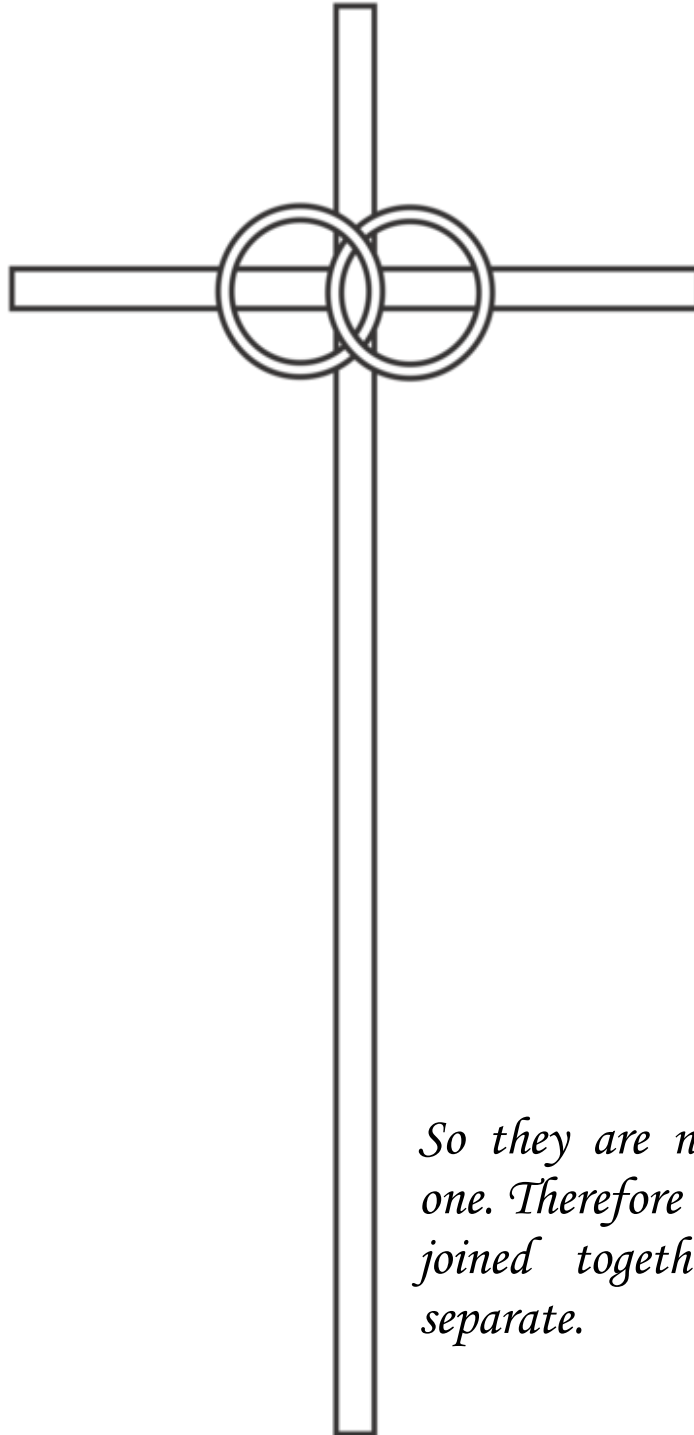


ST. BERNADETTE CHURCH

Parlin, New Jersey



*So they are no longer two, but
one. Therefore what God has
joined together, let man not
separate.*

Matthew 19:6

Congratulations on your forth-coming wedding!

We rejoice with you in your decision to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage here in our parish community. Your marriage is not just for a day, but also for a lifetime. Marriage is a sacrament celebrated by the Church and, therefore, it belongs to the Christian Community.

There will be much planning for this day. So, we encourage and remind you on the spirituality of the day – the celebration of a Sacrament, not the event.

The following is a guideline to assist you in the preparation of the Sacrament of Matrimony:

A. At least three meetings with the priest/deacon who will witness your marriage in order to develop a helpful and friendly relationship with you and to help plan the wedding Mass or ceremony.

B. F.O.C.C.U.S. Inventory

C. Marriage License: the marriage license can be obtained in the municipality in which the bride resides or in the municipality in which the groom resides in if the bride is not a resident of New Jersey. If neither, the license is then obtained from the Township of Old Bridge. The license is good for thirty (30) days. A witness may be required in obtaining a license.

D. Church Documents Required: a recent Baptismal certificate, dated within a year of the wedding, from the church you were baptized in; a recent First Communion and Confirmation certificate from the church where you received these Sacraments. For someone from a Christian Denomination: a copy of his or her Baptismal Certificate. If there has been a previous marriage, a Death Certificate of the former spouse is needed. If divorced, a Decree of Nullity from the Church Tribunal must be submitted. This Decree of Nullity from the Church is required regardless of one's faith background!

E. Attendance at a marriage preparation program: either a Pre-Cana or an Engaged Encounter Weekend; PLUS "God's Plan For Marriage" Session that is held at the St. John Neumann Pastoral Center. It is the responsibility of the couple to sign up and attend these programs. You will be handed a flyer with the dates and times of these programs that are held at various parishes throughout the Diocese. It is recommended that you attend these programs several months before the wedding date.

F. Because the Sacrament of Marriage is a sacred event, it is important that the celebration be in a church. The Bishops of the State do not allow a wedding to take place outside such a place of worship.

G. When both parties are practicing Catholics, they may have a nuptial Mass. When one party is not Catholic or is a non-practicing Catholic, it is advised that the couple have a wedding ceremony. It is not permitted to have two separate religious services.

H. A nuptial Mass or ceremony in our Church follows the basic format of our parish Sunday worship. In the case of a wedding ceremony, the Liturgy of the Eucharist is not celebrated. The couple is invited to choose scripture readings, prayers, etc., from those suggested by the "Catholic Rite for Marriage" book. All parts of the nuptial Mass or ceremony shall be sung according to the "Rite".

I. It is encouraged that you invite family members or friends to take special roles in the wedding service by choosing someone to do the readings from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and the Christian Scriptures (New Testament). Since the readings are to be heard and understood by the congregation, the person(s) you choose to read should have confidence and a strong enough voice to do a good job! Someone may be chosen to read the General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful) and bring up the gifts of bread and wine (when applicable).

J. *Music:* Mary Kay Isele is the Director of Music. You will need to meet with her to discuss the selection of songs for your wedding. A music selection list may be found on the parish website at saintbernadettechurch.net/wedding-music. All decisions by Mary Kay regarding music are final. The fee for vocalist/organist is \$350. No outside organist is permitted. Guest musicians are permitted but the Director must first grant permission. However, fees are not waived. Mary Kay Isele may be reached at 732-485-4947 or via email at MaryKayC@aol.com.

K. *Photographs:* one photographer should be used during the service. Please have your photographer meet with the priest/deacon one-half hour before the celebration so that they might be informed of our parish policy regarding pictures. NO flash is permitted during the celebration. The use of a video camera is allowed and they must be stationary with no lights.

L. *Time:* the latest time permitted is 2:30 p.m. for a ceremony and 2:00 p.m. for a nuptial Mass. It is important that the wedding party be on time or even early. There are confessions and an evening Vigil Mass on Saturday.

M. Rehearsal is normally on Friday evening and the time is to be set with the priest/deacon. The marriage license, fees, and wedding candle are to be brought the night of the rehearsal. Though the atmosphere at the rehearsal is relaxed, please remind your wedding party that the practice is taking place in Church and proper conduct is expected. Please remember to have all people present who are participating at the celebration.

N. Flowers are optional. A runner is NOT permitted. The church lends itself better to two vases of flowers and/or one placed in front of the altar. Flowers are usually left as a gift to the Church. If flowers or bows are to be placed on the pews, they should not be nailed, taped, or in any way attached so that they cause markings. Please make sure the Church knows when flowers will be delivered.

O. It is NOT permitted to drop rose pedals or flowers during the procession into or out of the Church. Nor is it permitted that rice, confetti, birdseed or anything else be thrown outside the Church after the wedding. There is NO ONE to clean up afterwards. This may be hazardous to people coming to Church afterwards especially if it rains and it is often brought into the Church.

P. It is customary to give a donation to the parish.

- A donation to the Church by weekly practicing Catholics (suggested: \$250.00)

- \$500.00 donation to the Church by non-practicing Catholics (many parishioners have helped support the Church over the years to maintain it)

- \$750.00 for non-parishioners.

Q. After your wedding day, please remember to register in the parish as a new family In the Church you will be attending. Registering in a parish is important: to share your time, talent and treasure; to receive a letter of recommendation to be a Godparent or a Sponsor; and to have your children baptized.

These guidelines are set to assist you in the preparation of the Sacrament. Any questions in regards to these guidelines are to be discussed with the priest/deacon. Please call the Parish Office if you postpone or cancel your wedding in the parish.

Thank you and be assured of our prayers for you during this time of preparation!

July 2022