

Planning your **WEDDING**

**MOST
PURE
HEART
OF MARY**
CATHOLIC CHURCH



As you are preparing for marriage consider praying this as a couple often, so Christ is with you every step of the way.

AN ENGAGED COUPLE'S PRAYER

We thank you, O God, for the love You have implanted in our hearts. May it always inspire us to be kind in our words, considerate of each other's feelings, and concerned for each other's needs and desires. Help us to be understanding and forgiving of human weaknesses and failings. Increase our faith and trust in You and may Your wisdom guide our life and love, especially during this preparation time. Reveal to us Your will for our vocations, and grant us the gift of discernment so that, in all things, our love may be fruitful for Your glory.

IGNITION PRAYER TIME FOR COUPLES

(10-20 minutes)

1. Silently pray for an openness to God's presence and guidance
2. Thanksgiving - For what are you most grateful today?
 1. Let the person with it on the tip of their tongue go first
 2. Remember that we are sharing with Christ to each other
 3. Women love the details
 4. You can ask questions and discuss, but not for too long
3. Prayerfully reflect on the day- Each choose one approach and share:
 1. What was most life-giving AND most life-draining, or
 2. What made you feel the most loved AND least loved, or
 3. When did you sin/reject God AND when did you listen to or follow God's will, or
 4. High and low of the day
4. Contrition- To God and each other:
 1. Apologize to one another for any hurt that was caused that day
 2. Apologize to God for missing Him or rejecting His will for you during the day and ask for a greater gift of discernment and the strength to follow His will
5. Look forward in Hope:
 1. Come up with a resolution to any conflict or disappointments
 2. Commit to apologize to anyone else you might have treated harshly
 3. Commit to some action or spiritual activity together within the next day
 4. Pray a prayer of petition
 5. Share what you are excited or worried about the next day
 6. Ask God to be present in all that you think, feel and do moving forward
6. Conclude with the Lord's Prayer (Our Father)

4 THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU SAY "I DO"

1

MEET WITH YOUR PRIEST OR DEACON

Time frame: 4-6 months before the wedding (6+ months is preferred).

As soon as she says, "yes!" contact your parish to set up a meeting with your priest or deacon. This meeting will:

- Get you and your priest/deacon acquainted and complete a FOCCUS inventory
- Get started on paperwork and give you an introduction to the process at your parish
- Schedule future meetings with priest/deacon and any other necessary parish staff
- Get a tentative wedding date reserved - please do not put down deposits on venues or services until you have had this meeting

2

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE

Time frame: 4-6 months before the wedding

There are several approved marriage preparation courses available to couples in this Archdiocese. Your priest or deacon will help you get connected to the right course for your area and your situation.

All the courses do the following things:

- Provide valuable skills for a successful marriage
- Allow time for you to reflect as a couple on your relationship
- Outline the Church's vision for sacramental marriage and why that is important

3

NFP INTRODUCTION

Time frame: 4-6 months before the wedding

NFP is a research-based method of spacing births that is not only effective but healthy for the woman and the couple's relationship. Since there is so much misunderstanding about NFP, we feel it is important for each couple to become familiar with it before marriage. You can fulfill this requirement by:

- Attending "Prescription for a Long and Healthy Life" with Dr. Laurie Heap
- Attending a full course of any NFP method (register at www.archkck.org/nfp)

4

FINAL PARISH MEETINGS

Time frame: 1-3 months before the wedding

This meeting(s) (depending on your parish and/or priest) is (are) the final step of your marriage preparation! The purpose is to:

- Discuss your marriage preparation/NFP introduction and have any questions answered
- Discuss the inventory you took (if applicable)
- Plan your wedding liturgy
- Complete anything else specifically required by your parish

Planning your Wedding

INTRODUCTION

First, let us congratulate you as you prepare to join the millions of others who accept the vocation as a married couple and receive the sacrament of marriage.

As you begin the "marriage preparation" process you might automatically think of "wedding planning" and all the details of the ceremony. However, there are two things that you need to prepare for at this time. Yes, you are preparing for your wedding day, but you are also preparing for marriage itself, the lifetime commitment you are about to make. Only when you understand what marriage is in the Church will you be able to understand what the wedding liturgy is all about. For that reason, we will first look at preparing for marriage and then consider preparing for a wedding.



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Preparing for Marriage



THE PEOPLE INVOLVED

During your marriage preparation, you will be working closely with one of the two priests here at Most Pure Heart of Mary. You will meet several times with the priest preparing you for marriage. However, you are always free to schedule an appointment, either together or individually, to speak with a priest about your marriage preparation.

In addition to the priest directly helping you prepare for marriage there are a few other people that will be involved in various aspects of your marriage preparation. We've got a great team here at Most Pure Heart of Mary to assist you in preparing for the special day of your wedding!

PERSONAL WEDDING CONSULTANTS

From time to time a couple will hire their own wedding consultant to assist in the planning of their wedding day. The Wedding Coordinators here at Most Pure Heart of Mary are normally more than adequate to assist you in your liturgical needs. However, if you do choose to hire an additional consultant on your own, please note that the Priest and Wedding Coordinators here will conduct the rehearsal and are in charge of everything that happens at the church.

Please remember that you, the bride and groom, are the ones getting married. It is only fitting that all correspondence, in-person visits, phone calls, emails, etc. come from you, not family, friends, or wedding consultants.

PARISH COORDINATOR

Assists you in reserving the church for the date of your wedding.

Marie Apel: (785) 272-5590 x233
mapel@mphm.com

Once your wedding is on the calendar the Wedding Coordinator and Music Coordinator will contact you further.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

Assists you and the priest in planning the liturgical details of your wedding and will be present at the rehearsal and on the wedding day to make sure that everything runs smoothly.

Use of a Most Pure Heart of Mary Wedding Coordinator is required. Our wedding coordinator is familiar with all the policies regarding weddings at Most Pure Heart of Mary as well as with the requirements of the Catholic Church regarding the marriage ceremony.

Elisabeth Sullivan:
esullivan@mphm.com

WEDDING MUSIC COORDINATOR

Assists couples in making arrangements for their wedding music. All music chosen for the wedding liturgy must meet the criteria set forth later in this book and receive the approval of the Wedding Music Coordinator.

Pat Brown: (785) 273-5048
RHS_Lady@cox.net

MARRIAGE IS A SACRAMENT

Marriage is one of the seven sacraments given to the Church by Jesus Christ. A sacrament is a sacred ritual instituted by Christ in which the grace of God is given to us in a special way. In the sacrament of marriage, the bride and the groom freely enter into a lifetime commitment of fidelity to each other and to the raising of children. When this commitment is made publicly before a priest and two witnesses, God creates a permanent bond between the spouses such that they are no longer two but one. Through the sacramental grace of marriage God strengthens the spouses to aid them in living out this commitment.

Given that marriage is a sacrament, one of the most important things you can do to prepare for marriage is to be living a sacramental life in the Church. If you are Catholic then you should have already received the following sacraments:

Are you missing any of these? If so, then now is the time to talk with the priest about completing your initiation in the Church.

- Baptism
- First Communion
- Penance/Confession
- Confirmation

Living a sacramental life in the Church also means receiving the sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance on a regular basis. Catholics are bound under a serious obligation to attend Mass every Sunday (or Saturday evening) and on Holy Days of Obligation. If you want to set your marriage on a firm foundation for you and your children, then it is critical that you are first faithful to the commitments you have to God as a Catholic.



ABOUT MIXED MARRIAGES

The Church recognizes the marriage between a Catholic and another baptized Christian as being a celebration of the sacrament of marriage. For a Catholic to marry a Christian baptized in another denomination, permission is needed from the Archbishop. The priest will request this permission for you.

Since a sacrament can only take place between two Christians, the marriage of a Catholic and a non-baptized person is not the sacrament of marriage but rather is called a *natural marriage*. Catholics are not allowed to marry non-Christians without an exception (called a dispensation) being granted by the Archbishop. The priest will request the necessary dispensation for you.

In either case, there are certain conditions that must be met before the Church will allow a Catholic to marry a non-Catholic:



- *The Catholic party must swear under oath that he or she realizes the serious obligations he or she has regarding the faith and that he or she intends to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church. He or she promises to do all in his or her power to have his or her children baptized and raised as Catholics.*
- *The non-Catholic party must be made aware of the oath sworn by the Catholic party.*

The primary responsibility that each of you will have as spouses is to help ensure that both you and your children are one day in heaven together. At a minimum, before any permission or dispensation is sought for a mixed marriage, the priest must be certain that this marriage does not present a temptation for the Catholic to abandon the practice of the faith. While this is the minimum, the truth is that a mixed marriage presents great challenges to both parties. Children notice very quickly if one spouse goes to Mass and the other doesn't. Studies have shown that children of mixed marriages tend to practice neither of their parents' faiths. Be sure to discuss these issues and any concerns you have with the priest.



For those not Catholic who would like to learn more about the Catholic faith of your future spouse, you may consider attending the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.). The R.C.I.A. is attended by those non-Catholics wanting to learn more about the Catholic faith, as well as those who are interested in becoming Catholic.



COHABITATION

Cohabitation means living together prior to marriage. Studies by sociologists have shown this is harmful to marriage. In fact, couples that live together prior to marriage have a 50% higher rate of divorce.

Moving in with your future spouse means surrendering your independence and freedom and jeopardizing your ability to have a true courtship. For a marriage to be valid, it must be entered into freely by both parties. Living together before marriage can seriously jeopardize your ability to validly enter marriage.

What happens if one party begins to have reservations or doubts prior to marriage? If you have moved in together, it's not so easy to step back and look at things objectively. In addition, cohabiting can increase pressure on a couple to go through with marriage when one or both parties may not be ready. It's easy to think, "We are already living as a married couple, why not make

it official?" Likewise, since you are living together, outside pressures can increase as other people presume that you will get married.

Sometimes couples will say, "We are living together, but we are not having sex." Why is this not in keeping with God's commandments? First, Jesus calls us to be lights to the world. We need good Christian couples today to witness to the Gospel. Discipleship is counter-cultural; it is a cause for scandal when people know you are Christian and yet are living together with your future spouse. The common presumption will be that you are sexually active. This diminishes your ability to witness to your faith in Christ.

In addition, we are called to avoid the near occasions of sin. Living a chaste life before marriage is not easy. It is even harder to avoid temptation against chastity if you are living under the same roof with your fiancé.

Finally, you want your wedding day to be a celebration of the beginning of your life together. If you are already living as though you were married then you've robbed yourself some of the joy that is supposed to make your wedding day special.

If you are living together at the time you begin marriage preparation the priest will likely ask you to move apart until your wedding day. While this may be difficult, it will be a great blessing to your future marriage and will make your wedding day much more meaningful. If this is something you are asked to consider, please be as open and creative as you can in coming up with solutions!

A person who engages in sexual relations with someone to whom they are not yet married commits an objectively serious (mortal) sin and, if a Catholic, is not able to receive the Eucharist again until they resolve to avoid this sin and have the sin forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance. For this reason, we do not celebrate the Rite of Marriage Within Mass for a couple that is cohabiting, even if both parties are Catholic, since neither spouse would be able to receive the Eucharist. This policy remains even in the case of a couple that is not having sexual relations due to the nature of scandal mentioned above.



For couples that are cohabiting, the Rite of Marriage Outside Mass will be used. See the section on "The Three Forms of the Rite of Marriage" for more

INITIAL MEETING WITH A PRIEST

The priests at Most Pure Heart of Mary are excited to help you prepare for your upcoming marriage. In your initial meeting the priest will begin getting to know you and maybe a little bit about “the story” of how you have discerned that God is calling you to marriage. In addition, this first meeting also involves getting started on the paperwork required for marriage. You can help this process along if you bring with you the documents found later in the section titled “Documents Needed” (page 13).

During or after this initial meeting you will set the wedding date. If the priest does not do it at the meeting, please contact the Parish Coordinator.

MARITAL INVENTORY

As a part of your initial meeting with the priest you will take an inventory known as FOCCUS which stands for Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding, and Study. At first glance, the questionnaire may look like a test. However, you will quickly see that there are no right or wrong answers to this test. The point of FOCCUS is to help you as a couple discuss issues related to your future marriage such as communication skills, problem solving, finances, extended family issues, sexuality, religion, children, etc. Most couples really enjoy this process and say that it gives them a lot to talk about. The priest or his delegate will help you get started and will review the results at a future meeting or meetings. Please see Appendix I “Helpful Websites” for FOCCUS website.

REGIONAL MARRIAGE PREPARATION

In order to help couples prepare for marriage from both the spiritual and the practical side, the various Catholic parishes in the Archdiocese work together to provide marriage preparation options. For more information about these options you can visit the Archdiocesan website located in the appendix



MARRIAGE PREP OPTIONS

Preparing to Live in Love

A seven session program to work with a mentor couple. It combines three key components that make the program incredibly effective and uniquely helpful – program content, authentic witness, and experiential delivery. Once you have your initial meeting with your mentor couple you will schedule the following meetings to work with your schedules. Depending on situations, the sessions could either be just couple-to-couple mentoring or have around five or six other engaged couples participating at a time. The classes are interactive and very practical.

After your initial interview with the priest he will submit your names to the Topeka Regional Family Life Office. The regional coordinator will then contact you to let you know that your information has been received. Depending on how soon your wedding date is scheduled, they will coordinate with other engaged couples to arrange a time and place for classes to be held. Typically, these classes are held once a week for five to seven weeks.

Engaged Encounter

A weekend retreat away with other engaged couples with plenty of time alone together to plan for a sacramental marriage. It is designed to give couples planning marriage the opportunity to dialogue honestly and intensively about their prospective lives together--their strengths and weaknesses, desires, ambitions, goals, their attitudes about money, sex, children, family, their role in the church and society--in a face-to-face way.

Agape Online

This is an extra-ordinary option in for specific cases decided by the priest.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING ORIENTATION

Human sexuality is sacred and holy. It is through the gift of sexuality that a couple speaks the truth of their wedding vows with their bodies. Conjugal love expresses total self-gift, faithfulness and commitment, and openness to life and procreation.

Contraception, however, closes off the openness to life and prevents a couple from speaking the truth of their wedding vows. For this reason the Catholic Church teaches, as all Christian churches have always taught until very recently, that the use of contraception within marriage is immoral. Your fertility is a gift from God and not a disease to be treated with potentially dangerous chemicals. While society has almost completely separated the natural connection between sexual intercourse and children, the Church continues to recognize the gift of children as God's crowning glory of marriage.

With that being said, the Church does not teach that a couple must have as many children as they are physically capable of producing. Through careful prayer and discernment a couple may come to believe that God is not calling them to have any more children either temporarily or for the remainder of their marriage. They may also discern that there is a serious reason to avoid a pregnancy. This is where Natural Family Planning can be useful.

Natural Family Planning is a term used to describe several methods of pinpointing when a woman is fertile each month. It has nothing to do with the old "rhythm method" or timing a woman's cycle. This is new technology that teaches couples how to observe symptoms in the wife's body to determine fertility in order to either plan or avoid a pregnancy. When couples understand the methods and are motivated to follow them, NFP is up to 99% successful in spacing or limiting births. Unlike with contraception, couples that practice NFP actually enhance their marriage and their communication as a couple and avoid all the other harmful spiritual and physical side effects of contraception. It's also free!

Sadly, most couples today have never heard of NFP or know little about it. The best way to begin learning about NFP is to attend a class taught by a certified instructor. There are several options available to learn about NFP.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING WORKSHOPS

Introduction to NFP in Topeka

An overview of the benefits of NFP as well as the practical applications of several methods. This class is great for anyone interested in learning more about NFP. This class fulfills your NFP marriage preparation requirement for the Archdiocese of Kansas City Kansas. You will watch a video by Jason Evert titled Life Giving Love. Following the video you will briefly discuss different methods of NFP and have a question and answer session. This class is FREE. Class is the first Saturday of the month at 4pm or by appointment. Register for exact location. Register by calling 785-380-0062 or e-mail Dana at danarunn@gmail.com

Prescription for a Long and Happy Life

Presented by Dr. Laurie Heap, MD, this session uses current research to look at the benefits NFP has on a woman's health as well as a couple's relationship. Couples appreciate the upbeat atmosphere and relevant dialogue that this session offers. This session will not teach you how to practice NFP, but it will give everyone (regardless of your experience of NFP) good insights and skills upon which to build your practice of any method. These classes are typically in KC and to register you will need to go to the Archdiocese's website located in the Appendix I "Helpful Websites." There is also an online version of this on the website.

Fertility Care Introductory Session

The Fertility Care Center of Kansas City offers introductory sessions in the Creighton Model of NFP. These introductory sessions are offered in a group setting and give couples all the information they need to understand how to get started. Only the introductory session is required for Marriage Preparation, but couples desiring to continue using the method would work individually with an instructor afterward in order to gain confidence with the system. To register you will need to go to the Archdiocese's website located in Appendix I "Helpful Websites."

Preparing for a Wedding

A WEDDING IS SACRED WORSHIP

As you begin to plan your wedding ceremony you no doubt have many ideas. Perhaps you've envisioned what this day will look like and how everything will go for quite some time. We want you to be very involved in the planning of this celebration. However, we also want you to realize right from the beginning that this is not just "your" wedding. The celebration of the sacrament of marriage is a sacred celebration of the entire Church and is fundamentally an act of sacred worship offered to God.

The Catholic Church worships in a public way that is carefully regulated. Many of our traditional rites have come down to us nearly unchanged over thousands of years. While the Rite of Marriage allows for certain cultural adaptations, you may find that what you have seen at other weddings or on TV does not match what the Church asks for in the celebration of marriage.

Remember that your wedding ceremony is not meant so much to be a celebration of you but rather a celebration of God. Any appearance of a "show" is to be strictly avoided. In the wedding liturgy we praise God for what he has done in creating man and woman and we ask his blessings as he makes the two of you one in marriage.



A NOTE ON DRESS

All wedding dresses, including bridesmaid dresses, should be modest in nature and appropriate for the sacred occasion. If you have questions or concerns about your dresses, please talk with the wedding coordinator.

THE THREE FORMS OF THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

1

Rite of Marriage Within Mass

Two Catholics entering into marriage the normal context for the celebration of marriage is within Mass. As the two of you become one in your exchange of consent, so you share together in the one bread and the one cup of the Eucharist as Jesus strengthens you with His Body and Blood.

2

Rite of Marriage Outside Mass

When a Catholic marries another baptized Christian this is the normal form of marriage. It resembles very much the Liturgy of the Word at Mass with readings from Sacred Scripture followed by the exchange of consent. There is no celebration of the Eucharist or distribution of Communion.

3

Rite of Marriage Between a Catholic & an Unbaptized Person

This rite is essentially the same as the Rite of Marriage Outside Mass except that the prayers are sensitive to the fact that one party is not Christian and this is not a sacrament being celebrated.

At the initial meeting, the priest will explain which rite of marriage will be used for the celebration of your wedding. Please be sure to clarify this detail before proceeding with planning the wedding liturgy.

MINISTRIES IN THE LITURGY

The word “ministry” may be unfamiliar to you, yet if you look at a Sunday Mass you will notice that many people are involved, greeting, leading the assembly in prayer and song, reading, and distributing Communion. Many of the same ministries are needed for the wedding liturgy.

The Couple In the Roman Catholic wedding liturgy, the bride and groom are the ministers of marriage. The presiding priest serves as the Church’s official witness. It is the couple who gives themselves in God, one to another, in marriage.

Since you will be very visible during the wedding liturgy, your behavior, attitudes and clothing help to set the sacred tone for the entire assembly. Your participation in the prayers and sacred music will greatly assist all gathered to feel comfortable and at ease in taking an active role in the Church’s wedding liturgy.

The Witnesses

While the entire assembly is a witness to your marriage, three individuals have special roles as witnesses in the Catholic Church’s liturgy and official records. The priest is the Church’s official witness. In addition, two designated individuals (commonly referred to as the “Best Man” and “Maid/Matron of Honor”) stand with you to fulfill the requirements of witnesses who formally attest to the fact that the wedding took place. It is preferable that both witnesses be practicing Catholics.

Ushers

As people enter the Church, ushers who are warm and pleasant will help make the guests feel welcomed. They serve as ministers of hospitality who greet, distribute printed programs, and escort people to their seats.

Ring Bearers and Flower Girls

If you include children in the wedding party, we recommend that they are able to walk down the aisle. Children may not stand with the wedding party during the ceremony.

Lectors

The invitation for this liturgical ministry should be offered to people who would be comfortable and competent proclaiming the Word of God. Contact the Wedding Coordinator with any questions about lectors.

The Wedding Party

In addition to the two official witnesses, couples often choose to have additional attendants accompany and stand with them (commonly referred to as groomsmen and bridesmaids). They’re standing with the couple on the day of the wedding indicates their willingness to stand with them for the rest of their lives and to aid the bride and groom in living out their commitment to marriage.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Extraordinary Ministers are not usually needed unless a large Catholic crowd is expected (100+). If Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are needed in the celebration of Marriage within Mass, then these ministers must be chosen from those who have been duly commissioned in this ministry. We would like them to come to rehearsal as well. If you are unable to find one and the priest decides one is needed the Wedding Coordinator can step in.

The Assembly

You should begin thinking about the people who will be at your wedding. From the perspective of worship, those present are not seen merely as guests, but as a community of witnesses who join you in prayer on this occasion. These people represent the local faith community, family, and friends. Together they become the voice of the Church, which speaks its word of faith and points you to a future life together.

If you think of the community in this way, you will want to invite their participation and hear their words of wisdom and support. In turn, you will enrich the community by your exchange of vows in which you freely accept one another in an intimate union and promise to nourish and develop your marriage with undivided affection. This promise of fidelity encourages the members of the community who are married in their own lives.



THE ORDER OF THE RITE

Pre - Entrance

The pre-entrance is not the start of the ceremony but a time to seat grandparents and parents. This sometimes takes place a few minutes before the start time of the wedding. Some couples also choose to have candle lighters start the pre-entrance to light the front altar candles. The order of seating the grandparents and parents can be discussed with the Wedding Coordinator for guidance.

The Entrance Procession

Catholics should be familiar with the entrance procession that they witness every Sunday at Mass. Normally the altar servers lead the way, perhaps carrying a cross and candles. Other ministers follow with the priest celebrant coming at the end of this sometimes long train of people. Meanwhile a song is sung by all gathered. The entrance procession at a wedding is supposed to look very similar. The ritual describes it as follows:

"If there is a procession to the altar, the ministers [altar servers] go first, followed by the priest, and then the bride and bridegroom. According to local custom, they may be escorted by at least their parents and the two witnesses. Meanwhile, the entrance song is sung."

The wedding coordinator will assist you in planning the opening procession for your wedding. The Catholic Rite of Marriage suggests some different options from what is popularly seen. You should consider the following in planning your wedding procession:



Servers/ Priest

Bridesmaids/Groomsmen

If the bridesmaids and groomsmen enter in the procession then they can come as couples in front of the bride and groom or all the men can precede the groom and all the women precede the bride. Whatever arrangement is chosen, all those in the procession follow behind the priest and servers.

Ring bearers/Flower Girls

If you choose to have ring bearers and/or flower girls they usually follow the bridesmaids and groomsmen. Ring bearers and flower girls can walk down together or walk down separately.

We do prefer them to be able to walk down on their own. It is not typical but, a trusted adult may carry the child if necessary. (Please no use of wagons. If you do not see it at Sunday Mass, we prefer not having it at a wedding.)

Bride / Groom

The bride and groom have a couple of different options in the procession that are typical but not limited to:

- Groom escorts his parents and stays at the sanctuary
- Groom walks in with the priest
- Bride is escorted last with her father, mother, both parents, or other appropriate figure

The Liturgy of the Word

After the people have been called to prayer, a selection of Scripture readings is proclaimed. These readings represent the Bible's story of marriage, but the story is not told simply for you as the bride and groom; it is addressed to all. In selecting the readings, therefore, you should try to be aware of the broader community who will be listening. The Together for Life book you will receive at your initial meeting with the priest has the approved reading options for weddings. Readings from sources other than scripture are not allowed during the Liturgy of the Word.

Standard Wedding Sequence

1. Reading from the Old Testament
2. Responsorial Psalm (sung)
3. Second reading from the New Testament
4. Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)
5. Selection from one of the Gospels
6. Homily by the priest follows the readings



The Rite of Marriage

The focus of the Rite of Marriage is the exchange of consent between the bride and groom. The priest will question the couple about their intentions to enter marriage. Specifically, he will ask if you have come freely to give yourselves to each other in marriage, if you intend to be faithful to your spouse and if you are open to God's gift of children. He will then lead them in exchanging their consent. The Blessing and Exchange of Rings follows.

The Rite of Marriage ends with the Prayers to the Faithful (Petitions) which are prayers for the Church, for the world, for all married couples, and for the two of you.

OPTIONAL ADAPTATIONS TO THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

While not a part of the official Rite of Marriage in the Catholic Church, the following cultural adaptations have been allowed in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas



Unity Candle

One large candle is lit from two smaller candles held by the bride and groom. The meaning of this action is that the couple is "no longer two but one" (may follow the exchange of rings)

Presentation of a Bouquet to the Blessed Mother

You may wish to place a bouquet of flowers and spend a quiet moment of prayer at the statue of the Blessed Mother. It was Mary who interceded to her Son on behalf of a newly married couple at their wedding feast in Cana. This usually follows the exchange of rings or lighting of the unity candle.

Roses for the Mothers

This consists of a gift of a single flower to the mothers of the bride and groom. This commonly takes place during the Sign of Peace in the Rite of Marriage Within Mass, and following the Unity Candle and/or Bouquet to the Blessed Mother in the Rite of Marriage Outside Mass. During Mass, both the bride and groom share the sign of peace with the bride's parents followed by the groom's parents.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

When both the bride and groom are Catholic the liturgy normally continues with the celebration of the Eucharist. If one spouse is not Catholic, the wedding rite continues with the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer

This is one of the prayers in which the entire assembly participates. While it is common in other Christian traditions to have a soloist sing the Lord's Prayer, Catholic tradition and practice holds that the Lord's Prayer should be spoken or sung by the assembly.



The Nuptial Blessing

This is a special prayer of blessing said by the priest asking God to bless the newly married couple. The Nuptial Blessing has several forms and is prayed at different places within the wedding liturgy depending on which form is being celebrated. The texts are prayers of intercession as well as prayers of hope for the future.



Dismissal

At the conclusion of the wedding liturgy, the priest blesses the newly married couple and the assembly. This conclusion creates a bridge between the celebration of the marriage liturgy and any celebration following. You might ask yourselves what this transition should be. It can easily be a time for a hymn of praise or simply a recessional in which the wedding party and ministers depart.



AFTER THE DISMISSAL

Information regarding the dismissal and exiting after Mass can be found in the "Rehearsal and Wedding Day" section.

OTHER LOGISTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Music For Your Wedding

The Most Pure Heart of Mary Wedding Music Coordinator will assist you with choosing music and will collaborate with any other musicians you wish to have as a part of your wedding.

The Catholic Church has set forth guidelines regarding music in any liturgy. Music choices should be evaluated in three areas: liturgical, pastoral, musical.



Liturgical

Is the music appropriate to the liturgy and celebration? Songs which are appropriate to the reception or dance, or songs which have their origin in movie soundtracks, the Broadway stage, or in the top-40 radio are never appropriate for the liturgy.

Pastoral

Does the music allow for congregational participation where called for and is it appropriate for those who are present?

Musical

Is the music of a special quality and will it be competently performed with appropriate instruments and voices?

It is important that those who are serving as musicians at your wedding are truly competent and that they have a thorough understanding of the structure of the Catholic wedding liturgy. Too often friends or relatives of the couple are asked to serve as musicians out of friendship rather than competency.

The Music Coordinator will be in contact with you 6 months before your wedding date. If you would like to contact them yourself, please refer to page 1 for contact information.



Our Wedding Music Coordinator reviews and approves all aspects of the music. If you have any questions, concerns, or thoughts on the music it needs to be approved by the Music Coordinator.

If other instrumentalists or cantors are being used, please confirm with the Wedding Music Coordinator.



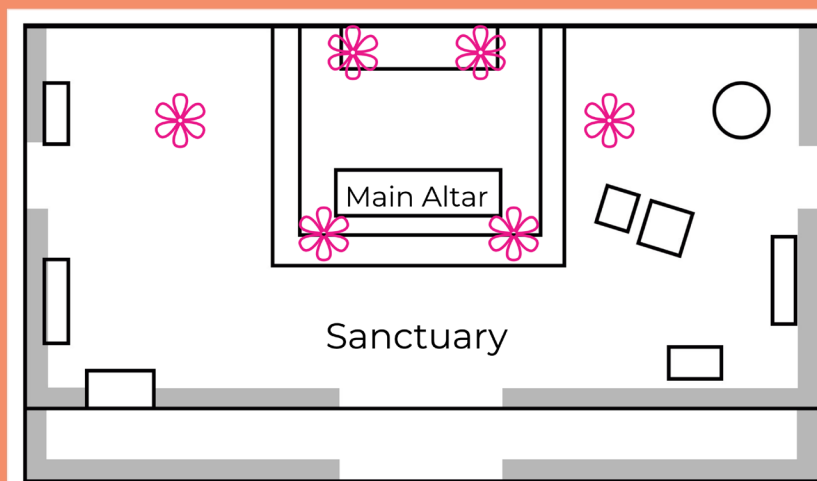
Liturgical Environment and Decorations

You have chosen to be married in the setting of a beautiful church, which does not require anything to beautify the space. The church will already be decorated in a specific liturgical color that corresponds to the liturgical season being celebrated. When considering additional decoration, it is required that great care be taken not to obscure, obstruct, or hinder the primary purpose of our gathering, which is to worship.

Candles and floral decorations may only be placed in appropriate areas, so as not to obscure the altar, pulpit, or chairs for the priest and couple. While there may be places in the sanctuary which would offer good space for a dramatic decoration, or a liturgical color that you may prefer not be used, the primary concern must be for the liturgical appropriateness of the space. Church furnishings are not to be moved and no other furnishings (runners, arches, etc.) are allowed in the church.

This sanctuary floor plan indicates several locations where floral arrangements may be placed. The flower icon represents possible locations, on top of the tabernacle, on the back altar on either side of the tabernacle, and/or either side of the front altar (not ON the front altar).

SANCTUARY FLOOR PLAN



Pew Ends

If flowers or bows are used to decorate the ends of the pews, only soft plastic pew holders may be used in attaching any decorations; glue, tape, or tacking to the pews or other furnishings is prohibited.

Pedals

If you choose to have your flower girl throw out flower petals as she walks down the aisle, the flower petals **MUST BE ARTIFICIAL**.

If you have any questions or concerns about decorations please contact the Wedding Coordinator who can help with more guidance.

Worship Aids

The wedding couple and their attendants are a model of participation for the assembly gathered and are asked to participate in the sung and spoken prayers in the liturgy. Wedding worship aids and our hymnals are excellent tools to encourage full, conscious and active participation from the assembly. The worship aid should be simple, user-friendly, and complementary to worship. The Wedding Coordinator will be happy to give you guidance with the worship aids. Please see below for a simple Order of Rite Within Mass and Rite Without Mass to help with your worship aids.



RITE OF MARRIAGE WITHIN MASS

Prelude

- Lighting of the Altar Candles (optional)
- Seating of the Grandparents (optional)
- Seating of the Mothers
- Wedding Party Processional
- Bridal Processional

Introductory Rites

- Gloria
- Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

- Old Testament Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- New Testament Reading
- Gospel Acclamation
- Gospel
- Homily

Rite of Marriage

- Statement of Intentions
- Exchange of Vows
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Lighting of the Unity Candle (optional)
- Dedication to the Blessed Mother (optional)
- Prayers of the Faithful (Petitions)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Presentation of the Gifts
- Eucharistic Prayer
- The Lord's Prayer
- Nuptial Blessing
- Sign of Peace (Flowers to Mothers-optional)
- Communion

Concluding Rites

- Final Blessing
- Presentation of the Couple
- Recessional

RITE OF MARRIAGE WITHOUT MASS

Prelude

- Lighting of the Candles (optional)
- Seating of the Grandparents (optional)
- Seating of the Mothers
- Wedding Party Processional
- Bridal Processional

Liturgy of the Word

- Opening Prayer
- Old Testament Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- New Testament Reading
- Gospel Acclamation
- Gospel
- Homily

Rite of Marriage

- Statement of Intentions
- Exchange of Vows
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Lighting of the Unity Candle (optional)
- Dedication to the Blessed Mother (optional)

Prayers and Blessings

- Prayers of the Faithful (Petitions)
- The Lord's Prayer
- Nuptial Blessing
- Sign of Peace - optional
(Flowers to Mothers-optional)

Concluding Rite

- Final Blessing
- Presentation of the Couple
- Recessional



Photographers and Videographer

Many couples want photographers and videographers to record their marriage. Wedding pictures can capture the beauty and wonder of the ceremony uniting you forever as husband and wife.

With the goal of reverencing the sacredness of the liturgy, the following guidelines must be followed:

- Photographers and all members of the wedding party are to keep in mind that they are in a sacred space. Please keep voices soft and actions reverent and respectful.
- Once the procession has begun no flash photography or artificial lighting is allowed.
- No extension cords are to be used and no candles or sanctuary furnishings are to be moved.
- Video cameras must be on a tripod in the designated area, and kept stationary during the liturgy.
- Photographers are not allowed in the sanctuary.
- Processional photographs may not impede the natural walking flow of the procession.
- Recessional photographs may be taken discreetly from the vestibule/foyer of the church.
- Due to busy church schedules the church is usually only available for two hours before the wedding begins. Archdiocesan policy requires all pre-wedding photographs conclude no later than thirty minutes before the start of the scheduled liturgy.

Please be aware that Confessions start at 2:45 pm. and people start arriving for the 4:00 pm. Mass. The Wedding Coordinator will let your photographer know when time is limited.

Documents Needed

FOR A CATHOLIC

An authenticated copy of your baptismal certificate (with notations) from your church of baptism, issued within 6 months of the wedding date. Photocopies are not sufficient. Usually this certificate is obtained by the parish secretary. We simply need to know the location and name of the church of your baptism, and approximate date of your baptism.

FOR A NON-CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN

A baptismal certificate is needed. Unlike the Catholic's baptismal certificate, it need not be issued within 6 months of the wedding date. If no certificate can be obtained, a witness must testify in writing as to the certitude that you were baptized with water using the Trinitarian formula (In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit).

FOR THE UNBAPTIZED

A form signed by the parents (or any two people who are closely related to the person) attesting to the person's freedom to marry (that the person has not been previously married in a religious or civil ceremony or by common law).

FOR A PREVIOUS MARRIAGE

If the previous spouse has died, an official copy of the death certificate is needed.

If the marriage ended by divorce, then a decree of nullity from the Catholic Church is required (even for non-Catholics). If the letter issuing the decree is missing, the case number is sufficient.

FOR THE COUPLE

- A certificate of completion of the Natural Family Planning classes.
- A civil license from the State of Kansas. No minister can legally perform a wedding in the State of Kansas without having the license physically in his possession. For help on how to apply for a Marriage License please see Appendix I "Helpful Websites" for the Shawnee County website.
- A certificate of completion for the local Couple Mentoring or Engaged Encounter program.

All certificates, decrees, and witness forms (with the exception of the marriage license) must be submitted to the priest preparing you no later than one month prior to the wedding.



Scheduling

REHEARSAL

You should invite only those persons directly involved in the wedding ceremony to the rehearsal. The rehearsal will take between 30 - 60 minutes and is the time to review and rehearse the ritual about to take place while focusing on the sacredness of the wedding day.

Friday Wedding

Between 4:00 & 6:00 pm on Thursday

Saturday Wedding

Between 4:00 & 6:00 pm on Friday



WEDDING

The time of the wedding will depend on if you would like pictures before and/or after the ceremony.

Friday weddings

Can begin anytime after 5:00 pm

Saturday weddings

Can begin between 12:00 & 1:00 pm*

*If the Rite of Marriage is being celebrated outside of Mass on a Saturday, it may begin as late as 1:30 pm



A NOTE REGARDING SATURDAY WEDDINGS - Saturday confessions start at 2:45 pm. Pictures do not need to stop, however, we do ask you be respectful of those coming for Confessions. Our Saturday evening Mass is at 4:00 and parishioners typically start coming in about 45 minutes prior to Mass. This will start making it difficult to continue with pictures inside the church.



Rehearsal and Wedding Day

Rehearsal

- Please be prompt due to the many Masses, Baptisms, and other activities of the parish.
- Dress is business casual
- We recommend bringing the following: guestbook, worship aids, unity candle (if applicable), and other decorations for the guest table or items you would like the Wedding Coordinator to set-up. It is easier on you to bring these all to the rehearsal so you don't have to worry about them on the wedding day. They will be locked up inside the church overnight.
- Please bring your civil marriage license to the rehearsal. You must obtain your marriage license through any Kansas County Courthouse. You will receive 2 copies of the license, mailing labels and an envelope. All these items need to be brought to rehearsal and turned in to the Wedding Coordinator. Once the priest has signed it the day of the wedding, you will receive the duplicate copy and the other will be mailed back in to be filed with the State of Kansas.
- Please note: the marriage license must be obtained no later than 2 weeks before your wedding, but it can be done as early as 5 months beforehand.

Wedding Day

The church has limited space and privacy for the wedding party to dress and prepare. Discuss with the Wedding Coordinator appropriate times wedding party and family could start showing up.

- If you have a guest book we also recommend you have it at the reception as well. If the back of the church starts getting congested or we are needing to seat people quicker the Wedding Coordinator will put it away for guestbook to sign later.
- The west cry room is set aside as a gathering space for the bride and her attendants. The room will not be locked at any time.
- The ushers' room is set aside for the groom and his attendants. The room will not be locked at any time.
- Any personal items brought into the church are the sole responsibility of the wedding party.
- It is recommended that as many people as possible arrive dressed and ready to allow for space limitations and the time needed for photography.
- It is nice to provide bottles of water and light lunch/snacks for your wedding party to have the day of the wedding in their respective rooms in the church. However, keep in mind that Catholics must fast from food for one hour before receiving Holy Communion. Food is allowed only in these dressing rooms; please refrain from bringing food into the church.
- Alcohol is not allowed on church property. A wedding may be canceled or postponed because of the presence of alcohol.
- Smoking is not allowed on church property.



Recommended Rehearsal Times

Friday Wedding

Between 4:00 & 6:00 pm Thursday

Saturday Wedding

Between 4:00 & 6:00 pm Friday



Following the Wedding

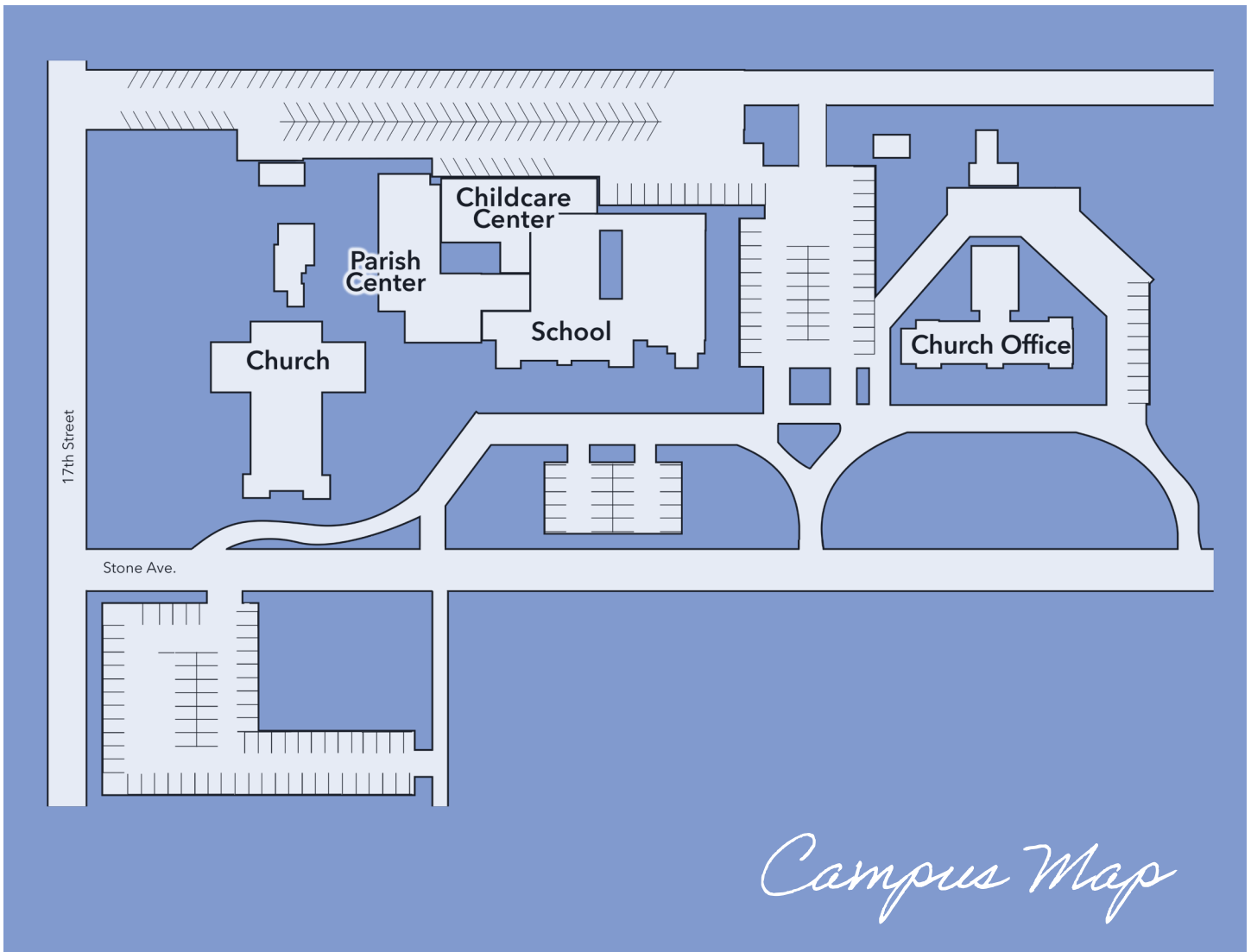
A receiving line after the wedding liturgy is not appropriately held at the church; this is more appropriate for the wedding reception. An exit with bubbles, steamers, or something else that does not require clean up is acceptable.

To insure that nothing is left in the church, please assign someone to collect all personal belongings after the wedding liturgy, especially in the Bride's Room and the Groom's Room. You are responsible for the removal and disposal of all trash from the rooms. It is expected that the church and all church property will be left in good order after the rehearsal and wedding.

Parking at Most Pure Heart of Mary

Parking is available in the following locations:

- Directly across Stone Ave to the west of the front of the church (handicap spots available)
- The parking lot on the south side of the front of the church, between the two playgrounds (handicap spots available)
- Handicap spots are available directly in front of the school on the east side of the drive.



Planning Responsibilities

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

When considering how much to spend on your wedding, the past experience of many couples indicates that simpler is usually better. There is no need to plan an extravagant "event" or spend thousands of dollars to make your wedding day special. The last thing you want is to feel stressed on your wedding day because of too many details. Of course you want to celebrate, but also keep in mind that the focus of the wedding is on the exchange of consent between the bride and the groom. This is what makes the wedding special and beautiful, and it doesn't have to be expensive.

Wedding Coordinator

All weddings at Most Pure Heart of Mary must employ the services of our Wedding Coordinator. A set offering of \$200.00 is expected to be paid. The check should be made out by name to the Wedding Coordinator.

Priest

No Honorarium is expected for the priest to preside at the wedding. Many couples wish to offer a personal monetary gift to the priest. Although nothing is required, an appropriate amount would be approximately the same as is asked for the cantor/vocalist (\$100). If you do choose to offer an honorarium to the priest, that check must be made out to: "Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church" and given directly to the Wedding Coordinator. The money will be used for the support of the parish unless explicitly designated as a personal gift to the priest.

FOCCUS inventory

A small fee is charged for the FOCCUS inventory. You will be charged for this when you log in to complete the questionnaire online.

Altar Servers

The Rite of Marriage within a Mass requires two trained altar servers. You may invite family or friends who are trained to serve on the altar. If they are not a part of the parish, please have them come to the rehearsal to meet with the priest. If you prefer, the Wedding Coordinator can schedule trained servers from our parish. A recommended monetary amount between \$10.00 - \$20.00 per server is payable on the day of the wedding.

Musicians

Musician fees should be paid to the individuals 3 weeks before the wedding day. If an organist other than a resident organist plays for the wedding, a bench fee of \$75 remains because the resident organist must be present during the wedding ceremony.

Organist	\$150.00
Cantor/Vocalist	\$100.00
Choir	\$500.00
Contemporary Group	\$200.00
Bell Choir	\$150.00
Guitarist	sets own fee
Trumpet	sets own fee
Violin	sets own fee

Use of the Church

It is appropriate that those who are not registered parishioners of Most Pure Heart of Mary Church make a \$500 donation to the parish to help defray expenses. There are no fees associated with the use of the church for registered members. You are welcome to donate to the parish in thanksgiving, if you so choose.

O'Connor Hall Receptions

The parish can also make O'Connor Hall available for you for an hourly rate. In addition to the hourly fee, you will need to pay a \$95.00 insurance fee to the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas. Please contact the Parish Coordinator to make reservations.

Hourly Rental Fees

Simple Wedding Reception
(No meal or alcohol)

\$50/hr Parishioner
\$75/hr Non - Parishioner

Wedding Reception / Dinner
(Food & alcohol)

\$75/hr Parishioner
\$100/hr Non - Parishioner

Wedding Reception/Dinner/Dance
(Food, Alcohol & Dancing)

\$100/hr Parishioner
\$150/hr Non - Parishioner

Please make the Insurance check payable to "Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas" and Rental/Reception check payable to "Most Pure Heart of Mary."

It is also never the intention that money be an obstacle to the celebration of the sacraments of the Church. At the same time, however, the parish must be responsible in our operational costs and personnel expenses. Your payment of the following fees are greatly appreciated. If you have any concerns about the above financial considerations please contact your priest.

CALCULATOR

Wedding Coordinator		\$200.00
Priest (optional)		\$_____
Foccus Inventory		\$_____
Altar Servers (\$10 - \$20 each)		
Altar Server A	\$_____	
Altar Server B	\$_____	
	Altar Server Total	\$_____
Musicians		
Organist	\$150.00	
Cantor	\$100.00	
Choir	\$500.00	
Contemporary Group	\$200.00	
Bell Choir	\$150.00	
Guitarist	\$_____	
Trumpet	\$_____	
Violin	\$_____	
	Musicians Total	\$_____
Church (\$500.00 Non-Parishioners)		\$_____
WEDDING TOTAL		\$_____

O'Connor Hall Calculator

Hourly Rate _____ times _____ Hours = \$_____

ArchKCK Insurance Fee \$95.00

O'CONNOR HALL TOTAL \$_____

SCHEDULE TIMELINE

Six Months Before

Meet with Priest
Reserve w/ Parish Coordinator
Greeting from Wedding Coordinator

Three Months Before

Meet with Wedding Coordinator
Complete Wedding Participant List

One Month Before

Required documents to Priest
Final Details to Wedding Coordinator

Three Weeks Before

Musician Fees Paid

One Week Before

Church / Reception Fees
Confession*

Day of the Wedding

Altar Servers
Wedding Coordinator
Priest (optional)

*Please consider going to confession (Sacrament of Reconciliation) shortly before the wedding. It is important to be fully open to God's grace and have a clear heart as you receive this wonderful and sacred Sacrament of Marriage.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Make sure you have these questions answered as your wedding is being planned and make sure all preparations are complete - You are responsible for this and the wedding cannot happen if you do not complete all requirements.

- Did you acquire a state license? (Please bring it to the rehearsal)
- Have you made arrangements with the wedding coordinator to setup for the wedding?
- Did you inform the priest and wedding coordinator with your reading and vow selection?
- Have you selected three readers/lectors? (1st reading, 2nd reading, & petitions/ prayers of the faithful)
- Do you need extra communion ministers? (For larger weddings)
- How do you want to be introduced at the end of the ceremony?
(Mr. & Mrs. John Smith, Mr. & Mrs. John and Mary Smith, John and Mary Smith, etc.)

Some questions you may want to answer and share with your priest celebrant to possibly help with making the homily a little more personal:

- What is your background (where are you from, occupation, schooling, etc.)
- How did you meet?
- What is it you love about each other?
- In the reading you chose, what is it that appealed to you as a couple?
- Anything else important to you as a couple that the priest should keep in mind?

Appendix

We hope this booklet has assisted you in beginning your preparation for marriage and for the planning of your wedding liturgy. The Church is here to help you during this special time and will be here to help you throughout your married lives. May God continue to bless the good work He has begun in you.

For lots of great information on marriage and more in depth articles on the topics addressed in this book, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has created a website specifically devoted to marriage. You can find details about the wedding ceremony and other marriage preparation topics at the below link.

FOCCUS Inventory

<http://www.foccusinc.com>



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:
Wedding Ceremony

<https://goo.gl/cr3nBY>



Natural Family Planning Topeka, KS

<http://nfptopeka.blogspot.com/>



The Archdiocese of Kansas City of Kansas:
Marriage and Family Life

<https://www.archkck.org/family-life/mfl-2015-marriage-prep>



The Archdiocese of Kansas City of Kansas: NFP

<https://www.archkck.org/nfp>



For Your Marriage

<http://www.foryourmarriage.org>



Shawnee County Court

<http://shawneecourt.org/FAQ.aspx?QID=77>



Dynamic Catholic: Better Together

<https://dynamiccatholic.com/better-together/marriage-enrichment>



Rite of Marriage Within Mass

Prelude

- Lighting of the Altar Candles (optional)
- Seating of the Grandparents (optional)
- Seating of the Mothers
- Wedding Party Processional
- Bridal Processional

Introductory Rites

- Gloria
- Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

- Old Testament Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- New Testament Reading
- Gospel Acclamation
- Gospel
- Homily

Rite of Marriage

- Statement of Intentions
- Exchange of Vows
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Lighting of the Unity Candle (optional)
- Dedication to the Blessed Mother (optional)
- Prayers of the Faithful (Petitions)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Presentation of the Gifts
- Eucharistic Prayer
- The Lord's Prayer
- Nuptial Blessing
- Sign of Peace (Flowers to Mothers-optional)
- Communion

Concluding Rites

- Final Blessing
- Presentation of the Couple
- Recessional

Rite of Marriage Without Mass

Prelude

- Lighting of the Candles (optional)
- Seating of the Grandparents (optional)
- Seating of the Mothers
- Wedding Party Processional
- Bridal Processional

Liturgy of the Word

- Opening Prayer
- Old Testament Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- New Testament Reading
- Gospel Acclamation
- Gospel
- Homily

Rite of Marriage

- Statement of Intentions
- Exchange of Vows
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Lighting of the Unity Candle (optional)
- Dedication to the Blessed Mother (optional)

Prayers and Blessings

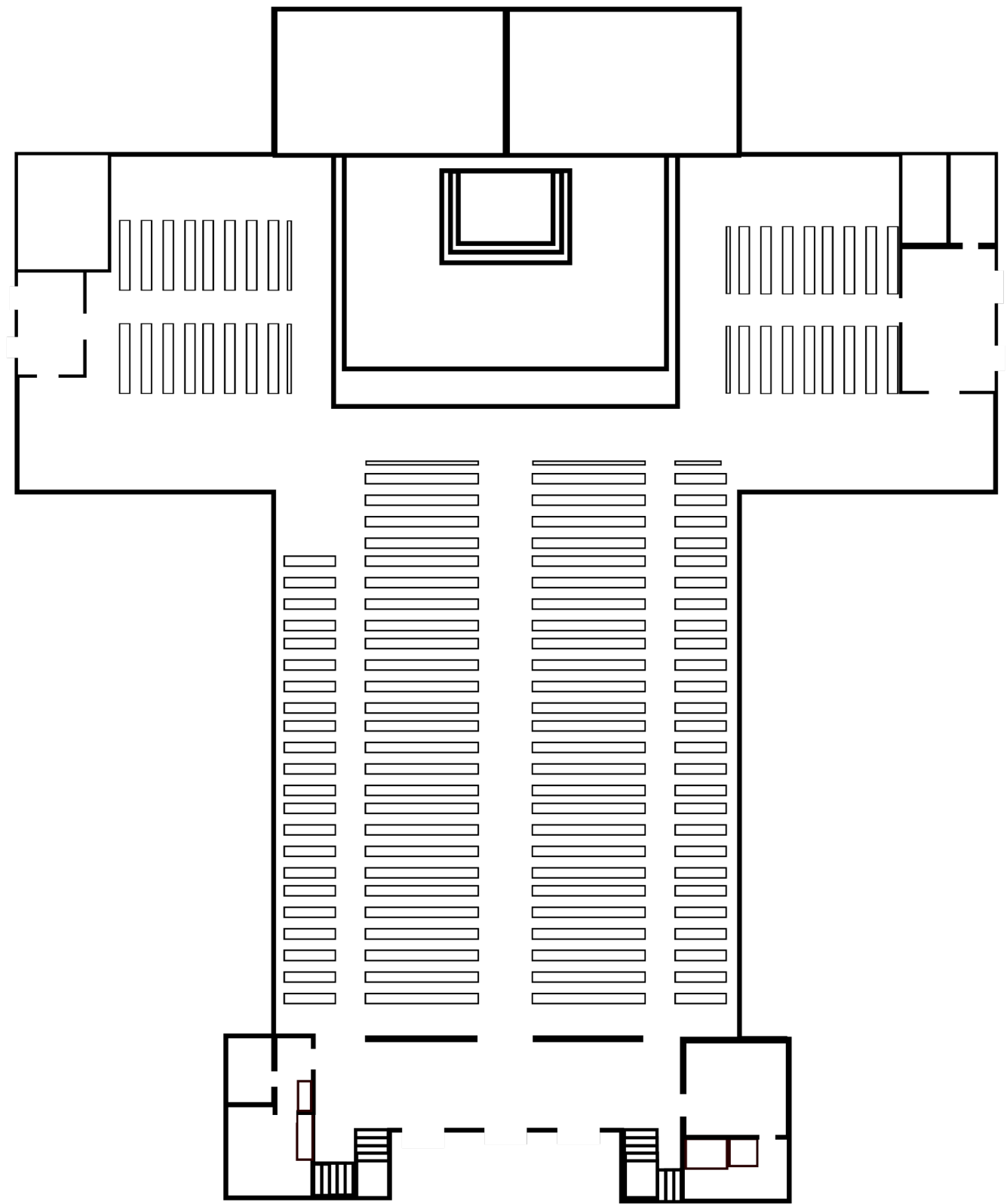
- Prayers of the Faithful (Petitions)
- The Lord's Prayer
- Nuptial Blessing
- Sign of Peace- optional (Flowers to Mothers-optional)

Concluding Rite

- Final Blessing
- Presentation of the Couple
- Recessional

Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church

Total Capacity: 840



Notes