

# **CELEBRATING YOUR MARRIAGE**

**at**

**Saint Paul the Apostle Church**

**Westerville, Ohio**

Revision: June 9, 2017

## **INTRODUCTION**

Congratulations on your pending nuptials! The celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony is a special moment in the life of the Catholic Church. The whole Catholic community rejoices when a bride and groom commit themselves in love and faith to each other. Since your wedding is part of the faith life of our parish, the Church desires that you be active members of St. Paul Parish. Only registered and active members of St. Paul Parish, or their children, may request to celebrate their wedding here. Newly registered parishioners will need to wait six months before a wedding date is set. During that time, the couple should engage as active and participating members.

## **TO BEGIN THE PROCESS**

The couple should contact the St. Paul Parish Office at least six months prior to their intended wedding date (614.882.2109). A St. Paul priest or deacon will assist the couple in their preparation and officiate at the ceremony. With the pastor's permission, the couple may invite a priest or deacon who is a relative or friend to officiate. Any priest or deacon is welcome to concelebrate and/or preach.

-The preparation process includes:

- † Completion of the Focus Survey
- † Pre-Marriage counseling with the priest or deacon
- † Required attendance of a Catholic Engaged Encounter Weekend  
<http://www.engagedencounter.org/>
- † Obtaining Baptismal Certificates
- † Obtaining Dispensation for a Mixed Marriage (if applicable)
- † Obtaining Declaration of Nullity of a prior marriage (if applicable)

Weddings are scheduled on most Saturdays at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Weddings are not scheduled during Advent and Lent. Rehearsals are normally scheduled on Friday between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. The rehearsal time should be scheduled when the wedding date is scheduled.

Due to time constraints, couples married at 11:30 a.m. are expected to leave the church by 1:00 p.m. Couples married at 1:30 p.m. are expected to leave by 3:00 p.m.

## **PLANNING THE CEREMONY**

The Sacrament of Matrimony takes place in one of two contexts: within the Sacrifice of the Mass when the bride and groom are both Catholic, or outside the Mass when either the bride or the groom is not Catholic.

The readings, prayers, and vows are chosen by the couple from those listed in a marriage booklet that will be provided. Guidelines concerning music, flowers, and photography are found on the subsequent pages of this document.

Relatives and friends are invited to participate as readers and gift bearers. They may also serve as Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist and Servers if they currently serve in these ministries at their own parishes.

Outside wedding planners will not be permitted to direct any part of the ceremony. St. Paul Parish has a Wedding Liturgist who will ensure that the ceremony runs smoothly.

## **THE COUPLE'S PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE**

In the Sacrament of Matrimony, the bride and groom are the ministers conferring the Sacrament on themselves while the priest or deacon serves as the Church's official witness. As Ministers, the couple should prepare themselves for this Holy endeavor. Behavior that could undermine this preparation:

-Cohabiting Couples: Living together before marriage hurts the sacred nature of the marriage vocation and lessens the ability of others to see the life led by the couple after taking vows as any different from their life before taking vows.

-Non-Practicing Catholics: The request to be married in a Catholic Church implies that the Bride and/or Groom are practicing members of a Catholic faith community. All Catholics are reminded of their obligation to weekly attend Sunday Mass and to support their Church with their time, talent, and treasure.

-Pre-Marital Pregnancy: Specific issues are raised when a couple with a pregnancy requests marriage. This or any of the aforementioned situations should be brought to the attention of the priest or deacon in order that he may provide the appropriate counseling.

## **STIPENDS AND FEES**

All stipends are given to the Wedding Liturgist,  
Sharon Meyer (614.891.9233), at your rehearsal (gratuities accepted).

**-Non-refundable Church Fee:** \$375

This fee is paid when scheduling the wedding. Only registered and active members of St. Paul Parish, or their children, may request to celebrate their wedding here. Newly registered parishioners will need to wait six months before a wedding date is set. During that time, the couple should engage as active and participating members.

**-Celebrant's Stipend:** at least \$200

**-Server's Stipend:** \$20 for each server

**-Organist Stipend:** \$175

The Music Director or Assistant Organist of St. Paul Church serves as the organist for all weddings. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to invite someone else to serve as organist.

**-Cantor Stipend:** \$125

St. Paul Church has qualified and trained Cantors to serve as wedding vocalists. If an outside vocalist is requested, a \$75 rehearsal fee will be charged should that vocalist need to rehearse with the organist on a day prior to the wedding day.

## **GUIDELINES FOR MUSIC**

Regarding the ceremony for the Sacrament of Matrimony, the emphasis is not on the couple's romantic life, but a communal prayer service emphasizing the Sacred Union of man and woman to the Divine. For this reason, we do not include secular music during the wedding ceremony or its prelude. Before the couple requests a specific song, they should consider the context in which that song is heard. Is the song more easily associated with a scene from a movie or a musical rather than a Sacrament? Is the song more easily associated with an evening of dining and dancing rather than a Sacred Moment of Prayer? These favorite songs should be included at rehearsal dinners and receptions.

There are many beautiful songs appropriate for use during the Sacrament of Matrimony. To that end, we have created a webpage on our parish website:

<http://stpaulcatholicchurch.org/weddings-and-baptisms/wedding-music-selections/>

Found on this webpage:

- 1) Sound files of wedding songs as sung by St. Paul Cantors.
- 2) Sound files of processional and recessional music as performed on our Pipe Organ.
- 3) The **WEDDING MUSIC SELECTION FORM** that will assist the couple in making their music selections.
- 4) The contact information for our wedding organist and those cantors who are frequently requested for weddings.
- 5) A "**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**" download that answers questions most commonly asked.

Before making further inquiries about music, the couple should spend some time on this webpage and read the FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS download. If there are further questions, please contact our Music Director (614.794.7303).

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE FLORIST (BRIDE AND GROOM COPY)**

We welcome floral arrangements that add beauty. However, this already beautiful Sacred Space can be made to look ostentatious when "too much" is added. We encourage one strive for elegance brought about through simplicity.

-As of July 2010, the Columbus Catholic Diocese has banned the use of the Unity Candle, as this practice has never been part of the Rite of Marriage.

-Due to our very active parish, florists should presume they will have only 30 minutes prior to the ceremony to set-up.

-For safety reasons, candelabra, lamps, floral displays with candles, aisle runners, and the practice of strewing flower petals are not permitted. As a matter of esthetics, trees, sculpture, balloons, or large pillars are not permitted. (Pedestals to elevate floral arrangements are permitted).

-No decorations may be placed on the altar. No means of attaching anything to a pew, which could damage the pew or its finish, should be used.

-As the Church strives for authenticity, natural floral arrangements/plants are preferred to artificial.

-Except for flowers at the Altar and Ambo (pulpit), all pew decorations and other adornments must be removed before the wedding party leaves the church.



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## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHER (BRIDE AND GROOM COPY)**

We welcome photographers and videographers to document this wonderful occasion. However, please remember that this space is considered Most Sacred. All poses should bear this in mind.

- Upon arrival, the photographer should consult with the Wedding Liturgist to be advised about where pictures and video may be taken.
- The photographer will be given time prior to and after the ceremony to take posed pictures.
- Once the ceremony begins, the photographer should remain as unobtrusive as possible. During this time, the photographer may not go up the steps into the altar area.
- Equipment and wires should not pose any obstructions.
- Church furnishings should not be moved without first consulting the Wedding Liturgist.
- The church cannot be held liable for the damage or loss of any equipment.



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## **FINAL DETAILS**

-The Angel Room (located on the church's second floor) is used as the dressing room for the bride and her attendants. It will be open 90 minutes prior to the wedding. If another wedding is scheduled to follow, belongings must be removed before the ceremony begins. The church cannot be held responsible for the damage or loss of any belongings. Common courtesy dictates that this room be left as it was found.

-Our very active parish necessitates that we keep the wedding within a time frame that will allow others the use of our church. As such, receiving lines are not permitted.

-Please inform guests that throwing rice or birdseed is prohibited.

-Renting any of our facilities for the use of a reception is a possibility. Please contact our parish office (614.882.2109) for more information.

-Alcohol is not permitted on St. Paul Parish property before or during the rehearsal or wedding ceremony. Failure to comply with this rule may lead to the cancellation of the wedding.

-Illicit drugs are not permitted on St. Paul Parish property. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the authorities being contacted.