**The Arras and Lazo or Veil**

The blessing and exchange of coins (*arras*) and the blessing and placing of the cords or garland (*lazo*) or veil are historical cultural customs that are frequently incorporated into the Celebration of Matrimony in Hispanic communities and in some Asian communities. In the Diocese of Calgary we most often receive requests for these customs from people of Filipino heritage. The Spanish edition of the ritual for the US included these rituals. They were translated and included in the English edition for the US. Although not in our Canadian book, it is permitted to celebrate these rituals in the Diocese of Calgary. The following texts are from *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, © 2016, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. We do not have permission to reproduce these texts (e.g. in a booklet or on a screen). They are here only for your own use.

**Arras**

The exchange of coins (*arras*) may take place immediately after the blessing and giving of rings regardless if the liturgy is within or without Mass or with a catechumen or non-Christian. The rubrics are not specific. It is customary for the bride and groom to select a married couple to present a box with the thirteen coins. When it is time for the coins to be exchanged, the priest calls the couple with the box of coins to come forward. They present the priest with the box of coins to be blessed. They may stand to the side for the blessing. After the priest blesses the coins, he pours them into the hands of the groom who hands them to the bride while saying the ritual texts. Then the bride presents the same coins to her spouse saying the same words. After the exchange of coins the groom may place them back into the box which is returned to the couple who presented them. The presenting couple takes their seats.

**Lazo or Veil**

The *lazo* is a double cord that a chosen pair wraps around the new husband and wife. It may resemble a large figure eight or a double rosary. Instead, a veil may be brought forward for blessing. In N. America it is common for the bride to enter the church already veiled. In that case the edge of the bride’s veil may be placed on or pinned to the groom’s shoulder. In some cultures an additional veil may be used. The rite suggests that the placing of either the *lazo* or the veil take place, although, in some cultures (the Philippines), the two are combined. The presider invites those who will present the *lazo* or veil to come forward after the Lord’s Prayer (omitting *Deliver us Lord*) and hold the *lazo* or veil during the blessing. They remove the *lazo* or veil after the Nuptial Blessing and return to their seats.

**The Blessing and Giving of the Arras [[1]](#endnote-1)**

If the occasion so suggests, the rite of blessing and giving of the *arras* (coins) may take place following the blessing and giving of rings.

The Priest says:

**Presider**: **Bless,  O Lord, these *arras***

 **that N. and N. will give to each other**

 **and pour over them the abundance of**

 **your good gifts.**

The husband takes the *arras* and hands them over to his wife, saying:

Husband: N. receive these *arras* as a pledge of God’s blessing

 and a sign of the good gifts we will share.

The wife takes the *arras* and hands them over to the husband, saying:

Wife: N. receive these *arras* as a pledge of God’s blessing

 and a sign of the good gifts we will share.

Then a hymn or canticle of praise may be sung by the whole community.

**The Blessing and Placing of the *Lazo* or the Veil[[2]](#endnote-2)**

According to local customs, the rite of blessing and imposition of the *lazo* (wedding garland) or of the veil may take place before the Nuptial Blessing. The spouses remain kneeling in their place. If the *lazo* has not been placed earlier, and it is now convenient to do so, it may be placed at this time, or else, a veil is placed over the head of the wife and the shoulders of the husband, thus symbolizing the bond that unites them.

The Priest says:

**Presider**: **Bless,  O Lord, this *lazo* (or: this veil),**

 **a symbol of the indissoluble union**

 **that N. and N. have established from this day forward**

 **before you and with your help.**

The *lazo* (or the veil) is held by two family members or friends and is placed over the shoulders of the newly married couple.

1. No. 67B, The Order of Celebrating Matrimony ©2016, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington DC. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. No. 71B, The Order of Celebrating Matrimony ©2016, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington DC. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)