

THE ROSE CEREMONY

(In the Rose Ceremony, the Bride and Groom give each other a Rose. Two roses are all that is necessary. The Rose Ceremony is placed at the end of the ceremony just before being pronounced husband and wife. In the old language of flowers, a single red rose always meant "I love you". The Rose ceremony gives recognition to the new and most honorable title of "Husband and Wife".)

"Your gift to each other for your wedding today has been your wedding rings - which shall always be an outward demonstration of your vows of love and respect; and a public showing of your commitment to each other.

You now have what remains the most honorable title which may exist between a man and a woman - the title of "husband" and "wife." For your first gift as husband and wife, that gift will be a single rose.

In the past, the rose was considered a symbol of love and a single rose always meant only one thing - it meant the words "I love you." So it is appropriate that for your first gift - as husband and wife - that gift would be a single rose.

Please exchange your first gift as husband and wife. In some ways it seems like you have not done anything at all. Just a moment ago you were holding one small rose - and now you are holding one small rose. In some ways, a marriage ceremony is like this. In some ways, tomorrow is going to seem no different than yesterday. But in fact today, just now, you both have given and received one of the most valuable and precious gifts of life - one I hope you always remember - the gift of true and abiding love within the devotion of marriage.

ANDRÉ and JASHILA, I would ask that where ever you make your home in the future - whether it be a large and elegant home - or a small and graceful one - that you both pick one very special location for roses; so that on each anniversary of this truly wonderful occasion you both may take a rose to that spot both as a recommitment to your marriage - and a recommitment that THIS will be a marriage based upon love.

In every marriage there are times where it is difficult to find the right words. It is easiest to hurt who we most love. It is easiest to be most hurt by who we most love. It might be difficult some time to words to say "I am sorry" or "I forgive you"; "I need you" or "I am hurting". If this should happen, if you simply can not find these words, leave a rose at that spot which both of you have selected - for that rose than says what matters most of all and should overpower all other things and all other words.

That rose says the words: "I still love you." The other should accept this rose for the words which can not be found, and remember the love and hope that you both share today.

ANDRÉ and JASHILA, if there is anything you remember of this marriage ceremony, it is that it was love that brought you here today, it is only love which can make it a glorious union, and it is by love which your marriage shall endure."