

Wedding Guidelines

*Celebrating marriage at
Saint Rita Parish*



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Marriage Preparation

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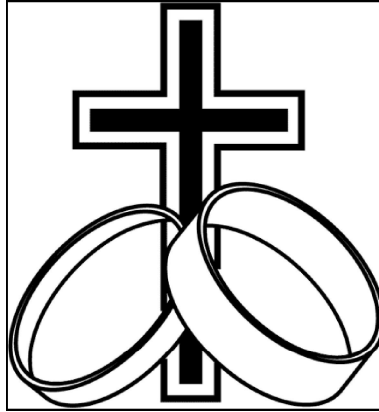
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Resources

Checklist, Wedding Planning Sheet, Photographer Sheet, Florist Sheet, and Couple's Contract all present.



We, in the presence of one another, individually declare our freedom to marry and our freedom from any known impediments between us. We hold marriage to be a life-long and faithful union and process of choosing each other for the mutual sharing of our life and our love; it is a union which is open to children; it is a union which is modeled after and symbolizes Gods ever-faithful love for His people. It is this partnership of life and love that we seek in marriage and to which we publicly give our consent.

Declaration of Matrimonial Consent Diocese of Cleveland

Congratulations on your engagement! The Saint Rita Parish Family shares your joy and excitement as you anticipate your wedding day. The celebration of your wedding and your marriage are important events for you, your family and your parish. Your marriage, lived out, is an expression of your love and commitment to one another as well as a sign of the love of God for all people. It is important that plentiful time and effort be given in preparing for your marriage.

We are pleased to share the responsibility of helping you prepare for your wedding day and more importantly, a lifetime together. After all, your wedding lasts a day, but your marriage lasts a lifetime. Please take time to read the following guidelines carefully.

God has called you to the vocation of Christian marriage. As you prepare for your wedding day, it is our hope that you will prayerfully reflect on the life you are beginning and how your faith can strengthen your marriage. May God bless you on your journey.

Approaching the Church for Marriage

After a couple is engaged, they usually ask the question: “what do we do next”? The couple can simply call the Saint Rita parish office (440.248.1350) and state they are wishing to be married. The staff will then direct you to the Pastor.

The Church of Saint Rita observes all Diocesan policies. Weddings are to be arranged at least six months in advance, although nine to twelve months is recommended. To be married at the Church of Saint Rita, one of you must be of the Roman Catholic faith tradition. Ordinarily, one of you should be a member of our parish; if not, you may need to acquire written permission from the pastor of your home parish if you wish to solemnize your marriage at Saint Rita. This will be decided by your celebrant.

Your wedding date will be tentatively scheduled during your first interview with a celebrant (priest or deacon) of the parish staff. This date cannot be considered final until the proper assessments, evaluations, and necessary dispensations are completed.

Marriage as a Sacrament

A Sacrament is an encounter with Jesus Christ. Every Sacrament brings us into contact with the saving activity of the Lord. In every Sacrament, we should experience God’s presence in a visible, tangible way.

The ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage are the bride and groom. When a man and a woman exchange wedding vows, they share in the love of Christ. The ministers of marriage extend the Lord’s presence to each other and become a sign of the Lord’s presence to others. The visible sign of the Sacrament of Marriage is the exchange of the wedding vows. In order to have a true exchange of promises, both the bride and groom must be responsible adults, capable of forming a community of life and love. The couple must honestly and without reservation declare to each other their willingness to assume the duties of marriage and parenthood according to the teachings of Christ and the Catholic Church.

Mixed Religion Marriages: An application for *matrimonial dispensation* is submitted to the Bishop of the Diocese before a member of the Catholic faith community may marry someone who is not of the Catholic faith tradition. In preparing to submit this petition, the Catholic is to make the promise below. The non-Catholic spouse is not required to sign this promise but should be aware of this promise being made.

I reaffirm my faith in Jesus Christ, and with God’s help, intend to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church. I promise to do all in my power to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and reared as Catholics.

Marriage Instruction & Preparation

Whenever a sacrament is celebrated in the Church, preparation is always undertaken so that one can appreciate the sacrament in a fuller context. Marriage preparation must be taken very seriously by a couple that wishes to marry. The Church's preparation for marriage is not just for the wedding day, but for a lifetime of love and commitment. It is hoped that couples recognize the importance of their preparation for Christian marriage. At Saint Rita Parish this involves the following main components:

- A. An initial meeting will be held with the celebrant, in which he develops a familiarity with the couple, completes the paperwork requesting marriage in the Church, and a tentative date can be set. The priest/deacon will explain to the couple the preparation process and the theology of marriage.
- B. A canonical assessment will also be done to be sure the couple is free to marry within the Church and that there are no impediments of Church law. If there has been a previous marriage that has not been annulled, a specific wedding date cannot be placed on the calendar until the annulment is granted. In the case of a remarriage or validation of an existing union, our staff will be happy to assist you in taking the necessary steps to ensure compliance with the Diocesan Tribunal.
- C. The couple will participate in a marriage evaluation tool (Prepare/Enrich) to be reviewed with the priest/deacon. This will be used to assess a couple's readiness for marriage and to help encourage communication on topics related to marriage. It also assists the person preparing you for marriage to help you get to know each other better. Please note there is a \$40 fee for the Prepare/Enrich (payable to the Church of Saint Rita).
- D. Subsequent meetings with the priest/deacon which will focus on various aspects of marriage readiness. The nature and frequency of these meetings is at the discretion of the preparing minister. It is incumbent upon the couple to contact the priest and schedule all meeting dates (minimum of three).
- E. Each couple must participate in **one** of the following preparation programs:

Pre-Cana Marriage Preparation Day: is a one-day retreat that is offered at Saint Rita in the spring. You may also attend a Pre-Cana day at a different parish or retreat center throughout the Diocese. Registration is necessary. A listing of Diocesan Pre-Cana days may be found online at:

<http://www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/mfm/marrprep.htm#Pre-Cana Days>

Sponsor Couple Program: involves an initial meeting followed by four or more sessions of the engaged couple with a sponsor couple at the sponsor's home. The sponsor couple is a married couple selected from the parish and trained to facilitate this marriage preparation program. This preparation program is intended to lead you to a deeper understanding of one another and your call to the vocation of Christian Marriage. To participate in this program, please inform the celebrant with whom you are working.

Cana II Day: is designed for couples planning remarriage in the Church. This day is offered twice a year. Schedule and registration information may be obtained by contacting the Marriage and Family Life Office (216-334-2978), or by visiting their website at:

<http://www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/mfm/marrprep.htm#CANA II>

- F. Spiritual Preparation. The sacrament of matrimony, like all other sacraments, is celebrated within a specific worshipping community. Therefore, one of the best preparations for marriage is to be an active faith member of the community. The couple is expected to celebrate Sunday Eucharist and the Sacrament of Penance regularly. It is hoped that the engaged couple would daily pray as individuals and as a couple for a happy and faith-filled marriage.
- G. Liturgy Planning. Each couple will plan the wedding liturgy during one of their meetings with the parish priest/deacon; resources for this are included in this booklet. Communication with the Parish Music Director is also a part of the liturgy planning process since music is an integral part of the wedding ceremony. We ask you to initiate this communication. [Music Director is Mr. David Jaronowski] DJaronowski@stritaparish.com or visit www.StRitaParish.com / Music / Weddings for samples

DOCUMENTATION

In order to prepare for marriage, the following documents will be required:

New Record of Baptism

A new record of baptism is obtained by phoning the Church of your baptism. This record should be issued **no more than six months** before the marriage. The original certificate, which your parents received on the day of your Baptism, will not suffice, nor will photocopies. Baptized non-Catholics can present their original document.

Marriage Forms

The priest or deacon-celebrant who assists you in your wedding planning will complete the marriage forms.

Prepare / Enrich

Prepare and Enrich is the pre-marriage evaluation tool and is a requirement for marriage in the Diocese of Cleveland. Your presider will walk you through this process.

Dispensation (if applicable)

If a dispensation is required, as in the case of mixed religion marriages, the dispensation will be submitted to the Tribunal.

Minister's License (if applicable)

Visiting clergy must be validly licensed by the State of Ohio in order to witness marriages at Saint Rita. Information to obtain a minister's license in the state of Ohio may be found at: www.sos.state.oh.us/sos/minister/index.html.

Civil License

Under state law, weddings cannot take place until the wedding celebrant has possession of your marriage license. For this reason, it is recommended that you bring your license during one of your meetings, drop it off at the Parish Office in the weeks before your wedding or at the very latest, to the rehearsal.

- The marriage license may be obtained in the County either of the bride or of the groom. If both parties are from out-of-state, the license **MUST** be obtained from Cuyahoga County.
- Both parties must be present at the time of the application.
- Both people must provide a social security number as well as a driver's license or valid ID.
- The marriage license is valid for 60 days and (as of last printing) costs \$60 for cash or check plus there is a \$2.95 fee for using a credit card.
- If there were any prior marriages a **certified copy** of the divorce decree with the location, date and case number is required.
- There is now an online pre-registration process (Cuyahoga County) that will speed up the process, although a personal visit to the probate court is still necessary. For more information, go to:
<http://probate.cuyahogacounty.us/marriage.htm>
- Remember, if you are changing your name, you will have to register the change with the Social Security Agency or you may lose your benefits. There is usually a form enclosed with your marriage license instructing you on how to do this.

In Cuyahoga County: Cuyahoga County Probate Court
1 Lakeside Avenue, Room 146
Cleveland, 44114 216-443-8920

In Summit County: Summit County Probate Court
209 South High Street
Akron, 44308 330-653-2288

In Geauga County: Geauga County Probate Court
231 Main Street; Ste. 200
Chardon, 44024 440-285-2222 x229

In Lake County: Lake County Probate Court
47 North Park Place
Painesville, 44077 440-357-2657

In Medina County: Medina County Probate Court
93 Public Square
Medina, 44256 330-725-9722

PLANNING THE WEDDING LITURGY

SETTING THE DATE AND TIME

Couples are expected to contact Saint Rita at least six months prior to the date on which they hope to celebrate their wedding. Only a priest or deacon may book the date for a wedding. **Your wedding date cannot be firmly set until after the priest or deacon has had sufficient opportunity to meet with the engaged couple.**

Weddings at Saint Rita are celebrated on:

- Friday evening at 5:00 PM
- Saturday afternoon at 12:00 PM
- Saturday afternoon at 2:00 PM

Exceptions to these times are rare and must be approved by your presiding priest/deacon. While a later time on Saturdays is sometimes preferred, the Church needs to be free by 3:30pm for incoming weekly services, so a 2:00pm wedding is the latest time slot permitted.

Also note that weddings are liturgical celebrations that fall into a liturgical year. Therefore, your particular celebration of marriage may take on a different “look” if you choose to be married at specific times of the year (Advent, Lent, the octave of Easter, etc.).

Place: In keeping with the sacred character of marriage, weddings are to take place in a sacred setting—one set aside for Divine worship. Therefore, weddings are not celebrated outdoors.

HOW DO WE CHOOSE SOMEONE TO MARRY US?

Marriage is a Sacrament, a covenant relationship between a man and a woman. As a result, the couple themselves are the actual ministers of the Sacrament. The parish priest or deacon is simply the official witness in the name of the Church and the State.

Typically, couples will call the main parish office and the secretary will be happy to direct you to one of the priests or deacons; please let her know if you would like to request someone specific.

Couples are welcome to invite a priest friend, deacon friend, or relative to officiate at their marriage. **The couple must meet with the Pastor of Saint Rita first and then extend the invitation to the couple’s choice to officiate.** This will help provide a clear determination of who will prepare the couple for marriage, who will officiate at the actual wedding liturgy, and who will complete the paperwork. All of this should be in writing. Visiting celebrants are expected to follow all Saint Rita Parish guidelines regarding the celebration of the sacrament.

Outline of the Ceremony

Marriage outside of Mass

Prelude(s)

Entrance Rite

Processional

Greeting

Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel

Homily

The Sacrament of Marriage

Exchange of Consent

Blessing of Rings

Prayers of the Faithful

Nuptial Blessing

Our Father

Concluding Rites

Final Blessing

Recessional

Postlude(s)

*The Eucharist is not
celebrated or shared
outside of the Mass.*

Marriage with Mass

Prelude(s)

Entrance Rite

Processional

Greeting

Gloria (Glory to God)

Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel

Homily

The Sacrament of Marriage

Exchange of Consent

Blessing of Rings

Prayers of the Faithful

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

Holy, Holy, Holy

Eucharistic Prayer

Our Father

Nuptial Blessing

Lamb of God

Exchange of Peace

Communion

Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rites

Final Blessing

Recessional

READINGS, GOSPEL, INTERCESSIONS

You may choose from the popular options outlined in this booklet, or choose your own (see instructions). Your priest/deacon is happy to discuss these with you so that they are meaningful to you as a couple.

THE MARRIAGE VOWS:

Church Policy does not permit you to compose your own Marriage Vows.

WITNESSES

The Church requires a Priest or Deacon and two witnesses in order for a marriage to take place with the blessing of the Church. Additional wedding party members are permissible, but not required. They perform no “official” role but are an extension of the hospitality of the bride and groom.

We encourage careful consideration when the selection of small children is made for the role of flower girl and/or ring bearer. (The ring bearer should not carry the actual rings) Rehearsal of their roles helps to ease possible anxiety on the wedding day. Children under the age of five years are discouraged from taking part in the bridal procession.

INVOLVING OTHERS IN THE CEREMONY:

As your family and friends have been an integral part of your lives, it is nice to involve them in the wedding ceremony. As stated in the marriage guidelines for the Diocese of Cleveland: *outside of Mass, the scriptures may be read by anyone of good reputation, and who can do so with a sense of reverence for the Scriptures.* When celebrating a wedding *within Mass, it is a general norm that Catholics who regularly worship should be asked to proclaim the readings.* With this in mind, please select individuals for the following roles:

READERS:

- ☐ Old Testament Passage
- ☐ New Testament Passage
- ☐ Prayers of the Faithful (petitions, intercessions)

GIFT BEARERS (Mass only):

- ☐ 2–4 people to bring forward the offertory gifts

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS (Mass only):

If celebrating the marriage within the context of the Mass, you have the option of involving a family member(s) who has been trained and commissioned as a Eucharistic Minister to assist the Celebrant in distributing communion to the assembly. Please ask the Celebrant about this possibility.

ALTAR SERVERS:

Relatives or friends who are experienced in the ministry of serving the Altar may fulfill this liturgical role at your wedding ceremony. If experienced family or friends are not available to serve, the parish will arrange two servers for your wedding.

FLOWERS

The Saint Rita Art and Environment group works hard throughout the year to make the Church beautiful and prayerful. If desired, you may wish to enrich the Church for your wedding with some of your own plants and flowers. There are a variety of placement options for flowers (e.g. in front of the ambo, in front of or behind the altar, etc.). It is popular and a common practice to leave these plants/flowers for the weekend masses.

Please take into consideration the current seasonal decorations and plants and refrain from moving them. For example, during October and November, decorations might include fall flowers, pumpkins, and corn stalks. During Lent and Advent, decorations might include purple altar cloths and hangings. During the Easter season, decorations might have more flowers and candles.

If there is another wedding the same weekend as yours, you may choose to share in the cost of the flowers for the church. Remember, however, that you are also welcome to leave the Church as it is without any additional floral arrangements and that adding items is purely optional.

Notes for the Florist:

- ▶ If you need to see the church ahead of time, please call the parish office for hours of availability.
- ▶ If you wish to coordinate decorations with what may be in the sanctuary the day of the wedding, please call our Pastoral Associate, George Peko (440-248-1350, x119).
- ▶ The church will be open at least one hour before the ceremony.
- ▶ Because of fire regulations, the use of lighted candles along the aisles is prohibited.
- ▶ Pew bows must be adhered with clips or rubber bands ... no wire or tape.
- ▶ Aisle runners are not permitted.
- ▶ While candelabras are permitted, you will need to place something underneath them to catch any wax that might drip.
- ▶ You will need to provide your own accessories (pedestals, etc.).
- ▶ Please plan on collecting your items immediately following the service to prevent loss.

MEMENTOS

As the newly wedded couple leaves the church, if anything is desired, bubbles or ringing bells are excellent options. Throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, or rose petals is not permitted. Since we take seriously our role as good stewards of the earth, the release of balloons is also prohibited

OFFERINGS AND GRATUITIES

While there is not a standard cost or fee associated with getting married in the Catholic Church of Saint Rita; it is appropriate that when one celebrates a Sacrament in the Church, that they make an offering to the Church and to the presiding Celebrant. The amount of the offering should be in proportion to your expenses for the rest of the day.

Some recommended amounts for the offering include:

- ☐ \$40 for the Pre-Marital Inventory (*Prepare/Enrich*)
- ☐ \$250 for the Church of Saint Rita
- ☐ \$250 or 10% of the cost of the Dress (whichever is greater) for the presiding Celebrant (in appreciation of the hours the minister has spent in preparation for your wedding)
- ☐ \$15/each for 2 Altar Servers (if celebrated within Mass)
- ☐ Musician fees are arranged with the Music Director directly and payable one week prior to the ceremony.

PEW DECORATIONS

Pew bows or decorations may be attached only by plastic clip or rubber-band; the use of tape or wire is NOT permitted.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

NOTE: Please provide the photographer sheet to the photographer and videographer.

We ask that photographers and videographers be respectful and reverent throughout the wedding liturgy. Most professional photographers are sensitive and use discretion when photographing a wedding. In order to make things run smoothly and to keep the ceremony as sacred as possible, all photographers and videographers must abide by the following guidelines:

- ▶ The photographer and/or videographer must consult with the presider before the Mass.
- ▶ It is important that you keep a low profile; this includes your attire and behavior.
- ▶ At no time may a photographer enter the sanctuary area of the Church.
- ▶ At no time may the wedding ceremony be interrupted for the purpose of taking pictures. This includes the procession up and down the aisle.
- ▶ Please try to be as quiet and unassuming as possible during the ceremony and always be aware of treating the Church as a sacred space.
- ▶ Be aware that there may be other events scheduled in the church immediately before or after your wedding, so please respect the time constraints given.
- ▶ You will be allowed a total of 1+1/2 hours from the wedding start time, which means there is about a half-an-hour after the wedding for indoor pictures. **Note: there is always a parish service at 3:30pm on Saturdays, so if your wedding starts at 2:00 pm, please be ready to leave the church no later than 3:30.**
- ▶ Couples may decide to have some pictures taken ahead of time, e.g. groom and groomsmen, groom and his family, bride and bridesmaids, bride and her family, etc
- ▶ Photographers may always take pictures on the grounds outside, before or after the ceremony.
- ▶ Your cooperation and understanding is most deeply appreciated.

POOR BASKET

Some couples opt to prepare a basket filled with non-perishable food or other basic items to be donated to charity as a sign of reaching out, caring for, and loving the poor. This basket is taken up during the offertory when marriage is celebrated within a Mass. The Poor Basket is strictly optional.

PROGRAMS

Wedding programs or worship aids are not required but may be helpful in encouraging the assembly to sing and participate. If you are duplicating music (words and/or actual music) you must obtain copyright permission to do so (the Music Director can help you understand this). You must also give proper credit to the composer under the published music and/or words. Note: the Presider and/or music director should proofread the wedding program before it goes to the printer.

If a large number of non-Catholics are anticipated at a wedding Mass (with Eucharist), you may want to print the following explanation in the wedding program:

As Catholics believe communion is the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, those who do not believe this or who are not of our faith are invited to remain in their place during communion praying for the newly married couple.

RECEIVING LINE

Receiving Lines are prohibited at Saint Rita. Pictures should begin as soon as possible, noting that there is only 1 1/2 hours after the posted starting time for the Ceremony and all indoor pictures.

UNITY CANDLES

Use of a “unity candle” is not part of the Catholic Rite of Marriage. Liturgically, the only appropriate *unity candle* is the Paschal Candle – which symbolizes Christ (who is the One who unites you in marriage).

If desired, we suggest you light a Unity Candle at the wedding reception as a part of the prayer before eating; this provides a bridge between the celebration of unity experienced during the Marriage Sacrament, and the beginning of the lived expression of that Sacrament experienced at the Wedding Reception.

VISIT TO THE BLESSED MOTHER STATUE

A visit to the Virgin Mary statue is sometimes included as a devotional time of prayer in the wedding liturgy. This devotional prayer is a custom and is not ordinarily included in the Roman Rite of Marriage; however it remains an option for couples. When included, the couple should process together to the Mary statue and spend time praying for help and inspiration in their married life.

THE WEEK PRIOR TO THE WEDDING DAY

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Receiving the Sacrament of Penance is a great way to start your new life together with your spouse; make it a priority to share in this Sacrament the week or two before your wedding. It is not appropriate to expect the priest to hear confessions at (or directly after) the Rehearsal.

WEDDING WORKSHEET

Please have this form completed in its entirety a week before your wedding and be sure that you keep a copy and that both the Celebrant and the Music Director both have copies as well. This will be used at the rehearsal.

BEFORE (OR AT) THE REHEARSAL:

The following may be taken care of at any time prior to the rehearsal. If your schedule has not permitted you the opportunity, you may present them to the presider at your rehearsal:

Marriage license: the rehearsal will not begin until the celebrant has the license in hand. Consider dropping it by the offices immediately after you obtain it from the Courthouse...one less thing for you to remember for the rehearsal.

Any balance(s) due for the fees and gratuities.

REHEARSAL

An important part of the ritual preparation for the wedding celebration is the rehearsal, which takes place in the week prior to the wedding (oftentimes the night before) and is scheduled months in advance.

It is important that all members of the wedding party be present for the rehearsal, as well as any individuals you have asked to participate, such as readers or Eucharistic Ministers during your celebration. Musicians will rehearse with the Music Director separately.

Since there is only 1 hour allotted for the Rehearsal, please be courteous by having everyone there promptly. Do whatever is necessary to get your guests there on time: it's okay to tell them the rehearsal is 15-30 minutes earlier than it's actually scheduled so they won't be late.

Please bring your copy of the Wedding Worksheet with you to the rehearsal so that everyone is on the same page as to the details of your special day.

RESPECT FOR SACRED SPACE

As a general rule, respect for the sacred space inside of Saint Rita Church should always be held in high regard. Kindness, openness, and willingness to listen to direction by the parish staff is key. Please refrain from loud and excessive talking. Also, be mindful of children playing throughout the worship space. Food and drink are not permitted.

NO GUM CHEWING BY ANYONE!

ALCOHOLIC CONSUMPTION:

There is to be no consumption of alcohol before the rehearsal or before the wedding and no alcohol is to be brought on or around the church property. Canon law forbids the Presider to marry anyone who might be intoxicated, because the individual might not freely be giving his/her consent.

THE WEDDING LITURGY

WEDDING DAY

Plan on arriving about 30-60 minutes before the wedding (be aware of other weddings or services before or after your wedding so that you can plan accordingly).

The bride and bridesmaids can get ready in the room located just off the entrance foyer to the left where there are mirrors and a bathroom. The groom and groomsmen can get ready near the Saint Mark Chapel or in the room to the right in the entry foyer depending on which entrance procession you choose.

Please be sure to take all personal belongings with you when you leave.

HOSPITALITY

The goal of the Gathering Rite is to gather the people into a praying community open and ready to hear the Word of God. A key element in creating that openness is hospitality. People should be greeted warmly as they arrive. We suggest you consider extending this gesture to include the entire bridal party (not just the ushers as is done in some traditions), the parent(s) of the bride and groom and even the bride and groom, since they are the reason the guests are there. It is not necessary to separate guests into the "bride's side" or the "groom's side" of the church.

WELCOME

After the guests have been seated but before the procession begins, the assembly should be welcomed, and invited / encouraged to participate in the wedding liturgy. This welcome may be offered by the couple themselves, the presiding minister, family member(s) or cantor. A brief rehearsal of sung responses prior to the wedding may encourage and help the assembly to participate. It can also help create a more hospitable climate and atmosphere of community. Coordinate with the Presider and the Music Director on who will do this.

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

The wedding procession is a symbol of “journey.” At one time, it was a traditional practice that the bride be escorted down the aisle by her father symbolizing that time when a father “gave away” his daughter and the dowry (a sum of money or goods) attached to her. Today, we suggest the bride and/or groom may be walked down the aisle by their parents at the beginning of the wedding liturgy to symbolize the journey, which the parents have shared with their children in preparation for a new journey in marriage. Then after the wedding, the bride and groom process out of the church together as a symbol of a new journey begun. As the book of Genesis reminds us “A man shall leave his father and mother, shall cling to his wife and the two become as one body.” (Genesis 2:24)

Processions should be structured to express the equality and mutuality of the couple and ought to be liturgical in nature. Therefore, the opening procession should include all involved in the liturgy: servers, cross bearer, lector(s), Celebrant, attendants, both sets of parents, and bride and groom. Here are some suggested ways of organizing such a procession:

Order I: “Liturgically Catholic”	Order II: “Classic”	Order III: “Vintage”
Cross-bearer	Cross-bearer	Priest leads Groom & Groomsmen from Sacristy area to front of Church
Servers	Servers	Groom’s parents (+/or stepparents)
Lector(s) carrying Gospel Book	Lector(s) carrying Gospel Book	Bride’s mom*
Priest or Deacon	Priest or Deacon	Bridesmaids
Attendants as couples	Attendants as couples	Maid of Honor
Best man and maid of honor	Best man and maid of honor	Bride with dad (*or both parents +/or stepparents)
Groom’s parents (+/or stepparents)	Groom with parents (+/or stepparents)	
Bride’s parents (+/or stepparents)	Bride with parents (+/or stepparents)	
Bride and Groom		

Processional Order 1: Liturgically Catholic

This processional order visually emphasizes the truth that the Sacrament of Matrimony is the only sacrament that is conferred upon by the participants (bride and groom), and therefore, the bride and groom process in together down the center aisle (walking down after the priest, parents, bridesmaids and groomsmen as couples).

Processional Order 2: Classic

This processional order has everyone processing in from the same location in the back of the church. The priest, the parents, the groom, the bridesmaids and groomsmen as couples, and the bride all originate from the same area. The bride can still remain in the Bridal Room so that she is not seen before she walks down the center aisle.

Processional Order 3: Vintage

This processional order is what used to be common, where the groom and groomsmen walk in from behind the altar (Saint Mark Chapel / priest Sacristy area), while the parents, the bridesmaids, and the bride process down the center aisle (optional: the groomsmen meet the bridesmaids half-way down the aisle during the processional).

PROCESSIONAL MUSIC (INSTRUMENTAL)

Normally, the liturgical procession is accompanied by a selection of instrumental music. The following are some possible choices of audio clips at www.StRitaParish.com/weddings for the opening procession music:

LITURGY OF THE WORD

After the Greeting by the Celebrant and an Opening Prayer, the Liturgy of the Word begins. Non-biblical texts may not be used during the Liturgy of the Word. Ordinarily, the readings for the wedding liturgy include an Old Testament/Hebrew Scriptures reading (1st Reading), an Epistle or Letter from the New Testament/Christian Scriptures (2nd Reading) and a Gospel Reading. Readers may be selected from among family, friends or lectors from the parish. The Lector(s) should be given the readings well in advance of the liturgy. They must attend the wedding rehearsal to learn the church's protocol, acoustics and sound system prior to the wedding liturgy. The following are texts commonly used for wedding liturgies; however, other Scriptural texts may be used.

FIRST READING (OLD TESTAMENT)

The first reading is ordinarily taken from the Old Testament. Please choose one of the following readings and indicate your choice (both the A# and the Scripture citation) on the planning form. You may choose a reading not listed here, as long as it can be found in the Old Testament. Please discuss any reading not in this guide with the Celebrant.

(A-1) A reading from the book of Genesis (Genesis 1:26-28, 31a)

Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground." God created humankind in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth." God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good. The Word of the Lord.

(A-2) A reading from the book of Genesis (Genesis 2:18-24)

The LORD God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him." So the LORD God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man. So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of 'her man' this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. The Word of the Lord.

(A-3) A Reading from the Book of Proverbs (Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31)

When one finds a worthy wife, her value is far beyond pearls. Her husband, entrusting his heart to her, has an unfailing prize. She brings him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She obtains wool and flax and makes her clothes with skillful hands. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her fingers to the spindle. She reaches out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy. Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her a reward of her labors, and let her works praise her at the city gates. The Word of the Lord.

(A-4) A reading from the book of Tobit (Tobit 8:4-7)

When Sarah's parents left the bedroom and closed the door behind them, Tobiah arose from bed and said to his wife, "My love, get up. Let us pray and beg our Lord to have mercy on us and to grant us deliverance." She got up, and they started to pray and beg that deliverance might be theirs. He began with these words: "Blessed are you, O God of our fathers; praised be your name forever and ever. Let the heavens and all your creation praise you forever. You made Adam and you gave him his wife Eve to be his help and support; and from these two the human race descended. You said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; let us make him a partner like himself.' Now, Lord, you know that I take this wife of mine not because of lust, but for a noble purpose. Call down your mercy on me and on her, and allow us to live together to a happy old age." The Word of the Lord.

(A-5) A reading from the Song of Songs (Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16, 8:6-7)

I hear my beloved. See how he comes leaping on the mountains, bounding over the hills, My Beloved is like a gazelle, like a young stag. See where he stands behind our wall. He looks in at the window, he peers through the lattice. My Beloved lifts up his voice, he says to me, "Come then, my love, my lovely one, come. My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock, in the coverts of the cliff, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet and your face beautiful." My beloved is mine and I am his. He said to me: Set me like a seal on your heart, like a seal on your arm. For love is strong as Death, jealousy relentless as Sheol. The flash of it is a flash of fire, a flame of the Lord himself. Love no flood can quench, no torrents drown. The Word of the Lord.

(A-6) A Reading from the Book of Sirach (Sirach 26:1-4, 13-16)

Blessed the husband of a good wife, twice lengthened are his days; A worthy wife brings joy to her husband, peaceful and full is his life. A good wife is a generous gift bestowed upon him who fears the Lord; Be he rich or poor, his heart is content, and a smile is ever on his face. A gracious wife delights in her husband, her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones; A gift from the Lord is her governed speech and her firm virtue is of surpassing worth. Choicest of blessings is a modest wife, priceless her chaste soul. A holy and decent woman adds grace upon grace; indeed, no price is worthy of her temperate soul. Like the sun rising in the Lord's heavens, the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home. The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The Responsorial Psalm is always sung and is taken from one of the 150 Psalms in the Old Testament. The following is a selection of the most common Psalms chosen for wedding liturgies.

#	Psalm	Text (Refrain)
B-1	Psalm 103	Loving and Forgiving are You O Lord
B-2	Psalm 118	This Day Was Made by the Lord
B-3	Psalm 128	O Blessed Are Those Who Fear the Lord
B-4	Psalm 145	I Will Praise Your Name Forever

SECOND READING (NEW TESTAMENT)

The second reading is always taken from the New Testament and is often one of the letters of Saint Paul. Please choose one of the following readings and indicate your selection on the planning form(both the C# and the Scripture citation). You may choose a reading not listed here, as long as it can be found in the New Testament and is not one of the Gospels. Please discuss any reading not in this guide with the Celebrant.

(C-1) A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans (Rom 8:31-35, 37-39)

What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ (Jesus) who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Word of the Lord.

(C-2) A reading from the first letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor 12:31-13:8a)

Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts. But I shall show you a still more excellent way. If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever. Love is always patient and kind, it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offense, and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in the truth. It is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes. Love never ends. The Word of the Lord.

(C-3) A reading from the letter of Paul to the Colossians (Colossians 3:12-17)

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful. Let the word of Christ, rich as it is, find a home in you. Teach each other and advise each other in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God. And never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. The Word of the Lord.

(C-4) A reading from the first letter of John (1 John 4:7-12)

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might have life through him. Love, then, consists in this: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us. The Word of the Lord

(C-5) A Reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans (Rom 15:1b-3a, 5-7, 13)

Brothers and Sisters: We ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves; let each of us please our neighbors for the good, for building up. For Christ did not please himself. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Word of the Lord.

(C-6) A Reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians (Philippians 4:4-9)

Brothers and Sisters: Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you. The Word of the Lord.

(C-7) A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews (Hebrews 13:1-4a, 5-6b)

Brothers and sisters: Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels. Be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their imprisonment, and of the ill-treated as of yourselves, for you also are in the body. Let marriage be honored among all and the marriage bed be kept undefiled. Let your life be free from love of money but be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never forsake you or abandon you". Thus we may say with confidence: "The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid." The Word of the Lord.

THE GOSPEL READING

A Priest or Deacon always proclaims the Gospel reading (chosen only from one of the four Gospels). It may be chosen by the Bride and Groom or selected by the Celebrant for the liturgy.

(D-1) A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 5:1-12a)

When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.

(D-2) A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 5:13-16)

Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.

(D-3) A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 7:21, 24-29)

"Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined."

(D-4) A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 19:3-6)

Some Pharisees approached him, and tested him, saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?" He said in reply, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate."

(D-5) A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew (Matthew 22:35-40)

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them (a scholar of the law) tested him by asking, "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."

(D-6) A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (Mark 10:6-9)

But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother (and be joined to his wife), and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate."

(D-7) A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (John 2:1-11)

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." (And) Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came, the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

(D-8) A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (John 15:9-17)

As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another."

(D-9) A reading from the holy Gospel according to John (John 17:20-23)

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: "I pray not only for my disciples, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me."



THE MARRIAGE RITE

EXCHANGE OF WEDDING VOWS AND RINGS

The proclamation of vows, when done prayerfully and meaningfully, expresses the unity and intimacy of a couple joining together as one. To express this life-long commitment and promise, the bride and groom are asked to memorize their vows, but aren't required to do so. Whether memorized (which is preferred) or repeated after the Celebrant, the vows should be audible to the assembly as witnesses to the promises the bride and groom make.

Church Policy does not permit you to compose your own Marriage Vows.

The text of the vows is as follows:

The Exchange of Wedding Vows

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

I, _____, take you _____, to be my husband.
I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

The rings will be blessed by the Celebrant and then each will place it on the finger of the other (Bride and Groom) while saying the following words:

The Exchange of Rings

_____, take 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.

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

The response to the intercessions may be spoken or sung. A family member or friend may offer these prayers. Some suggested intercessions are listed here and can be personalized. ***Priest always begins and ends with prayer. Please stay at the pulpit until the Priest ends the prayer.*** Deceased relatives and friends can be mentioned.

I)

Reader: The response to the following petitions will be Lord hear our Prayer

For Francis our Pope, Edward our Bishop, Michael his Assistant, and clergy everywhere that they may lead us to deeper faith in God and a stronger love for others, we pray

For all civil leaders, that they may be effective in achieving peace and eliminating poverty, we pray

For married persons that they may continue to give, be able to forgive, and find happiness deepen with the passing of each day, we pray

For N and N, now beginning their life together, that they may have divine assistance at every moment, the constant support of friends, the rich blessing of children, a warm love reaching out to others, and good health until a ripe old age, we pray

For those who are sick, that they may be strengthened by God's healing hand and aided by their friends we pray

For all who have died, especially relatives and friends of N's and N's families, may they enjoy perfect happiness and total fulfillment in eternal life, we pray

For our own personal needs, we pray

II)

Reader: The response to the following petitions will be Lord hear our Prayer

For leaders of Church and state for heads of institutions, for heads of homes and households. . . that they will lead us and guide us in the search for God and the good life, in the search for peace and joy, in the search for love among us, we pray.

For all married people: for those who married yesterday, for the new couple N and N, married today, for those who will marry tomorrow. . . that they may savor the joy of being together, warm love, and children, a long life, wine, and friends, and a new day, every day we pray.

For all single people who look forward to a vocation full of life and full of love we pray.

For the lonely old and the lonely young, for the hungry rich and the hungry poor, for the sick In body, mind, and spirit, for the weakness in all of us we pray.

For our relatives and friends who have gone before us to the other side of life especially members of N's and N's families may they find eternal peace with God we pray.

*[N. and N. represent the names of the bride and groom.]

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST*

*The Liturgy of the Eucharist is only celebrated when the wedding liturgy is celebrated within Mass.

PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

The procession of offertory gifts includes not only the bread and wine that will be transformed into the Eucharist and Precious Blood, but it also symbolizes the gift of our lives to the Lord. An optional idea is to prepare a basket of non-perishable items as a symbol of the couple's love reaching out and embracing others in need. Instrumental music or a short song should accompany the action of the preparation of the gifts.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Eucharistic Prayer is the prayer of the entire assembly with the Priest leading the prayer. The full, active and conscious participation of the assembly is encouraged. A cantor typically leads the acclamations (Holy Holy, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen).

THE LORD'S PRAYER (OUR FATHER...)

The entire assembly should sing or recite the Lord's Prayer.

NUPTIAL BLESSING

The Nuptial Blessing is the official prayer of the Church for the bride and groom.

SIGN OF PEACE

The Sign of Peace is a symbolic action of offering the peace of Christ to those around us. The Bride and Groom offer a sign of peace to each other, to the Celebrant and to other ministers and (when appropriate) to the wedding party and immediate family. If there is musical accompaniment for the sign of peace, it should be instrumental, simple and appropriate to the occasion.

COMMUNION

Only those sharing full unity of the Catholic faith, life and worship may receive Communion during Mass. Under specific conditions, a bride or groom from another Christian church may receive special permission to receive Communion at their wedding Mass. However, permission cannot be extended beyond the bride or groom. If a large number of non-Catholics are anticipated at a wedding Mass, the following explanation may be printed in the wedding program:

As Catholics believe communion is the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, those who do not believe this or who are not of our faith are invited to remain in your place during communion, praying for the couple.

COMMUNION HYMN

The following are some appropriate selections for the Communion Hymn; usually one is sufficient. Listen to audio clips at www.StRitaParish.com/weddings.

HONORING MARY (OPTIONAL)

VISIT TO THE BLESSED MOTHER STATUE

A visit to the Virgin Mary statue is sometimes included as a devotional time of prayer in the wedding liturgy. This devotional prayer is a custom and is not ordinarily included in the Roman Rite of Marriage; however, it remains an option for couples. When included, the couple should process together to the Mary statue and spend time praying for help and inspiration in their married life.

BLESSING

After the closing prayer, the Priest or Deacon asks the bride and groom and the assembly to bow their heads and pray for God's blessing.

DISMISSAL AND RECESSIONAL

After the dismissal, the newly married couple is formally “presented” to the assembly and then begin their life journey as they process out together. The recessional procession is usually accompanied by instrumental music. For some possible selections; listen to audio clips at www.StRitaParish.com/weddings.

CONCLUSION

Reminder that there should be no receiving line at the Church. The Bride and Groom can either enter the Bride’s Room or go around to the Sacristy.

Congratulations

The Saint Rita parish staff extends our heartfelt prayers and congratulations to you during this special time in your life. Please know that we are available to you in the days and years ahead as you discover and live your new vocation and mission. There are wonderful programs such as Marriage Encounter, enrichment programs, retreats and *Retrouvaille*, which can all help, enhance and enrich your married life together. Please feel free to call upon us if the need or desire arises. Furthermore, if you plan to make Saint Rita your home parish, please register with us at the Parish Office. Parishioners should notify us of a change in name or address. We hope and pray that your wedding will be a time of true celebration of your love for one another and for the Lord.



CHURCH OF SAINT RITA WEDDING PLANNING CHECK-LIST

- ☐ Meetings with the Celebrant:
 - Initial Interview (a picture will be taken)
 - Administration of the pre-marriage inventory, Prepare/Enrich
 - Discussion of the pre-marriage inventory
 - Pre-marital sessions (continued as directed by Celebrant)
 - Planning of the Wedding ceremony & music
- ☐ Marriage Preparation Program Completed
 - Pre-Cana Day, Sponsor Couple Program, Engaged Encounter, or Cana II.
- ☐ Baptismal Certificate(s) obtained & submitted
 - For Catholics a recently dated certificate must be obtained from the Church of Baptism during the six-month period which precedes the wedding. Those of another Christian faith tradition may submit a photocopy of their original certificate.
- ☐ Rehearsal Date and Time Scheduled
- ☐ Plan music with Parish Music Director
- ☐ Choose Scripture readings and Intercessions
- ☐ Prepare program design (optional) and get approval from Priest and Music Director prior to printing.
- ☐ Friends & Family Involvement
 - First & Second Readings (Saint Rita will give them copies so they can practice)
 - Intercessions (Saint Rita will give them a copy so they can practice)
 - Offertory Gifts (if wedding includes Eucharist)
 - Eucharistic Minister (if applicable)
 - Servers (if applicable)
- ☐ Fees and Gratuities (Payable one week prior to the wedding)
 - Donation to the parish for use of the church
 - Gratuities for your Celebrant
 - Gratuities for the servers, if applicable
 - Fees for the musicians and vocalists
- ☐ Marriage License given to the Celebrant (no later than the rehearsal)
- ☐ Programs (optional) – Brought to Church
- ☐ Poor Basket (optional) – Brought to Church