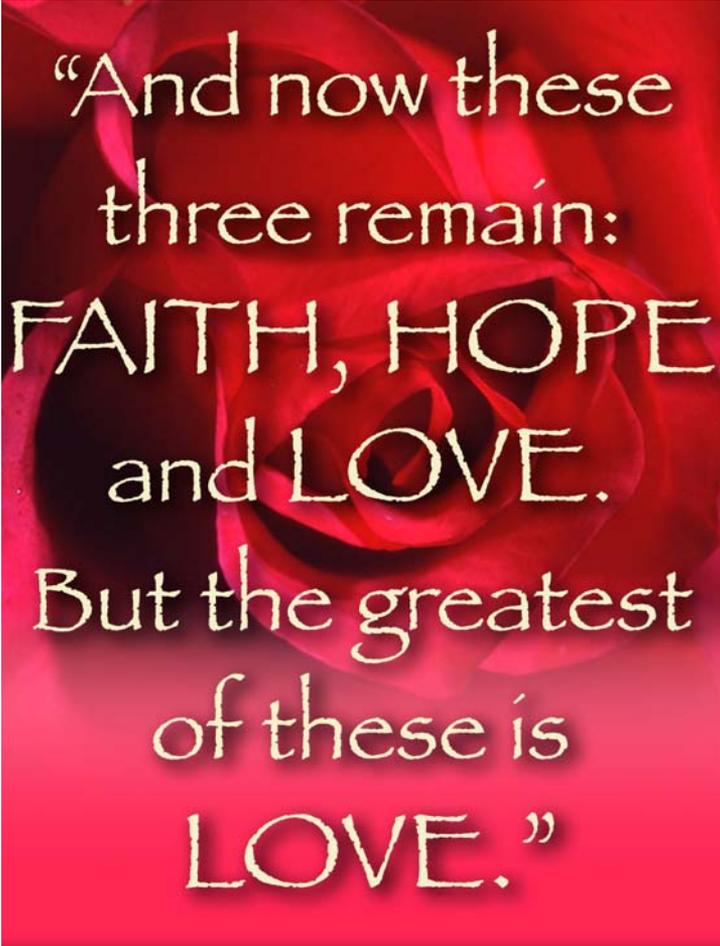


# MARRIAGE GUIDELINES



“And now these  
three remain:  
FAITH, HOPE  
and LOVE.  
But the greatest  
of these is  
LOVE.”

1 Corinþians 13:13, NIV

*St. Patrick of Heatherdowns*

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Parish Office: 419-381-1540

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Congratulations on your upcoming marriage! Your wedding is a special and joyous event as you make a covenant with each other and with God, witnessed by God's people, your relatives and friends. The moment of solemn vows, exchange of rings, the blessing and prayers are, above all, an encounter with Jesus, Our Lord, in the Holy Sacrament of Matrimony.

Marriage is also a great and beautiful adventure. It is an undertaking that sparkles with the promise of joyful years together. It holds the expectation that life will wear well. People will enter marriage with rosy prospects and high hopes. It is this atmosphere that brings out the best qualities of each person in every marriage.

Nevertheless, it is a disturbing fact that a large number of marriages today end in divorce within five years. Yet, those marriages that end in suffering and humiliation begin with the same expectations as those that prove to be joyful and fruitful.

Today, more than during the immediate past, we, the Church, especially married couples, parents, priests, deacons, and teachers have a grave responsibility to help our people to enter into a marriage that gives promise of being grace-filled, happy and successful.

We, therefore, deem it a privilege, a pleasure and a serious responsibility to assist you in preparing to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony.

The following pages answer many concerns of engaged couples. We will be happy to clarify, or explain, these and other questions that arise.



# PREPARATION AND PLANNING

## AN INVITATION

While you are preparing for marriage you have a special claim on God's blessings. Often a renewed sense of God's love and his closeness develops as you make your preparation as spiritual one. Pray, individually and together. We invite you to celebrate the Mass together on weekends. Other parish events and services can help you to be close to Christ, the Church and each other.

## ARRANGEMENTS

Although initial information may be obtained by telephone, no marriage date is assured or set until you, as a couple, have made arrangements with the parish priest or deacon whom you wish to perform the ceremony.

The diocesan guidelines require that a thorough time of preparation be given so that the two parties fully realize the commitment that they are making to one another. Therefore, arrangements for your marriage must be made at least six (6) months in advance, to give you and the presider ample time for your premarriage preparations and to assure that the church will be available.

It is traditional to enter this new state of life as close to the Lord as possible. The reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is highly recommended as part of your preparation for matrimony. Try to include this sacrament sometime before the wedding, with a priest of your choice.

It is expected that the engaged couple will meet at least three (3) times with the priest or deacon who will be witnessing their vows. Also, participation in either a diocesanwide *Engaged Encounter* (a weekend retreat usually held in Carey, Ohio), or the parish-based *Pre-Cana Day of Reflection* (presented by married couples and a staff member on a Saturday or Sunday) is expected. This total process of preparation for your marriage is seen as a time of opportunity for learning and growing in your love for one another and in your faith. To register for the *Pre-Cana Day of Reflection*, call Mrs. Sharon Christy at 419-381-1540 x125.

The MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROCESS is basically a three-fold blend of assessment, instruction, and planning. The priest or deacon will be concerned about discussing such things as:

- the freedom and readiness for marriage of both parties
- the level of maturity
- the knowledge of responsibility in marriage
- compatibility in personality and temperament
- the understanding of, and the ability to make, a permanent commitment
- the level of faith and the value of religion in your life as an individual and as a couple
- the possible areas of religious differences (especially in an interfaith marriage)
- the understanding of marriage as a sacrament

FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study) is an instrument used in Marriage Preparation. Through a series of statements that each partner answers, couples are able to see, and discuss, areas of agreement and disagreement.



# THE WEDDING CEREMONY

## PARISH CUSTOMS AND RULES

We hope your family and friends will take an active part during the celebration of your wedding. When both parties are Catholic, the ceremony is normally the Nuptial Mass. Catholics traditionally receive Eucharist at the wedding Mass. If it is an interfaith service, the sensitivities of the non-Catholic party are the deciding factor regarding whether or not to have a Mass. Normally the Eucharist is not celebrated at an interfaith wedding for these two reasons:

- the presence of many people not of our Faith will make the celebration difficult
- the spouse, not of the Catholic faith, cannot receive Eucharist

The marriage normally takes place in the parish of the bride. In the event of an interfaith marriage, permission may be received from the Bishop for the marriage to be celebrated in a non-Catholic church. In this event, you may wish to invite one of our parish priests or deacons to share in the ceremony.

If the interfaith marriage is celebrated at St. Patrick's, you may invite the non-Catholic clergy to participate with the priest or deacon from St. Patrick's.

In the Catholic Church, weddings are not permitted to be celebrated out-of-doors, or in a high school, college, hospital chapel, or any other non-religious setting.

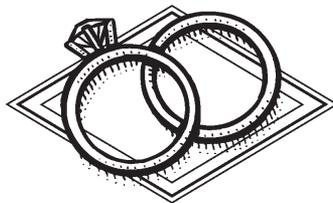
The priest or deacon and the Director of Liturgy will be happy to work with you in planning your wedding ceremony. The Sacrament of Marriage may be received either in the context of a NUPTIAL MASS or a NON-EUCHARISTIC LITURGY (especially if one member of the couple is non-Catholic). You will have the opportunity to select your own passages of Sacred Scripture, ring blessings, prayers, etc. The booklet *Together for Life*, a planning resource, will be made available to you.

## **DOCUMENTS REQUIRED**

- 1) Baptismal Certificates - an authentic copy of the baptism of Christians is required. In the case of Roman Catholics, this must be a recently issued copy (not more than 6 months old). A copy can easily be obtained from the Church of Baptism by a phone call or letter.
- 2) A Marriage License from the State. The priest or deacon must have this before the rehearsal.
- 3) In the case of a previous marriage by either party, other documents will be necessary. The priest or deacon will explain this to you at your initial conference with him.

## **CIVIL REQUIREMENTS FOR MARRIAGE IN THE STATE OF OHIO**

Application for a marriage license must be made in the county where either the man or the woman resides and is valid in any county in Ohio for 60 days after it is issued. The minimum age for boys is 18 years and for girls is 16 years. If the girl is under 18 years, she must have both parents and/or legal guardians present and have proof of pre-marriage counseling before she can obtain a State of Ohio Marriage License. There is no waiting period, except in cases where the age or residence is in question. In this case there is a 5 - 30 day wait while the information is being verified. Blood tests are no longer required. However, this may change.



## **TIME OF WEDDINGS**

Weddings are ordinarily celebrated on Friday afternoon and evening and during the day on Saturday. However, they may be celebrated on any day or night. If the Saturday date is chosen, they must take place either at 10:00 a.m., NOON, or 2:00 p.m. No weddings are permitted in the Diocese of Toledo after 2:00 p.m. on Saturday.

Rehearsals usually take place the previous day or evening. Like the wedding ceremony itself, the rehearsal begins promptly on time and cooperation of all parties involved is expected.

## **THE USE OF THE CHURCH**

We are happy to have you use our church for your wedding. However, since we have a large number of weddings and they seem to take place during concentrated times, the courtesy, cooperation, and thoughtfulness of all is both desired and expected.

Ordinarily the time allotted for the use of the church is two hours: namely ½ hour before the scheduled time of your wedding and 1 ½ hours from the time your wedding is scheduled. See below:

<u>WEDDING</u>	<u>CHURCH AVAILABLE</u>	<u>DEPARTURE</u>
10:00 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	11:30 a.m.
12 noon	11:30 a.m.	1:30 p.m.
2:00 p.m.	1:30 p.m.	3:30 p.m.

The half-hour before is used for decorating, seating of guests and other necessary preparations.

Your wedding should begin on time. Normally, a wedding celebrated with a Nuptial Mass will last approximately minutes. Weddings celebrated without a Nuptial Mass usually last about 30 minutes.

The remaining time may be used as you wish - receive guests, photographs, etc. However, please be conscious that you are asked to leave after the 1 ½ hour time, either because of the next wedding party wishing to begin preparing for their wedding or other Church services which are scheduled, such as Confessions or Mass on Saturday afternoons.

**Therefore, choose wisely!**

Experience has shown that if you have your reception line at church, there is rarely enough time for photographs.

Sometimes photographers have proved very difficult and you will be asked to leave when your time is up. To avoid any difficulties, or unpleasantness, please be considerate of these time lines. Church furnishings and decorations may never be moved.

The normal fee for the use of the Church is \$200.00. Servers will be supplied by the parish when requested; usually two in number. It is customary to offer them a small token of thanks (\$10 each). There is no fee for the services of the priest or deacon, nor do they expect one or any gifts. However, you may choose to offer them a token.

While in many instances a friendship between the engaged persons and/or their parents and the priest or deacon may exist, this is not always the case. Consequently, the minister does not expect to be invited to the rehearsal dinner or reception if these are held.

If you wish for them to be present, please express this to him during the time of preparation. Last minute invitations or presumption that he will be present for either of these events will usually cause disappointment or misunderstanding.

## LITURGICAL MUSIC

All of the music, whether it comes before, during or after the wedding must serve to direct the people's attention to the sacredness of the Liturgy and the presence of Christ in the Holy Sacrament of Marriage. All music must be sacred and or liturgical music. No secular (such as pop songs) or pre-recorded music is allowed in the church.

Our own parish Director of Liturgy and Music will provide the music. The fee is \$150.00. Only in unusual circumstances would it be permitted to have an outside instrumentalist and/or vocalist perform at your wedding, in this case the \$150 is still paid to our parish Director. If you choose to have an additional vocalist, it is your responsibility for their fee.

Your music choices will be coordinated with Mr. Ron Prebe, Director of Liturgy and Music ([ron.prebe@toledostpats.org](mailto:ron.prebe@toledostpats.org)) (419-381-7251). Arrangements must be made with him in advance and on an individual basis. Guidelines for music selections must be observed and will be presented at the time of the wedding music consultation.

Please note: *The Parish Guidelines for Music is that of the Catholic Diocese of Toledo as well as the Roman Catholic Church at large. All guidelines for music are printed in official documents from the Vatican and are followed here at St. Patrick of Heatherdowns.*



# DECORATIONS

Flower arrangements are allowed in the church.

The practice of dropping rose/flower petals is not allowed.

Aisle runners are discouraged. If you are considering a runner, the following should be taken into account:

- The couple will be asked to sign a release relieving the parish from all liability.
- We have a carpeted aisle.
- Renting a runner costs money.
- They are usually made of paper or plasticized paper, which punctures easily - especially under the pressure of spiked heels and have proven to be dangerous.
- They very often tangle and prove hazardous to members of the wedding party and guests, especially to older ones who might be going to Communion.

The liturgical procession of the bridesmaids and bride will be down the main aisle from the narthex.

If the aisle runner or ribbons to mark the pews are used, it is the responsibility of someone in the wedding party to dispose of them properly immediately after the wedding.

No church furnishings or liturgical decorations may be moved.

If you use a printed program/worship aid, please appoint someone for clean-up after the Wedding.

(See *Florist Policy* for more details)

The throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, rose petals, etc., is not allowed, both inside and outside the church.

## **COPYRIGHT**

It is illegal to print the words of the ceremony or of the hymns to be used unless you have contacted the publishers and obtained copyright permission. The parish does own certain copyrights, please see the Director of Liturgy for more information.

If any questions arise, please feel free to call the Parish Liturgy Office at 419-381-7251.

# CHECK-LIST

- \_\_\_\_\_ All appropriate information is filled out accurately with your priest or deacon. (Scripture readings, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ You have contacted the parish Director of Liturgy and Music to assist in the music for your wedding. It is best to contact the Director immediately after the church is reserved. 419-381-7251
- \_\_\_\_\_ You have met with the parish Director of Liturgy and Music to finalize all music planning. This time can be set-up when you call to reserve the church.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The information sheets regarding policy for pictures and flowers have been given to your florist and photographer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ All fees (\$200 for the church, \$150 for the Director of Liturgy and Music) must be given to the church before your wedding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Wedding License turned into the Parish Office one week prior to the date of your wedding.

