

A Guide to
PLANNING
Your
Wedding
with Christ Our Light



CHRIST OUR LIGHT CATHOLIC PARISH

11700 293rd Ave NW, Princeton, MN 55371

763.389.2115 | www.christourlightmn.org

Christ Our Light Catholic Parish is happy to assist you in preparation for your wedding liturgy and married life together! When planning a wedding remember that your service is centered on Christ and is not a performance, but a liturgy.

Please keep in mind to:

- allow active participation by all present
- resemble a Sunday service in many ways
- strive for inclusivity (language, participations)

To become married is one of, if not, the most important endeavors of a couple's life. The Catholic Church considers this so important that we want couples well-prepared and ready for this vocation. For a Catholic to get married, even when it occurs with a non-Catholic or at a non-Catholic church, there are some basic requirements:

_____ Set a date with Fr. Kevin Anderson and the church by calling 763-631-9208

_____ Attend the Christ Our Light Wedding Seminar series (fee: \$50), offered over three consecutive Saturday mornings in either the fall or spring.

At this seminar, all Diocesan requirements are explained. They include:

- _____ Filling out the Pre-Nuptial Data Form
- _____ Completing the Fully Engaged inventory (i.e. compatibility survey)
- _____ Completing the Myers – Briggs Personality Inventory
- _____ Finishing the paperwork needed for marriage

_____ Meet with Maureen (Mo) Putnam, Director of Music & Liturgy, to discuss your wedding liturgy musical details

_____ Meet with your Sponsor Couple to discuss your Fully Engaged results

_____ Meet with Fr. Kevin at least one month before the wedding to finalize details

_____ Baptismal Certificates: newly-issued for Catholics, photocopy for non-Catholic

_____ Attend a Diocesan sponsored Pre-Marriage Retreat or Workshop (Certificate is given on completion.)

_____ Rough draft of your wedding program

_____ Marriage License (obtained through the County Courthouse)

_____ "Prayers of the Faithful" (also known as Petitions, see page 8)

_____ Fee for use of the Church \$300, (\$450 for non-members)

_____ Stipend for Presider \$150

_____ Stipend for Musicians (see page 9)

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING LITURGY

A wedding is a time of praise and thanksgiving for the ways that God is working in your life and relationship. A challenge at this point is to shape a wedding ceremony that aptly expresses your personal faith and love and that also expresses the public worship of the faith community.

The congregation also has an important role to play by participating in your wedding. You can ensure this by seeing that they are welcomed, providing them with a program for the service, including music for them to sing and involving them in the ritual through word and gesture.

THEME (OR FOCUS)

First, begin by determining a theme (i.e., a focus or underlying motif/idea that you want to be conveyed at the celebration). While the theme may not be explicitly stated at the liturgy, it will give you a platform from which to plan the entire service. A theme will keep your ceremony focused and uncluttered.

Examples of Themes

Everlasting	Light	Celebration	Friendship
Commitment	Christ	Nature/Creation	Support

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Now that you have chosen your theme, the next step is to select scripture texts which complement that theme. Below is a list of suggestions; however, these are not the only scripture texts allowed. You may also shorten or lengthen any text to fit with your theme.

Most weddings include three scripture readings: a Gospel reading, an Old Testament reading, and a New Testament reading. However, it is possible to include one Gospel reading and two Old Testament readings, or one Gospel reading and two New Testament readings. Recommendations can be found below and on the next page. We ask that you, as a couple, prayerfully and thoughtfully consider your scriptural choices so that they reflect your overall theme.

(Please see the appendix for all readings listed on the following pages)

Old Testament Readings

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 *"Choose life then so that you and your descendants may live"*
 Tobit 7:9c-10, 11c—17, *"A wedding blessing for Tobiah and Sarah"*
 Tobit 8:5—9, *"The wedding prayer of Tobiah and Sarah"*
 Song of Songs 2:8—10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a, *"A love song: Arise, my beloved and come!"*
 Isaiah 58:6—11, *"Share your bread with the hungry"*
 Isaiah 60:1—6, *"All people will walk in your light"*
 Jeremiah 1:4—9, *"See, I place my words in your mouth"*
 Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a, *"A covenant written on our hearts"*
 Ezekiel 36:25—28, *"I will give you a new heart and place a new spirit within you"*
 Genesis 1:26—28, 31, *"A man and woman created in God's image"*
 Genesis 2:18—24, *"Second story of creation: The two become one body"*
 Genesis 12:1—4, *"Leave your country and come into the land I will show you"*
 Genesis 24:48—51, 58—67, *"The meeting and marriage of Isaac and Rebecca"*

New Testament Readings

Romans 8:31—34, *"Nothing can separate us from God's love"*
 Romans 12:1-2, 9—18, *"Offer to God yourselves as a living and holy sacrifice"*
 Romans 15:5-6, 13, *"Christ, the hope of all"*
 I Corinthians 6:13a—15a, 17—20, *"Your body is a dwelling of the Spirit"*
 I Corinthians 12:31—13:8a, *"All the things love does"*
 Ephesians 4:1—6, *"Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"*
 Ephesians 5:1-2a, 21, 25—32, *"Love of the couple like that of Christ and the church"*
 Philippians 2:1—13, *"Be united in your convictions and united in your love"*
 Philippians 4:4—9, *"The God of peace be with you"*
 Colossians 3:12—17, *"Forgiving, being thankful, and other signs of our life together"*
 Hebrews 13:1—4a, 5-6a, *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow"*
 I John 3:18—24, *"Love is more than words: It's what we do"*
 I John 4:7—12, *"If we love one another, God dwells in us"*
 Revelation 19:1, 5—9a, *"God's kingdom is like a wedding feast"*

Gospel Readings (to be chosen by the Presider: Priest or Deacon)

Matthew 5:1—12a, *"The Beatitudes"*
 Matthew 5:13—16, *"You are the salt of the earth and the light of the world"*
 Matthew 7:21, 24—29, *"Build your house on a firm foundation"*
 Matthew 19:3—6, *"Let no one separate what God has joined"*
 Matthew 22:35—40, *"The great commandment"*
 Mark 10:6—9, *"The two are one: Let no one separate what God has joined"*
 Luke 4:16—22, *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me"*
 John 2:1—11, *"There was a wedding at Cana and Jesus was there"*
 John 15:9—12, *"Love one another as I have loved you"*
 John 15:9—17, *"I call you friends"*
 John 17:20—26, *"Father, may they be one"*
 John 21:15—19, *"Simon, do you love me?"*

MUSIC

Only after your theme and scripture have been selected should you move on to selecting music. Please contact Maureen Putnam (Mo), our Director of Music and Liturgy at 320-339-0651 to help you with this. Please bring your theme and scripture selections with you when you meet with her.

Your wedding ceremony is a reflection of our Sunday liturgy, which means there is a cantor or soloist for the psalm, hymns and Mass parts. If you do not have a soloist in mind, Maureen will assist you in finding one and any other desired instrumentalists. Because of our sound system and the liturgical music component of the ceremony, we recommend that Maureen is your wedding accompanist. However, other musicians are welcome to participate in the ceremony. Fees for your musician(s) will vary depending on their terms and conditions.

Please note, most often secular or “top 40s” music is usually suitable as a prelude or postlude.

Places for Music during a ceremony with Eucharist

(*indicates must have, all other places are optional)

Prelude

Procession (use only one piece)

Gathering Song

* **Psalm Response** (after first reading)

* **Alleluia** (also known as the Gospel Acclamation)

Preparation of Gifts/Unity Candle (one song will cover both actions)

* **Mass Acclamations** (including Holy, Memorial Acclamation, Amen)

Communion

Closing/Recessional

Places for Music during a ceremony without Eucharist

(*indicates must have, all other places are optional)

Prelude

Procession (use only one song)

Gathering Song

* **Psalm Response** (after first reading)

* **Alleluia** (also known as the Gospel Acclamation)

Lighting of Unity Candle

Closing/Recessional

OUTLINE OF THE WEDDING LITURGY

Wedding Liturgies with Mass (celebrated with Eucharist)

- **Liturgy of the Word:**
 - Procession
 - Scripture Readings
 - Homily
- **Rite of Marriage:**
 - Exchange of Vows
 - Blessing and Exchange of Rings
 - Nuptial Blessing
 - Prayers of the Faithful (also called Petitions)
- **Liturgy of the Eucharist:**
 - Preparation of Gifts/Lighting of the Unity Candle
 - Eucharistic Prayer
 - Lord's Prayer
 - Sign of Peace
 - Communion
 - Closing Prayer and Recessional

Wedding Liturgies without the Mass (Eucharist is not included)

- **Liturgy of the Word:**
 - Procession
 - Scripture Readings
 - Homily
- **Rite of Marriage:**
 - Exchange of Vows
 - Blessing and Exchange of Rings
 - Nuptial Blessing
 - Prayers of the Faithful (also called Petitions)
 - Lighting of the Unity Candle (optional)
 - Lord's Prayer
 - Sign of Peace
 - Closing Prayer and Recessional

THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

During the Rite of Marriage, the Wedding Party will gather with the Bride and Groom on the steps of the altar, facing the congregation. The Presider will stand on the main floor.

- ***Declaration of Intent/Questioning***

The Presider will ask the couple a series of questions (i.e., regarding their intention to enter into a permanent, faithful union, open to children). The Presider then asks the congregation about their willingness to support the couple in their married life together.

- ***Consent/Exchange of Vows***

The couple faces each other and slowly speaks their vows to one another. Typically, the Groom begins. **VOWS MUST BE MEMORIZED.**

Please select either Form A or B.

- ***FORM A***

“I, **(name)**, take you, **(name)**, to be my wife/husband.

I promise to be faithful to you in good times and in bad,
in sickness and in health,
to love you and to honor you all the days of my life.”

- ***FORM B***

“I, **(name)**, take you, **(name)**, for my lawful wife/husband,

to have and to hold, from this day forward,
for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do us
part.”

- ***Blessing and Exchange of Rings***

ALSO MEMORIZED BY THE COUPLE. As the rings are placed on the ring finger of each person’s left hand, the following is said:

“**(Name)**, receive this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

- ***Nuptial Blessing***

Spoken or sung by the Presider; after this blessing, the Wedding Party return to their seats while Bride and Groom remain standing at the altar.

- ***Prayers of the Faithful/Intercessions***

Prepared by Bride and Groom (see “Sample Prayers of the Faithful.”)

SAMPLE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL (Petitions)

Use four or five of these (or write your own), hand in a typed copy

For _____ and _____, now beginning a new life together. May they know of God's presence in their lives, and the constant support of friends and family. We pray to the Lord.

For _____ and _____, that their treasure will be each other; that learning and understanding will be the object of their ambitions; and that compassion and charity will always be the measure of their success. We pray to the Lord.

For _____ and _____, that they will always be teachers and students; that their lessons will always be peace and justice; that hope will be their bond, love their companion, and faith their journey. We pray to the Lord.

For _____ and _____, that they may experience life as with one heart and one soul, tasting its pleasures and enduring its sorrows, at all times assisting, supporting, and consoling each other. We pray to the Lord.

For all married persons, that they may continue to give, be able to forgive, and find happiness with the passing of each day. We pray to the Lord.

For those who have died, especially _____ (*names and relationship to the bride/groom*) that they may enjoy perfect happiness and total fulfillment in eternal life. We pray to the Lord.

For all scorned because of racial, religious, sexual and generational differences, that we will find strength in these differences and love in our hearts to strive for tolerance among all of God's people. We pray to the Lord.

For those men and women who serve in the military, that they will be kept safe from harm and strengthened by the loving arms of Christ. We pray to the Lord.

For justice and lasting peace in our world for all who are oppressed. We pray to the Lord.

For the people of _____, and for people of all nations suffering from violence and division, that hostilities will soon end and wounds will heal. We pray to the Lord.

For all of us, that we may become the instruments of peace. We pray to the Lord.

For all of us, that we will experience a renewed sense of love and faith as we journey with this couple in their married life together. We pray to the Lord.

More Details

Planning is a huge part of the entire marriage process. Therefore, we ask couples to contact Fr. Kevin preferably twelve (12) months prior to the proposed wedding date to allow adequate time for preparation.

One of the engaged persons must be a registered member of Christ Our Light, or the child of a registered member.

Friday weddings are at 5:00 PM and Saturday weddings are at 2:00 PM. Weddings may be held on Sundays but need to be celebrated within the context and structure of the Sunday Mass. Weddings are usually not held during Advent and Lent, and never during Holy Week (which begins on Palm Sunday and goes through Easter Sunday).

The fee for use of the church is \$300.00*--the Wedding Coordinator fee is included in this amount. PLEASE NOTE: This does not include fees for musicians or the presider. The typical stipend to the Presider is \$150. (***\$450 for non-members**)

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

There are other roles (ministries) to be performed during your celebration. Please select people to fill them.

LECTOR(S): The lector (reader) needs to be someone accustomed to taking this role in the church or comfortable with public proclamation. S/he should practice the scriptures at the rehearsal. **A separate reader for each reading is preferred.**

USHERS: Ushers may be male and/or female. They need to be chosen for their ability to welcome people and attend to their needs before, during and after the service. They should be available to seat people at least 20 minutes before the liturgy and be familiar with the location of the restrooms, etc. Part of their responsibility is to remove items personal to the bridal party after the ceremony (i.e., programs, unity candle, etc.).

ALTAR SERVERS: Servers are not necessary but may be used especially if a Eucharist is included in your ceremony. Servers need to be experienced.

GIFT BEARERS: If celebrating the Eucharist, you may choose two or three people to carry the gifts of bread and wine in the offertory procession.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS: If you plan to celebrate the Eucharist as part of your wedding, Eucharistic Ministers will be needed to distribute Communion. These minister should be an experienced Eucharistic Minister from their own parish. For most weddings, two Eucharistic Ministers (including the priest) are sufficient. For larger weddings, four Eucharistic Ministers (including the priest) are recommended. The Precious Blood is not offered at weddings, but it can be included upon request.

SEATING IN THE CHURCH

The total seating capacity is 275. Overflow seating—available by opening Classrooms B and C—can accommodate an additional 90 guests.

WEDDING PARTY

It is best to avoid excessive numbers of groomsmen/bridesmaids. No more than six couples (including junior attendants) are recommended.

The use of Flower Girls and Ring Bearers are not encouraged during the liturgy. In most cases, their presence detracts from the focus on the bride/groom and the solemnity of the liturgy. It is preferred to have these little ones participate only for photographs. If they are to participate in the service, it is the responsibility **of the couple** to arrange for a parent/guardian to assist them down the aisle. While the child may be comfortable at the rehearsal the night prior, walking down the aisle in front of a full church of strangers is very different, and we do not want them to feel uncomfortable or frightened.

The Witnesses (Maid/Matron of Honor and Best Man) are considered legal witnesses to the marriage. They are responsible for signing the license (done immediately after the ceremony) and must be at least 16 years of age.

ENVIRONMENT

When selecting the date for your wedding liturgy, please keep in mind the liturgical season in which you will be celebrating your marriage. Our church is decorated for each season with very specific colors and fabrics, flowers, and other items. It is helpful to take this into consideration when choosing dresses, tuxedos/suits, and flowers in your planning phase.

The following is a list of decorations and colors that you will see in the Sanctuary during a given season of the year.

- **CHRISTMAS:** Red, green, gold, white. Evergreen trees & poinsettias are present.
- **WINTER ORDINARY TIME:** (Immediately follows Christmas, goes until Ash Wednesday) Soft teal shades of green, off-white, and light colors. Green plants will be added.
- **EASTER:** Pastel colors. Many flowers and plants are incorporated; decorations are very lavish.
- **PENTECOST:** Red, orange, yellow fiery colors
- **SUMMER ORDINARY TIME:** Shades of green and gold
- **FALL ORDINARY TIME:** Browns, reds, orange, yellow, and tan

We ask that you respect those decorations in the church environment by **NOT ALTERING OR REMOVING** elements of the decor for your wedding. **Please inform florists and photographers regarding this.** It is advisable to consult with Mo when planning any additions to the environment.

Because the altar is the central symbol of our liturgy and represents Christ, no flowers, candles, or other decorations are to be placed on it or in front of it. Floral arrangements may be placed in front of the ambo or on the table for the Unity Candle. If you plan to use decorations on the chairs, please talk with Mo about how you plan to secure them. **NO tape, nails, or other such material may be used on the chairs!**

For safety and maintenance reasons, the use of rice, confetti, fireworks, or birdseed is not permitted inside or outside the church. **Any objects in the environment, including plants and flowers, that are damaged by the wedding party shall be the sole responsibility of the wedding couple to replace.**

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

Rehearsals are usually held on the night before the wedding. Rehearsals are scheduled in consultation with the Wedding Coordinator. The Bride and Groom have a private rehearsal 30 minutes before the rest of the Wedding Party arrive. For example, the Bride and Groom come at 5:00 PM to rehearse, then the others (including the Wedding Party and family) arrive at 5:30 PM.

It is recommended that readers and Eucharistic Ministers attend the rehearsal. If that is not possible, they should locate the Wedding Coordinator at least 30 minutes prior to the ceremony for instructions. Musicians are not expected to be present for the rehearsal, unless otherwise arranged; visiting musicians are encouraged to attend, to become acquainted with our space and equipment. **Musicians may rehearse prior to the beginning of the rehearsal, but not during.**

USE OF CHURCH ON YOUR WEDDING DAY

The Conference Room near the restrooms will be set aside for your use on the day of your wedding. This room is intended for dressing and preparing for the wedding. Classroom A is available upon request for the men to use.

If you are planning to bring a snack/lunch, please use the tables in the Gathering area near the Conference Room. Please supply your own utensils, napkins, plates, cups, etc. **CLEAN UP IS REQUIRED!**

The offering fee for the church does not cover use of other areas of the Church. Rental of additional spaces may be done through the Parish Office. **FOOD AND BEVERAGES ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE SANCTUARY AT ANY TIME FOR ANY PURPOSE.**

Smoking and alcoholic beverages are **NOT PERMITTED** on church property.

USE OF CHURCH FOR RECEPTION PURPOSES

If you wish to use the church for a meal, please inquire at the Parish Office. Christ Our Light has a Facility Rental Policy that will be given to you.

There is a fee for use of the church AND a request form which must be filled out and signed by you and then approved by the Pastor. The bride, groom and/or family are responsible for set up and clean up, and must serve the meal or have it catered. **The area needs to be left in the condition it was found.**

INFORMATION FOR THE LITURGY

* Only needed if a Mass is included

LECTOR(S) _____

***EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS** (Needs two, including the Priest)

Bread (Priest) _____

Bread _____

***GIFT BEARERS** _____

CANTOR _____

PIANIST _____

OTHER INSTRUMENTALISTS OR VOCALISTS _____

*

ORDER OF SERVICE (for your Program)

INTRODUCTORY RITES

PRELUDE (*Optional*) _____

PROCESSIONAL _____

GREETING

GATHERING SONG (*Optional*) _____

OPENING PRAYER

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING _____

RESPONSORIAL PSALM _____

SECOND READING _____

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ALLELUIA) _____

GOSPEL READING _____

HOMILY

THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

- DECLARATION OF INTENT
- EXCHANGE OF VOWS
- EXCHANGE OF RINGS
- NUPTIAL BLESSING
- GENERAL INTERCESSIONS (PETITIONS)

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

(with a Mass - Eucharist)

PREPARATION OF
GIFTS/LIGHTING OF THE UNITY
CANDLE (*optional*)

EUCHARISTIC ACCLAMATIONS
THE LORD'S PRAYER
SIGN OF PEACE
COMMUNION
CLOSING PRAYER / BLESSING
RECESSIONAL

POSTLUDE

or CONCLUDING RITES

(without a Mass – no Eucharist)

UNITY CANDLE LIGHTING
(*optional*)

THE LORD'S PRAYER
SIGN OF PEACE
CLOSING PRAYER / BLESSING
RECESSIONAL

POSTLUDE

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

- RE-MARRIAGES: If one (or both of the engaged) is marrying for a second time, the couple must attend a course of the Pastor's recommendation. This course will specifically explore issues relating to second marriages and blended families. If either person has children, they will participate in sessions appropriate to their age and understanding.
- ANNULMENTS: While we try to be as accommodating as possible, couples in which one or both persons need an annulment will be asked to complete that process before celebrating their marriage at Christ Our Light. **No marriage date may be set until the annulment process is completed and granted.**
- COHABITATION: In 1984 the Diocese of St. Cloud issued a statement on couples who live together prior to the celebration of sacramental marriage (cohabitation). ***This states that any couple preparing to receive the sacrament of Holy Matrimony who are living together must begin living separately immediately.*** If the couple refuses to comply, the priest can refuse to witness the marriage. There is growing data which indicates that cohabitation is not good preparation for marriage.

Sexual relations are a sign and symbol of a total gift of one person to another. This total gift is made in the marriage vows in which two people give themselves publicly and irrevocably to each other for life. To engage in sexual relations before making that formal, public, permanent gift and commitment in marriage is to falsify the sacred symbol because no formal commitment has been made. Receiving the sacrament of Holy Matrimony is to ask Christ to be the center of your marriage, making a permanent commitment to each other and God.

- COUPLES WITH OTHER SPECIAL SITUATIONS: Chemical dependency, a history of abuse, or couples who are very young will be required to explore those concerns with competent personnel prior to the celebration of marriage. These issues are not reasons to avoid marriage, but they do have serious impacts on relationships and need to be considered as part of the preparation for a healthy marriage.