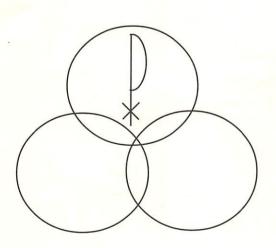


# Preparing for



and Planning Your







# St. Charles Borromeo Parish - Chippewa Falls St. John the Baptist Parish - Cooks Valley St. Peter the Apostle Parish - Tilden

CENTRAL OFFICES 810 Pearl Street Chippewa Falls, WI 54729 Phone: (715) 723-4088

Bride:	Groom:	
Parish:		
□ St.	Charles Borromeo	
□ St.	John the Baptist	
□ St.	Peter the Apostle	
Celebrant:		
Wedding Date:	Time:	
Rehearsal Date:	Time:	
FOCCUS Couple		
Name:		
Telephone:		

Wedding Liturgy
PLANNING SHEETS



The Wedding of	and
Date:	
Rehearsal Date:	Time:
Presiding Minister:	
Witnesses:	
Readers:	
Eucharistic Ministers:	
Ushers:	
Servers:	
Accompanist:	
Singer(s):	The state of the s
Other Musicians:	
Gift Bearers:	



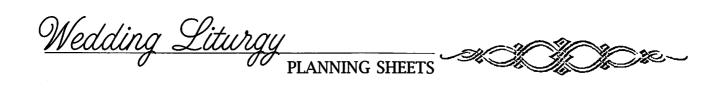


## The Order of Service Within Mass

## The Order of Service Within Mass

**INTRODUCTORY RITE** 

Prelude	Instrumenta	l	Order of P	rocession
Entrance Song				
Greeting				
Opening Prayer				
LITURGY OF THE	WORD			
First Reading				
Responsorial Psalm			☐ Recited	Sung
Second Reading				
Gospel Acclamation				
Gospel				
Homily				
Rite of Marriage			Unity Candle	
General Intercessions				
LITURGY OF THE	EUCHARIS	ST		
Preparation of Altar and Gif	ts			
Offertory Song				
Prayer Over the Gifts				
Preface				
Sanctus	Sung			
Eucharistic Prayer				
Memorial Acclamation	Recited	Sung		
Doxology/Acclamation	Recited	Sung		Continued next page



The Order of Service Within Mass, continued

**NOTES:** 

COMMUNIO	N RITE		
Lord's Prayer			
Nuptial Blessing			
Agnus Dei	☐ Recited ☐ Sung		
Communion Song			
	Song		
	☐ Instrumental		
Post Communion	on Song of Praise		
Prayer After Comm	union		
CONCLUDIN	G RITE		
Final Blessing			
Dismissal			
Closing Song	Recessional Song		



## The Order of Service Outside of Mass

## INTRODUCTORY RITE Order of Procession ☐ Prelude ☐ Instrumental Entrance Song \_\_\_\_\_ Greeting **Opening Prayer** LITURGY OF THE WORD First Reading \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Recited Responsorial Psalm \_\_\_\_\_ Sung Second Reading \_\_\_\_\_ Gospel Acclamation \_\_\_\_\_ Gospel \_\_\_\_\_ Homily Unity Candle \_\_\_\_\_ Rite of Marriage **General Intercessions Nuptial Blessing CONCLUDING RITE** Final Blessing Dismissal ☐ Recessional ☐ Song \_\_\_\_\_ Closing Song

## **NOTES:**

# Contents Significant

- 2 Pastoral Letter
- 3 Preliminary Marriage Information Worksheet & Checklist
- 4 Marriage Guidelines and Policies
- 5 Preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage
- 8 Marriages Prepared Outside the Place of Celebration
- 9 Wedding Liturgy Planning Sheets (detachable section)
- 13 Pastoral Letter on Cohabitation
- 16 Planning the Wedding Ceremony
- 19 Guidelines on the Selection of Music
- 20 Notes





Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations on your engagement, and may the Holy Spirit guide you through these months of preparation.

There are two important aspects to your preparation: one, the immediate planning of your wedding day, and two, the lifelong union of your marriage from the moment you walk out of church. While you may be consumed with details regarding the wedding day, we ask that you use the time of marriage preparation well, strengthening your relationship with each other, with God, and with the Church so that your marriage and family life will be happy and fruitful.

Included in this booklet are wedding guidelines and policies we follow regarding preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage. You should read through them thoroughly before your first meeting. Also included is a special pastoral letter regarding cohabitation before marriage emphasizing how cohabitation changes the nature of your preparation and the way in which the wedding is celebrated in church.

The last two parts of this booklet concern guidelines for the selection of music and the actual planning sheet for the wedding ceremony. Any questions you might have can be asked at your first meeting.

God bless both of you. We look forward to working with you in the months ahead!





Re	quested Date:			
Time:				
	ace:			
GROOM		BRIDE		
First Name Midd	le Last	First Name	Middle	Last
Address		Address		
City/State/ZIP		City/State/ZIP		
Home Phone	Work Phone	Home Phone	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Work Phone
SACRAMENTAL INFO	ORMATION	SACRAMENTA	AL INFOR	MATION
☐ Baptism		$\Box$ Baptism		
Place		Place		
Date of Birth		Date of Birth		
☐ First Communion		☐ First Com	munion	
$\square$ Confirmation		□ Confirmat	ion	
$\square$ Previously Married $\square$ Annulment		☐ Previously	Married [	☐ Annulment
DOCUMENTATION		DOCUMENTA	TION	
☐ Baptismal Certificate		☐ Baptismal Certificate		
$\square$ Declaration of Nulity		$\square$ Declaration of Nulity		
$\square$ Defect/Lack of Form	1	☐ Defect/Lac	k of Form	
Dispensation		Dispensation		
	Step	ι	Date	Preparer
CHECKLIST:	Initial Interview	-	<del></del>	
☐ Inventory Intervi		w (FOCCUS, PMI)	<del></del>	
	☐ Inventory Review ☐ Marriage & Family	Life Program		
	☐ Matural Family Pla	_		
	Wedding Ceremon	<u>-</u>		





### BEFORE you set the date . . .

1. Before we can celebrate the Marriage Rite of the Catholic Church, we must first know if you are free to marry according to the laws of marriage in the Catholic Church.

Conditions which could delay or prohibit marriage are:

- ❖ A previous marriage which ended in divorce.
- Cohabitation (living together in the same dwelling) prior to marriage.
- ❖ Inactive practice of the Catholic Faith
- Public scandal or past behavior which would cause doubt about the sacredness and holiness of the Sacrament of Marriage. It is possible to reconcile any of these problems with time. However, no date can be set until we are assured that at the time of marriage you have complete freedom to marry.
- 2. In the case of a **mixed marriage** (marriage of a Catholic and non-Catholic) the Catholic party must agree to the following:
  - ❖ To remain faithful to the Catholic Church
  - To do all in his/her power to insure the Catholic baptism and upbringing of any children.
  - Both parties must receive instruction about the purposes and essential properties of marriage. Lack of agreement to these conditions would prohibit marriage in the Catholic Church.
- 3. You may check to see when openings are available for hall rental, bands, and so on, but *do not set a date with them* until we have finalized a date for the wedding. This will save much trouble. Have possible dates ready and we can check them against my calendar.
- 4. Documents and information you will need as we begin to prepare for your marriage:
  - ❖ A recent baptismal certificate from each of you. Contact the church in which you were baptized to obtain this. Catholics must have all previous sacraments received noted on the baptismal certificate including the date and place of reception.
  - The full name of your parents, including your mother's maiden name, and their religious affiliation.
  - ❖ If you are related, you must know how closely you are so related.
  - ❖ If you were previously married, you must provide a copy of the divorce decree, and a declaration of nullity if an annulment was granted by the Catholic Church.

## PREPARING FOR THE

# Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage preparation assists you in understanding the "purposes and essential properties of marriage" as understood and taught by the Catholic Church. This means that, to the best of our ability, we will look at your intellectual, psychological, and spiritual readiness to undertake the vocation of marriage.

The following steps are tools we use to accomplish this:

Schedule an appointment to see the pastor with the parish office. This should be done as soon as you and your intended spouse have made the decision to marry . . . at least six (6) months and preferably twelve (12) months prior to the anticipated wedding date.

At this meeting, you and the priest or deacon will discuss your intentions and fill out the M-A Form. The M-A Form is an information sheet containing all of the necessary data needed to begin your marriage preparation. (If the priest or deacon is unfamiliar with you, you may asked to have an M-B Form filled out as well. This can be done by someone who knows you well, such as your parents, if possible. This is done as an interview by a cleric who signs the form to validate the information.)

- The second step is an appointment to complete the Pre-Marriage Inventory (FOCCUS or PMI). This inventory is an instrument used to create a profile of your current readiness for marriage. This profile will help you to see where you are already strong in your readiness for marriage with your intended spouse, and it points out areas that may be a weakness for you which can be strengthened before you begin your married life.
- The third step is to review the inventory. Help and suggestions are given to strengthen your relationship and help you to prepare better for marriage.
- The fourth step is our marriage and family life program. You will be with several couples preparing for marriage. In this program, presentations are given on specific topics concerning marriage and family life. The presentations are followed by time for reflection, personal response, and dialogue with your partner concerning your own relationship. Normally this program is set up in a series of four evening sessions held over four consecutive weeks.
- ❖ The fifth step is instruction in **Natural Family Planning** (NFP). This is to help you understand and put into practice the only approved form of family planning in the Catholic Church.
- Finally, we come to the actual planning of the Marriage Rite. Using the planning guide enclosed, begin jotting down ideas for songs, readings and other plans for your ceremony in the spaces provided. We will get together at least one month prior to the wedding day to finalize the plans. You should submit a copy of your planning sheet to be used on the night of the rehearsal.

## Some Considerations Regarding Your Faith

1. A Wedding between two baptized Catholics is more than a personal, social, or civil event: it is a Sacrament of Christ and of His Church. It demands a living faith on the part of the couple, an awareness that they are entering into a covenant relationship, no only with each other, but also with God. As such, it is not something to be undertaken lightly or in a hurried manner. Since Christian marriage mirrors the love of Christ for his Church (cf. Ephesians 5:32), preparation for Christian marriage must involve serious reflection on the meaning of Christian love.

A Catholic wedding should be an expression of should be an expression of your faith and your conviction that God is uniting you in an indissoluble bond. Christ is invited to be an essential participant in this celebration. He is sacramentally present in the union of husband and wife.

- 2. Ideally, then, you should prepare for your marriage by daily prayer, both individually and as a couple. You should also be in the habit of regularly attending Mass and frequently receiving the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. You are about to receive a sacrament that will change your whole life. Such a commitment cannot be made without prayer and the grace of God. Spiritual preparation is absolutely necessary for any Catholic marriage. If the couple stands up at their wedding and professes a faith they do not have, the marriage rite becomes at best an empty formality.
- 3. Interdenominational & Interfaith Marriages are possible in the Catholic Church. They do however, require more preparation in order to safeguard the faith of the Catholic partner. Following is an explanation of some things you will need to be aware of if you are planning to enter into a marriage where one partner is not Catholic.
  - ❖ Dispensation: A marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic Christian is still understood to be a sacrament. While a marriage between a Catholic and a non-Christian is not a sacrament, it is nevertheless a union blessed of its very nature by God when those entering into this covenant relationship intend what God and his Church intends in the union of man and woman. A dispensation (permission) for a mixed-marriage is obtained from the bishop in order that he may, as chief shepherd of the Church of La Crosse, be satisfied that the faith of the Catholic partner may be protected. For a Catholic to not seek the needed dispensation and to attempt marriage outside of the Church is to place oneself out of full communion with the Catholic Church. The cleric with whom you are preparing for marriage will obtain this dispensation for you.
  - ❖ Promises made by the Catholic partner: When a dispensation is obtained for a Catholic to marry a non-Catholic Christian or a non-Christian, the Catholic party must promise that he or she will continue in the practice of the Catholic faith (which includes weekly attendance at Sunday Mass) and will do everything possible to ensure that the children are baptized and raised in the Catholic Church. It must be emphasized that, for a Catholic, attendance at Sunday Mass is the only acceptable way of fulfilling the Third Commandment and the precepts of the Church.
  - A marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic will affect the way the Marriage Rite should be celebrated. This will be elaborated on in the section on planning your wedding.

- The obligation to seek salvation together, to grow in faith and grace, is just as binding and strong in a mixed marriage as in the union of two Catholics. Differences of belief and religious practice may make it more difficult for a Catholic and a committed non-Catholic Christian to come to an agreement about the faith and its practice. Those differences are even more pronounced in a marriage between a Catholic and one who is not baptized.
- The question of faith, its importance to each person, and its place in the marriage must be discussed and agreed upon before the wedding takes place. It is simply unrealistic to put these important questions aside thinking that "they will take care of themselves" when the time comes. Private prayer and honest, prayerful discussion of these matters must precede the wedding.



- 1. When you first contact the parish, you may inquire about the availability of a particular date and time. However, no wedding date will be entered into the calendar until your freedom to marry has been ascertained.
- 2. There are times when the preparation for marriage cannot be handled within the parish where the wedding is to take place. In these cases the pastor will guide you in making alternate arrangements for the completion of your preparation.
- 3. It is a sad fact that in some cases a couple will attempt to deceive the pastor as to the fact of their co-habitation and other pre-marital sexual behavior. This includes giving the address and phone number of their parents or friends home. Because each individual is under oath when they fill out the pre-marital questionnaire which asks for their place of residence, such a deception is a grave matter and may therefore affect the nature of the wedding celebration.
- 4. In accordance with the norms established by the bishops of the state of Wisconsin, all preparations should be completed at least six (6) weeks prior to the wedding day.
- 5. The current schedule of fees involved with your preparation for marriage and wedding are found on a separate sheet included in this booklet.

In the Catholic Church a priest must have canonical jurisdiction to witness the marriage of a couple outside the boundaries of his parish. If Catholics seeking the sacrament of marriage are not officially registered in a Catholic parish they must do so to establish what is called domicile. This must be established where the Catholic lives and resides.

If a couple wants to have the wedding celebration in a Catholic church other than where they are registered, the following procedures must be followed by the couple and the priest or deacon preparing them:

- 1. The Catholic parties must present proof to the pastor where the wedding will be celebrated that they are a registered member of a Catholic parish where they reside.
- 2. Marriage preparation and all canonical documentation is to take place in the parish where the Catholic party is registered and resides, except for the planning of the ceremony, which is handled by the priest or deacon where the wedding will take place.
- 3. All canonical documents for the marriage must be forwarded from the parish where preparation is taking place to that parish's chancery office for the nihil obstat. The chancery office will then forward the documents to the proper diocese where the wedding will take place or the parish of celebration itself.
- 4. Note: Documents from the place of preparation should never be sent directly to the place of celebration. The proper diocesan chancery office must verify that there is nothing prohibiting the marriage and give jurisdiction to the priest or deacon celebrating the marriage.
- 5. The marriage file of the couple preparing outside the parish of celebration should arrive at the parish of celebration in a timely fashion, preferably one month prior to the day of the wedding. It is the sole responsibility of the couple to obtain the civil marriage license prior to the wedding, and present it to the officiant of the wedding at the rehearsal.

### IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW!

Even though a couple has a date set with a parish for their wedding, until the documents arrive from the parish of preparation through the proper channels, the priest or deacon may not celebrate the wedding. Failure of the couple or the parish of preparation to follow these procedures could result in an embarrassing and tragic cancellation of the wedding in the Catholic parish of celebration.

It is advised that couples check with the priest or deacon doing the marriage preparation to make sure all is in order before they print their invitation and mail them to their guests. It is not the responsibility of the parish of celebration to check on these things. The parish of celebration only helps in the planning of the wedding ceremony.



## The Order of Service Within Mass

INTRODUCTORY RITE

## Prelude Instrumental Order of Procession Entrance Song Greeting Opening Prayer LITURGY OF THE WORD First Reading Responsorial Psalm \_\_\_\_\_ Recited Sung Second Reading \_\_\_\_\_ Gospel Acclamation \_\_\_\_\_ Gospel \_\_\_\_\_ Homily Unity Candle \_\_\_\_\_ Rite of Marriage General Intercessions LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST Preparation of Altar and Gifts Offertory Song \_\_\_\_\_ Prayer Over the Gifts Preface Recited Sung Sanctus **Eucharistic Prayer** Memorial Acclamation Recited Sung Recited Continued next page Doxology/Acclamation Sung





The Wedding of	_ and
Date:	_ Time:
Rehearsal Date:	_ Time:
Presiding Minister:	
Witnesses:	
	·
Readers:	
Eucharistic Ministers:	
Ushers:	
Servers:	
Accompanist:	
Singer(s):	
Other Musicians:	
Gift Bearers:	





The Order of Service Within Mass, continued

**NOTES:** 

COMMUNION	N RITE
Lord's Prayer	
Nuptial Blessing	
Agnus Dei	☐ Recited ☐ Sung
Communion Song	
	□ Song
	☐ Instrumental
Post Communion	☐ Song of Praise
Prayer After Comm	union
CONCLUDIN	G RITE
Final Blessing	
Dismissal	
Closing Song	Recessional Song



## The Order of Service Outside of Mass

INTRODUCTORY RITE	
☐ Prelude ☐ Instrumental	Order of Procession
Entrance Song	_
Greeting	
Opening Prayer	
LITURGY OF THE WORD	
First Reading	-
Responsorial Psalm	Recited Sung
Second Reading	-
Gospel Acclamation	-
Gospel	-
Homily	
Rite of Marriage	Unity Candle
General Intercessions	
Nuptial Blessing	
CONCLUDING RITE	
Final Blessing	
Dismissal	
Closing Song Recessional Song	

**NOTES:** 





### Dear Engaged Couple,

Over the years cohabitation (living together prior to marriage) continues to be a choice for many young couples as a means of "testing out" the relationship before a decision is made on entering into marriage. Another scenario is that after the engagement is announced, couples find no real reason to remain apart since, "in a sense, we are already married." This remains a pastoral problem for the Church, which, while trying to be open and sensitive to the situation of each young engaged couple must uphold the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the teachings of His Church.

### **RELIGIOUS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 1. First, let us look carefully at the religious elements of this question. Let us presume that cohabitation involves premarital sexual activity on the part of the couple. The biblical word for this is *fornication*.
  - St. Paul most clearly expresses the teaching of Jesus Christ concerning sexual conduct in his first letter to the Corinthians. He says: "Can you not realize that the unholy will not fall heir to the Kingdom of God? Do not deceive yourselves: no fornicators, idolaters, or adulterers, no sodomites, thieves, misers, or drunkards, no slanderers or robbers will inherit God's Kingdom" (1 Cor. 6:9-10)
- 2. St. Paul wishes to help you and me understand that our fidelity to God involves obedience to His law, which includes the proper use of His gift of sexuality. God created us as sexual beings, but not for an indiscriminate use of our sexual powers.
  - St. Paul continues: "Shun lewd conduct. Every other sin a man commits is outside his body, but the fornicator sins against his own body. You must know that **your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit**, who is within the Spirit you have received from God. You are not your own. You have been purchased, and at a price. So glorify God in your body" (1 Cor. 6:18-20).
- 3. It is important to see that there is no place in the Bible where fornication, or any other misuse of our sexual powers is either esteemed or permitted. Very simply then, the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church remains constant to the demands of Christ. Concern for engaged couple's sexual conduct then is of deepest concern for their souls and their salvation. Cohabitation, while itself not a sin, is certainly a clear occasion for sin. Even if a couple should remain chaste while cohabiting, it is almost impossible to avoid public scandal.

### SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It has been said to me by many couples that living together prior to marriage is a good way to tell if you are suited for one another and can make the marriage last. While this sounds reasonable at first, there is much evidence to the contrary. Human relationships cannot be given a "test-drive" like one would a car. Give your attention to the following considerations:

1. In the majority of circumstances, the reasons for cohabiting are different for men and women. Usually, the man agrees to cohabit for more convenient access to sexual encounters. The woman generally agrees as a step toward leading the relationship to marriage. Notice that there are two very different assumptions (most often never spoken of) which lead to two different expectations for the arrangement.



- 2. It is often the case that because the woman has allowed these encounters and is attempting to move the relationship towards marriage, the man, because he has enjoyed her sexual favors, may feel obligated to enter into marriage as a "payoff" for the favors he has received. If a child is conceived in the process, there appears to be even more of a reason for seeking marriage.
  - This is the poorest foundation for a life-long marriage. It is no wonder that couples who have cohabited, and have been sexually involved before marriage, contribute to the overwhelming majority of divorces. Conversely, couples who have remained chaste have a much lower rate of divorce, and report a much higher rate of satisfaction in their marriages.
- 3. It seems accurate to assume that a chaste relationship is the best preparation for marriage. A chaste relationship tests the most important aspect of any relationship fidelity. Ask yourself how couples who are cohabiting and sexually active can really trust that once married, they can remain faithful to each other when, before their marriage, they were unable to uphold the moral standards of Christ's Church.
  - It is an interesting question that you should ask yourselves if this is the circumstance you are in presently. Couples who have the spiritual strength of chaste love before marriage most often are more capable of being faithful to each other during their life together.
- 4. There are other difficulties relating to cohabitation which are verified by the behavioral sciences. To maintain their relationship, cohabiting couples often hide important aspects of their lives from each other. Cohabiting couples may tend to speak and behave cautiously to avoid criticizing each other and may repress anger, lest the relationship disintegrate. Relationships with members of their families and with others may also be strained during the period of cohabitation.

### WORTHY RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

- Sacraments are a means of grace given by Jesus Christ to His people. The Sacrament of Matrimony effects
  an invisible bond that lasts until the death of one of the spouses and brings to the couple the assurance of
  God's help to persevere together and grow in love, fidelity, and holiness. These graces are especially
  important today because of the many pressures and harmful influences in our society, influences which
  make married life difficult and which attempt to degrade the importance of a strong family life.
- 2. If a person would receive the sacrament in a state of mortal sin (cohabitation with sexual favor), this would be a sacrilege. The bond of matrimony would still be established, but the grace would be withheld until the confession of all sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation would occur. Given the infrequent use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation by many today, it is also no wonder why grace is lacking in the relationships of so many engaged couples.
- 3. Any couple preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage should pray for God's help and direction. The couple should study the beauty, nobility, and duties of the vocation to marriage. They should practice virtue, especially chastity. Frequent reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist (for those who are Catholic) will also bring to the couple preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage the graces needed to prepare for and embark on this vocation.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

1. After careful consideration, it seems obvious that cohabitation prior to marriage is harmful to the spiritual and emotional life of a couple who sincerely desire a good and lasting marriage. Many strategies have been tried by bishops and priests to uphold the holiness and nobility of the Sacrament of Marriage.

Here is a reasonable solution and one which is to be upheld by those desiring marriage in this parish:

Couples who are cohabiting prior to marriage may not celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage within the context of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass since cohabitation is a public witness of unfaithfulness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the sacred Teachings of the Catholic Church. If a couple should faithfully separate during the period of preparation for marriage and receive the Sacrament of Penance, the Mass could be celebrated on the wedding day. Should the couple return to cohabiting anytime prior to the wedding, the ceremony will be celebrated without the benefit of the Mass. This decision can be determined up to the wedding day itself.

2. In some places, marriage in the Catholic Church is not allowed altogether until the cohabiting couples separate for an extended period of time. The above policy is fair and reasonable. Given what has been said in this letter, you are asked to refrain from the practice of cohabiting before marriage.

We entrust you to the hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the Holy Family of Nazareth, who teaches us the true dignity and holiness of marriage and family life.





The planning guide given to you will answer many of your questions concerning the ritual. Here are further policies and practices to which you are asked to adhere:

- 1. Location: In accord with canon law, no wedding is to take place outside of a church without the permission of the local bishop. In the diocese of La Crosse this permission is never given.
- 2. The Choice of Ritual: This is largely determined by circumstances relating to the faith of those being joined in marriage. For largely practical reasons, a wedding in the context of the Holy Mass is discouraged in cases where one of the spouses is a non-Catholic Christian.
- 3. Size of the wedding party: There is no set limit. It can be difficult at times to figure out who to ask and who to leave out. You are asked, however, not to exceed six couples in the party, excluding yourselves.
- 4. Miniature bride and groom, flower girls, ring bearers, etc.: Should you choose to include these, they will be considered as part of the total number in your wedding party. Please try to have them be at least of school age. Any children who are of pre-school age will have a limited role in the ceremony, nor will they be present with the wedding party at the time of the yows.
- 5. Readers: The couple is encouraged to invite a person (or persons) of their choice to proclaim the Sacred Scripture at their wedding celebration. This is an important ministry and should be undertaken by persons who are practicing the faith they are being asked to proclaim. They should also be comfortable with public speaking and be able to speak clearly and effectively.
- 6. Ushers: At least two persons should be selected to serve as ushers. Their task is to greet and seat guests and to "trouble-shoot" during the wedding ceremony. They are also responsible for making sure that the church and any other rooms used are straightened up after the liturgy.
- 7. Gift Bearers: Family members or friends may be invited to bring up the gifts of bread and wine for the Liturgy of the Eucharist if your wedding is to take place in that context. At that time gifts for the poor may also be brought forward as a sign of the willingness of the newly married couple to extend Christ's love to those in need.
- 8. Photography: One person will be designated as your official photographer. Ask this person to contact the parish prior to the day of the ceremony for instructions. If you have your wedding videotaped, the videographer will be limited to:
  - Being in the front of the church for the opening procession.
  - Taping from the choir loft for the remainder of the ceremony.

- 9. Decorations: Flowers may be brought in for the wedding ceremony as well as other decorations. You are asked to respect the seasonal decorations which are already in place. These are not to be tampered with. Note too that there is to be no tape or other adhesives used in attaching such decorations to any wood surfaces, including the pews. The cleric who is assisting in your preparation will be happy to assist you in determining the appropriate places for such flowers and other decorations.
- 10. Rice, bird-seed, confetti, etc.: Make your wedding party and family members aware that they are not to throw any sort of materials at you on the church property. This policy is enacted for two reasons:
  - The mess causes difficulty, especially when weekend masses follow the wedding.
  - Should someone slip and be injured as a result of the materials thrown, you can be held legally and financially responsible for their injuries.
- 11. Rehearsal: Make sure that your wedding party is aware of the time of the rehearsal, and that they are prompt. Because of possible appointments after the rehearsal, a delay in starting could result in an incomplete and hurried rehearsal.
- 12. Alcohol and Drugs: It is the policy of this parish not to deal with anyone who is intoxicated either at the rehearsal or on the day of the wedding. Let your wedding party know that should anyone arrive intoxicated at either of these, they will be dismissed from the wedding party.
- 13. **Dressing:** The women will be able to use the facilities provided on the church grounds to prepare themselves for the ceremony. Men usually get ready at home before coming to the church.
- 14. Reverence and Respect: The church is a sacred place, not a community hall. As such, it must be treated with due reverence and respect. As the couple responsible for your wedding party, I ask that you take charge of your party as they gather for the rehearsal and ensure their compliance. No food or beverages may be brought into the church.
  - If children are present for the rehearsal, please see to it that there are responsible adults ready to care for them or take them elsewhere if they cause a disruption. After the wedding, make sure that you have people to go through the church in order to pick up boxes, bags, and other garbage which may be left behind. The church should be left ready for Mass. If the church has to be cleaned up after the wedding you will be asked to pay an additional fee for the cleanup.
- 15. Fees and gifts: A separate sheet containing information about fees and gifts is included with this booklet.
- 16. Wedding Candle: If you choose to light a "unity candle" during the ceremony, it will be your responsibility to provide it. Bring the candle with you to rehearsal. It is not necessary to have two "taper" candles, although if you have them, we will use them.

17. Marriage license: You must go to the County Clerk in your respective county to obtain a marriage license. Please have them send the license to the priest or deacon performing the ceremony. This way, the license can be prepared in plenty of time. If you are given the license, please bring it with you on the night of the rehearsal.



- 1. Visiting Clergy: The clergy assigned to the parish where your wedding will take place is the official witness of your exchange of marriage vows.
  - If the bride or the groom has a close relative or friend who is an ordained priest or deacon, he is welcome to serve as the celebrant of the wedding or to assist.
  - In the case of a marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, the minister or rabbi of the non-Catholic party's church or synagogue is welcome to attend the wedding and to participate as fully as possible in the wedding liturgy. The couple should make all of the necessary arrangements with whomever they invite. The guest minister or rabbi is welcome to read selected passages from scripture during the Liturgy of the Word (exclusive of the Gospel). The clergy of this parish however are the proper ministers for witnessing the exchange of vows, as well as the homilist. This is in accordance with the norms governing mixed-marriages.
- 2. In order to respect the differences which continue to exist between the Catholic Church and other ecclesial communities, it is recommended that mixed-marriages take place outside of the context of the Holy Mass. This is not to degrade or "penalize" the Catholic party, but to respect and enable the full participation of the non-Catholic parties.
- 3. If time and scheduling permits, the cleric may be able to attend the wedding reception, but will do so only if he has received a written invitation. In this way, neither party expects or presumes attendance. This applies as well to anyone from the parish who is involved in your marriage preparations.

#### A FINAL NOTE:

Generally a priest will be available after the rehearsal for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This is a very important part of your preparation for your reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Before you receive any sacraments it is always beneficial to make a good confession prior to it. You and the Catholic members of your wedding party are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.



Before you fill our the wedding liturgy planning sheet, here are guidelines you are asked to follow in the selection of your music. Please share this with the musicians with whom you are working.

### **SELECTION OF MUSICIANS**

It is important that you select capable musicians who are well trained and have experience in church music. A wedding in a Catholic church is a formal liturgical rite and should be respected as such. If you have difficulty finding musicians familiar with Catholic church music, the parish staff will be happy to make some referrals.

#### SELECTION OF MUSIC

There is no "list" of appropriate music. Much will depend upon the musician's range of musical selections. You should apply the following principles when selecting music with your musicians:

- Any music selected should reflect the Christian ideal of love and marriage. Christian love is chaste, pure, faithful, and eternal. Words and ideas should not contradict this.
- There are two types of music: sacred music, which is written for church and wedding use specifically, and secular music, which has its source in popular songs and movies. Secular music should be kept to a minimum and used only as guests are seated for the wedding and/or at the dismissal of the guests.
- Sacred music should be used from the opening processional to the closing recessional. We reserve the right to review, and approve or reject songs based upon the above principles.
- When the Mass is part of the wedding rite, it is desirable to have a musician who is familiar with, and can support the singing of the parts of the Mass (Holy-Holy, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen, Lamb of God). This adds greatly to the dignity of the celebration of the Mass.

Keeping these basic principles in mind, meet with your musicians to plan the music for the wedding ceremony. Contact the celebrant of your wedding when you are finished so he may review these plans with you and give his final approval.

Notes