

Congratulations on your Engagement!

Planning your wedding can be one of the most exciting times of your life.

We are happy that you have chosen Holy Trinity
to be part of your special day.

We want to help you plan a wedding ceremony that is spiritual and sacramental in
accordance with the Catholic belief that marriage is a lifelong commitment.

Since planning a wedding can be one of the most stressful times of your life, we have
included some guidelines for you, your family and friends, and any others that will be a
part of your big day, to help guide you through the process.

Holy Trinity Ministry Center

(619) 444-9425

Father Reynaldo Manahan, Pastor

Music Ministers & Rehearsal Coordinators

Wendy Andersen, Parish Music Director (English)

wendyandersen@cox.net

(619) 994-7203

Suzette Montoya, Parish Music Ministry (Spanish)

(619) 318-8475

To Schedule a Rehearsal, please contact the Church Ministry Center

admin@holytrinityelcajon.org (619) 444-9425

Once you have met with a priest, chosen your wedding date, and put down a deposit, please make arrangements for your music and rehearsal.

MUSIC -

It is customary that all music be arranged with one of our Music Ministers for your wedding celebration. Because marriage in the Catholic Church is a liturgical celebration, songs played before and during the ceremony should focus on the religious nature of love and the sacred character of Holy Matrimony. This means that any music which would be appropriate at Mass is also appropriate for your wedding. You have hundreds of songs to choose from and one of our music ministers will work closely with you to plan the musical part of your ceremony. Please contact one of our parish music ministers as soon as possible to check availability and confirm your date and discuss their fees.

Wendy Andersen (English) - (619)-994-7203 or,
Suzette Montoya (Spanish) - (619)-318-8475

If you plan to have additional musicians or singers, we ask that they be in touch with your Holy Trinity music minister well in advance of your wedding. They will be guided with the music selections that are appropriate for your celebration.

REHEARSAL -

Dates and times for rehearsals at Holy Trinity are flexible, but must be confirmed with the church office as soon as possible to ensure your request is met.

Typically, rehearsals are set for late afternoon or early evening on the Thursday or Friday prior to your ceremony. All those who have a part in your wedding ceremony should attend the rehearsal to become familiar with their roles. This includes lectors and members of the wedding party including flower girl(s) and ring bearer. Parents and grandparents may attend as well. We ask that everyone arrive PROMPTLY. Because of scheduling conflicts in the church, we cannot guarantee a rehearsal if it is not started on time. We ask everyone involved to carefully listen to and follow the instructions of the Rehearsal Coordinators. Each step of the wedding ceremony will be practiced or discussed at the rehearsal. Rehearsal typically lasts one hour. Remember, respect and reverence while in the church at all times. Please no food, drink, or chewing gum. ALCOHOL IS NOT PERMITTED ON CHURCH GROUNDS. Place cell phones off or in vibrate mode. Please exit the church when receiving or making a call. Proper and respectful dress...please no short shorts, tank tops, or beach wear. Do not let children run around the church.

Please fill out the "Together for Life" form and either return it to the Church Ministry Center or email it to the rehearsal coordinator. The information provided will help ensure a successful rehearsal. DO NOT WORRY if you leave some sections blank.

SECTION I - PLANNING THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Guidelines – Your wedding ceremony will be planned primarily by you with assistance from the priest, the music minister and the rehearsal coordinator. Your information folder contains a booklet titled “Together for Life”, which contains guidelines for planning a Catholic wedding ceremony that is liturgically appropriate. When you meet with the priest who will preside at your wedding, he will review your plans for the ceremony and will make any modifications that may be needed.

Deciding whether to have a Mass - If you choose to celebrate Mass as part of your wedding ceremony, the order of liturgical rites would be Liturgy of the Word (scripture readings), Marriage Rite, and Liturgy of the Eucharist (consecration and Communion). If you choose to plan a wedding ceremony outside of the Mass, the order of the liturgical rites would be Liturgy of the Word, Marriage Rite, and Blessing.

It is appropriate and encouraged that a Mass be celebrated when both members of the engaged couple are Catholic, and the other type of ceremony be celebrated when one of the members is a baptized Christian of another denomination, or is a non-Christian, or is not baptized. The sacrament of Holy Matrimony is not lessened when Mass is not chosen. Your priest can help you make this decision when you meet with him.

The Catholic wedding – While allowing for certain personal preferences and choices, the wedding liturgy follows certain prescribed norms:

- The congregation actively participates in the liturgy
- Readers (chosen in advance by the couple) may be family members or close friends
- Altar Servers and Eucharistic Ministers are provided by Holy Trinity
- Gift presenters are provided by Holy Trinity
- Musicians and cantors are provided by Holy Trinity unless otherwise discussed
- Church decorations remain in place, with optional, additional flower arrangements kept to a minimum

Entrance procession – The order of the entrance procession may be decided by the couple. It is customary at Holy Trinity for the priest to be in the front of the church at the beginning of the ceremony. Which wedding party members process down the aisle, and which wait in the front of the church are up to you. This will be practiced several times during the wedding rehearsal.

Choosing scripture readings – Whether your ceremony includes a Mass or not, *you will need to choose two readings*. You will find a list of appropriate readings in the Together for Life booklet. Your first reading needs to be chosen from section “B”, from the Old Testament. And your second reading needs to be chosen from section “D”, from the New Testament. *You will need to choose a friend or family member to read these scriptures.*

The presiding priest will choose the Gospel to be read, unless otherwise discussed.

Vows – The exchange of wedding vows in the Catholic church is a liturgical celebration and therefore, certain formulas must be used according to the Church. Several ways of exchanging vows can be found in the “Together for Life” booklet and may be discussed with the priest.

Rings – Your rings are blessed and given to each other as a sign of your love and fidelity. You will repeat the words of exchange after the priest. If you are including the blessing of coins, a rosary, a bible and/or a lasso, in your ceremony, this will take place here. Most often, these additional items to be blessed will be placed on a side table near the bridal couple until they are presented to the priest. However, if you prefer, members of the bridal party may hold them at their seats until called upon.

Unity Candle – The lighting of a Unity candle is optional. If you choose to include it in your ceremony, please discuss it with the rehearsal coordinator prior to the rehearsal so that it can be practiced. **Unity candles will not be accepted as part of the ceremony if not discussed in advance.** You must supply the candles (2 tapers and a 3” round pillar will work best).

Intercessions – The priest will choose the Prayers of the Faithful to be read at this point in the Mass. In addition to these intercessions, you may choose to add up to two additional, personal intercessions. If parents, grandparents other family members or friends of the couple are deceased, you may want to acknowledge them by name here. These additions are optional and must be given to the rehearsal coordinator prior to the rehearsal and ceremony. *You will need to assign a friend or family member to read the Prayers of the Faithful.*

Presentation of the bread and wine – If you choose to have a Mass, there is no offertory procession unless otherwise discussed.

Eucharist prayer – If you choose a Mass, you and the congregation will remember Christ’s gift of Himself to us at the Last Supper during this prayer.

Lord’s Prayer – The congregation will recite the Our Father

Nuptial blessing – This is a special prayer for the couple following the Lord’s Prayer to be chosen by the priest.

Sign of Peace – The priest will ask the congregation to share a sign of Christ’s peace with one another. You may exchange a sign of affection with each other, your families and your wedding party. You may choose to present mothers with a single flower at this time (optional).

Communion – If you choose a Mass, those who are Catholic will receive Communion at this time. Altar servers and/or Eucharistic ministers will be supplied by Holy Trinity unless otherwise discussed.

Visit the Blessed Virgin Mary - You may choose to ask Mary and the saints to pray for you in your commitment to each other. This is optional. You may also choose to bring a small bouquet of flowers with you to leave at her feet. If you choose to have music played during your visit to Mary, please remain in prayer before her until the music is complete before you return to the priest.

Final blessing – The priest will bless you with a prayer of his choice.

Introduction and recessional - The priest will introduce you to your family and friends as a married couple. You will leave the church followed by the wedding party, family and guests.

SECTION II - DAY OF THE CEREMONY

Dressing rooms – Holy Trinity does not have a bridal dressing room. There are bathrooms in the back of the church, but they do not offer adequate space for dressing, etc. It is strongly recommended that the bride, groom and bridal party come attired and ready to go. If the bride would like to hold to tradition and not be seen by her groom until she processes down the aisle, she and her bridal party may wait in the choir loft. Please let the rehearsal coordinator know in advance so that the gate can be unlocked.

Flowers and decorations – Flowers and decorations are to be used in a sensible and restrained manner. Holy Trinity is adorned with many beautiful statues and stained glass windows, so you may want to keep the decorations simple. Please keep in mind the nature of the liturgical season in which your ceremony will be held. For instance, during the weeks after Christmas and Easter the church may already be decorated with poinsettias or Easter lilies and you will not need much more. During other seasons you may choose to decorate with floral arrangements on the railings or next to or at the foot of the altar.

NOTHING is ever to be placed directly on the altar. You may place a large arrangement on the floor in front of the altar or on the side platforms below the Virgin Mary and Jesus statues. Pedestal or standing arrangements may be placed in front of the marble railing that separates the altar area from the congregation or near the baptismal font....not on the altar steps.

Only ribbon, rubber bands, or plastic hangers that clip over the pew may be used to fasten arrangements to the pews. NO TAPE, THUMBTACKS, METAL HOLDERS, STAPLE GUNS, OR OTHER MEANS OF FASTENING ARE PERMITTED.

If pew decorations are used, they are to be removed immediately following the ceremony by the florist or family.

Florists are asked to work with the rehearsal coordinator when delivering and placing flowers for the ceremony. All flowers must be removed immediately following the ceremony by family, friends or florist.

Because it could be a safety hazard, the use of an aisle runner on the main aisle is not permitted.

LIT CANDLES ARE NEVER PERMITTED IN THE AISLES, ON THE PEWS, OR ANYWHERE OUTSIDE OF THE SANCTUARY AREA.

The only candles that you will need to supply are those for the unity candle holder if you choose to include it in your ceremony. You will need 2 tapers and a 3” round pillar (height and color are up to you). Please discuss with the rehearsal coordinator prior to the ceremony.

Flower Girls - Flower petals can be a slipping hazard for the bridal party and their guests, as well as staining our beautiful church floor. Therefore, petals of any kind are never allowed to be dropped down the aisle of Holy Trinity Church nor on the grounds outside the church. However, we do understand that flower girls can be an important part of your wedding party. You may want to consider having them carry a single flower or small bouquet or basket (without petals)...or a “Here Comes the Bride” sign for your guests to enjoy.

Blessing Table - If you will be including the blessing of coins, a bible, a rosary and/or a lasso in your ceremony, there will be a small table placed to the left of the bridal kneelers where the items may be placed until they are presented to the priest. A bouquet for the Virgin Mary and any flowers to be handed out during the Sign of Peace may also be placed on this table.

Photographs and videotaping - Please remember that a Catholic wedding is a liturgical ceremony. Photographers and videographers must be mindful of this sacredness. To assist them and you, a separate sheet of information is provided in this packet which you can give to them when they are hired.

For safety reasons, there is to be NO throwing of rice, confetti or birdseed in or around the church. Bubbles are allowed outside the vestibule when the couple is leaving the church.

