



# Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church

## INTRODUCTION

The day of your wedding is a pinnacle moment in your life, and at the foundation of it all is your wedding liturgy, when you will gather with family, friends, and the Church community to speak your vows to one another. We hope that planning this liturgy will be exciting as you envision that holy day and carefully prepare your wedding. Your presider or a preparing minister will assist you in planning the liturgy, explain the various options and choices you need to make, and answer specific questions that you have. Additionally, you will have a separate meeting with our music director for your wedding to plan musical selections. Please take the time to review this document prior to the liturgy planning meetings, as it gives you an overview of what things to consider in advance and what the formal policies are of our specific parish.

## PRE-LITURGY PREPARATIONS Civil

### License

A civil marriage license must be obtained no more than sixty days prior to the wedding, from the Ohio county of residence of either party. If neither party is a resident of Ohio, then the license must be obtained from Cuyahoga County, which is the county of the parish. Most counties charge a fee for obtaining the license and some counties require proof of residence, such as a driver's license. If either party has been previously married, most counties expect a certified copy of the divorce decree or a death certificate. We recommend that you call the county or check their website in advance, so that you know precisely what their requirements are:

Cuyahoga: <http://probate.cuyahogacounty.us/marriage.aspx>

Lorain: [https://www.loraincounty.com/probate/marriage\\_licenses.shtml](https://www.loraincounty.com/probate/marriage_licenses.shtml)

Medina: <http://www.medinaprobate.org/marriage.html>

Summit: <https://summitohioprobate.com/2014/12/03/im-getting-married-post/>

Bring the license with you to the wedding rehearsal. After the wedding, the presider will sign the civil documents, and one copy will be given to you for your records. The presider will mail back to the county a second copy, and a third copy will be retained by the parish.



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## Minister's License

If the presider of your wedding is a visiting priest or deacon from out-of-state, they must be licensed in the State of Ohio in order to witness your marriage. Information to obtain a minister's license in Ohio may be found at <https://www.sos.state.oh.us/records/minister-licenses/>.

## Flowers and Decorations

Flowers should be in good taste and should not detract from the altar as the focal point of the sanctuary. Pedestals are available, if needed. A visit to the statue of Mary may include a small bouquet or a single rose.

Anything attached to the end of the pews, such as flowers or ribbons, must be either tied or clipped. No tape may be used, as it might damage the wood finish on removal.

## Florists

If you are hiring a florist for your wedding, please make sure that they understand that they should not block view of the altar, nor should they remove or rearrange the flowers and decorations already in our sanctuary. They should also be aware that they may not set up for the wedding until 60 minutes prior if there are other church events that day. If they have any questions they are welcome to call the parish office.

## Photographers and Videographers

If you are hiring a photographer or videographer for your wedding, please make sure that they understand that the focus of the wedding is the prayer we are all engaged in, and they should not become a distraction. They should not enter the sanctuary, or block the assembly's view of the altar, bride and groom, or presider. Flash photography should not be used during the liturgy, but may be setup afterwards for formal photos.

## Mementos

Throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, rose petals, or anything else that needs to be cleaned up afterwards is not permitted. If you wish to provide something for your guests, alternatives could be bubbles, balloons, or bells. If you do choose to give any mementos to your guests, please inform the presider when planning the liturgy.

## Programs

Wedding programs or worship aids are not required but may be helpful in encouraging the assembly to sing and to take part in the liturgy. They are especially helpful if, beyond just listing names and the order of the celebration, they include music or explanation of what is taking place. If you are duplicating music, even just the words without musical notation, you must obtain copyright permission to do so. You must also give proper credit to the composer under



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the published music and/or words. The music director or presider must approve the wedding program before it goes to the printer.

## Rehearsal

Arrangements for the rehearsal are made with the presider. If a visiting priest or deacon is presiding, then arrangements must be made through the parish office.

Those taking part in the rehearsal should arrive at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled rehearsal time. The entire wedding party, lectors, parents, and any others taking a special role in the liturgy should be present for rehearsal. Please advise everyone to be on time.

The remaining balance of the church fee is due at the time of rehearsal.

## Arrival and hospitality

The wedding party should arrive one hour before the wedding.

The bride's room (Mercy Room) will be available for the bride and bridesmaids; the sacristy will be available for the groom and groomsmen. We request that the wedding party be fully dressed before arrival. Items may be left in these areas during the liturgy, but please make arrangements to have someone remove all personal items before leaving.

It is traditional to have at least the groomsmen greet the guests and help them be seated. It would also be very appropriate for the bride and groom to welcome their guests together.

No consumption of alcohol is permitted before the wedding and no alcohol is to be brought on the property. From the perspective of both civil and ecclesial law, the bride and groom must be sober in order to give their consent by the exchange of vows.

## **THE WEDDING LITURGY**

Your wedding liturgy is more than a private celebration; it is the public prayer of the Church that celebrates God's covenant of love made present by your lives. With this in mind, liturgy planning should strive for the full, active, and conscious participation of everyone present in this prayer of the Church.

When the bridegroom and bride are both Catholic, the rite of marriage takes place within Mass; if one party is not Catholic, then the rite of marriage takes place outside of Mass. In both cases the rite of marriage begins with readings from Scripture followed by the exchange of vows and rings. A wedding within Mass will continue with the celebration of the Eucharist.



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Your presider or preparing minister will work with you directly to fully explain the structure of your wedding liturgy and what options you have as you plan the celebration.

## Liturgical Preparation

During your marriage preparation, you will be given the booklet *“Together for Life”* by Joseph M. Champlin. This book contains the entire Marriage Liturgy including the options for the readings and prayers. There is a detachable “selection form” in the back to fill out with your selections. You will be asked to complete this by your last marriage preparation meeting.

## Liturgical Ministers

You are encouraged to invite some of your family and friends to take liturgical roles during the wedding. You will need one or two people to minister as lectors and proclaim the Scripture readings. They must be Christian themselves since they will be proclaiming God’s Word, and preferably they should be comfortable with public speaking or ideally lectors in their home parish. You may also have one or two people read the universal prayer after the exchange of rings, and can have someone read a welcoming before the opening procession begins.

If your wedding is taking place within Mass, you may also invite two or more people to be gift bearers. Often this is an opportunity to include younger family members. Finally, if you know people who are Catholic and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion in their own parish, you may discuss with the presider the possibility of having them help with the distribution of communion.

## Music

All music played during the liturgy must be liturgical music. Our music director is available to assist you in making appropriate selections, and can also help you select additional instrumentalists or cantors if desired. Please arrange a meeting with the music director several weeks prior to your wedding date.

Pre-recorded music is not permitted. Also, as noted above, copyright permission must be obtained from the publisher for any music printed in a program. Final decisions regarding the appropriateness of music selections are left up to the music director.

## Devotional Practices

In all cases the presider must be informed and give approval for anything being added to the wedding liturgy.

There are some devotional practices that have become traditional in certain families or nationalities. For example, the bride and groom walking to a statue of the Holy Family or of Mary and taking a moment to pray has become somewhat common in our culture. Generally



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speaking, these practices are permissible, but if there is anything you plan on doing that you do not see at a usual Sunday Mass, discuss it with the presider.

In addition to devotional practices, there are also non-religious customs that are sometimes seen at civil marriage ceremonies, sand ceremonies, or poetry readings. These practices will not be included as part of the wedding liturgy; as an alternative, you may wish to include them at your wedding reception.