

Wedding Guidelines for Photographers

Couples being married at _____ should ask their photographer to respect the sacredness of this Church and the holiness of the commitment they are celebrating.

Photos may be taken in the center aisle before Mass begins and from the choir loft, front side aisles or back, during Mass. A video camera may be set up in the choir loft or front side aisles and may run throughout the ceremony, provided it is not moved and the photographer does not move about in a distracting way.

Be sure that the placement of your equipment does not obstruct the flow of traffic in the side aisle at Communion time. No flash photos may be taken during the homily or during the Eucharistic Prayer, the consecration or communion.

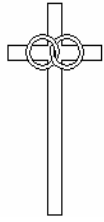
To keep the focus on the Mass, the Wedding Ceremony and the Bride and Groom, no photos may be taken from anywhere in the sanctuary during the ceremony. (The sanctuary is the area beyond the bottom step and includes the side altar areas.)

Upon arrival at the Church, the photographer is asked to see _____ or the presiding priest or deacon, give them his or her business card or name in writing, and acknowledge that they are familiar with these guidelines.

All photography must conclude 15 minutes before the parish's scheduled time for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**“If we love one
another,
God remains in us,
and his love
is brought
to perfection
in us.”**

1 John 4:12



United in Christ

Prayer Before Marriage

Lord God,
Source of all love,
your providence has brought us together.
As we prepare for the sacrament of marriage
we pray for your grace,
that, strengthened by your blessing,
we may grow in respect for one another
and cherish each other with a sincere love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

May the God of love and peace
abide in us, guide our steps,
and confirm our hearts in his love,
now and for ever.
Amen.

Conclusion

These months of preparation for your marriage will be busy and exciting. If you find that there are ways in which the parish staff can be of help, please call.

The prayers, scripture readings, the vows, the giving and receiving of rings, the music, the nuptial blessing - all of these, for you, will be an expression of both faith in God and in each other. They will also express your confidence that the presence and love of God will strengthen and confirm your love for each other.

May these days of preparation hold many blessings!

After the Ceremony

Having made the decision to be married in the Church, remember to register in the parish as a newly wed couple. This may mean the simple change of name and address if you are continuing to worship in the Church where you were married, or a new registration if you are moving elsewhere.

Ongoing Support

The Catholic Church wants very much to be a presence in your lives. Please be attentive to parish activities, as there may be marriage enrichment possibilities for you. Also, when you decide to start a family, please be in touch with the parish staff regarding baptism information and preparation.

Congratulations!

Rehearsal

Your rehearsal will be planned for one or two days before your celebration. This must be scheduled at the time when the wedding is arranged to be sure that the Church will be available when you need it.

Ordinarily the rehearsal will last about 45 minutes. All members of the wedding party should be present. Readers may also practice their readings on the microphone at this time. It is not advisable to invite additional guests to the rehearsal.

There may be no consumption of any alcoholic beverage on the Church property at the time of the rehearsal or wedding.



Reception

Neither _____ nor the priest or deacon who presides at your wedding will assume they are invited to the reception. If you would like them to come, invite them well in advance of the wedding date.

Wedding Guidelines

We are delighted that you have chosen to celebrate your marriage at _____.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, **Marriage is a Sacrament**. The bride and the groom contract their marriage in the presence of God.

For a marriage to be sacramental, two baptized persons, at least one being Catholic...

- * Freely enter into a vowed commitment of respect, reverence and love.
- * Make this promise for a lifetime.
- * Promise fidelity.
- * And include an openness to bearing children, providing for their good and bringing them up in the faith.

The exchange of promises between the bride and groom is a commitment to one another for life, even as God is faithful. Thus the couple's love and pledge of fidelity becomes a sign of God's love for God's people. This powerful promise speaks to all assembled.

The priest (deacon), the families of the couple, the attendants and the assembled gathering of friends witness what the bride and groom promise.

The Church will be reserved for you and the date for your wedding will be set only after you have had your initial interview with _____.



Contacts to schedule

Plan on a minimum of six contacts with the parish prior to the day of your wedding:

- a) Initial session: To get acquainted, fill out necessary preliminary paper-work, which includes determining your freedom to marry, setting your date and discussing diocesan and parish guidelines.
- b) Second session: administration of the FOCCUS inventory (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study). This internationally used instrument for marriage preparation is self-diagnostic and designed to help couples learn more about themselves and their unique relationship. At this time, further sessions for interpretation will be scheduled.
- c) Contact musician for consultation, early on.
- d) Pre-cana sessions - presented in a variety of models at your parish, at another parish (schedule on diocesan website www.dor.org) or on-line.
- e) Meeting to finalize plans for your Marriage liturgy - Call to set this date well ahead of your ceremony. At this time, please plan to make an offering to the church. The suggested diocesan offering is \$150.00
- f) Rehearsal - the entire wedding party should attend.

Offering

The standard diocesan offering of \$150 should be made at the time of finalizing your wedding liturgy. In addition, consult your parish for information regarding their fee for the organist, vocalist, and instrumentalist. The parish organist will help you choose from the recommended music, and suggest possible vocalists/instrumentalists. As soon as your date has been scheduled, contact the organist.

Photography

Please instruct your photographer to remain on the sidelines and in no way obstruct your ceremony.

You may remain in Church for photos after your celebration. If your wedding is scheduled for Saturday afternoon, keep in mind that all photography must conclude 15 minutes before the parish's scheduled time for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The attached Guideline is to be given to your photographer.

Marriage License

Bring your marriage license to the rehearsal. Your witnesses will sign the papers then. The priest or deacon will sign on the day of your ceremony and _____ will send the papers in.



Planning the Liturgy for your Marriage

At the time of your Pre-Cana, you will be given materials that will help you to plan your wedding celebration. About two months before your wedding, make an appointment with _____ for help in planning your liturgy. Your celebration should include prayers and readings that reflect your faith in God and in each other.

Some of the ways in which family members and friends can participate in special ways are:

- * Proclaiming the Scripture readings
- * Reading the Prayer of the Faithful
- * Bringing up the gifts
- * Serving as Ministers of Communion

Each of these ministries presumes some training and experience. Please choose people who are experienced to serve as these special ministers.

There are several books to help you choose appropriate readings.

The following guidelines will help you as you make your plans.

Baptismal Information

Contact the Church where you were baptized and ask for a recently dated copy of your Baptismal certificate. Parishes are used to providing this information and it is usually obtained by a simple phone call to the parish secretary.

If you do not know the location of the Church, the National Church Directory (which is in the parish office) may be of help.

Pre-Cana

All couples preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage are required to participate in Pre-Cana sessions. Schedules will be provided at your initial interview. The sessions should be completed after the FOCCUS inventory, and at least 4 months before your wedding date.

If one, or both, of you have been married before, you will participate in the Second Marriage Preparation Process led by mentor couples. This information is available at your parish and on the Diocesan website.

Register early because sessions fill as much as 3 months before the scheduled date.

Planning Your Celebration

Music

There are some restrictions on the music that may be used at a Catholic Church wedding. Please look through the Wedding Music Guidelines found on the Diocesan website. (www.dor.org/psm/liturgy.htm)

Ideally, you will plan some music that the congregation can sing so that all can praise God and pray together for you in music. Using only instrumental music or only a soloist is usually discouraged at Catholic weddings. Using recorded music is also discouraged.

As you plan your music think of the following considerations: Does this music fit the context of this liturgical celebration? Is the music technically and esthetically good? Will it help this assembly to pray? Please check with the parish regarding their practice times for musicians.

Flowers

Flowers may be left in Church or taken to your reception. Let _____ know ahead of time what your plan is. Be sure to let your florist know where you want them placed in the sanctuary. No flowers will be placed on the altar.



Ceremony

Couples may plan to be married either during Mass or outside of Mass. If you attend Mass regularly, you may choose to be married at Mass. If you do not attend Mass regularly or if many of your guests are not Catholic, you may decide to be married in a Wedding ceremony (a Liturgy of the Word). The engaged couple together with _____ and the priest or deacon who presides will plan the liturgy.

If you have a relative or friend who is a priest or deacon whom you would like to preside at your marriage, mention this at the time of your wedding interview. It is preferable to have a presider who is known to you and your family.

If your fiancé is of another faith and would like to have a minister or rabbi be part of the ceremony, mention this at the time of your initial planning as well.