



Marriage & Wedding Policy

Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations! Now that you have made the decision to get married, no doubt you have already started planning your wedding. You have probably started looking around for different ideas to make your wedding really special. And, as you have looked, you probably found more than enough resources for planning a wedding. They are not hard to find; florists, photographers, blogs, and many others are putting out many different guides to wedding planning these days. While all of those are fine in their own way, it seems appropriate that the Church should offer both some guidelines and some support in planning a wedding that is truly an experience of faith and worship.

Rather than approach the wedding first from the point of view of flowers, photos, clothing and other commercial concerns, we would like you to be able to approach your wedding from the basic understanding that the Church has of marriage, that it is, a sacrament. The following pages are meant to be a guide and support to help you in that approach. The ideas expressed will be important to you in your preparations for the meaningful celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE:

The union of a man and woman in the bond of marriage is a sacred union. A Christian Marriage is more than a civil contract; it is an interpersonal relationship between two persons and the love of God. Marriage in the Christian tradition is a covenant relationship drawing strength from the unconditional covenant of Jesus Christ with His people. The Catholic Church in order to preserve and strengthen the gift of the Sacrament of Marriage requires couples to participate in the Marriage Preparation Program as outlined in the Peoria Diocesan Common Policy. The Common Policy has, among others, the following concerns in mind:

1) **A concern for the couple to be married.** The Catholic Church wishes to encourage those who have decided to be married in the Church and to assist them in the development of the quality of their relationship. There has been built into the policy not just educational opportunities for marriage preparation, but more important, formational experience enabling the couple to sort through their relationship before their vows.

2) **A concern for the Sacramentality of Marriage.** The Catholic Church wishes to help the couple properly understand the Sacramentality of the marriage relationship and to help the couple to celebrate marriage as a sacrament.

3) **A concern for the good of society.** The family is the most basic societal unit. The current rate of divorce in our country suggests that the institution of marriage has been seriously weakened and family life is suffering. It is the concern of the Christian community that the values of a Christian family be honored and enhanced by highlighting the ideals of a Christian marriage as a basis for a Christian family. In presenting this Policy for Marriage and Weddings, the people of the Diocese of Peoria and Mary, Mother of God Parish hope to strengthen the stability of marriage within our society and to show engaged couples that the Church does indeed care for their welfare. Engaged couples are reminded that love and good intentions, though essential, are not all that is necessary for a happy and lasting marriage. Finally, this policy is not written to make it difficult to marry in the Catholic Church, but rather to help couples realize the seriousness and sacred nature of the Sacrament of Marriage, thus enabling them to develop a beautiful and permanent relationship.

There will be a total of four appointments with Father to prepare for the sacrament of marriage. The initial meeting must take place before you may enroll in the required Genesis Retreat required by the Diocese of Peoria. Please call the Parish Office to arrange this first meeting.

- Meetings:
- 1.) Initial Meeting
 - 2.) FOCCUS Meeting (after Genesis Retreat is completed)
 - 3.) FOCCUS results meeting.
 - 4.) Recap & shortly before wedding.

Please visit the Diocese of Peoria website at <https://www.cdop.org/marriage> for more information regarding the Genesis Retreat. The weekend retreat takes place six to seven times per year at the Sacre Coeur Retreat Center in Magnolia, Illinois.

Part A - The Theology of Marriage

Saturday's focus is on God's plan for you, your spouse, and your marriage. We will begin sharply at 10 AM so please arrive at the retreat center for check in at 9:30 AM. You should plan for programming to end around 7:30 PM. Lunch and Dinner are provided in your registration cost.

Part B - The Skills of Marriage

Sunday's focus is on sharpening your skill set and equipping you and your spouse to love in a free, total, faithful, and fruitful love. We will begin sharply at 9:00 AM. You should plan for programming to end around 3:00 PM and Mass will be included. A meal is provided with your registration.

Overnight Housing Available

Thank to generous donations, we are able to provide discounted housing for \$50/person (\$100 for the couple). All rooms are individual.

REGULATIONS & FEES:

SETTING THE WEDDING DATE:

The wedding date should be set soon after the engagement is announced. Normally at least one member of the engaged couple is a **registered contributing** member of Mary, Mother of God Parish for **six** months prior to the wedding. Engaged couples must contact the church at least 10-12 months prior to the wedding in order to complete marriage preparation prior to the wedding. Weddings can be held on any day except Sunday, Holy Days or Fridays during Lent.

THE TIME OF A WEDDING:

Only **one** wedding will be scheduled on a Saturday no later than 1:30pm (to allow time for pictures before the 4:30pm Mass). Weddings during the week are permitted provided there is nothing on the Parish schedule that would conflict with use of the church facilities. In the Diocese of Peoria, weddings are not permitted on Sunday.

THESE FEES are due on or before the rehearsal for ALL weddings:

STIPEND FOR PRIEST:	\$200.00 made payable to the priest.
ALTAR SERVERS:	\$10.00 per altar server.
MUSICIAN FEES:	
Accompanist:	\$150.00 made payable to the Accompanist.
Soloist (each)	\$125.00 made payable to the Soloist.
Instrumentalist	\$125.00 made payable to <i>each</i> Instrumentalist.
Choir:	\$200.00 made payable to Mary, Mother of God Parish.

***You must contact the parish Music Director to confirm fees and review music selections.*

St. Patrick Music Director: Clare Tschirn cmht13@gmail.com or 309-566-9309

St. Monica Music Director: Eileen Hahn aceehahn@comcast.net 309-699-7468

NON-PARISHIONER: If you or your fiancée are not parishioners of Mary, Mother of God Parish, a fee of **\$300.00** is requested for the use of the facilities. **\$150.00 non-refundable deposit is due at the time of scheduling the wedding and the other half is due at the rehearsal.** This contribution to the parish is not considered a fee for the organist, cantor or a gift to the priest/deacon.

REHEARSAL:

- The rehearsal is normally held the day before the wedding, usually around 5pm.
- **Musicians should not attend the rehearsal.** Due to time allotted for rehearsal, there will not be time for the musicians to practice during the rehearsal.
- ALL fees are due at the rehearsal with the exception of the non-parishioner deposit which is due at time of scheduling.
- Be sure to bring your marriage license.

DECORATING THE CHURCH:

SET-UP: The church may be decorated one and one half to two hours before the scheduled wedding provided there is nothing else scheduled in the church.

SANCTUARY: Flowers, greenery, and other decorations approved by the Parish Office may be used in the sanctuary. Provisions should be made that wax, water, and greenery do not mar the carpet, tile or woodwork in the sanctuary. **The furniture in the sanctuary may not be moved or removed.** *(The couple is responsible for informing the photographer and the person doing the video that they are not to move any of the furniture.)* During certain Liturgical seasons (i.e., Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.), the floral decorations in the sanctuary may **NOT** be removed.

DRESS CODE: Out of respect for the sacredness of the Catholic Church, all brides and bridesmaids are expected to show Christian modesty when choosing a bridal gown or bridesmaid dress for the wedding and rehearsal.

UNITY CANDLE: The unity candle is not mandatory since it is **NOT** part of the marriage rite. However, if a unity candle is desired, it needs to be provided by the couple and will be placed on a small table near the ambo (and should not damage the table).

PEW DECORATIONS: Absolutely **NO** tape, tacks, nails, or wire should be used to attach anything to the pews. Only plastic pew fasteners provided by the florist may be used.

ROSE PETALS: Rose petals are permitted if they are cleaned up afterwards.

WAGONS AND PETS: The use of a wagon in the entrance procession for children is not allowed. Pets are not allowed.

CLEANING THE CHURCH: The decorations, candles and anything else used for the wedding should be completely removed from the church following the wedding and picture taking. You may leave floral arrangements in the church for the Sunday Liturgies; otherwise, the parish is not responsible for anything left behind. If there are programs used, these should be removed from all the pews by the ushers or others.

ST. PATRICK CHURCH DRESSING ROOMS: The bride and her attendants may use the cry rooms to dress. There are box fans available in cry room closets if needed for air flow. The rooms are available for no more than 2 ½ hours before the scheduled wedding. Both cry rooms are expected to be clean and orderly before the couple leaves the church. All hangers, plastic bags, and other disposal items should be removed completely from the room.

ST. MONICA CHURCH DRESSING ROOMS: St Therese Chapel is available for the bride and her attendants for dressing. If the couple plans to use St. Monica Church Hall for their reception, they may use hall to dress as well. The rooms are available for no more than 2 ½ hours before the scheduled wedding and must be clean and orderly before the couple leaves the church.

All hangers, plastic bags, and other disposal items should be removed completely from the rooms. Please arrange with Parish Office prior to your special day.

RECEIVING LINE: The bride and groom may greet their guests after the ceremony in the vestibule of the church (however this is not always practical due to the size of the vestibule) or outside. Because of time limitations a receiving line at the church is **not advisable** if the couple is planning on pictures after the ceremony.

RICE THROWING, BIRD SEED, CONFETTI, BUBBLES AND BALLOONS: According to our Diocesan Insurance policy and the mess it leaves in the church, rice, bird seed, and confetti are **not** permitted to be thrown in or around the area of the church. Bubbles are permitted provided they are distributed outside the church and outside gathering space.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPING: The liturgy during which you celebrate your marriage is a sacred moment of rejoicing in prayer, song and gesture. While we understand your desire to record this moment, picture taking is not the focus of the day and so we ask you to observe the following so that the sacred joy of this day will not be marred by photo and taping equipment and those who operate it. Photographers and those taking videos are not permitted to roam about once the liturgy has begun. There should **NOT** be any disruption of the flow of the entrance procession or ceremony because of pictures.

Photographers and videographers or any equipment are **NOT** permitted in the sanctuary. Photographers typically may stand in the side aisles. Only the lighting already available in the church may be used. No additional lighting may be brought into the church during the ceremony. Photographs *in the church* are limited to **ONE HOUR ONLY** before or after the ceremony. If the wedding is in the afternoon the picture taking will have to be completed by **3:00 p.m.** Couples are responsible for informing their photographer about these policies.

MUSIC AT YOUR WEDDING: A wedding is a time of joy and celebration, and music occupies an important place in the wedding liturgy. There is a wealth of music available which can enhance the beauty of your wedding, be inspiring to those in attendance, and be long cherished in your own memories.

Music at weddings should invite those gathered to sing the prayer of the Christian community. Solo or instrumental pieces should draw those gathered to prayer and unity, rather than entertainment. A song which may have personal meaning for the bride and groom, and which may express personal human love is only appropriate if it also expresses a Christian view of love and worship. *Texts should clearly affirm a relationship with God.* They should be in keeping with the belief of Catholic Christians and be drawn primarily from scripture and from the liturgy. The desired end in all the music performed, vocal and instrumental, is an experience of communal prayer. **Therefore, secular songs are not appropriate and not allowed.**

Music adds much to celebrations of the community, especially when the community understands that the primary purpose of music is to aid their prayer. The singing of the assembly is to be preferred, even though a vocalist may be appropriate at certain times before and during the liturgy. At times, a request for a particular song cannot be honored. This does not imply that such music

is bad; it is simply not appropriate in the church service. It might well be included in another part of the wedding celebration such as the reception. Since many or most couples have limited awareness of appropriate sacred wedding music, it is required that you contact the parish's Choir Director. She can make known to you some of the perhaps less familiar but beautiful, possibilities available for your wedding.

No tape or CD music is allowed for accompaniment for a group or soloist.

An experienced cantor from our parish or one who has experienced in Catholic liturgies is required. Because of inexperience, normally relatives or friends who are untrained musicians should not be encouraged to provide music at the wedding service. If you do involve a musician outside of the parish, that person should work in partnership with the parish's Directory of Liturgy. Many times, outside musicians may not be Catholic, or familiar, with the order and structure of the wedding liturgy. Also, people who may be good musicians do not necessarily have the gift of leading an assembly in community song. Leadership qualities and liturgical skills are essential. To have a musician without such skills given the responsibility of leading the assembly is to put extreme pressure on them, and it can result in nervousness and discomfort, resulting in a very anxious and stressful situation. A couple's wedding day is certainly a significant event. Therefore, it is our hope that through the music you choose, this special day will be most joyful and prayerful.

REGISTERING AS PARISHIONERS: We have included a form in this packet for you to complete and return to the parish office. This form registers you as Parishioners of Mary, Mother of God Parish as a married couple.



MEMBERSHIP FORM
MARY, MOTHER OF GOD PARISH

705 E. Jefferson St. Washington, IL 61571 (309) 444-3524

HOME CHURCH: ST. PATRICK ☐
HOME CHURCH: ST. MONICA ☐

Date: _____

Envelope #: _____

Letter: _____

For Office Use Only

HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD (SEE ADULT #1 BELOW)

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle: _____
Address: _____ Home #: _____ ☐ Unlisted; please do not share.
City, State, Zip: _____ Cell #: _____
Email: _____

ADDITIONAL ADULT INFORMATION INCLUDING HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD (ADULT #1)

First Name: **ADULT #1.** _____ **ADULT #2. First Name:** _____
Gender: ☐ M ☐ F (Maiden) _____ ☐ M ☐ F (Maiden) _____
DOB (mm/dd/yyyy): ____/____/____ ____/____/____
Cell Phone: _____
Email Address: _____
Company & Profession: _____
Religion (if not Catholic) _____
☐ I am interested in becoming Catholic ☐ I am interested in becoming Catholic

Sacraments Received:	ADULT #1.	ADULT #2.
<input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism	<input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism	<input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism
<input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation	<input type="checkbox"/> Reconciliation
<i>Faith of Baptism if not Catholic:</i> _____	<i>Faith of Baptism if not Catholic:</i> _____	<i>Faith of Baptism if not Catholic:</i> _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communion	<input type="checkbox"/> Communion	<input type="checkbox"/> Communion
<input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation	<input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage in the Catholic Church	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage in the Catholic Church	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage in the Catholic Church
<input type="checkbox"/> Anointing of the Sick	<input type="checkbox"/> Anointing of the Sick	<input type="checkbox"/> Anointing of the Sick
Marital Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Separated	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Separated
	<input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Annulled <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Annulled <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced

DEPENDENT INFORMATION

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Gender	Relationship to Head of Household	Date of Birth	Office Use/PS
1.			<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
Sacraments Rcvd: <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism (Faith of Baptism if not Catholic: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> First Reconciliation <input type="checkbox"/> First Communion <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation						
Religious Education Attending: <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry (teen) <input type="checkbox"/> CCD <input type="checkbox"/> St. Patrick School						
2.			<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
Sacraments Rcvd: <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism (Faith of Baptism if not Catholic: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> First Reconciliation <input type="checkbox"/> First Communion <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation						
Religious Education Attending: <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry (teen) <input type="checkbox"/> CCD <input type="checkbox"/> St. Patrick School						
3.			<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
Sacraments Rcvd: <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism (Faith of Baptism if not Catholic: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> First Reconciliation <input type="checkbox"/> First Communion <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation						
Religious Education Attending: <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry (teen) <input type="checkbox"/> CCD <input type="checkbox"/> St. Patrick School						
4.			<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
Sacraments Rcvd: <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism (Faith of Baptism if not Catholic: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> First Reconciliation <input type="checkbox"/> First Communion <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation						
Religious Education Attending: <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry (teen) <input type="checkbox"/> CCD <input type="checkbox"/> St. Patrick School						
5.			<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
Sacraments Rcvd: <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism (Faith of Baptism if not Catholic: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> First Reconciliation <input type="checkbox"/> First Communion <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation						
Religious Education Attending: <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry (teen) <input type="checkbox"/> CCD <input type="checkbox"/> St. Patrick School						
6.			<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
Sacraments Rcvd: <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic Baptism (Faith of Baptism if not Catholic: _____) <input type="checkbox"/> First Reconciliation <input type="checkbox"/> First Communion <input type="checkbox"/> Confirmation						
Religious Education Attending: <input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Ministry (teen) <input type="checkbox"/> CCD <input type="checkbox"/> St. Patrick School						

ADDITIONAL ADULTS IN HOUSEHOLD

Last Name	First Name	Relationship to Head of Household

Please list and complete a separate form.

SHARING GOD'S GIFTS OF TIME AND TALENT (NON-CONFIDENTIAL)

To begin participating in any of the following ministries, please write the first name of the interested family member adjacent to the listed ministry. *Some ministries may require Diocesan approval/training.

Family Last Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

PLEASE WRITE FIRST NAME OF PERSON INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING MINISTRIES UNDER THE CORRECT COLUMN:					
	ST. PATRICK	ST. MONICA		ST. PATRICK	ST. MONICA
LITURGICAL MINISTRIES			<input type="checkbox"/> Gardener		
<input type="checkbox"/> Altar Server			<input type="checkbox"/> Lector		
<input type="checkbox"/> Choir Singer			<input type="checkbox"/> Usher		
<input type="checkbox"/> Choir Instrumental			<input type="checkbox"/> Sacristan		
<input type="checkbox"/> Church Cleaner			<input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal Decorator		
<input type="checkbox"/> EMHC					
OUTREACH MINISTRIES			<input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality/Welcome		
<input type="checkbox"/> Charity in Truth			<input type="checkbox"/> Food Pantry		
<input type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth Ministry			<input type="checkbox"/> Meals Ministry		
<input type="checkbox"/> Funeral Meals			<input type="checkbox"/> Parish Nurses		
<i>Circle: I can provide a dish / I can help with dinners</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> Respect Life		
EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES			<input type="checkbox"/> O.C.I.A.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Bible Study			<input type="checkbox"/> Retreats/Missions		
<input type="checkbox"/> CCD Teacher			<input type="checkbox"/> School Volunteer		
FELLOWSHIP MINISTRIES			<input type="checkbox"/> Fun After 50		
<input type="checkbox"/> Card Clubs			<input type="checkbox"/> Knights of Columbus		
<input type="checkbox"/> Coffee/Donuts Helper			<input type="checkbox"/> Ladies Guild		
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Movie Night			<input type="checkbox"/> Seniors Luncheon		
<p>I have a special talent or skill I am willing to share: _____</p> <p>Please indicate skill or talent: _____</p> <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;"><i>examples: sewing, art, sign language, carpentry, painting, florals, editing, computer software skills, etc</i></p>					

NOTES: