

The Sacrament of Marriage at Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Guidelines and Regulations for the Liturgical Celebration of Marriage



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Sacred Heart Mission Statement

**We, the faith community of Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church,
are committed to forming Disciples of Christ by embracing
Stewardship through Hospitality, Prayer, Formation and Service.**

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CHECK LIST FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION

- Reserve the church for your wedding date at your initial meeting with the Pastor. (Receipt of this Marriage Handbook and Together for Life)
- Confirm Priest to perform ceremony
- Complete FOCUS inventory
- Require to attend a class on the introduction of Natural Family Planning. Contacts are: Meghan Magistro at 816.810.3775 or magistros@sbcglobal.net or Kim Feist at 913.387.7073 or kimfeist1@gmail.com
- Request a record of Baptism issued by Church within the last six months. Once received, please forward to the Priest handling your Marriage Prep.
- Set up an appointment with Evan Akers, Sacred Heart's Music Director (if you would like Evan to play at your wedding you will need to confirm with him his availability. Reserving the church and the Pastor for your wedding date does not also confirm Evan's availability)
- Schedule additional Marriage Prep Meetings with your Marriage Prep Priest
- Schedule your Marriage Prep weekend (please allow enough time to take your classes prior to your wedding date. Time will sneak up quickly and it is best to try and attend this as soon as reasonably possible.)
- Request your Civil Marriage License (please refer to section "Church Documents Needed" for information.)
- Rehearsal information: an informational sheet **is required one week prior** to Rehearsal via email to Fr. Pat (frpat.sullivan@shoj.org). The sheet can be found in this handbook or on-line at www.shoj.org/marriage.asp (the on-line form can be completed in a Word Document, saved and emailed as above.)
- Fees due prior to wedding. Please refer to the Wedding Fee section of this Handbook.

At all times please keep the Pastor apprised of any changes in times or dates.

INTRODUCTION

In his apostolic exhortation on the role of the Christian family in the modern world, Pope John Paul II wrote:

Knowing that marriage and family constitute one of the most precious of human values, the Church wishes to speak and offer her help. . . In a particular way the Church addresses the young, who are beginning their journey towards marriage and family life for the purpose of presenting them with new horizons, helping them to discover the beauty and grandeur of the vocation to love and the service of life.

The preserving and fostering of the Christian ideals of marriage is one of the most important works in the total apostolate of the Church. To young men and women, mothers and fathers, caught in the current of the anxieties and pressures of the modern world, the Church wishes to bring the answer of Christ. She wishes to show forth the richness of the sacramentality of marriage and to find means of helping couples to realize the religious significance of their vocation. And she wishes to help them in practical ways to dispose themselves to the generous promptings of the Holy Spirit. *(Common Policy for Marriage Preparation, written by the bishops of the Kansas Province, 1988)*

Each sacrament is an important moment in the life of the Church. Marriage, in particular, is important in the life of a man and a woman. The above statement from the Kansas bishops emphasizes "the richness of the sacramentality of marriage," as well as helping a couple to "realize the religious significance of their vocation." In keeping with these ideals, it becomes important for the engaged couple to focus on the wedding celebration, first and foremost, as a sacrament. This sacrament is properly celebrated with a worshipping community, and becomes an experience of religious importance for the couple.

These guidelines and regulations are a supplement to the general norms for wedding celebrations found in "Rite of Marriage," promulgated by the Holy See on July 1, 1969, and the "Common Policy for Marriage Preparation," prepared by the Bishops of the Province of Kansas, and are provided to engaged couples of Sacred Heart Catholic Church to aid in the planning of their wedding ceremony. They are intended to enhance the liturgical celebration of the sacrament, and help the couple enter this celebration more fully.

THE NATURE OF THE SACRAMENT

THE CATHOLIC WEDDING IS A SACRAMENT and therefore the Catholic Church establishes specific guidelines for couples who wish to be married in the Catholic faith. The Catholic party or parties should be practicing their Catholic faith by attending Mass every week and participating in the other Sacraments and life of the Church. According to Church canon law, the following may be cause for delay of marriage: a. insufficient faith, or an unwillingness to practice the faith (c. 1086.2) b. a substantial lack of appreciation for the SPIRITUAL and religious meaning of marriage (can. 1095;1101.2) c. refusal of the parties to take part in the prescribed marriage preparation program or to refuse to participate in any pre-marriage assessment, evaluation, or counseling.

The Sacrament of Marriage, like all other sacraments, is intended for the whole Church. This means that everyone attending the ceremony plays a part in the celebration. The variety of ministries and ways to enhance the celebration are spelled out in the following sections.

The Bride and Groom - The bride and groom actually minister the Sacrament of Marriage to each other. During the public declaration of vows, the bride and groom become the minister of Christ's love and unifying grace to each other, to those present at the celebration, and to the entire Church as well.

The Priest - The primary role of the priest is one of leading the various ministries within the assembly. He is called to witness and accept the vows of the couple in the name of the entire Church community and to draw all into prayerful participation of the Sacrament

The Assembly - The Sacrament of Marriage is an act of public worship, and so the assembly that is gathered is called to a role of active participation in this celebration. Through prayers, song, and their witness to the universal love of Christ, the assembly becomes a source of support for the couple as they begin their married life. Care should be taken in the planning to make sure that the assembly may participate in the celebration.

PREPARATION

A couple wishing to be married within the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, must contact the parish priest at least six months before the desired wedding date. This will allow sufficient time for a couple to attend the required marriage preparation classes. No wedding date can be set before the initial interview with the pastor. There will be three or four meetings with the priest before the wedding.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM: Other than your meetings with the priest the Archdiocese requires that a couple preparing for marriage must attend some type of preparation classes.

Presently, there is a weekend marriage prep program or a five week class led by a Lead Couple . Please speak with your Marriage Prep Priest to get a listing of those programs and schedule as soon as possible.

PRE-NUPTIAL INTERVIEW: During an interview with the priest an Archdiocesan pre-nuptial form is filled out by both the groom and the bride at least a month before the wedding (usually immediately following the Marriage Prep Program.) Besides some biographical information, it contains questions about the person's beliefs, any dispensations that may be required, and the couple's freedom to marry according to the Catholic faith. In the case of an interfaith marriage, you will be asked to sign an agreement to raise your children in the Catholic faith. You should prepare yourselves for this by discussing it prior to your interview with the priest.

When the **PRE-NUPTIAL FORM** is completely filled out, the parish priest will send it to the chancery office in order to receive the Archbishop's permission to conduct the wedding.

PLANNING BOOKLETS (*Together for Life*): One copy of this booklet is for ceremonies with a Mass and the other is for ceremonies without the Mass. You will be given the copy which is appropriate for your chosen ceremony.

This book is VITAL in assisting you, the Pastor, and the music director in planning your marriage ceremony. BE SURE TO READ THIS BOOKLET AND CHOOSE TOGETHER THE READINGS, PRAYERS, ETC. THAT WILL BE USED IN YOUR WEDDING CEREMONY. THE COMPLETED SELECTION FORM IN THE BACK OF THE BOOKLET SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE PRIEST CONDUCTING THE CEREMONY AT THE TIME OF YOUR LAST MEETING.

Focus Inventory

This inventory, consisting of over 150 questions to which each of you is asked to answer 'agree,' 'disagree,' 'uncertain,' is designed primarily to raise questions and identify concern areas so that you can think about and discuss them. It is *not a test* that predicts the future of your marriage, although the choice of statements and categories for study were taken from areas known to counselors and lay leaders as central to success or failure in marriage.

Focus explores basic expectations, communication and problem-solving skills and attitudes on money, children, religion, sexuality and in-laws. In addition, it attempts to sharpen exploration on other additional key issues: couple compatibility/match, the impact of individual backgrounds, two-career families, interfaith marriages and second marriages.

The Focus inventory will be administered during the first meeting with the priest. You will be notified when the results are available, after which you will need to schedule an appointment with the priest for final feedback.

After the Focus inventory has been completed, you will then be ready to move on to the next step in your marriage preparation.

CHURCH DOCUMENTS NEEDED

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATES should be obtained by both bride and groom and given to the parish priest at the Pre-Nup interview. For Catholics, a new certificate or letter from the Church of baptism dated within six months of the date of marriage is required since all marriages are recorded in your Church of baptism.

FOR THE NON-CATHOLIC PARTY

A baptized non-Catholic should also obtain a Baptismal certificate or a letter documenting the Baptism from the church of Baptism (NOTE: when documentary proof is not available, affidavits of parents or other trustworthy persons are acceptable). For those who are Christians of other denominations, a photocopy of proof of baptism may be submitted.

CIVIL DOCUMENTS NEEDED

The State of Kansas requires that a license for marriage be obtained. Such a license may be obtained in any county of the State of Kansas and is valid for six months following the date of its issue. Please obtain a State of Kansas marriage license and bring it to the rehearsal with you.

MARRIAGE LICENSE/WITNESSES: Witnesses must be at least 18 years old. A non-Catholic may be chosen as one of the witnesses.

Important: The Marriage license should be submitted to the Pastor at least two (2) weeks prior to the wedding date. Please do not separate contents of the grey envelope that you receive but give the envelope to the Priest *in its entirety*. The Priest will give back the information that you need to complete after he completes his information.

Marriage License Information: (For the most up to date information:
http://courts.jocogov.org/dc_marrlic.aspx)

- The Marriage License is ONLY valid in Kansas.
- No Marriage License can be issued before a three (3) business day waiting period. For example, a license applied for on Tuesday cannot be picked up

until Friday.

-The Marriage License is good for six (6) months.

-Blood tests are not required.

-The \$85.50 application fee is non-refundable and payable by cash, credit card (\$4.95 convenience fee is charged) money order or cashier's check to "Clerk of the District Court". Personal Checks are not accepted.

-The completed ORIGINAL license should be returned by the person performing the ceremony. An addressed envelope will be provided with the marriage license.

PRIOR MARRIAGE

Must have certificate of nullity (an annulment) before marriage preparation process can begin.

Please inform us if former spouse is deceased.

THE WEDDING LITURGY

VISITING CLERGY may be arranged with the parish priest. The visiting priest will be responsible to direct the couple through the marriage preparation program including all paperwork, meetings, etc. You will be required to use a parish wedding liaison. There is an additional fee. (please refer to "Wedding fees" for a complete list.

INTERFAITH WEDDING

A minister of another faith is welcome to join the priest in presiding at the ceremony. It is important that the visiting minister coordinate with the parish priest to determine the different parts of the ceremony each will be taking.

HOLY COMMUNION: According to the laws of the Church, Communion is not allowed for a non-Catholic bride or groom and non-Catholic members of their families. (1 Col. 11:27 -29) It is important that the couple explain this to the non-Catholic members of the wedding party and family members. "Reception of the Eucharist by Christians not fully united within the Catholic faith would imply a oneness which does not yet exist, and for which we all must pray" (National Council of Catholic Bishops).

Although a Mass is permitted in the interfaith ceremony, the Church suggests a Catholic ceremony without a full Mass. The couple should discuss this carefully since the distribution of Communion at Mass may be more of a sign of disunity and possible source of embarrassment for guests of non-Catholic faiths.

MUSIC IN THE LITURGY

1. Each couple should contact the Director of Music at Sacred Heart soon after setting a date for the ceremony. The couple should not plan music only with the individual vocalist or musicians for the ceremony.

a. Each couple is required to attend Spirituality sessions with the priest.

b. With each couple the Director of Music will complete a *Music Planning Guide*.

2. Musicians

- a. A list of vocalists, accompanists, and musicians is available through the Director of Music. ***It is the couple's responsibility to contact and contract with musicians not associated with the Parish.***
- b. The music should be sung and/or played well by those who will be expected to lead them during the ceremony.
- c. It is helpful if the cantor (vocalist) and/or accompanist is of the Catholic faith and are experienced at leading a Catholic liturgy.

3. Selecting Music for the Ceremony

- a. The music must be sacred, that:
 1. Has lyrics that express a Christian view of love and life.
 2. Expresses not only the human love of one person for another but also God's love for all people.
- b. Should fit the part of the ceremony in which it is used.
- c. Does not cause delays in the ceremony.
- d. The music should be artistically good music, that:
 1. Is sacred or classical;
 2. Has a meaningful text that fits the sacramental moment
- e. Secular music (non-sacred or popular) is not permitted during the wedding ceremony. Instrumental classical music is appropriate during the liturgy. Secular music should be kept for use at the reception.

4. Guidelines for Music for the Wedding Liturgy

- a. Congregational singing is strongly encouraged.
- b. Specific parts should be sung by the cantor and congregation: Gospel Acclamation ("Alleluia"); Holy, Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation; Great Amen; Lamb of God.
- c. The Lord's Prayer can only be sung as a solo if no Eucharist accompanies the ceremony.
- d. Solos should never be so long that they stop the movement of the liturgy
- e. Recorded music of any kind is not permitted in the church.

LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT

1. **In general**, not a great deal of floral ornamentation is required. Since floral arrangements need to be removed from the church, it is recommended that the couple consider using flowers in the church that can then be taken and used at the reception.

2. **Sacred Heart has available for your use:**

- a. Wooden boxes—several sizes are available for unity candle, flowers, plants, etc
- b. Tables for wedding gifts

3. **Guidelines for Environment for the Wedding Liturgy**

- a. Primary consideration should be given to the seasonal decor of the church. Plants or displays that do not speak to the Sacrament of Marriage may be moved. ***The exceptions*** to this regulation are the Christmas and Easter displays. Please keep this in mind when planning your wedding date.
- b. Prior approval must be sought before you place anything on the pews. Typically ribbon, rubber bands, etc. may be used as long as they do not damage the pews.
- c. Aisle runners are ***strictly prohibited!***
- d. Sacred Heart has two seven candle candelabras.
- e. Nothing may be strewn in or outside of the church. Insurance regulations prohibit the use of rice, grains, bird seed, confetti, etc. Bubbles may be used ***outside the church*** (on the cement or grass areas).

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The proclamation of the Word of God and the homily are integral to the celebration of marriage. Three readings are chosen from the Scriptures: one from each of the Old Testament, New Testament, and the Gospels. These may be chosen from, but not limited to, those found in the book *Together for Life* given to you by the priest. The Psalm Response is encouraged to be sung and could be chosen with the Director of Music.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Eucharist is the center of Christian life and marriage between two Catholics. The Eucharist is optional in the ceremony of a Catholic and non-Catholic. Archdiocesan regulations regarding the reception of the Eucharist are followed at Sacred Heart and can be explained to the couple by the priest.

PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE CHURCH

While photographs are important, the sanctity of the sacrament and the sacredness of the house of worship must also be taken into account.

Guidelines for Photography in the Wedding Liturgy

- a. Video cameras and still cameras may be set up in the open space in the pew area to the left of the altar or in the back of the church. Do not set up on the music side.
- b. All photography must be handled as unobtrusively as possible. There should be minimal movement throughout the ceremony. Photographers should not stand on the church pews.

MISCELLANEOUS

Wedding times are 6:00 p.m. on Friday, and 10:00 am and 1:00 pm on Saturday (1:30 pm wedding start can be requested. Approved needs to be granted by Pastor). Check with the priest for any variation.

WEDDING GOWNS: Please be aware that during most of the wedding ceremony the bride is kneeling. For modesty purposes, it is encouraged that brides wear either a shawl, short jacket or shell if the wedding gown is strapless.

REHEARSALS are usually held the evening before the wedding (around 6:00 /6:30 pm) and last from 45 minutes to an hour. It is very important that all participants in the ceremony be prompt for rehearsal! Be sure to schedule the rehearsal with the parish priest.

HOW LONG WILL THE CEREMONY LAST? A full Nuptial wedding (with a Mass) usually lasts 50 minutes. A Marriage ceremony with Scripture readings, homily, petitions, exchange of vows and rings, lighting of the unity candle, songs, and nuptial blessing (but without a Mass) usually lasts approximately 35-40 minutes, depending on the number of songs, etc.

FLOWER GIRL/RING BEARER: We strongly urge you to be realistic when adding young children to an already emotionally charged moment. Young children can become frightened and disruptive, especially if mom and dad are also in the wedding and unavailable to tend to the child.

ALTAR SERVERS: Altar servers are not required for your wedding unless you wish to have family members or friends for this role. Discuss this option with the priest.

CANDLE LIGHTERS: If you wish to have friends or family members light candles please discuss this option with the priest.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION is encouraged for couples prior to their wedding day. If you wish, the priest will offer this Sacrament following the rehearsal.

BRIDAL DRESSING ROOM: This room is located to the left of the main gathering space. The dressing area contains large mirrors, multiple plug-ins, and chairs. It is attached to the women's restroom.

GROOM'S DRESSING ROOM: We have a meeting room off to the right of the Narthex that the men can gather.

THE CHURCH is a place of worship. Preparations, photography, and celebrating are a part of your 'joyful experience,' but please keep in mind that you are in the Lord's House of prayer. Please maintain an appropriate decorum, especially in the worship areas of the Church. **Do not bring food or drink into the worship areas of the church or allow children to play in the sanctuary or around the altar.**

The wedding party is responsible for cleaning up the dressing areas in consideration for other weddings and church events.

WHAT USHERS NEED TO KNOW

Every wedding must have at least two ushers. USHERS ARE RESPONSIBLE THAT THERE ARE NO loud noises, running or playing, smoking, food or drink before, during, or after the ceremony.

BEFORE THE WEDDING CEREMONY

1. Be there on time for pictures. Stop the photographer 20 min. before the wedding. Be at the church entry 40 minutes before the wedding to seat early arrivals.
2. Know where the restrooms are located.
3. Invite people to be seated. They visit in the narthex until an usher gets them going.
4. If you are escorting a group of people, offer your arm to the eldest woman with the others in the group following behind.
5. Hand programs to the guests as they enter their pew.
6. You will offer your arm on the side closest to the row. Know how many rows are to be reserved for family and special friends and seat the remaining guests behind that point. Know the number of people so they can be seated in the special areas and not scattered around the church.
7. 5 minutes before the ceremony begins, ask the person at the guest book to be seated and to take the guest book along to the reception.
8. Men and women of the wedding party are encouraged to assist ushering guests at the "rush" 5 minutes before the ceremony begins.
9. DURING PRELUDE: Escort Grandparents of the bride and groom to designated rows.
10. Pick up Brides and Grooms dressing rooms so you can leave when the ceremony is over.
11. There is to be NO rice, confetti, rose petals birdseed. etc. present before, during, or after the ceremony. Should any be used, it is the responsibility of the Ushers to clean it up. The liturgy director will show you where the cleaning supplies are located.

DURING THE WEDDING CEREMONY

1. It is wise not to plan any "extra activity" (car decorating etc.) before or during the ceremony.
2. Late arriving guests should be asked to seat themselves via the side aisles. (They should not be seated during the processional.)

AFTER THE WEDDING CEREMONY

After the wedding party exits, the Ushers return to the front and help with escorting guests out. Check each row for any left behind purses, cameras, etc. Pick up any discarded tissues, film boxes, flower boxes and/or petals, programs and other debris.

WEDDING FEES

*****Due 30 days prior to the wedding. Can be paid at the last meeting with the Priest which is typically scheduled within one month of the wedding.**

Presiding Priest (Officiant) Honorarium <i>(suggested but not required)</i>	\$200.00
Visiting Clergy Fee	\$100.00 (if Parish Priest is not the Celebrant)
Music Director Fee**	If using Sacred Heart's Music Director, please make an appointment with Evan as soon as possible. He has his own separate fee sheet.
Altar Servers	If using non-family altar servers (in other words – servers borrowed from the parish) \$20.00 per server
Musicians (other than above)	\$75.00-\$100.00/each (this should be paid directly to the individual(s))
Vocalists	\$75.00-\$100.00/each (this should be paid directly to the individual(s))
Non-Parishioners	\$1,000 rental fee for use of the church

IMPORTANT!

****Whether you use our Music Director and musicians or you bring in your own, you must meet with our Music Director prior to your wedding to discuss any details that a guest musician may need to know. There is \$100 bench fee if you bring in your own instrumentalist.**

I have reviewed all the policies and guidelines in this document and agree to adhere to them:

Groom: _____ Bride: _____

Date: _____

WEDDING PROGRAM TEMPLATE

It is your responsibility to provide a wedding program if you so wish. Here is a template of what information should be included in your wedding program.

Wedding Program Information:

Bride/Groom: _____

Wedding Date/Time: _____

Wedding colors: _____

Celebrant: _____

Organist: _____

Musicians: _____

Wedding Ceremony Order: *(information can be found in the Together for Life booklet)*
Hymns should be selected with the guidance of our Director of Music with the couple.

Processional Hymn: _____

Bride Processional: _____

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading: _____

Responsorial Psalm: _____

Second Reading: _____

Alleluia: _____

Gospel: _____

Rite of Marriage:

Statement of Intentions and Consent

Vows and Exchange of Rings

Lighting of the Unity Candle

Song?? _____

Full Mass? {If so, complete this part, if not, go to “continued”}

Liturgy of the Eucharist:

Offertory Song: _____

Eucharistic Prayer Acclamations: _____

Nuptial Blessing and Sign of Peace

Communion Songs: _____

Continued:

Presentation to Mary: (Optional): Yes or No: (**Please verify with the Priest performing your ceremony on his preference of when you present to the Virgin Mary – it is proper either after the Exchange of Vows or directly after Communion.**) What song would you like during this time? _____

Final Blessing: _____

Recessional Hymn: _____

The Wedding Party Information:

Parents of the Bride: _____

Parents of the Groom: _____

Grandparents of the Bride: _____

Grandparents of the Groom: _____

Maid of Nuptial Blessing: _____

Honor: _____

Bridesmaids: _____

Flower
Girl(s): _____

Best
Man: _____

Groomsmen: _____

Ring
Bearer: _____

Ushers: _____

Program
Attendants: _____

Any other people recognition for
program? _____

Thank yous to
include: _____

Reception
Information? _____

