

Mass wedding goes ahead in Korea despite coronavirus

11th February, 2020



Picture via AFP - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5to16xqQDU>

Six thousand couples decided not to let the coronavirus deter them from celebrating their happy day. The multiple brides and grooms attended a mass wedding ceremony in South Korea's Unification Church on Friday, in

spite of the health scare from the coronavirus in neighbouring China. The couples jetted in from sixty countries around the world to attend their wedding. The newlyweds were joined by 24,000 guests; some renewing their marriage vows and others watching friends and family tie the knot. The church seemed well prepared for such a large-scale event as staff handed out hand sanitizer and surgical masks to all attendees. They also checked the temperature of the couples.

The Unification Church is famous for holding the mass weddings. It was founded in 1954 by self-declared messiah Sun Myung Moon. The communal weddings started in 1961 and have seen hundreds of thousands of couples walk down the aisle. In many cases, the bride and groom had been matched and met for the first time at the ceremony. One newlywed spoke about marrying amid the global spread of the coronavirus. He told the Reuters news agency: "I'm very happy to attend this deeply blessed joint wedding. Since coronavirus is going around these days, I wore a mask to be on the safe side." A 23-year-old bride from Benin said: "I didn't put on a mask because I wanted to be beautiful for my husband."

Sources: theguardian.com / reuters.com / bbc.com

Writing

All public events should be banned until the coronavirus is no longer a threat. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

couples / happy day / bride / groom / health scare / wedding / marriage vows / masks / famous / messiah / walk down the aisle / tie the knot / blessed / coronavirus / safe

True / False

- a) Six thousand couples got married at a mass wedding. T / F
- b) The wedding took place in the capital city of North Korea. T / F
- c) Couples from sixteen different countries were married at the ceremony. T / F
- d) The church ran out of surgical masks to give the guests. T / F
- e) The mass weddings have been taking place since the early 1960s. T / F
- f) Sometimes, the bride and groom meet for the first time at the wedding. T / F
- g) A groom said he wore a mask to be on the safe side. T / F
- h) A bride did not wear a mask so her new husband could kiss her. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. deter | a. conducting |
| 2. attended | b. out of harm's way |
| 3. mass | c. promises |
| 4. vows | d. joint |
| 5. sanitizer | e. large-scale |
| 6. holding | f. get married |
| 7. communal | g. discourage |
| 8. walk down the aisle | h. fortunate |
| 9. blessed | i. sterilizer |
| 10. on the safe side | j. were present at |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about mass weddings?
- b) What kind of wedding is best?
- c) What is the meaning of marriage?
- d) Is getting married the happiest day of your life?
- e) Should the wedding have taken place amid the coronavirus threat?
- f) How worried are you about the coronavirus?
- g) Why is marriage called 'tying the knot' in English?
- h) What precautions are you taking against coronavirus?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. in spite of the health scare | a. vows |
| 2. some renewing their marriage | b. spread of the coronavirus |
| 3. The church seemed well prepared for such | c. the mass weddings |
| 4. hand sanitizer and | d. from the coronavirus |
| 5. They also checked the temperature | e. the aisle |
| 6. famous for holding | f. surgical masks |
| 7. couples walk down | g. groom |
| 8. the bride and | h. of the couples |
| 9. marrying amid the global | i. the safe side |
| 10. I wore a mask to be on | j. a large-scale event |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Are mass weddings better than single weddings?
- How does it feel to walk down the aisle?
- What would it be like to marry someone you have just met?
- What kind of wedding would you really like?
- What wedding vows should people make?
- Should public events be cancelled because of coronavirus?
- What questions would you like to ask one of the newlyweds?

Spelling

- lulieptm brides and grooms
- a mass wedding cermyone
- renewing their marriage vswo
- hand retiazisn
- calsigru masks
- They also checked the tmteeaeurrrp
- self-declared eiasmhs
- The mcumanol weddings
- couples walk down the aeils
- One lwndewye spoke about marrying
- I'm very happy to adtetn this
- deeply sesdbel

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. j	3. e	4. c	5. i
6. a	7. d	8. f	9. h	10. b

Role Play

Role A – Clothes

You think clothes are the best thing about being the bride or groom. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as great. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): flowers, cake or presents.

Role B – Flowers

You think flowers are the best thing about being the bride or groom. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as great. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): clothes, cake or presents.

Role C – Cake

You think cake is the best thing about being the bride or groom. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as great. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): flowers, clothes or presents.

Role D – Presents

You think presents are the best thing about being the bride or groom. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as great. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): flowers, cake or clothes.

Speaking – Bride & Groom

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about being a bride or groom. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| • Photos | • Clothes |
| • Cake | • Flowers |
| • The kiss | • Presents |
| • Family | • Vows |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.