

Guidelines for the Rite of Marriage

Holy Family Parish

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"The sacrament of marriage signifies a union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994)

Congratulations on your Christian engagement! As you prepare for this celebration and lifetime commitment, the parish will assist you in your preparation. To enhance and preserve the sacredness of the sacrament of marriage, these requirements and important notes are listed.

We maintain high standards in our sacramental preparation and worship life at Holy Family. A sincere respect and reverence for the traditions and rites of the Roman Catholic Church is expected of all involved. Please study these guidelines, and feel free to bring any questions or comments you have to the parish staff.

Requirements:

(The wedding date always remains contingent on the fulfillment of these requirements, up to the wedding date itself.)

1. The couple takes an active part in their preparation for marriage. Normally this preparation will take at least six months. The pastor, other parish pastoral staff and supporting married couples will assist those preparing for the sacrament of marriage. It is the responsibility of the couple getting married to arrange an initial meeting with the pastor and follow-up meetings with him and others as needed. Throughout the marriage preparation, the couple will learn about the sacrament of marriage and the commitment that each is making to God, each other, and the Church. There will be time to pray and reflect on the sacred Scriptures for the marriage liturgy; discuss the couple's relationships and experiences of God, family, friends and, of course, each other; fill out church documents; prepare and rehearse the wedding liturgy; discuss the Catholic faith and process annulments if necessary.
2. Either the bride or groom must be a practicing, registered member of Holy Family. If one has been a previous member and has moved away and wishes to be married here, a letter from the pastor of the parish in which he or she is now worshipping is needed.
3. The civil marriage license (obtained from the county) must be brought to the parish office at least two days before the wedding date. No wedding can legally occur without the marriage license.

Important Notes:

- A. To place your wedding on the parish calendar, please schedule a meeting with the pastor at least six months prior to the wedding date; twelve months or more is better.
- B. The details of the wedding liturgy, decorations, liturgical ministers, dates and times for rehearsal and wedding, etc., are to be arranged with the pastor. This is also required when a visiting priest, musician or vocalist has been asked to participate in the wedding.
- C. When you have completed your initial meetings with the pastor, you should then make an appointment with the Director of Music at least two months prior to the wedding to make arrangements for the music for your wedding.
- D. In a marriage between a Catholic and a person not of the Catholic faith, the marriage is ordinarily celebrated outside the Eucharistic Liturgy.
- E. Visiting priests are welcome with permission and delegation of the pastor.

- F. It is customary to make an offering to the parish on the occasion of a wedding. The parish relies on such an offering to defray some of the expenses specific to your wedding. This offering is not a rental of the church. The suggested offering for our parish is \$175.00. Checks should be made payable to **Holy Family Parish** (not to the pastor) and brought in along with the marriage license the week prior to the wedding. This offering does not cover the cost of musicians, music rehearsals or gifts to guest pastors or ministers.
- G. Both an organist and a cantor are required for the liturgy. All participating musicians must be approved by the Director of Music. The fee for the organist is \$200.00. This includes: a one hour consultation, a thirty minute rehearsal with the cantor, and the liturgy proper. The fee for a parish cantor is \$75.00. This includes a thirty minute rehearsal with the organist, and the liturgy proper. Both fees are to be paid no later than 14 days in advance of the wedding. In the event that the wedding is canceled, half of the above stated fees are to be paid to the musicians in remuneration for services rendered. If the full amount has been paid when the wedding is cancelled, the musicians will refund half of this amount. All checks are to be made payable to the musicians by name.
- H. The main building will be opened and available two hours before the time of the wedding. (The religious studies wing and Carpenter Hall will not be open or accessible.) There is the possibility that the church will be needed prior to or after the scheduled time of the wedding for a funeral or other activity. Therefore, plan on fitting your decorating, photography and the wedding liturgy inside a four-hour window.
- I. The ministers' sacristy (to the left of the entryway as one enters the church) is the room where the women of the wedding party may dress and where loose items and clothing may be stored. Men are asked to be dressed for the wedding when they arrive at the church. The Marian room (near the bell tower entrance) is also available for the wedding party to use. Please make sure to take all belongings (boxes, paper, hangers, etc.) with you after the ceremony.
- J. Since the church is a place of prayer, no food, beverages or gum are allowed at any time in the church or the narthex.
- K. Smoking is not allowed in any part of the building.
- L. No alcoholic beverages are to be consumed before the rehearsal or the wedding liturgy. Further, there is no drinking of alcoholic beverages anywhere on the church property. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in a postponement of the liturgy.
- M. Rice, confetti or birdseed may not be thrown on the church premises. Balloon launches are also not allowed.
- N. **Out of reverence for the Eucharist** which is reserved in the tabernacle at all times, **the following must be observed by everyone:**
1. Proper attire is required by all at all times in the building, before, during and after both the rehearsal and the wedding, including all musicians, photographers and others involved.
 2. Proper etiquette is expected at all times on the premises of the church. Please refrain from loud talking in the worship space and the adjacent areas of the building. Small children are to be supervised at all times.
 3. It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to see that the above rules are conveyed to the wedding party and guests, and that these rules are respected.

O. Guidelines for receiving Communion are as follows:

- ✘ ***For Catholics:*** Catholics fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when they pray, attentively listen and respond to the word of God, and receive Holy Communion. Participants in the Eucharist first should be reconciled with God and with the community through the Sacrament of Reconciliation (penance) if any serious sin has fractured those relationships. Secondly, a person receiving Holy Communion is to fast for one hour prior to reception of the Eucharist.
- ✘ ***For other Christians:*** We welcome to this celebration of the Eucharist those Christians who are not fully united with us. It is a consequence of the sad divisions in Christianity that we cannot extend to them a general invitation to receive Communion. Catholics believe that the Eucharist is an action of the celebrating community signifying a oneness which does not yet exist, and for which we must all pray and work.
- ✘ ***For those not receiving communion:*** Those not receiving sacramental communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.
- ✘ ***For non-Christians:*** We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot extend to them an invitation to receive communion, we do invite them to be united with us in prayer.

P. After the wedding:

1. There is no maintenance personnel on duty on the weekends. Please remove all flower boxes, plastic bags, hangers, etc. from all areas of the building.
2. For Saturday weddings, all cleanup must be completed no later than 4:00 PM. The sacrament of reconciliation (confessions) begins at 4:15 PM.

Q. Flowers and decorations:

1. As a general rule, *anything* artificial—flowers, for example—is inappropriate for our worship.
Please see our separate parish guidelines concerning flowers and decorations for the liturgy.
2. Conveying these guidelines to the florist is the responsibility of the couple to avoid miscommunication and unpleasant surprises. An extra copy of those guidelines will be provided to pass along to them.

R. Photographers & video operators:

1. ***Please see our separate parish guidelines concerning photography for the liturgy.***
2. Conveying these guidelines to any photographers and videographers is the responsibility of the couple to avoid miscommunication and unpleasant surprises. An extra copy of those guidelines will be provided to pass along to them.
3. Our worship space is not very brightly lit. Photographers must be prepared to work without a flash during our worship, bringing appropriate film, cameras and lenses.
4. During the liturgy, it is necessary to avoid any movement or action that will distract from or interrupt our worship. Photographers and video operators may not operate near the sanctuary nor within the tiled floor area surrounding the organ during the liturgy. Please work discreetly behind the assembly at all times.