

## **Guidelines for Weddings**

### **MARRIAGE PREPARATION:**

Along with what might be considered as normal preparations for a wedding - the selection of invitations, your list of guests, selection of bridal party, etc. - there are certain elements of wedding preparation that emphasize the religious, covenantal, and sacramental nature of Marriage as it is expressed in the Catholic church. To that end, there are certain aspects of wedding day and marriage preparations that must hold to a certain standard. This information is being given to you early on in your preparation so that you may have answers to some practical questions, you will know what is expected of you, and so that your wedding ceremony will be a joyful, dignified celebration of your love.

According to Archdiocesan policy, in addition to meeting several times with the parish priest who will be presiding at your wedding, you must complete a formal Marriage Preparation program. There are several basic options: Engaged Encounter (a weekend experience with a large number of other couples which is held at Savior Pastoral Center in Kansas City), or small group preparation called Preparing to Live in Love, with a lead couple from our local area (which is extended over a number of weeks and held more locally, or occasionally may be done on a weekend), and the School of Love Program. At your first session of marriage preparation this will be further explained and information will be provided for you to make arrangements for this **requirement**. This should be done fairly early in your wedding planning calendar!

### **FOCCUS:**

You will be asked to complete a FOCCUS survey which highlights a number of topics and concerns related to marriage. The bride and groom take the FOCCUS survey independently, it is "scored", and then the priest discusses the results with the couple. This is generally done on the second and third meetings with the priest.

### **BAPTISMAL RECORDS:**

Unless the bride and/or groom were Baptized at St. Boniface or St. Therese, you will need to call the parish or church of your Baptism, and have a copy of your Baptismal Certificate sent to the priest who is doing the wedding. This is not to be a copy of your own certificate, but one filled out by the church or parish of Baptism within six months of the wedding date. This is a routine matter for parishes, and only requires a phone call to the church. Please ask to have it mailed to the address on this form.

### **NUPTIAL MASS OR WEDDING CEREMONY:**

If both the bride and groom are Catholic, the norm is to have the wedding within the celebration of a Nuptial Mass. If only one member of the couple is Catholic, the norm is to

have a Marriage Rite without Mass. This must be determined early on in the planning process with the priest.

**MARRIAGE LICENSE:**

Obtaining a Marriage License is a **state requirement**. It is your obligation to meet all state requirements for marriage (call your County offices for advice on this). The priest who witnesses your marriage must sign and return your license to the state immediately following the wedding. To make the wedding day a little less cumbersome, you are asked to bring your License and the return envelope **with you to your rehearsal**. The wedding **cannot** take place without the license.

**PARISH HALL RENTAL:**

If you plan on using St. Boniface Parish Hall for your reception, bring that to the attention of Father Jerry at your first meeting with him. He will show you the Hall, if necessary, and handle scheduling, contracts, expectations, etc. There is an Archdiocesan **requirement** that an insurance rider must be obtained for use of the Hall. This will be explained by Father Jerry - but remember that the check and paperwork for the insurance requirement must be submitted to them no later than **one full month before the wedding date**.

**USE OF PRIORY:**

There had been a time-honored tradition of allowing the bridal party to use some of the rooms in the Priory for wedding day preparations. With the Priory renovations and occupancy changes, **the use of the Priory is no longer permitted**.

**RICE - BIRDSEED - CONFETTI - BALLOONS:**

Throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, or release of balloons is not allowed inside or outside of the church.

**FLOWERS - CANDLES - PEW DECORATIONS:**

You may bring in flowers to decorate the church if they are done tastefully. If your florist has questions about what is allowed, he or she may contact the priest ahead of time. There is NO expectation that the flowers are to remain in the church. If you want to use them at the reception, please arrange to have them removed by someone in your family immediately following the ceremony. If fresh flowers are to be used, a clear, plastic liner must be placed under any vases or plant containers, whether the flowers are on an altar, a stand, or on the carpeting. The **ONLY** candleabra that are allowed are the two that belong to the church. DO NOT rent other candleabra or candles that are to be attached to the pews. THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED. If you are planning on having candlelighters as part of the ceremony, they must attend the rehearsal. If you are planning on using a Unity Candle during the service, you must provide the stand and the candles - and take them with you following the ceremony. Any decorations attached to the pews must be done so **ONLY** with ribbon or string - **absolutely no tape, wire, or tacks of any kind may be used!** If you have a flower girl who will be dropping petals, the petals must be fabric, not fresh flower petals. These must be cleaned up immediately following the ceremony.

**MUSIC:**

The parish has two organists. If you would like one of them to play at your wedding, you must contact them directly. They are: Mary Milner (785.835.6154) and Iona Sobba (785.448.3551). They will discuss their fees with you directly. You may bring in other instrumentalists, but please inform Father about this beforehand, and work this out well before the wedding or rehearsal. **Taped music is very much discouraged, and will only be allowed after consultation with Father! All music in the church must be of a classical or religious nature** (not pop, rock, rap, country/western, show tunes, etc. - save that for your

reception!!!). **All music must be reviewed and approved by Father prior to the wedding or before there is any printing of programs for the wedding!**

**PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS:**

If your photographer or videographer has not worked at St. Boniface with the current parish priest, please have him/her contact the parish before the ceremony for guidelines. This can be done at the rehearsal, but should NOT wait until the day of the wedding!

**CLEAN-UP:**

We do not have a maintenance staff. Any and **all decorations**, flower boxes, programs, petals, etc. **must be removed immediately following the ceremony**. The church MUST be returned to the way it was before the wedding and ready for Mass the following day.

**OFFERING:**

All couples who are parishioners (**Parishioners = the bride and/or groom, or their parents are registered, active, participating members of the church community!**) and wish to be married here are asked to make a \$100 donation to the parish.

If you or your immediate family (meaning the bride's or groom's parents!) are not parishioners, as defined above, this donation is to be no less than \$200.

This offering, as well as the Marriage License, **must be given** to the priest **no later** than at the rehearsal.

This donation does **not** go to the priest. ***If you wish to offer something to the priest, that would be separate from this fee.***

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The intent of these guidelines is to assist you in your planning. It is a good idea to begin a wedding planning journal right away. If you have questions that need to be asked and answered, write them in your journal until your next meeting with the priest. Generally speaking, you will have a total of 4 meetings with the priest, the final meeting taking place usually the week before the wedding date.

***Enjoy planning your special day and may God bless you in your love for one another! Be assured of our thoughts and prayer for you as you move closer to this momentous occasion and life commitment!***

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