



The Sacrament of Marriage at St. Mary's

The time of engagement is a privileged time that offers a couple unique gifts and blessings that are not present at any other time in the relationship. It is in this time of a promise that is not yet fulfilled, that a couple lives in the fullness of anticipation of what is to come and prepares to receive the gifts of marriage in Christ. It is because of the unique nature of this time that a couple needs to spend time being engaged—can you imagine what Christmas morning would be like if the day after Thanksgiving, you decided that since Christmas was coming anyway, you might as well celebrate it the day after, rather than having weeks to prepare. Just like the Church has long testified to the preparatory nature of Advent and Lent, and their necessity in receiving the fruits of Christmas and Easter, so too do we look to reap the fruit of marriage through the period of Engagement. And truly, we would also say that entering into marriage brings the new life and resurrection that Christmas and Easter also bring.

WEDDING DATE

- ♦ Scheduled for no sooner than 9 months after initial meeting has been made with the Pastor. This is per Diocesan standards and cannot be amended except in the case of extreme circumstance.
- ♦ In situations where a prior marriage exists and a declaration of nullity is needed, the date for the wedding cannot be set before the declaration has been received. Typically this will take at least 6 months from the time it is first filed with the Marriage Tribunal.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

The guidelines for marriage preparation are established by the Diocese, with certain options available. Once a couple has had their initial meeting with the pastor, there are essentially 4 steps:

- ♦ Completion of the Marriage Inventory
- ♦ Marriage Catechesis and Spiritual Formation
- ♦ Planning of the Nuptial Mass
- ♦ Final meeting with the pastor

DOCUMENTATION

The following documents will need to be submitted to the parish:

- Baptismal Certificate that has been issued in the last 6 months and includes all notations. You can have the certificate sent directly from your parish of baptism to St. Mary's.
- If applicable, *Declaration of Nullity*

- For any non-Catholics, a proof of name and date of birth must be provided. (As an official document of the Church, the baptismal certificate provides this for all Catholics).

FOCCUS MARRIAGE INVENTORY

- ◆ Must be completed within 4 months of the wedding date

MARRIAGE CATECHESIS AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

* This is the step which is commonly thought of as *Marriage Preparation* and has two options and must be completed **3 months** prior to the wedding date

- **Option 1** (Preferred option) Parish Catechesis
 - 4 Sessions using the One In Christ: Marriage Preparation.
 - When possible, completed with other couples
 - The books can be purchased directly by the couple or from the parish
- **Option 2 THRIVE!**
 - THRIVE is an online program supported by our Diocese
 - \$200 Cost per couple
 - While completed at the desired pace of the couple, it must be completed 3 months prior to the date of the wedding.

WEDDING LITURGY (THE NUPTIAL MASS)

The wedding liturgy has a twofold character: first, it is the Sacramental celebration in which God encounters the couple, transforming a human commitment to one another into a Divine bond that cannot be broken. Second, as the couple are themselves the active agents of the Sacrament, it also contains an expression of their particular relationship within the marriage context, namely in the selection of music and the readings..

The planning of the liturgy, then, reflect this twofold chracter, a union of the Sacramental Rites of the Church and an act of the couple. Both of the future spouses should be actively involved in the planning.

- The proper celebration of the Sacrament is within the Nuptial Mass. For significant reasons, the Sacrament may be celebrated outside of Mass, and only with the permission of the pastor. Typically speaking, a Deacon is not permitted to preside over the wedding unless significant reasons direct that a Mass not be celebrated.
- Planning of the liturgy is to be completed no later than 6 weeks prior to the scheduled date of the wedding.
- Planning of the Liturgy consists of two steps: Music and the Nuptial Mass itself.
 - ◆ **Music**

- The couple is to contact the Music Director, Angelina Gearke. She will assist in the music selection and in arranging for an organist/pianist.
- If you desire to have an outside musician, they will need approval of the pastor and need to coordinate all music through the Music Director.
- In accordance with the rubrics for the Mass, no recorded music is permitted. This applies also to wedding celebrated outside of Mass.
- ◆ **Nuptial Mass**
 - The couple will work with the Pastor for the selection of readings and prayers.
 - The couple will have a final meeting with the pastor or wedding celebrant. At this time they will go through the rite itself, much like a rehearsal, but with the couple alone so that they can engage more intimately with the various parts of the liturgy, such as the marriage consent, exchanging of vows and the rings.
- ◆ **Rehearsal**
 - ◆ The wedding rehearsal typically takes place at 6:00pm on the evening before the wedding. and includes the couple, wedding party and all family members who will be processing in (parents, grandparents, etc.)
- ◆ **General notes and policies regarding the celebration of the wedding**
 - ◆ Decorations in the church, including flowers, are allowed but with the following conditions:
 - No glitter or fabrics with glitter may be used.
 - All decorating must be done on the day of the wedding.
 - All decorations, with the exceptions of flowers, must be removed before the next celebration of Mass, which for a Saturday wedding, is typically 2-3 hours after the wedding.
 - Decorations, including the placement of flowers, must not interfere with the celebration of the Mass (ie. must not interfere with the walkways, reception of communion or altar space).
 - Flower petals, nor any other object, may be thrown on the floor. In its place, often times the flower girl will hand roses to the guests sitting on the aisle of the pews.
 - ◆ The wedding party is limited to 4 each, Bride's Maids and Groomsmen. This is due to space limitations in the church.
 - ◆ Any variations from the rubrics of the Church must be pre-approved by the pastor

Fitz Hall is available for rental. The hall seats 125 people comfortably. Please check with the parish office for a full description of the parish hall rental policies.

**Please also note that during this time, the kitchen is undergoing remodeling and may or may not be available for use. Please check with the office secretary as to what services we anticipate being available at the time of your wedding.

KEY DATES AND DEADLINES

- ◆ **9 months prior** Contact the Parish no sooner than 9 months prior to the desired wedding date
- ◆ **4 months prior** Completed FOCCUS Marriage Inventory sessions
- ◆ **2 months prior** Completed Marriage Catechesis and Spiritual Formation
- ◆ **6 weeks prior** Completed liturgy planning for the Nuptial Mass

* These deadlines are firm, unless special permission has been granted due to significant and extraordinary circumstances. If they are not met, the wedding date will have to be moved, even if invitations have gone out.

STIPENDS

St. Mary's Church:	\$300*
Parish Hall:	\$250
Priest:	\$150
Cantor:	\$100
Musician:	\$100

*There is no charge for use of the church for registered parishioners of St. Mary's

REQUESTING ANOTHER CELEBRANT

Given the intimacy of the marriage sacrament, it is very common that a couple would like a long time family priest to be the celebrant at the Mass. We are happy to welcome a priest in good standing. Canon Law, the law governing all Baptized Christians and the Church, requires that a visiting priest receive permission from the pastor of the Parish.

- ◆ If you would like to have another priest celebrate the Nuptial Mass written permission must be granted by the Pastor
- ◆ If the priest is from another Diocese (which includes the Archdiocese of Kansas City, KS) a letter of suitability must be sent to the chancery offices and parish. This is a common practice and every priest is used to the process.
- ◆ Deacons are welcome to serve the nuptial Mass with the same provisions. However, unless there is a significant reason such that

there will not be a Nuptial Mass, but that it is celebrated without a Mass, a Deacon will not be granted permission to be the celebrant.