



The SACRAMENT of MATRIMONY

MARRIAGE PREPARATION & WEDDING GUIDELINES

Congratulations on your engagement and thank you for choosing to be married according to the Rites of the Catholic Church. Marriage is one of the seven sacraments, and it finds its origin in creation. It was part of God's plan from the beginning that man and woman should no longer be two but one flesh and what He joins together no one must separate. Marriage is a vocation in the church and like all vocations it is a call from God which requires prayer, formation, and commitment. Marriage is serious and sacred.

Marriage preparation is designed to help an engaged couple prepare for the sacrament. It is more than just planning a wedding; it is centered on a couple's relationship and their faith in God. For a person to receive the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony he or she must choose it freely, intend it for life, and be open to the gift of life.

An engaged couple begins their marriage preparation at least six months prior to the date of the proposed wedding. At least one must be a registered and active member of St. John the Baptist Church. If a couple lives out-of-state and wants to be married at St. John the Baptist (with the pastor's approval), they must be registered in a parish where they live and complete the marriage preparation requirements of that (arch)diocese. A date for their wedding will not be finalized until after they have met with the pastor (or the parish representative) of that parish and have begun the marriage preparation process.

These guidelines will assist you in preparing for the Sacrament of Matrimony. The program we offer will help deepen your relationship with one another and with Christ and his Church, and, if you will be married at St. John the Baptist, they will also help you in planning your wedding. Be assured of our prayers and support during your engagement. We look forward to getting to know you better and celebrating your marriage for many years to come.

Monsignor William L. Novak, V.G.

Pastor

MARRIAGE PREPARATION STEPS

STEP 1: MEET WITH THE CLERGY

Before an engaged couple can schedule a wedding date, they must meet with a member of the clergy. At this meeting, he will introduce the couple to the marriage preparation process, explain its purpose, and, if appropriate, help them select a wedding date and review the wedding guidelines.

STEP 2: TAKE FOCCUS

The engaged couple will receive information from the marriage preparation coordinator about FOCCUS, an online compatibility inventory. FOCCUS is not a test. Couples cannot pass or fail.

STEP 3: MEET WITH MENTOR COUPLE

Engaged couples will be assigned a mentor couple. Mentor couples are registered and active members of St. John and they have been married for at least 10 years. Engaged couples will meet up to three times with their mentor couple to review and discuss the results of FOCCUS. Meetings take place in the mentor couple's home. FOCCUS results are confidential and are shared only with the clergy and mentor couple.

STEP 4: ATTEND DISCOVERY MARRIAGE PREP RETREAT

Engaged couples attend the Discovery Marriage Prep Retreat which begins on a Friday evening and continues until Saturday afternoon. The retreat is led by clergy, mentor couples, and includes five main topics: Family of Origin, Communication, Finances, Intimacy and Marriage as Sacrament. Meals are provided. The marriage preparation coordinator will provide information regarding dates and registration.

STEP 5: MEETING WITH THE CLERGY

Engaged couples will schedule a meeting with their clergy after finishing the FOCCUS and retreat. He will review with them the nature and obligations of marriage.

STEP 6: MEET WITH WEDDING COORDINATOR

If the wedding takes place at St. John the Baptist Church, the engaged couple will schedule a meeting with the parish wedding coordinator to discuss the details of the ceremony, both the bride and groom must attend this meeting.

STEP 7: MEET WITH MUSIC DIRECTOR

If the wedding takes place at St. John the Baptist Church, the engaged couple will schedule a meeting with the parish music director. Music appropriate for a Catholic wedding is listed in this guide.

STEP 8: FINAL MEETING WITH CLERGY

At this final meeting, the clergy will complete the PNI with the couple and give them the Disclosure of Marriage Preparation to receive a discount on the marriage license. He will also review the wedding ceremony.

WEDDING GUIDELINES

THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

Your wedding at St. John the Baptist Church will be dignified and sacred. All members of the wedding party, family, and guests must help preserve the sacredness of the ceremony through appropriate behavior. All weddings at St. John the Baptist Church follow the ritual guidelines of the Roman Catholic Church—no exceptions. The Church provides two options for the wedding ceremony: a Nuptial Mass or the Sacrament of Marriage outside of Mass. Catholic couples are strongly encouraged to select a Nuptial Mass. With the pastor's approval, a Nuptial Mass may be celebrated *ad orientem*. The proper place for a Catholic wedding is a church; as a matter of policy, permission will not be granted for weddings in any place other than a consecrated church or chapel.

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

Weddings are not recommended during the holy season of Lent and are not permitted on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation. Rehearsals are scheduled for the evening before the wedding. Only after the couple has met with the pastor will the wedding date be entered on the parish calendar. Weddings typically take place on Saturdays at the following times: 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, 1:00 PM, or 6:30 PM. Friday evening weddings are also permitted at 6:30 p.m.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals typically take place the evening before the wedding. Friday rehearsals begin at 4:00 pm or 6:30 pm. Those who have a part in the wedding, for example, readers, wedding party members, parents, are strongly encouraged to attend the rehearsal.

THE WEDDING PARTY

There is no limit to the number of bridesmaids and groomsmen you can have for your wedding. Two witnesses (a Best Man and a Maid/Matron of Honor) are required by Oklahoma Law and the Catholic Church for a marriage to be valid. Witnesses must be 18 years of age or over and cannot be a child(ren) of the bride or groom. Pets are not permitted in the church.

USHERS

Groomsmen will assist ushers, if applicable, in seating guests before the wedding.

FLOWER GIRLS & RING BEARERS

It is preferred that flower girls and ring bearers chosen for the wedding be age-appropriate; in other words, they should be old enough to walk down the aisle by themselves. Dropping flower petals or any other item while walking down the aisle is not allowed.

SACRED SCRIPTURE

At the meeting with the wedding coordinator, couples will select readings for the wedding from the options provided by the Church—a reading from the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Gospel. You may have up to two readers for your wedding (Old Testament, New Testament). All readers must be present at the wedding rehearsal. They need not be Catholic.

THE VOWS

The Church provides wedding vows. You will review them with the pastor at your final meeting.

THE MARRIAGE LICENSE

The engaged couple is responsible for securing a marriage license from the State of Oklahoma. Bring the marriage license with you to the wedding rehearsal and give it to the parish wedding coordinator. After the wedding the bride and groom along with the witnesses will sign it. Photographers are allowed to be present at the signing of the marriage license. It is the responsibility of the clergy to send the marriage license to the Court House. If you want copies of the license, please arrange it with the parish wedding coordinator. You can always request a copy of the license through the county courthouse where the license is issued.

MUSIC

All music before and during the ceremony must reflect the reverence and dignity of the occasion, intensify the Christian meaning of the liturgy, and dignify and enhance its sacredness. The following may not be used:

1. Any music that is purely secular in nature and, as such, neglects the sacred union of the couple, not only to one another, but also to Christ.
2. Popular, operatic or Broadway musical favorites which merely recall sentimental and personal associations; such music should be reserved for the wedding reception.
3. No pre-recorded music.

St. John the Baptist Church will make the Director of Music available to assist you. You will meet with the Director of Music to select music for your wedding. Guest or professional musicians are welcome to assist only with the Director of Music's approval. Professional musicians must follow these guidelines and are contracted by the couple. Most require four to six months' advance notice for booking and typically do not attend the wedding rehearsal. Outside professional musicians may not be hired in place of the parish organist and cantor. Non-professional musicians, such as friends or family members, may be invited to sing or play one or two solos. They must receive the music in advance, learn it independently, and attend the rehearsal to practice. The Director of Music will determine whether additional rehearsals are needed to ensure a high-quality performance. There is a fee of \$50 for each additional rehearsal. The approved music list appears in the Approved Music for Catholic Weddings section of this guide.

PRAYERS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

It is customary for the bride and groom to ask for the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary during their wedding ceremony as they begin their married life. At the appropriate time, they will go to the statue of Mary and offer her flowers while a Marian hymn is sung.

WORSHIP AIDS

Worship aids are provided for your wedding by the parish at no cost to you. The worship aid will include the music and scripture readings you selected, as well as the overall structure of the ceremony so your guests can follow along. In addition, you are welcome to create an insert that includes the names of your wedding party and family members.

PHOTOGRAPHERS & VIDEOGRAPHERS

It is very important when choosing a photographer and videographer for your wedding that you make them aware of the following guidelines. If the photographer or videographer has any questions, please contact the parish wedding coordinator.

1. During the ceremony, flash pictures may be taken when the wedding procession enters the church. Flash photography is not allowed once the bride and groom have entered the sanctuary and until the ceremony is over.
2. Photographers and videographers are not permitted to move throughout the church during the wedding ceremony. They may be positioned at the back of the church during the ceremony.
3. Photos may be taken in the church before and after the wedding ceremony. Photos taken before the wedding will end 45 minutes before the start of the wedding.
4. Video cameras must be placed on a tripod. The tripod can be placed in the back aisle leaving enough room for the wedding party to move down the aisle or on one of the side aisles. The cameraperson cannot walk around the church or in the sanctuary during the ceremony. The cameraperson cannot lay down in the aisles or stand on the pews.
5. When the ceremony is over the Wedding Coordinator will bring the wedding party around to the sanctuary so the photographer can take additional photos.
6. After the marriage license is signed a photo of the couple with the clergy is taken first.
7. Photos must be completed 45 minutes after the ceremony ends. No exceptions.

LIVE STREAM

For an additional cost of \$150, St. John the Baptist Church can live-stream your wedding.

ARRIVING AT THE CHURCH ON THE WEDDING DAY

The wedding party may arrive no earlier than two hours before the start of the wedding. All members of the wedding party, including the bride and groom should arrive at the church already dressed. Final preparation may be made in the bride's room. Weddings at St. John the Baptist Church begin on time. The bride, groom, and wedding party must arrive no later than 30 minutes before the wedding begins; if they have not arrived by that time, the wedding will be canceled.

THE USE OF ALCOHOL

The use of alcohol in the church before the wedding ceremony is strictly prohibited. It could result in the cancellation of the wedding. A valid marriage requires that the bride and groom, as well as the witnesses make a complete, knowing, and free gift of themselves. Any mind-altering substance like alcohol could impair judgment and free will and affect the validity of the marriage covenant.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

All personal belongings must be removed before the start of the wedding. St. John's is not responsible for any personal belongings that are left unattended.

DECORATIONS

The beauty of a wedding is found above all in the sacrament. Decorations should not distract from or overpower these sacred symbols. The following are not permitted on church premises: aisle cloths, dropped flower petals, flower distribution by flower girls during the procession, rice, birdseed, balloons, confetti, bubbles, or sparklers.

FLOWERS

Flowers should contribute to the aesthetic beauty of the church, not detract from it. The proper placement of flowers may be discussed with the parish wedding coordinator. Only fresh flowers are permitted in the sanctuary. No decoration may obscure the line of vision in the church or damage church furnishings. Tacks, nails, or other items that may damage walls or furniture may not be used. If pew bows or flowers are used, they must be secured with plastic clips. The florist is responsible for removing pew markers unless other arrangements have been made with the wedding coordinator. The parish and wedding coordinator are not responsible for florist property left overnight unless special arrangements have been made.

CANDLES

Hurricane lamps and rented candelabras are not permitted. Candles are not allowed on the pews, or in the aisle.

ALTAR SERVERS

St. John the Baptist will provide altar servers for your wedding. There will be three altar servers for a Nuptial Mass and one for a Wedding Outside of Mass.

VISITING CLERGY

Normally the clergy assigned to St. John the Baptist will be the main celebrant at all weddings; however, arrangements can be made for a family priest or friend to con-celebrate a wedding ceremony or preach with the permission of the clergy.

RECEPTION RENTAL

The Great Hall is available for rent receptions only after a Friday or Saturday evening wedding. Contact the Parish Event Coordinator for all information regarding reception rentals.

FEES

There is no charge for the use of the church for registered and active members of St. John the Baptist Church. However, there is a flat fee of \$950 that includes fees for the wedding coordinator, organist, cantor, altar servers and clergy.

The flat fee must be paid the week before your wedding. Bring the check to the parish office and make the check payable to St. John the Baptist Catholic Church.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Pastor	Msgr. William L. Novak, V.G.	405-255-3581	wnovak@stjohn-catholic.org
Parochial Vicar	Rev. Stephen Jones	405-471-2621	sjones@stjohn-catholic.org
Parochial Vicar	Rev. Mariadas Manti	405-509-3828	frmanti@stjohn-catholic.org
Marriage Prep. Coord.	Bernadette Dibler	312-952-0579	bdibler@stjohn-catholic.org
Wedding Coordinator	Bree Edmonds	405-625-1654	bree.edmonds.ok@gmail.org
Music Director	Danny Jack	405-264-3711	djack@stjohn-catholic.org
Parish Event Coord.	Mel Ashton	405-509-4081	mashton@stjohn-catholic.org

APPROVED MUSIC FOR CATHOLIC WEDDINGS

SEATING OF THE FAMILY

Ave Maria by Schubert, Bach or Gounod or a selection from the procession of the wedding party

PROCESSION OF THE WEDDING PARTY

Adagio by Alstott

Air from *Water Music* by Handel

Aria by Handel

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring by Bach

Largo from *Xerxes* by Handel

Minuet from *Berenice* by Handel

PROCESSION OF THE BRIDE

St. Anthony's Chorale by Haydn

Thaxted from the *Planets* by Holst

The Prince of Denmark's March by Clarke

Trumpet Tune by Purcell, Stanley or Johnson

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 33: *The earth is full of the goodness of God*

Psalm 34: *Taste and see the goodness of the Lord*

Psalm 103: *The Lord is kind and merciful*

Psalm 112: *Happy are those who do what the Lord commands*

Psalm 128: *Happy are those who fear the Lord*

Psalm 145: *How good is the Lord to all*

Psalm 148: *Let all praise the name of the Lord*

OFFERTORY HYMNS FOR A NUPTIAL MASS

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

*Ubi Caritas**

*Where Charity and Love Prevail**

*When Love is Found**

God of Love, Embrace Your People

*God, in the Planning**

*Love Has Brought Us Here Together**

*Can be sung as a communion hymn for a Nuptial Mass

COMMUNION HYMNS FOR A NUPTIAL
MASS

Adoro te Devote

Ave Verum

Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord

Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

Jesu, Dulcis Memoria

Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All

O Food of Exiles Lowly

O Lord, I Am Not Worthy

O Sacrament Most Holy

Panis Angelicus

Soul of My Savior

FLOWERS TO MARY

Ave Maria

Salve Regina

RECESSIONAL

Hornpipe by Handel

Nun Danket Alle Gott by Bach or Karg-Elert

Wedding March by Mendelssohn



ST. JOHN *the* BAPTIST
+ CATHOLIC CHURCH +

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