



# **WEDDING POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

(as of October 14, 2016)



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## WEDDINGS

### YOUR WEDDING AT MARY QUEEN CATHOLIC CHURCH

We rejoice with you as you prepare to enter into Holy Matrimony. As you prepare for this wonderful vocation of love, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- You are preparing for a life time commitment. Thus the Church asks you to prepare for this major commitment by attending a preparation process that will address the theology of marriage; communication skills; etc. Your marriage preparation and wedding day are a holy time of prayer.
- Your wedding day will take a great deal of preparation, and we are here to help. Remember to keep important things important. Everything else will work out!
- Because this is a holy time, remember to pray. Attend Mass every Sunday and all other holy days of obligation; go to the Sacrament of Penance on a regular basis; read your bible and pray. There is no substitute for prayer. This will sustain you as you prepare for your wedding day and all the days of your married life.

## DATES AND TIMES

### REHEARSALS AND WEDDINGS AT MARY QUEEN

#### Schedule of Weddings

##### Saturdays:

As of February 2016, Saturday weddings are celebrated at 10:00 a.m., 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m. Due to the great number of parish activities, the church is reserved for your use 3 hours before the wedding and 1 hour after the wedding. This is the time available for setup, decorating, picture taking and clean-up. If additional time is needed before the wedding, this must be scheduled with the Coordinator of Ministries and Functions and an extra fee may be incurred.

##### Weekdays:

Special weekday wedding dates are permitted only if the parish schedule allows.

##### Sundays:

There are no weddings on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation.

\* Weddings during Lent are discouraged.

#### Rehearsals

The Rehearsal should be a joyful and prayerful occasion for the engaged couple and their wedding party. Since it takes place in the sacred space of the Mary Queen Catholic Church, emphasis will be given to prayer and worship. Failure to show up or late arrival to the rehearsal that causes re-scheduling will result in forfeiture of the deposit, as well as for those who do not cooperate (or their wedding party).



- Proper professional attire by all is to be worn at the wedding rehearsal. This means no shorts, short hemmed skirts/dresses, low cut tops, halter tops, tank tops or mid-drifts, baseball caps, torn, baggy, or otherwise worn jeans, flip-flops, or any clothing that bears offensive language or imagery.

#### Schedule of Rehearsals:

Rehearsals are generally on the evening before the wedding. Exceptions are made for Friday evening weddings. Rehearsals are conducted by Mary Queen staff and last no longer than 60 minutes. Rehearsals times are 5:30; 6:30; and 7:30 pm.

#### **Reserving a Rehearsal and Wedding at Mary Queen**

Wedding and rehearsal dates/times are scheduled with the Function Coordinator. No date can be reserved or "held" until the completion of **the Mary Queen Wedding Reservation Form** (see separate attached forms in wedding packet) and the deposit is received. Wedding dates/times are on first-come, first-serve basis.

Please note: The reservation of a wedding date is not a guarantee that you will marry. Issues that may arise in marriage preparation may result in the postponement or cancellation of your wedding.

## DOCUMENTS NEEDED

The following documents are required and must be promptly provided to Mary Queen. There are no exceptions to these documents; every parish is required to include these documents in the wedding file, prior to any wedding taking place.

**For Catholic Parties:** Baptismal Certificate(s) or a Profession of Faith Certificate issued within six months from the Catholic Church of your baptism or where you became a Catholic, with any sacramental notations listed on the back.

**For Baptized Christian Parties:** Proof of baptism (certificate of baptism or letter from minister or witnesses) for a baptized Christian (other than Roman Catholic).

- Two Affidavits of Freedom to Marry (see separate attached forms in wedding packet) *each* for the groom and bride, provided by the church, completed and returned.

- A valid civil Marriage License can be obtained at any County Clerk's Office in Texas and be used anywhere in Texas. Texas law states a marriage license will expire 30 days from the date it is issued, and it must be secured at least 72 hours prior to the wedding. However, Mary Queen requires your marriage license to be in the parish office **one week prior to the wedding**. Without a valid civil marriage license, there will not be a wedding.



## THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

The Catholic Rite of Marriage takes place within the Sacred Liturgy. By its nature, Sacred Liturgy is a celebration of the universal church. The wedding liturgy reflects this aspect when a groom and bride profess their solemn vows to each other before God and His people assembled.

The Rite of Marriage may be celebrated during Mass or outside of Mass (Liturgy of the Word with no Holy Communion).\*

- Rite of Marriage during Mass is the norm when both the bride and the groom are practicing Catholics.
- \* Rite of Marriage outside of Mass (Liturgy of the Word with no Holy Communion) is the norm when a Catholic marries a baptized Christian of another faith. (Circumstances may allow exceptions.)
- \* Rite of Marriage outside of Mass (Liturgy of the Word with no Holy Communion) is the norm when a Catholic marries a non-baptized person.

For a Rite of Marriage outside of Mass, practicing Catholics and/or practicing baptized Christians of another faith may read the first and second readings or a person of the Jewish faith may read the Old Testament reading.

To prepare for the Rite of Marriage outside a Mass, a book will be given which outlines options for the prayers and scripture readings.

With the Rite of Marriage during Mass, couples are asked to choose two (2) practicing Catholics to present the gifts of bread and wine for consecration.

## OFFICIANTS:

Since weddings are acts of worship and prayer, in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, weddings must take place in a parish church and are not allowed in private homes, gardens, or reception halls without the permission of the Archbishop.

Marriages may be celebrated in the parish church of either the bride or the groom. With the permission of the bishop, when one party is an active member of a different religious tradition, the wedding can take place in the worship place of the Christian party and in the presence of the religious leader of that religious community. A Catholic priest or deacon should be invited to participate in the ceremony. In an interfaith marriage that takes place in a Catholic church, the religious leader of the Christian party is invited to take part in the ceremony to the extent allowed by Church norms.



**Non-registered couples of Mary Queen Parish may have to secure their own priest/deacon who will do the marriage preparation and preside at the wedding liturgy.**

**A visiting priest or deacon who officiates weddings at Mary Queen Church must receive a letter of delegation from the pastor of Mary Queen. The visiting priest or deacon must understand and agree to follow the marriage preparation guidelines of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, as well as the wedding liturgy guidelines of Mary Queen.**

**Furthermore, a cleric from outside the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston must have the testimonial of suitability for ministry from his own religious superior or bishop before he is allowed to exercise ministry at Mary Queen.**

## **THE WEDDING PARTY**

The focus of the wedding is the liturgy; witnessing the sacramental exchange of wedding vows by the bride and groom. While wedding parties certainly add an element of solemnity and festivity to the occasion, they must not be a distraction from the liturgical rite. Mary Queen, in seeking to preserve the integrity of the liturgy, has established certain policies regarding the wedding party.

The following are the policies regarding the wedding party for weddings at Mary Queen. By signing a contract with Mary Queen Catholic Church, all couples give their written acknowledgement *and* consent to these policies and will be held accountable to them.

1. Brides are to be mindful of the necessary modesty of dress that is appropriate for a sacred place and for sacred worship. Appropriateness for a sacred place is not the same as a reception, party, etc. Appropriateness of attire should be a discussion the wedding coordinator has with the bride and groom scheduling and planning the wedding. The emphasis is a reverent respect for the Church and the liturgy.
2. Since the groom and bride are the focus, the number of attendants is to be limited to seven couples or less. Couples should strive for beauty and simplicity.
3. At least two gentlemen, apart from the groomsmen, are to serve as ushers. Their primary duties are to welcome and seat the guests and family members, and to aid in the opening of the doors for the entrance and departure of the guests and liturgical procession. Groomsmen may also help the ushers with the seating of the guests if there is sufficient time.
4. Children in the wedding party: Flower Girls and Ring Bearers must be of the age of childhood maturity, which are ages 6 or above. Younger children are not of the approved age for these significant roles.
5. Following the service, the attendants are to ensure that the church and Bridal Suite are clean and clear, by picking up any left over worship aids, waste, or other items left by the wedding party and/or guests. Light snacks and refreshments are permitted in the Bridal Suite, but under no circumstances can alcohol of any kind (including wine and champagne) enter the church. Please remember this room is used for other weddings and church use; be considerate of others.

***Mary Queen Catholic Church will not be held responsible for any remaining, missing, or lost items from the rehearsal or wedding.***



## WEDDING COORDINATORS

### WEDDING COORDINATORS OR CONSULTANTS

Wedding coordinators or consultants may be helpful in situations where a wedding will not occur in the Catholic Church, or if the couple is Catholic, the service would only apply to needs such as the rehearsal dinner, reception, or connecting to resources including flowers, photography, etc. This service can become expensive or cumbersome though. We advise couples to think carefully before hiring a wedding coordinator or consultant.

### THE CHURCH IS ITS OWN WEDDING COORDINATOR

Since the Catholic Church adheres to the rubrics for its Sacred Liturgy, hired wedding coordinators and/or consultants are not necessary.

**Policy:** Couples who choose to hire a wedding coordinator/consultant must make sure that all communication regarding the wedding is between Mary Queen staff and the groom and bride. No third party calls will be permitted (including parents, vendors, etc.).

The hired wedding coordinator/consultant must honor all aspects of the Church's marriage preparation and liturgy. Moreover, he/she will not conduct the wedding rehearsal or interfere with the wedding itself. Though that person is welcome to be *present*, he/she will assist Mary Queen's wedding coordinator (priest, deacon, or designated layperson) **ONLY** when directly asked by Mary Queen staff.

*It is the groom & bride's responsibility to communicate all policies and boundaries with the wedding coordinator prior to contracting the service.*

## FLOWERS, CANDLES & MORE

The use of flowers and other symbols is intended to add to the festivity of the wedding liturgy. Flowers are permitted as part of the wedding environment, as long as they do not distract from the focus of the wedding (the exchange of consent) and do not cause danger of falling, and/or damage to the building or furnishings. Church furnishings and liturgical decorations may not be changed or moved.

The following policies are in place to ensure the appropriate placement and use of flowers, candles, and other symbols. By signing a contract with Mary Queen Catholic Church for one's wedding, the couple gives their written acknowledgement and consents to these policies and will be held accountable to following them.



### **FLOWERS/DECORATIONS:**

- Flowers may be used in the designated areas except during Advent. Flowers may be placed on the pedestals in the back of the sanctuary; on the floor in front of the candelabra if used, or on the floor on either side of the front steps of the sanctuary.

- Flowers/greenery and/or bows may be placed on the first pew on either side of the center aisle using only special floral hangers. The use of tape, staples, glue, etc. on the pews or any other furnishing is not permitted.

- Silk or plastic flowers are not permitted.

- Flowers for the Blessed Virgin Mary may be presented at the conclusion of the wedding liturgy prior to the recessional by BOTH Bride and Groom together.

If flowers are to be used, they must be considered as a gift to the parish for use at the weekend Masses and may not be removed.

-Mary Queen's Art and Environment Team is able to provide beautiful arrangements for your ceremony for a fee. Please contact the Director of Liturgy & Music for more information.

### **UNITY CANDLE/OTHER SYMBOLS:**

**Remember, the focus of your marriage ceremony is your consent and the exchange of vows and rings. Other symbols may be used, though not encouraged, as long as the focus is maintained.**

- Unity candles are not part of Catholic ritual. However, if the unity candle is used, the parish owned unity candle stand must be used and the couple must provide their own unity candle and floral decorations for the stand. Rental fee of \$25.00 for Unity Candle Stand.

- No aisle stanchions, lanterns, or candles of any sort and no white aisle runners are permitted due to safety reasons.





## APPROPRIATE CHURCH BEHAVIOR

Just as when we attend ball games, movies, theatres, or any other venue, there is a standard of behavior expected, so even truer is it for worship in a sacred place or gathering. Care and respect of the church as a sacred place for prayer and worship is to be given at all times. A prayerful reverence should be reflected in speech and in actions before, during, and after the wedding rehearsal and the wedding liturgy. To ensure there are no misunderstandings, the couple must inform/educate their guests and the wedding party of the expected behavior in the church/and church property.

By signing a contract with Mary Queen Catholic Church for a wedding liturgy, the couple gives written acknowledgment and consent to the following policies concerning appropriate church behavior:

- Couples and their wedding party and guests should come reverently and modestly attired and prepared to fully participate, be on time and with as little distractions as possible.
- No loud or excessive talking by anyone; and no running or playing around by children. Children must be supervised and with an adult at all times.
- Arriving and/or starting late for the wedding may result in the forfeiture of the deposit.
- Throwing of flower petals, bird seed, rice, confetti, bubbles is not permitted. Releasing doves or other animals is also not permitted.
- There is to be NO FOOD (including gum) or BEVERAGES inside the church building (including bride room, narthex, etc.)
- There is to be NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES or ILLEGAL NARCOTICS anywhere on church property, including the parking lot. Anyone found with such substances will be asked to leave the property.
- There are to be NO CONCEALED HANDGUNS or WEAPONS of any kind on church property, including the parking lot and other church-owned buildings.
- Cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are to be turned OFF or placed on mute when inside the church. Taking phone calls or texting during the liturgy is entirely inappropriate and not permitted.



## MUSIC

An important element of any liturgy is the music. Singing is always an integral part of the Church's worship. Music is prayer. St. Augustine said that "*singing is praying twice!*" Therefore, couples preparing for music need to pay special attention to the music chosen for their wedding liturgy. Remember that weddings in the Catholic Church are liturgies first and foremost, and the goal of the liturgy is to give worship to God.

Music must be appropriate for Catholic liturgies; secular music or even popular Christian praise and worship music is not liturgical, and therefore not permitted. Pre-recorded music is also not permitted. The Director of Liturgy & Music at Mary Queen Catholic Church will meet with couples to provide the musical options available that are approved for Catholic liturgical worship.

### **PREPARING FOR MUSIC & MUSICIANS:**

Couples preparing for marriage must consult with the music director at least 6 months prior to the wedding date. In addition, the parish accompanist and cantor must be used. Outside musicians may not be used without prior approval from the Liturgy & Music Director. This ensures that proper equipment and audio needs are addressed prior to the wedding day.

Dylan Ramirez, Director of Liturgy & Music  
281-482-3454

## PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO TAPING

Since the church is a sacred place of prayer and worship, appropriate professional and reverent behavior is expected at all times on church premises. The overriding principle for a photographer or videographer is to be as inconspicuous and discreet as possible.

Couples must provide their photographer and/or videographer with a copy of the Mary Queen Catholic Church wedding guidelines. Before contracting with these services, couples must be sure the following policies are acknowledged and will be followed:

- The photographer and videographer must check in with the priest or deacon before the wedding liturgy begins.
- Pictures and video may be taken in the church prior to the ceremony but ending 30 minutes prior to the service. Please consult the function coordinator for the time allotted for the usage of the church.
- The photographer and/or videographer is allowed only in designated areas. They are never allowed in the inner sanctuary, near the tabernacle, or in front of the assembly. They are encouraged to remain behind the main assembly of people. The videographer is encouraged to remain stationary throughout the ceremony and for adequate recording of sound, to connect into the Church's sound system.



- There is to be no artificial lighting or flash photography during the ceremony. The procession is not to be stopped or interrupted once it has begun. All photos should be respectful of the sacredness of the church (no cutesy or inappropriate poses).

## RECEPTION

The wedding ceremony does NOT include use of the Main Hall or any additional rooms in the Parish Center. Those rooms require a separate rental policy. Please contact the Parish Office for more information.

## LITURGICAL PROCESSION

As with any ritual or ceremony, there is usually some kind of order in the processional and recessional (entrance & exit). The Catholic Church in her liturgies has a defined order of procession and recession as well. Our order is defined by local and national ecclesial authorities.

Below is the proper order for a wedding liturgy; wedding coordinators are not to interfere with this order in any way.

\*\*\*\*\*

Seating of Guests  
Seating of Grandparents  
Seating of Parents (unless escorting bride and/or groom)

### LITURGICAL PROCESSION

Altar Servers  
(couple may provide servers, but are not required)  
Lector(s)  
Groom  
Priest and/or Deacon

OPTION 1	OPTION 2
<b>Groom</b> (alone)	<b>Groom</b> (with father and/or mother)
<b>Groomsmen</b> (single file)	<b>Groomsmen &amp; Bridal Attendants</b> (couples)
<b>Bridal Attendants</b> (single file)	
<b>Ring Bearer and/or Flower Girl(s)</b>	<b>Ring Bearer and/or Flower Girl(s)</b>
<b>Bride</b> (alone, with father and/or mother)	<b>Bride</b> (alone, with father and/or mother)



### **LITURGICAL RECESSION**

Groom & Bride  
Groomsmen and Bridal Attendants  
Ring Bearer and/or Flower Girl(s)  
Altar Servers (if app)  
Priest and/or Deacon and Servers  
Parents/Family  
Guests

## **FEE SCHEDULE FOR WEDDINGS**

Mary Queen Catholic Church is pleased to have your marriage ceremony take place in our parish. As with everything else, there are costs associated with keeping these beautiful structures operational and properly maintained. The fees below do not cover the entire costs of having your wedding here, but they do help defray the expenses of hosting your wedding.

### **Main Church with Rooms for Bridal and Groom Parties**

#### **Mary Queen Catholic Church \*Parishioner Fees (registered with stewardship): \$590.00**

Reservation Deposit: \$200.00

Marriages in Church: Usage Fee: \$350.00

PMI Processing Fee: \$40.00

\* A parishioner is defined by stewardship: time, talent, and treasure.

- Time & Talent: Offering your time and talent to the parish (participating in Sunday Mass, parish events, ministries, etc.)
- Treasure: Using your church envelopes or Faith Direct faithfully for the previous year. *You must have been registered and contributing using your church envelope/Faith Direct for an entire year PRIOR to scheduling the church.* Registering and contributing at the time of scheduling the church is not accepted.

#### **Mary Queen Catholic Church \*Parishioner Fees (registered non-stewardship): \$740.00**

Reservation Deposit: \$200.00

Marriages in Church Usage Fee: \$500.00

PMI Processing Fee: \$40.00

#### **Newly-Registered (less than twelve months) Parishioner Rate: \$1240.00**

Reservation Deposit: \$250.00

Marriages in Church Usage Fee: \$1000.00

PMI Processing Fee: \$40.00



**Non-Parishioner Rate: \$1440.00**

Reservation Deposit: \$200.00

Marriages in Church Usage Fee: \$1200.00

PMI Processing Fee: \$40.00

**Chapel with Rooms for Bridal and Groom Parties**

**Mary Queen Catholic Church \*Parishioner Rate (registered with stewardship): \$490.00**

Reservation Fee: \$200.00

Marriages in Chapel Usage Fee: \$250.00

PMI Processing Fee: \$40.00

\* A parishioner is defined by stewardship: time, talent, and treasure.

- Time & Talent: Offering your time and talent to the parish (participating in Sunday Mass, parish events, ministries, etc.)
- Treasure: Using your church envelopes faithfully for the previous year. *You must have been registered and contributing using your church envelope/stewardship for an entire year PRIOR to scheduling the church.* Registering and contributing at the time of scheduling the church is not accepted.

**Mary Queen Catholic Church \*Parishioner Rate (registered non-stewardship): \$590.00**

Reservation Deposit: \$200.00

Marriages in Chapel Usage Fee: \$350.00

PMI Processing Fee: \$40.00

**Newly-Registered (less than twelve-months) Parishioner Rate: \$990.00**

Reservation Deposit: \$200.00

Marriage in Chapel Usage Fee: \$750.00

PMI Processing Fee: \$40.00

**Non-Parishioner Rate: \$1140.00**

Reservation Deposit: \$200.00

Marriages in Chapel Usage Fee: \$900.00

PMI Processing Fee: \$40.00

***\* All deposits & fees due must be paid in full at least 3 months PRIOR to the wedding. If you cancel your wedding reservation, we retain the stated reservation deposit and 25% of monies paid toward the church usage fee.***

**ADDITIONAL FEES:**

**Liturgy/Music:**

Accompanist - \$250.00

Cantor - \$150.00

Audio Engineer - \$125 (only applicable if outside musicians will be used)

MQ Wedding Coordinator- \$50.00

A free will offering for the priest or deacon.



**Optional Symbols:** If you plan to use the unity candle symbol in your wedding, you must provide your own unity candle set and use the parish unity candle stand.

**Unity Candle Stand - \$25**

Couples are to provide the unity candle set and floral decorations for the candle stand.

**Important - Please note:**

A wedding date and time **CANNOT** be reserved without payment of the designated reservation deposit and completion of the wedding reservation form. If the church is left in good condition; nothing is damaged or taken, and provided **all the wedding guidelines of Mary Queen Catholic Church** have been followed, **all marriage fees and church fees, including PMI** have been paid, the reservation deposit will be refunded.\*

***\* If you cancel your wedding reservation, we retain the reservation deposit and 25% of the monies paid toward the church usage fee.***

Please understand that the Mary Queen Parish subsidizes the wedding ceremonies since these fees do not even cover the actual costs involved. Of course, these financial expectations always depend on the couple's situation. **No one is ever denied a wedding at Mary Queen Catholic Church due to the lack of sufficient financial resources.** We are happy to celebrate the weddings of those who cannot afford the fees, provided this is also reflected in the simplicity of the wedding with regard to music, number of attendants, décor, reception, etc. If an exception is to be made, the officiating cleric will make the appropriate recommendation to the pastor who has to give the final approval.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

To assist engaged couples with answering the most common questions or concerns, we have provided frequently asked questions and responses. We urge couples to thoroughly read the information we provide prior to contacting the parish.

**1. How long does it take to prepare to marry?** The answer is dependent on a number of factors, including where you are marrying, if you are free to marry in the Church, how long it takes you to complete the marriage preparation sessions, and your own readiness. There is no magic number so we have provided some guidance with the typical scenarios.

**2. We plan to wed at Mary Queen and want to register for classes and book a date. What do we need to do?** After reading the information online, contact the parish office and request a function coordinator. She will provide you the necessary forms and information for registration and schedule an appointment for booking a wedding date. Please note that booking a date & attending classes does not guarantee a wedding will occur; only the clergy makes that final determination with each couple.



**3. How long should it take if we are marrying at Mary Queen (or another parish in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston)?** The absolute minimum is six (6) months to complete the marriage preparation classes, however this means no absences, all forms and fees are submitted on time as requested, and all meetings with the clergy assigned to you have been fulfilled and no other serious concern exists. Non-parishioners are responsible to transport the file to the clergy at the parish where they are marrying.

**4. How much time do I need to give for a wedding outside the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston (or out of country)?** The Archdiocese requires that couples planning to marry outside the Archdiocese must have fully completed all Marriage Preparation sessions by two (2) months in advance of the wedding date. This means a minimum of eight (8) months is needed, no serious concerns exist, and all proper documents and fees are submitted on time before the wedding may take place. In addition, once the documents are complete, couples are responsible for transporting them to the parish where they will marry, including if it is out of the country. Mary Queen Catholic Church is not responsible for transporting/mailling documents.

**5. My fiancé and/or I have a pending annulment. Is it okay if we go ahead and start marriage preparation and book a wedding while we wait for it to be finalized?** First of all, there is no guarantee that an affirmative decision will be reached on any petition for annulment, let alone when that might occur. Therefore, couples are not permitted to begin any wedding plans, including marriage preparation until an affirmative decision is reached and the final decree of the nullity is received. A copy of the nullity decree must be provided to the parish before any wedding plans are able to proceed; including marriage preparation classes. This ensures that both parties are free to marry in the Church.

**6. My fiancé and/or I have had a prior marriage, but not in the Church. Does this count as being "free to marry" since the wedding took place outside the Church?** No, both parties must have had all prior civil & religious marriages examined and have a petition for nullity submitted and approved before the couple is free to marry each other. This includes non-Catholics as well. See information on Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Office of the Tribunal for information on annulments, or contact your parish for assistance.

**7. Are the Marriage Preparation classes only for Catholics?** No, the classes are for those seeking to marry in the Catholic Church. One partner must be Catholic; the other may be Catholic, Baptized Christian of another church, or non-baptized. The theology is based on Catholic teaching since the wedding is to occur in the Catholic Church. There is no expectation that the non-Catholic will choose to become Catholic, but marrying a Catholic requires some understanding of what is expected in Catholic marriages.

**8. What is the procedure for registering for Marriage Preparation classes, and can my fiancé and I just drop in to the first class when we're ready?** Drop-ins are not permitted. All couples must register in advance with the parish office, parishioners & non-parishioners alike. Couples may either e-mail or phone during regular office hours Monday-Thursday. Your patience and cooperation are appreciated; please be aware that our function coordinators work with many couples throughout the year and will give each couple the attention they need. Your inquiry will be responded to as soon as she is able. Inquiries made on Fridays will wait until Monday or Tuesday before she can respond.

**9. My fiancé and I are newly engaged and want to get ahead and book our date for the reception; how soon can we do this?** Before you book any events or services, contact the Church first to inquire into Marriage preparation, available wedding dates, and other necessary details. The Church is to be your first and most important phone call or inquiry; not the hotel, travel agent, restaurant, caterer, etc. We





are not responsible for deposits that have to be cancelled because a couple did not contact us first before booking a venue or service.

**10. What is the fee for Marriage Preparation?** The fee for Marriage Preparation is separate from the wedding booking fees. If a couple is marrying at Mary Queen, the fee is \$30.00 for the PMI tool processing due at that session. If a couple is only taking classes at Mary Queen and *not planning to marry at the Mary Queen*, the fee is \$150.00 and must be paid in full by the initial class they attend. The \$150.00 fee includes the \$40.00 PMI processing fee.

## MARRIAGE AND CONFIRMATION

The Church strongly recommends all Catholics to be fully initiated prior to receiving the sacrament of Matrimony, if it can be done without unnecessary burden or delay. Catholics in the United States are not required to be Confirmed prior to Marriage, but it is strongly advised.

The Sacrament of Confirmation, in which the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are poured out upon the candidate, provides graces necessary for fully living out the faith that Jesus calls each one of us to do.

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit are Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of the Lord (Reverence). All are necessary for the daily challenges of marriage, as well as for all vocations.

### **1. What to do if you are not Confirmed?**

You must desire the sacrament, first of all, and desire to be fully engaged in your faith as a practicing Catholic. Most parishes offer preparation for Adult Confirmation in the Winter or Spring. Mary Queen offers adult Confirmation preparation each Spring.

On the Mary Queen Catholic Church website, see Parish Info/Sacraments/Confirmation **or** Religious Ed/Adult Faith Formation/Adult Confirmation for details on scheduling an interview, class schedule and requirements.

### **2. What if there isn't time to be Confirmed prior to the wedding?**

Find out when the *next* preparation will be offered (each Spring) and follow the instructions on the website for scheduling an interview.

### **3. Are spouses or fiancés invited to attend Confirmation preparation?**

Yes! You are encouraged to invite your spouse or fiancé to attend as many of the preparation sessions as possible, including the evening of prayer. It will be a learning experience for you to share and grow together in your faith. However, you will still need a separate sponsor. See information on Confirmation page of this website.





## MARRIAGE AND BECOMING CATHOLIC

In the Catholic Church, a Catholic may marry a person of another tradition (with proper dispensation). The intended spouse is not required to become Catholic. We honor the religious freedom of each individual person and do not expect a person of another tradition to enter the Church in order to be married.

However, many persons of another tradition (baptized or not) have discerned a desire to learn more about the Catholic Church, with the possibility of becoming Catholic. The process we use to help individuals discern more fully is with RCIA, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Each parish operates the RCIA on their own schedule, with different start times, and different lengths of time for readiness. Sometimes this is determined by their resources or parish size, but no one parish does things exactly like the others.

Mary Queen Catholic Church offers the RCIA process on a school-year calendar, which fits the majority of people's work/vacation cycles. Our RCIA begins in mid-August and culminates at the Easter Vigil, however this does not mean a person must decide at this time. Not everyone completes the process or is ready to be received into the Church at the same time. *Interviews to enter the process are advertised and scheduled by appointment.*

### **What to do if you or your fiancé is interested in the RCIA process?**

On the Mary Queen Catholic Church website, go to Parish Info/Becoming Catholic to learn about the process, schedule, requirements, and schedule an interview based on the information provided.

### **What if the marriage is to take place before the RCIA process is completed?**

We take the discernment process very seriously; it includes learning about the teachings, but must also include integrating oneself into the community, experiencing a sincere conversion and embracing the *whole of the faith*. This takes time. Therefore, we do not short-cut the process for the purpose of weddings.

**If you are thinking of getting married and learning more about the Catholic Church, inquire into the next available RCIA Process.**