

Prompt:

I am looking for images from museum websites that demonstrate important aspects of marriage in the late middle ages. Please provide me with a list, ideally of at least 30 objects, from various museum websites in North America and Europe, that directly relate to gaining a deeper understanding of marriage in Europe in the Late Middle Ages. Please include links.

ChatGPT said:

Thought for 4m 41s



Here's a cross-section of museum objects (Europe + North America) that you can mine for images and teaching angles about late-medieval marriage: betrothal, gift exchange, childbirth, piety, and dynastic display. I've grouped them loosely by type.

A. Marriage chests & caskets (courtship, trousseaux, love narratives)

1. **Marriage chest (cassone)** – Italian (Florence or Lucca), ca. 1480–95, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*
Allegorical scenes from Ovid on a large bedroom chest; label discusses wedding chests, trousseaux, and women's lives in the camera. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/193335)
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/193335>
2. **Casket with Scenes of Romances** – French, 1330–1350, ivory, *Walters Art Museum*
Carved with Castle of Love, Tristan & Iseult, etc.; the museum notes it “may

originally have been a courtship gift.” [Walters Art Museum Collection](https://art.thewalters.org/object/71.264/)
<https://art.thewalters.org/object/71.264/>

3. **Casket with Scenes from Romances** – probably Flemish, early 15th c., leather, *Walters Art Museum*
Lockable leather casket decorated with courtship scenes and bearing two Flemish family names; likely owned by a couple. [Walters Art Museum Collection](https://art.thewalters.org/object/73.14/)
<https://art.thewalters.org/object/73.14/>
 4. **Casket** – French, early 14th c., *Art Institute of Chicago*
Small wooden/ivory casket with secular courtly imagery; often interpreted as a love or betrothal gift.
<https://www.artic.edu/artworks/107681/casket>
 5. **Scenes of a Marriage Ceremony (cassone panel)** – Italian, c. mid-15th c., *Victoria & Albert Museum* (via Art UK)
Panel from a marriage chest showing a wedding ceremony and feast; great for the staging of elite nuptials. [Art UK+1](https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/scenes-of-a-marriage-ceremony-149969)
<https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/scenes-of-a-marriage-ceremony-149969>
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B. Birth trays & marital household (marriage–childbirth continuum)

6. **Birth Tray (Desco da Parto) with the Triumph of Chastity** – Workshop of Apollonio di Giovanni, ca. 1450–60, *Metropolitan Museum of Art*
Painted birth tray celebrating chastity and fertility, used at childbirth but tied to marriage ideals. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/479708)
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/479708>
7. **Birth Tray: The Triumph of Love** – Workshops of Apollonio di Giovanni & Marco del Buono, c. 1453–55, *National Gallery, London*
Desco da parto whose label explains how such trays functioned as symbolic gifts for marriage or childbirth and bear the couple’s coats of arms. [National Gallery](https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/workshop-of-apollonio-di-giovanni-and-workshop-of-marco-del-buono-birth-tray-the-triumph-of-love)
<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/workshop-of-apollonio-di-giovanni-and-workshop-of-marco-del-buono-birth-tray-the-triumph-of-love>
8. **Birth Tray (Desco da Parto): Diana and Actaeon / Justice** – Italian, mid-15th c., *Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco*
Mythological subject on a birth tray used to mark childbirth in a patrician marriage.
<https://www.famsf.org/artworks/childbirth-tray-desco-da-parto-obverse-diana-and-actaeon-reverse-justice>

9. **The Triumph of Fame (Descro da Parto)** – Giovanni di ser Giovanni (Scheggia), ca. 1449–50, *Metropolitan Museum of Art*
Birth tray celebrating the birth of Lorenzo de' Medici, with Medici–Tornabuoni arms on the reverse; the text explicitly links it to Piero and Lucrezia's marriage and firstborn. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436516)
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/436516>
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C. Rings and jewelry (betrothal, vows, conjugal symbolism)

10. **Gold Marriage Ring** – Byzantine, 3rd–4th c., *Metropolitan Museum of Art*
Early Christian marriage ring with a couple flanking a cross; useful for long-duration Christian marriage symbolism even if earlier than “late” medieval. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/46478)
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/46478>
11. **Gold Marriage Ring** – Byzantine, 6th–7th c., *Metropolitan Museum of Art*
Another inscribed marriage ring with Christ crowning the couple; connects sacramental theology and conjugal imagery. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/46479)
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/46479>
12. **Jewish Marriage Ring (Waddesdon Bequest)** – probably German, 16th c., *British Museum*
Elaborate ceremonial wedding ring with a miniature house (“house of the bridegroom”), reflecting Jewish marital law and display. [British Museum](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_WB-195)
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_WB-195
13. **Fede / Betrothal Ring** – probably Italian or German, late medieval/early modern, *British Museum* (e.g. AF.1113)
Clasped-hands (fede) ring, a classic betrothal form in late medieval Europe. [British Museum](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_AF-1113)
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_AF-1113
14. **Gimmel / Betrothal Ring** – Europe, 15th–16th c., *British Museum* (e.g. 1959,0209.40)
Interlocking hoop ring used in engagement and marriage ceremonies; sometimes split between spouses before the wedding. [British Museum](https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1959-0209-40)
https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/H_1959-0209-40
15. **Betrothal Ring** – Europe, late medieval, *Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*
One of several rings in the MFA collection explicitly catalogued as betrothal rings,

useful for object typology. [MFA Collections](#)

<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/58424/betrothal-ring>

16. **Betrothal Ring (second example)** – Europe, late medieval, *Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*

Another variant, good for comparing inscriptions and iconography. [MFA Collections](#)

<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/58421/betrothal-ring>

17. **Jewel with the Word “AMOR”** – probably Italian, 15th c., *Metropolitan Museum of Art*

Love jewel associated with courtship and marriage exchanges; included in *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy*. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](#)

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/467482>

D. Painted marriage scenes (ritual, vows, household ideals)

18. **The Arnolfini Portrait** – Jan van Eyck, 1434, *National Gallery, London*

Double portrait of Giovanni di Nicolao Arnolfini and his wife, long read as a marriage or betrothal image; superb for objects in the marital chamber (clothing, bed, dog, mirror). [National Gallery](#)

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-van-eyck-the-arnolfini-portrait>

19. **The Marriage of the Virgin** – Michelino da Besozzo, ca. 1430, *Metropolitan Museum of Art*

Panel of Mary and Joseph’s marriage, popular in the 15th c. for underlining the dignity of all marriages. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art+1](#)

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437083>

20. **Marriage of the Virgin and Saint Joseph** – Netherlandish, ca. 1500, *Walters Art Museum*

Altarpiece wing with a detailed depiction of the marriage ceremony; Walters notes the theme’s link to new emphasis on family in the 15th c. [Walters Art Museum](#)

[Collection](#)

<https://art.thewalters.org/object/61.161/>

21. **The Betrothal of the Virgin** – Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), 1420–30, *Museo Nacional del Prado*

Grisaille panel showing the betrothal of Mary and Joseph; rich in legal/ritual detail of handfasting. [Prado Museum](#)

<https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-betrothal-of-the-virgin/6f303c39-3d03-4d48-8bb0-ffe162d017dd>

22. **The Betrothal of the Virgin / Cristo Patiens** – Workshop of the Master of the Legend of Saint Catherine, 1470–1500, *Museo del Prado*

Recto shows the betrothal ceremony with priest binding the couple's hands with a ribbon, reflecting Flemish marriage practice. [Prado Museum](#)

<https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-betrothal-of-the-virgin-cristo-patiens/9b0b9a6a-c7c8-4320-ab18-97d0bd4befd8>

23. **Marriage of the Virgin** – Follower of the Master of the Virgin among Virgins, c. 1480–1500, *Philadelphia Museum of Art*

Netherlandish panel (in the PMA collection) showing the marriage of Mary and Joseph; pairs well with the Prado works for comparison. [philamuseum.org](#)

<https://www.philamuseum.org/collection/object/102114>

24. **Marriage of the Virgin (Book of Hours miniature)** – anonymous, c. 1470, *Walters Art Museum, Ms. W.196*

Historiated initial “D” with Marriage of the Virgin in a Bruges book of hours; shows how marriage imagery appears in lay devotion. [thedigitalwalters.org+1](#)

<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W196/description.html>

E. Books of hours & marriage-specific manuscripts (gifts, identity, conflict)

25. **Book of Hours (Raoul II de Raineval & Isabelle de Coucy)** – Paris, ca. 1380, *Walters Art Museum, Ms. W.89*

Commissioned specifically to commemorate their wedding; heraldic initials combine both lineages and a donor portrait of the bride highlights the marriage.

[thedigitalwalters.org+1](#)

<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W89/>

26. **Pabenham–Clifford Hours** – England, c. 1315–20, *Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 242*

Book of Hours designed for a couple, probably to commemorate their marriage; important for joint devotional identity. [The Fitzwilliam Museum+1](#)

<https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/illuminated/manuscript/discover/the-pabenham-clifford-hours>

27. **Gualenghi-d’Este Hours** – Ferrara, c. 1469, *J. Paul Getty Museum*

Luxurious manuscript created for the marriage of diplomat Andrea Gualengo and

Orsina d'Este; ties conjugal alliance to highly personalized devotion. [Getty+1](#)
<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/103RVH>

28. **Poncher Hours** – France, c. late 15th c., *J. Paul Getty Museum*

Book of Hours personalized for Denise Poncher, with many allusions to marriage and motherhood in its imagery and texts. [Getty+1](#)
<https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/object/109G3M>

29. **Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux, Queen of France** – Jean Pucelle, ca. 1324–28,
Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Cloisters)

Royal book of hours likely given by Charles IV to Jeanne as a wedding or coronation gift; classic example of a marriage-linked devotional object for a queen. [The Metropolitan Museum of Art+1](#)
<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/470309>

30. **Hours of Catherine of Cleves** – Dutch, c. 1440, *Morgan Library & Museum*

Commissioned by Catherine, whose biography (marriage to Arnold of Egmond and subsequent separation) frames how we read the book's intense imagery and patronage. [The Morgan+1](#)
<https://www.themorgan.org/collection/Hours-of-Catherine-of-Cleves>

31. **Book of Hours of Catherine of Cleves (object page M.917/945)** – *Morgan Library & Museum*

Detailed object record with individual folio images suitable for classroom use. [The Morgan](#)
<https://www.themorgan.org/manuscript/76941>

F. Marriage, devotion, and couple identity

32. **The Pabenhams-Clifford Hours (again, heraldry focus)** – *Fitzwilliam Museum*

Its combined heraldry and couple-oriented program help illustrate how marriage reshaped devotional books as shared objects. [The Fitzwilliam Museum+1](#)

33. **Catherine of Cleves biography panel** – *Morgan Library*

Short essay emphasizing her unhappy marriage and political conflict with her husband; a nice counter-example to harmonious conjugal imagery. [The Morgan](#)
<https://www.themorgan.org/collection/Hours-of-Catherine-of-Cleves>

If you'd like, I can next:

- Sort these into thematic clusters (e.g. **ritual, gifts, childbirth, conflict**) for a teaching site or exhibit, and
- Suggest a handful of “anchor objects” plus 2–3 comparative images for each section of your student’s “Marriage in Medieval Europe” web project.