



THE PARISHES OF SACRED HEART AND DIVINE MERCY

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the Lord! Prayerful congratulations on your engagement!

Preparation for getting married in the Catholic Church focuses primarily on the formation of the couple for marriage and secondarily on the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (ceremony). The Church accompanies those celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony by presenting God's plan for marriage and family so that they can strive to live it well.

Five sessions are devoted to: (1) collecting the information needed for preparation and explaining the process, (2) the theology of marriage (origins, nature and purpose, vocation and call, sacramentality) (3), living a married life (spirituality, sexuality, family life), (4) natural family planning (NFP), and (5) the practical aspects (FOCUS). A sixth session is devoted to examining the liturgy (ceremony) and finalizing the selections permitted.

Please note that the wedding ceremony in the Catholic Church is different than it appears in society and culture. Weddings are celebrated according to the ritual provided by the Church without any changes. Please view the video *Saying I Do: What Happens at a Catholic Wedding* on YouTube before beginning to make any plans.

Below is more information about preparing for the celebration of Matrimony as well as a checklist of information needed and tasks to be done to ensure that all is prepared for the day of the wedding and for the married life that follows. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions or seek assistance. We are happy to help you.

In Christ,

Reverend Christopher R. Seibt
Pastor



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INFORMATION FOR THE *ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY*

Weddings can take place on **Saturdays** at or before 1:00 PM. They may take place on other days and at other times (e.g., a Friday evening).

Wedding **rehearsals** are scheduled for the night before the wedding. Both the wedding party and the liturgical ministers are to attend.

Baptismal certificates for those baptized must be obtained from the parish of baptism. Any notations (first Communion, Confirmation, etc.) should be provided.

Parties from another Catholic parish must have a **letter of permission** from the pastor of their parish to be married at this parish.

Marriage preparation takes place over the course of six sessions (once a month for six months).

Readings and other parts of the liturgy may be selected from the options provided by the Church. Selections are finalized at Session VI of Marriage Preparation.

The **procession** for the wedding liturgy is a liturgical one. One of the options provided by the Church (see below) must be selected.

Liturgical ministers (ushers, servers, readers) may be selected. They should be capable and comfortable performing these roles.

Music selections are arranged through the parish Director of Music before Session VI of Marriage Preparation: Nicholas Cantello (ncantello@syrдио.org). *Note: secular music is not permitted in the liturgy.*

Flowers may adorn the sanctuary, but not during Lent. A large “altar arrangement” and/or two small “tabernacle arrangements” are recommended. The florist Leaf and Stem (315-668-8455) regularly provides good, quality arrangements to the parishes.

Photographers/videographers are permitted provided they check in with the priest or deacon before the ceremony to receive any parameters and directives.

Programs may be provided to encourage those in attendance to participate. Sample programs are available. Printed programs should be brought to the rehearsal.



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The use of a unity candle, aisles runners, rose petals, rice, balloons, confetti, birdseed, and bubbles (in the church) are **prohibited**. All materials (boxes for corsages, water bottles, pew decorations, etc.) must be cleaned up after the wedding.

The **offering** for weddings with Mass is \$550. This includes the stipend for the church, clergy, organist, cantor, and altar servers. The offering is to be brought to Session VI of Marriage Preparation.

A **civil marriage license** must be obtained. Visit health.ny.gov for more information.

Alcoholic beverages are not to be consumed on Church grounds at any time. The wedding party is to refrain from consuming alcoholic beverages before the wedding liturgy. The bride and groom cannot consent to marriage under the influence.

Confession

CHECKLIST FOR THE BRIDE AND GROOM

- Pre-Marriage Investigation completed
- Church reserved
- Rehearsal scheduled
- Copy of Baptismal certificates with notations (first Communion, Confirmation, etc.) **provided**
- Dispensations/ Permissions obtained
- Permission to marry from current parish
- Marriage preparation completed
- Readings and other parts of the liturgy selected
- Liturgical ministers selected
- Director of music contacted and selections made
Mr. Nicholas Cantello (ncantello@syrдио.org)
- Flowers order
Leaf and Stem (315-668-8455)
- Photographer scheduled
- Programs created
- Church offering provided at Session VI
- Marriage license obtained and brought to rehearsal
- Sacrament of Penance celebrated