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A Letter from the Pastor

Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations on your engagement, and may the Holy Spirit guide you through these months of preparation.

You have asked to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage within the parish community of Saint Therese. Keeping in mind the saying, "A wedding is for a day; but a marriage is for a lifetime," we will do our best to prepare you for your wedding day and for the lifetime of marriage that is before you.

There are two important aspects to your preparation: one, the immediate planning of your wedding day, and two, the lifelong union of your marriage from the moment you walk out of church. While you may be consumed with details regarding the wedding day, we ask that you use the time of marriage preparation well, strengthening your relationship with each other, with God, and with the Church so that your marriage and family life will be happy and fruitful.

Included in this booklet are wedding guidelines and policies we follow regarding preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage. You should read through them thoroughly before your first meeting and make a note of any questions you may have. Also included is a special pastoral letter regarding cohabitation before marriage emphasizing how cohabitation changes the nature of your preparation and the way in which the wedding is celebrated in church.

The last part of this booklet concerns guidelines for the selection of music. Please make a note of any questions you might have and bring them with you to our first meeting.

God bless both of you. We look forward to working with you in the months ahead!

Sincerely,

Rev. Joseph Albert



Marriage Guidelines and Policies

BEFORE you set the date...

1. Before we can celebrate the Marriage Rite of the Catholic Church, we must first know if you are free to marry according to the laws of marriage in the Catholic Church.

Conditions which could delay or prohibit marriage are:

- ✤ A previous marriage which ended in divorce.
- Cohabitation (living together in the same dwelling) prior to marriage.
- Inactive practice of the Catholic Faith.
- Public scandal or past behavior which would cause doubt about the sacredness and holiness of the Sacrament of Marriage.

It is possible to reconcile any of these problems with time. However, no date can be set until we are assured that at the time of marriage you have complete freedom to marry.

- 2. In the case of a *mixed marriage* (marriage of a Catholic and non-Catholic) the Catholic party must agree to the following:
 - To remain faithful to the Catholic Church.
 - To do all in his/her power to insure the Catholic baptism and upbringing of any children.
 - Both parties must receive instruction about the purposes and essential properties of marriage.

Lack of agreement to these conditions would prohibit marriage in the Catholic Church.

- 3. You may check to see when openings are available for hall rental, bands, and so on, but **do not set a date with them** until we have finalized a date for the wedding. This will alleviate much trouble which could potentially result from booking a hall only to find that the church is not available for such a date. It is strongly recommended that you have possible dates ready and we can check them against our calendar.
- 4. Documents and information you will need as you begin to prepare for marriage in the Church:
 - A recent baptismal certificate from each of you (dated within the last six months). Contact the church in which you were baptized to obtain this. Catholics must have all previous sacraments received noted on the baptismal certificate including the date and place of reception.
 - The full names of your parents, including your mother's maiden name, and their religious affiliation.
 - If you are related, you must know how closely you are so related.
 - If you were previously married, you must provide a copy of the divorce decree, and a declaration of nullity if an annulment was granted by the Catholic Church.

Some Considerations Regarding Your Wedding

- 1. When you first contact the parish, you may inquire about the availability of a particular date and time. However, no wedding date will be entered into the calendar until your freedom to marry has been ascertained.
- 2. There are times when the preparation for marriage cannot be handled within the parish where the wedding is to take place. In these cases, the pastor will guide you in making alternate arrangements for the completion of your preparation.
- 3. It is a sad fact that in some cases a couple will attempt to deceive the pastor as to the fact of their co-habitation and other pre-marital sexual behavior. This includes giving the address and phone number of their parents or friends home. Because each individual is under oath when they fill out the pre-marital questionnaire which asks for their place of residence, such a deception is a grave matter and may therefore affect the nature of the wedding celebration.
- 4. In accordance with the norms established by the bishops of the state of Wisconsin, all preparation should be completed at least six weeks prior to the wedding day.
- 5. The current fee to be paid to St. Therese Parish for your marriage preparation and wedding is \$235.00 for registered parishioners or \$335.00 for non-parishioners. *Please note that this does not include the fees to be paid for the "Married Love" program or the NFP program.*
- 6. The practice of the bride and groom not seeing each other until she walks down the aisle is being called into question. Like many other customs, it goes back to an earlier day. In this case, to a time when parents arranged marriages and occasionally a switch was made (Genesis 29:25) in the favor of an older, unmarried daughter; hence the need for a veil and taking the precaution that the groom should not see the bride until after the vows were exchanged. Today, we suggest some time together in prayer, before the ceremony or greeting the guests as they come in.
- 7. Since marriage is a joining of two families, this could be expressed in the seating arrangement. Once the immediate family is seated, all others could be seated regardless of family ties.



Preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage Preparation assists you in understanding the "purposes and essential properties of marriage" as understood and taught by the Catholic Church. This means that, to the best of our ability, we will look at your intellectual, psychological, and spiritual readiness to undertake the vocation of marriage.

We use the following steps to accomplish this:

Schedule an appointment to see the pastor with the parish office. This should be done as soon as you and your intended spouse have made the decision to marry... at least six months and preferably twelve months prior to marriage.

At this meeting you and the priest will discuss your intentions and fill out the M-A form. This form in an information sheet containing all of the necessary data needed to begin your marriage preparation. (If the priest is unfamiliar with you, you may be asked to have a M-B form filled out as well by someone who knows you well, such as your parents, if possible. (This is done as an interview by a cleric who signs the form to validate the information.)

- The second step is an appointment to complete the Pre-Marriage Inventory (FOCCUS). This inventory is an instrument used to create a profile of your current readiness for marriage. This profile will help you to see where you are already strong in your readiness for marriage with your intended spouse, and it points out areas that may be a weakness for you which can be strengthened before you begin your married life. Please call the Religious Education Office at 1-715-254-4064 to set up a time to take the FOCCUS.
- The third step is to review the inventory with one of our trained couples. Help and suggestions are given to strengthen your relationship and help you to prepare better for marriage.
- The fourth step is to attend a session of "Married Love: Two becoming One." Please contact Fr. Al Slowiak at St. Mark's Parish at 715-359-5206 or email fraljs@smproths.org for schedule information and to sign up. You will be with several couples preparing for marriage. In this program, presentations are given on specific topics concerning marriage and family life. Upon completion, you will be given a certificate which must be turned into the parish office. If you are unable to attend the program in our area, there are other opportunities in Steven's Point, Marshfield, or Wisconsin Rapids areas. For a complete listing of dates and times, please see:

http://diolc.org/marriage/marriage-preparation/marriage-preparation-schedule/

The fifth step is to enroll for instruction in Natural Family Planning (NFP). This is to help you understand and put into practice the only approved form of family planning in the Catholic Church. Please see the diocesan website for more information at: http://diolc.org/marriage/natural-family-planning/natural-family-planning-registration/

- In the Sixth step, we come to the actual planning of the Rite of Marriage. Using the planning book you will receive for the form of the wedding service you will have, begin jotting down ideas for songs, readings, and other plans for your ceremony in the spaces provided. For information on choosing your music, please see the section entitled "Wedding Music Guidelines" in this booklet. You should submit a copy of all of your selection and planning forms to the pastor at least two weeks before the wedding for him to review.
- About 3-4 days before the wedding at St. Therese, Father Albert would like to meet with you (the bride and groom) one last time for a pastoral instruction on marriage. Please schedule this with our secretary as soon as possible.
- The next step is the wedding rehearsal. All couples, together with their wedding party and any assisting ministers (readers, ushers, etc.) must meet with the presider to rehearse the wedding liturgy. This is usually done the evening before the wedding, or at some other time that is convenient to the party and the presider. A rehearsal is very important because it answers many questions, helps alleviate any stress, and insures smooth execution of any and all actions. This rehearsal time is not for music practice, although musicians may be there. If a priest or deacon from outside the parish will be presiding, it is presumed that he will also be present for the wedding rehearsal. Rehearsals should be concise and less than an hour long. At your request, Father would be happy to offer the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation following the rehearsal. Since rehearsal takes place in Church, we would expect everyone to be properly attired.
- Finally, we have the wedding liturgy. After much preparation we wish you all the best as you enter into a lifelong covenant with your spouse.
- The last step is that you attend a marriage enrichment seminar at some point during your first year of marriage. For a schedule of offerings, please visit:

http://diolc.org/marriage/marriage-enrichment/ or contact the Diocesan Office of Family Life at 1-608-791-2673. Every marriage needs a little enrichment from time to time and we are blessed to have several wonderful opportunities in our diocese each year.

Marriage Fees

We suggest a minimum contribution of \$235.00. Part of this is the \$50.00 payment you make when you set the wedding date. The rest must be paid at least one month in advance.

If you are not a contributing member of St. Therese Parish, the suggested minimum contribution is \$335.00.

Marriage Preparation Outside St. Therese Parish

In the Catholic Church a priest must have canonical jurisdiction to witness the marriage of a couple outside the boundaries of his parish. If Catholics seeking the sacrament of marriage are not officially registered in a Catholic parish they must do so to establish what is called "domicile." This must be established where the Catholic lives and resides.

If a couple wants to have the wedding celebration in a Catholic church other than where they are registered, the following procedures must be followed by the couple and the priest or deacon preparing them:

- 1. The Catholic parties must present proof to the pastor where the wedding will be celebrated that they are a registered member of a Catholic parish where they reside. This is usually done in the form of a written letter from your pastor.
- 2. Marriage preparation and all canonical documentation is to take place in the parish where the Catholic party is registered and resides, except for the planning of the ceremony, which is handled by the priest or deacon where the wedding will take place.
- 3. All canonical documents for the marriage must be forwarded from the parish where the preparation is taking place to that parish's chancery office for the nihil obstat. The chancery office will then forward the documents to the proper diocese where the wedding will take place or the parish of celebration itself.
- 4. Note: Documents from the place of preparation should never be sent directly to the place of celebration. The proper diocesan chancery office must verify that there is nothing prohibiting the marriage and give jurisdiction to the priest or deacon celebrating the marriage.
- 5. The marriage file of the couple preparing outside the parish of celebration should arrive at the parish of celebration in a timely fashion, preferably one month prior to the day of the wedding. It is the <u>sole responsibility of the couple</u> to obtain the civil marriage license prior to the wedding, and present it to the officiant of the wedding at the rehearsal.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW!

Even though a couple has a date set with a parish for their wedding, until the documents arrive from the parish of preparation through the proper channels, the priest or deacon may not celebrate the wedding. Failure of the couple or the parish of preparation to follow these procedures could result in an embarrassing and tragic cancellation of the wedding in the Catholic parish of celebration.

It is advised that couples check with the priest or deacon doing the marriage preparation to make sure that everything is in order before they print their invitations and mail them to their guests. It is *not* the responsibility of the parish of celebration to check on these things. The parish of celebration only helps in the planning of the wedding ceremony.

Some Considerations Regarding Your Faith

A wedding between two baptized individuals is more than a personal, social, or civil event: it is a Sacrament of Christ and of His Church. In the Sacrament of Marriage, a man and a woman vow their love in an exclusive, permanent sexual partnership. This union is to be marked by love, respect, care and concern and a commitment to share responsibility in the raising of a family if God should bless them with children. It demands a living faith on the part of the couple, an awareness that they are entering into a covenant relationship, not only with each other, but also with God. The couple is joined on their life's journey by Jesus Christ, who promises to bless, sustain and rejoice in their union. As such, it is not something to be undertaken lightly or in a hurried manner. Since Christian marriage mirrors the love of Christ for his Church (cf. Ephesians 5:32), preparation for Christian marriage must involve serious reflection on the meaning of Christian love.

A Catholic wedding should be an expression of your faith and your conviction that God is uniting you in an indissoluble bond. Christ is invited to be an essential participant in this celebration. He is sacramentally present in the union of the husband and wife.

- 2. Ideally, then, you should prepare for your marriage by daily prayer, both individually and as a couple. You should also be in the habit of regularly attending Mass and frequently receiving the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation. You are about to receive a sacrament that will change your whole life. Such a commitment cannot be made without prayer and the grace of God. Spiritual preparation is absolutely necessary for any Catholic marriage. If the couple stands up at their wedding and professes a faith they do not have, the marriage rite becomes at best an empty formality.
- 3. **Interdenominational and Interfaith Marriages** are possible in the Catholic Church. They do, however, require more preparation in order to safeguard the faith of the Catholic partner. Following is an explanation of some things you will need to be aware of if you are planning to enter into a marriage where one partner is not Catholic.
 - Dispensation: A marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic Christian is still understood to be a sacrament. While a marriage between a Catholic and a non-Christian is not a sacrament, it is nevertheless a union blessed of its very nature by God when those entering into this covenant relationship intend what God and his Church intends in the union of man and woman. A dispensation (permission) for a mixed-marriage is obtained from the bishop in order that he may, as chief shepherd of the Church of La Crosse, be satisfied that the faith of the Catholic partner may be protected. For a Catholic to not seek the needed dispensation and to attempt marriage outside of the Church is to place oneself out of full communion with the Catholic Church. The cleric with whom you are preparing for your marriage will obtain this dispensation for you.
 - Promises made by the Catholic partner: When a dispensation is obtained for a Catholic to marry a non-Catholic Christian or a non-Christian, the Catholic party must promise that he or she will continue in the practice of the Catholic faith (which includes weekly attendance at Sunday Mass) and will do everything possible to ensure that the children are baptized and raised in the Catholic Church. It must be

emphasized that, for a Catholic, attendance at Sunday Mass is the only acceptable way of fulfilling the third Commandment and the precepts of the Church.

- In the case where a Catholic and a non-Catholic are to be married it is strongly recommended that the Rite of Marriage be celebrated outside of a Mass. This is not to degrade or "penalize" the Catholic party, but to respect and enable the full participation of the non-Catholic parties and to prevent possible hurt feelings which may result from non-Catholic family members and friends who are unable to participate in communion.
- The obligation to seek salvation together, to grow in faith and grace, is just as binding and strong in a mixed marriage as in the union of two Catholics. Differences of belief and religious practice may make it more difficult for a Catholic and a committed non-Catholic Christian to come to an agreement about the faith and its practice. These differences are even more pronounced in a marriage between a Catholic and one who is not baptized or where one spouse professes no religious belief at all. As such, it is important to deal fully and honestly with religion before the wedding. Share your concerns and questions with pastors, families and close friends.
- The question of faith, its importance to each person, and its place in the marriage must be discussed and agreed upon before the wedding takes place. It is simply unrealistic to put these important questions aside thinking that "they will take care of themselves" when the time comes. Private prayer and honest prayerful discussion of these matters must precede the wedding.
- When the couple is of different faith backgrounds, a course of education in the Catholic Faith might be added to the preparation process at the discretion of the pastor. Since the emphasis is on the mutual need of the couple for openness and dialogue, exposure to some of the basic precepts of both faith communities is to be highly encouraged. In the event that one of the parties entering the marriage is a 'non-practicing Catholic', the additional education is also encouraged. The Catholic party should honor and participate in pre-marriage programs in which the non-Catholic may be required to participate in fulfillment of his/her religious tradition.



Pastoral Letter on the Question of Cohabitation

Dear Engaged Couple,

Over the years cohabitation (living together prior to marriage) continues to be a choice for many young couples as a means of "testing out" the relationship before a decision is made on entering into marriage. Another scenario is that after the engagement is announced, couples find no real reason to remain apart since, "in a sense, we are already married." This remains a pastoral problem for the Church, which, while trying to be open and sensitive to the situation of each young engaged couple must uphold the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the teachings of His Church.

RELIGIOUS CONSIDERATIONS

1. First, let us look carefully at the religious elements of this question. Let us presume that cohabitation involves premarital sexual activity on the part of the couple. The biblical word for this is *fornication*.

St. Paul most clearly expresses the teaching of Jesus Christ concerning sexual conduct in his first letter to the Corinthians. He says: "Can you not realize that the unholy will not fall heir to the Kingdom of God? Do not deceive yourselves: no fornicators, idolaters, or adulterers, no sodomites, thieves, misers, or drunkards, no slanderers or robbers will inherit God's Kingdom." (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

2. St. Paul wishes to help you and me understand that our fidelity to God involves obedience to His law, which includes the proper use of His gift of sexuality. God created us as sexual beings, but not for an indiscriminate use of our sexual powers.

St. Paul continues: "Shun lewd conduct. Every other sin a man commits is outside his body, but the fornicator sins against his own body. You must know that **your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit**, who is within—the Spirit you have received from God. You are not your own. You have been purchased, and at a price. So glorify God in your body." (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)

3. It is important to see that there is no place in the Bible where fornication, or any other misuse of our sexual powers is either esteemed or permitted. Very simply then, the consistent teaching of the Catholic Church remains constant to the demands of Christ. Concern for engaged couple's sexual conduct then is of deepest concern for their souls and their salvation. Cohabitation, while itself not a sin, is certainly a clear occasion for sin. Even if a couple should remain chaste while cohabitating, it is almost impossible to avoid public scandal.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

It has been said to me by many couples that living together prior to marriage is a good way to tell if you are suited for one another and can make the marriage last. While this sounds reasonable at first, there is much evidence to the contrary. Human relationships cannot be given a "test-drive" like one would a car. Give your attention to the following considerations:

- 1. In the majority of circumstances, the reasons for cohabitating are different for men and women. Usually, the man agrees to cohabit for more convenient access to sexual encounters. The woman generally agrees as a step toward leading the relationship towards marriage. Notice that there are two very different assumptions (most often never spoken of) which lead to two different expectations for the arrangement.
- 2. It is often the case that because the woman has allowed these encounters and is attempting to move the relationship towards marriage, that the man, because he has enjoyed her sexual favors, may feel obligated to enter into marriage as a "payoff" for the favors he has received. If a child is conceived in the process, there appears to be even more of a reason for seeking marriage.

This is the poorest foundation for a life-long marriage. It is no wonder that couples who have cohabited, and have been sexually involved before marriage, contribute to the overwhelming majority of divorces. Conversely, couples who have remained chaste have a much lower rate of divorce, and report a much higher rate of satisfaction in their marriages.

3. It seems accurate to assume that a chaste relationship is the best preparation for marriage. A chaste relationship tests the most important aspect of any relationship - fidelity. Ask yourself how couples who are cohabitating and sexually active can really trust that once married, they can remain faithful to each other when, before their marriage, they were unable to uphold the moral standards of Christ's Church.

It is an interesting question that you should ask yourselves if this is the circumstance you are presently in. Couples who have the spiritual strength of chase love before marriage most often are more capable of being faithful to each other during their long life together.

4. There are other difficulties relating to cohabitation which are verified by the behavioral sciences. To maintain their relationship, cohabiting couples often hide important aspects of their lives from each other. Cohabiting couples may tend to speak and behave cautiously to avoid criticizing each other and may repress anger, lest the relationship disintegrate. Relationships with members of their families and with others may also be strained during the period of cohabitation.

WORTHY RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

- 1. Sacraments are a means of grace given by Jesus Christ to His people. The Sacrament of Matrimony effects an invisible bond that lasts until the death of one of the spouses and brings to the couple the assurance of God's help to persevere together and grow in love, fidelity, and holiness. These graces are especially important today because of the many pressures and harmful influences in our society, influences which make married life difficult and which attempt to degrade the importance of a strong family life.
- 2. If a person would receive the sacrament in a state of mortal sin (cohabitation with sexual favor), this would be a sacrilege. The bond of matrimony would still be established, but the grace would be withheld until the confession of all sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation would occur. Given the infrequent use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation by many today, it is also no wonder why grace is lacking in the relationships of so many engaged couples.
- 3. Any couple preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage should pray for God's help and direction. The couple should study the beauty, nobility, and duties of the vocation to marriage. They should practice virtue, especially chastity. Frequent reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist (for those who are Catholic) will also bring to the couple preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage the graces needed to prepare for and embark on this vocation.

HOW COHABITATION AFFECTS THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

1. After careful consideration, it seems obvious that cohabitation prior to marriage is harmful to the spiritual and emotional life of a couple who sincerely desire a good and lasting marriage. Many strategies have been tried by bishops and priests to uphold the holiness and nobility of the Sacrament of Marriage.

Here is a reasonable solution and one which is to be upheld by those desiring marriage at Saint Therese parish.

Couples who are cohabiting prior to marriage may not celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage within the context of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass since cohabitation is a public witness of unfaithfulness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the sacred Teachings of the Catholic Church. If a couple should faithfully separate during the period of preparation for marriage and receive the Sacrament of Penance, the Mass could be celebrated on the wedding day. Should the couple return to cohabitation anytime prior to the wedding, the ceremony will be celebrated without the benefit of the Mass. This decision can be determined up to the wedding day itself.

2. In some places, marriage in the Catholic Church is not allowed altogether until the cohabiting couples separate for an extended period of time. The above policy is fair and reasonable. Given what has been said in this letter, you are asked to refrain from the practice of cohabitation before marriage.

We entrust you to the hearts of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the Holy Family of Nazareth, who teaches us the true dignity and holiness of marriage and family life.



Participants in the Wedding Ceremony

- 1. **Bride and Groom:** The bride and groom are the ministers, giving the Sacrament of Marriage to one another.
- 2. **Presider:** A priest or deacon presides at the liturgy. He calls the assembly to prayer, coordinates the various ministers and acts as the official witness of the Church.
- 3. Attendants: It is customary for the Best Man and Maid of Honor to serve as the official two witnesses of the marriage. They are to support the couple and give witness to the sacredness of the wedding liturgy. They are required to be at least 18 years of age.
- 4. **Readers:** The couple is encouraged to invite a person (or persons) of their choice to proclaim the Sacred Scripture at their wedding celebration. This is an important ministry and should be undertaken by persons who are practicing the faith they are being asked to proclaim. They should also be comfortable with public speaking and be able to speak clearly and effectively. The readings should be given to them in advance so that they may properly practice the readings.
- 5. **Gift Bearers:** Family members or friends may be invited to bring up the gifts of bread and wine for the Liturgy of the Eucharist if your wedding is to take place in the context of a Mass. They bring up the gifts following the Prayers of the Faithful. In addition to the bread and wine, the gifts could also include a basket for the needy as a sign of the willingness of the newly married couple to extend Christ's love to those in need.
- 6. Ushers: At least two persons should be selected to serve as ushers. Ushers welcome people to the celebration. They help guests find seating, hand out participation aids, and assist

wherever they can. They should be alert for anyone who needs to use the elevator, telephone, or bathroom. They are also responsible for making sure the church and any other areas used are straightened up and in order before they leave.

- 7. **Miniature bride and groom, flower girls, ring bearers, etc:** Should you choose to include these please try to have them be of at least of school age. Any children who are of pre-school age will have a **limited** role in the ceremony, nor will they be present with the wedding party at the time of vows.
- 8. Servers: When the Mass is celebrated, it is preferred that servers be from Saint Therese Parish so that they are familiar with our procedures. For this reason, arrangements for

servers are normally made by the parish office. If you have trained and experienced relatives you would like to serve, please let the parish office know well in advance. If there is no Mass, it is not necessary to have servers.

9. The Assembly: Of great importance are those who gather to celebrate this day with you. They are asked to participate by word, song and gesture in the celebration, praying for and with you rather than just sitting back and watching.

Planning the Wedding Ceremony

The planning book given to you will answer many of your questions concerning the ritual. Here are further policies and practices to which you are asked to adhere to at Saint Therese:

- 1. Location: In accord with canon law, no wedding is to take place outside of a church without the permission of the local bishop. In the diocese of La Crosse this permission is never given.
- 2. **The Choice of Ritual:** This is largely determined by circumstances relating to the faith of those being joined in marriage. For largely practical reasons, a wedding in the context of the Holy Mass is discouraged in the cases where one of the spouses is a non-Catholic Christian.
- 3. Size of the Wedding Party: There is no set limit. It can be difficult at times to figure out who to ask and who to leave out. You are asked, however, not to exceed six couples in the party, excluding yourselves, as groups larger than this can be difficult to manage.
- 4. **Photography:** Pictures may be taken before and after the ceremony. The more pictures taken before, the more time you will have to spend with your guests after. All activity in the church is to be completed by 4 pm. Anyone is welcome to take pictures during the Procession and Recession, but only professional photographers and video personnel are permitted to take pictures during the wedding. Keep in mind that picture taking and video recording are secondary to the gathering for worship. Professional photographers and videographers are to contact the parish office prior to the day of the ceremony for instructions. It is the responsibility of the photographers and the wedding party to put back in place any items moved during the taking of pictures
- 5. **Decorations:** Flowers and plants add a touch of beauty to this festive occasion. We suggest two plants or bouquets to be placed on stands near the altar. The flowers should be delivered to the church the morning of the wedding. It is hoped that these plants or flowers will

remain at the church as a continuing sign to the parish community of your promises and our pledge to support. If there is another wedding the same day as yours, we encourage you to work with them in providing plants or flowers. We do not encourage the use of white aisle runners. They often end up wrinkled, crooked and torn; however they are available from the florist. Our church middle aisle measures 75 feet. If decorative attachments are used on the ends of pews, please use the form of attachment that will not mar the woodwork. There are 21 end panels on the pews. They are 3' high, 1' 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. There are 20 rows of pews on each side of the Church. You are asked to respect the seasonal decorations (if any) which are already in place.

- 6. **Rice, bird-seed, confetti, etc.:** Make your wedding party and family members aware that they are **not** to throw **any** sort of materials at you on the church property. This policy is enacted for two reasons:
 - The mess causes difficulty, especially when the weekend masses follow the wedding.
 - Should someone slip and be injured as a result of the materials thrown, you can be held legally and financially responsible for their injuries.
- 7. **Rehearsal:** Make sure that your wedding party is aware of the time of the rehearsal, and that they are prompt. Because of possible appointments after the rehearsal, a delay in

starting could result in an incomplete or hurried rehearsal.

- 8. Alcohol and Drugs: Because of the very special and sacramental nature of the wedding liturgy, the use of alcoholic beverages is not permitted before the ceremony. Consumption of alcoholic beverages could invalidate the promises or witnessing of promises. It is the policy of this parish not to deal with anyone who is intoxicated at either the rehearsal or on the day of the wedding. Let your wedding party know that should anyone arrive intoxicated at either of these, they will be dismissed from the wedding party.
- 9. Food: Food, drink and gum are not allowed upstairs into the church itself. Food is allowed in the cafeteria located in the church basement provided you clean up after yourselves. Please remember that there is a one hour fast before receiving communion if you are having your wedding celebrated within the Mass.
- 10. **Dressing:** The ladies can choose to get dressed in the ladies washroom or use the facilities provided in the church basement of the new addition to the church. Men usually get ready at home before coming to the church.
- 11. **Reverence and Respect:** The church is a sacred place, not a community hall. As such, it must be treated with due reverence and respect. As the couple responsible for your wedding party, I ask that you take charge of your party as they gather for the rehearsal and ensure their compliance.

If children are present for the rehearsal, please see to it that there are responsible adults ready to care for them or take them elsewhere if they cause a disruption. After the wedding, make sure that you have people to go through the church in order to pick up boxes, bags, and other refuse which may be left behind. The church should be left ready for Mass.

- 12. Wedding Programs: Wedding programs can be of great assistance in facilitating the full and active participation of those gathered for your wedding ceremony. For this reason, it is highly recommended that you print a program to be distributed at your wedding. If you choose to use a wedding program, it should be brought to the pastor before it is printed in order for him to be able to review the music and the order of the Mass.
- 13. Wedding Candle: If you choose to light a "unity candle" during the ceremony, it will be your responsibility to provide it. Bring the candle with you to the rehearsal. It is not necessary to have two "taper" candles, although if you have them, we will use them. A candle stand is available for your use.
- 14. **Presentation of Roses:** If you choose to present roses to Mary you may do so in place of the lighting of the unity candle or near the end of the ceremony. Please see Father if you have any questions on this practice.
- 15. **Marriage License:** You must go to the County Clerk in your respective county to obtain a marriage license between six and thirty days prior to the date of the wedding. The license needs to be presented to the presider at the wedding rehearsal. The signing of the Wedding License ordinarily takes place after everyone has gone through the reception line after the wedding ceremony.
 - To apply for the wedding license, you will need a birth certificate, a proof of residence (drivers license, ID card, etc.) and, if you have been married before, a copy of a divorce judgment, annulment papers, or death certificate for the previous

marriage.

- 16. Clean Up: It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to ensure that the parish facilities are left clean and in the same order they were found in.
- 17. **Time Constraint:** You are reminded that all activities in the church are to be completed by 4 pm. This is to ensure that those coming to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation can do so without distraction in a quiet and sacred environment and to allow adequate time to prepare for the 5 pm Mass.



A Note About Reconciliation

Generally, at your request, a priest will be available after the rehearsal for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This is a very important part of your preparation for your reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Before you receive any sacraments, it is always beneficial to make a good confession prior to it. You and the Catholic members of your party are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

Other Issues

- 1. **Visiting Clergy:** The clergy assigned to the parish where your wedding will take place is the official witness of your exchange of vows.
 - If the bride or the groom has a close relative or friend who is an ordained priest or deacon in the Catholic Church, he is welcome to serve as the celebrant of the wedding or to assist. Visiting priests and deacons are expected to observe all church norms as well as established parish policy.
 - In the case of a marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, the minister or rabbi of the non-Catholic party's church or synagogue is welcome to attend the wedding and to participate as fully as possible in the wedding liturgy. The couple should make all of the necessary arrangements with whomever they invite. The guest minister or rabbi is welcome to read selected passages from scripture during the liturgy of the Word (exclusive of the Gospel). The clergy of this parish however are the proper ministers for witnessing the exchange of vows, as well as the homilist. This is in accordance with the norms governing mixed-marriages.
- 2. **Mixed Marriages:** In order to respect the differences which continue to exist between the Catholic Church and other ecclesial communities, it is recommended that mixed-marriages take place outside of the context of the Holy Mass. In this way, the non-Catholic family members and friends will hopefully feel more comfortable in their full and active participation in the wedding ceremony. If you are entering into a mixed-marriage and still wish to have your marriage in the context of a Mass, you may be allowed to do so at the discretion of Father. However, because of differences in theology and separations which exist between the Catholic Church and other ecclesial communities, you are reminded that non-Catholics are not to partake of Holy Communion. This is why it is suggested that a mixed-marriage take place outside of Mass in order to prevent possible hurt feelings which may result from certain individuals being excluded from receiving the Eucharist.
- 3. Clergy Attendance: If time and scheduling permit, the cleric may be able to attend the wedding reception, but will do so only if he has received a written invitation. In this way, neither party expects or presumes attendance. This applies as well to anyone from the parish who is involved in your marriage preparations.



Guidelines for the Selection of Wedding Music

Before you fill out the wedding liturgy planning sheet, here are the guidelines you are asked to follow in the selection of your music.

SELECTION OF MUSICIANS

A wedding in a Catholic church is a formal liturgical rite and should be respected as such. It is important that you select capable musicians who are well trained and have experience in church music. It is normally expected that the church accompanists of Saint Therese will play at the weddings held in our church. The accompanists will help you chose music appropriate for weddings.

If you wish to employ other experienced musicians, the approval of the Music Director is required. Family members or friends are welcome to assist with the music at your wedding. If working with any musicians outside the parish his/her fees increase due to the need for more rehearsal and communication with any musician unfamiliar with Catholic worship or with liturgy at St. Therese. This helps ease any apprehension or fear on their part so that your celebration is beautiful, prayerful, and relaxed. All music selections must still be approved regardless of who is providing the music at the wedding.

MUSICIAN FEES

It will be necessary to pay the musicians involved in your wedding, even parish musicians, since this work falls outside their regularly contracted work with the parish. Each musician involved should be contacted regarding their fee. The wedding fees are set by the Saint Therese Liturgy and Worship Committee and typically range from \$75.00-\$175.00. The fees are set depending on the amount of music that will be played at your wedding. The organist/pianist plays prelude music, the processional and recessional music, postlude selections, and accompanies hymns and solos.

The couple should contact the musician(s) several months prior to the wedding to schedule an appointment for the purpose of discussing musical options, which may include solos and/or congregational singing. This allows the musician(s) ample time to meet with you, select music, and rehearse.

ORGANIST/PIANIST

Lynn Hildebrandt Organ/Piano 715-551-0188 Sandy Solheim Cristie Bates

Piano

Organ/Piano 715-359-6412 715-355-7345

SOLOISTS

Lynn Hildebrandt	715-298-0908
Kandace Elmergreen	715-845-7175
Kathy Kowalke	715-355-9570
Sara Zieglmeier	715-581-0405

WEDDING MUSIC GUIDELINES

Because you have chosen to be married in the Church and are seeking God's blessing on your marriage, we ask that you give careful consideration to the musical selections you choose. The celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony is one of the seven sacraments. As such, the marriage ceremony must maintain the norms of good sacramental liturgy. With this in mind, it is important to remember the following key points when selecting music for your wedding liturgy:

- The music should be appropriate for a liturgical celebration. Any music selected should reflect the Christian ideal of love and marriage. Christian love is chaste, pure, faithful, and eternal. Words and ideas should not contradict this. It should be an expression of prayer and praise to God. Therefore, rarely is secular music (popular love songs) appropriate for use during the wedding liturgy. Secular music is best sung at the wedding reception, the rehearsal dinner or other wedding and engagement festivities.
- Music chosen for weddings should invite those gathered to participate with heart, mind and soul. This can happen both with vocal and instrumental music. Congregational songs, such as well-loved hymns, and the joyful gospel "Alleluia," draw your friends and relatives present into a unified community giving thanks and praising God on your wedding day.
- The Church offers this guidance when choosing particular music for any wedding liturgy. Particular decisions about choice and placement of wedding music should grow out of three judgments...
 - The liturgical judgment: Is the music's text, form, placement and style congruent with the nature of the liturgy?
 - The musical judgment: Is the music technically, aesthetically and expressively good, irrespective of music idiom or style?
 - The pastoral judgment: Will it help this assembly to pray?



SUGGESTIONS FOR WEDDING MUSIC

The following songs are pre-approved for use in a wedding at St. Therese. They meet the requirements set forth in the wedding music guidelines. This is not meant to be a comprehensive list, but merely to assist the bride and groom in offering possible choices when selecting their wedding ceremony music.

Processional

Canon in D Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring Arioso

General

A Choral Benediction And on this Day By My Side Gift of Love God, A Woman, and a Man How Beautiful Not for Tongues of Heavens Angels 612 Only a Shadow Walk With Them Lord When Love is Found 856 Wherever You Go 860

Responsorial Psalm

The Lord is Kind and Merciful 58 Blest are Those Who Love You 70 I Will Praise Your Name 76 We Praise You 540

Candle Lighting

And on this Day By My Side A Choral Benediction

Communion

I Have Loved You 504 Only a Shadow Taste & See 827 Gift of Finest Wheat 816

Recessional

Hornpipe Ode to Joy Trumpet Voluntary