

The Church of Saint Margaret of Antioch

Pearl River, NY (845) 735-4746

Wedding Preparation Guidelines

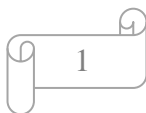
Congratulations! We rejoice with you as you prepare for your marriage. These guidelines are to help you in properly preparing for the Sacrament of Matrimony. Although we try to accommodate personal tastes, it is helpful to remember the Sacrament and the Liturgy belongs to the entire Church and not to individual persons.

Your spiritual development as a couple is the most important aspect of your marriage preparation. As you enter the church, come before the altar, and exchange your vows, you will receive a new sacramental identity, which will be centered on a relationship built on faith in God and in each other.

Marriage is a sacrament, which lasts until *death*. We are here to help you prepare for this profound experience of God's love that will be showered upon you on your wedding day and every day of your married life. Because sacraments are essential to the life of the Church, adequate preparation is necessary for the Reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

In the weeks and months ahead, as you plan for the reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony, we suggest that you spend time with each other in prayer. Prayer in the days ahead, both alone and together will certainly deepen your personal relationship and your relationship with God.

We *strongly encourage* that couples preparing to be married in the Church, before God attend Mass together each Sunday. Your presence is important not only for one another, but also for this parish community. We recommend that you make frequent use of the Sacrament of Penance, particularly prior to your wedding. The sacrament affords you the opportunity to experience the forgiveness and love of the Lord.



1. **Banns of Marriage:** For three weeks prior to your wedding, your names will be published in our bulletin informing God's people of the impending marriage. Banns need to be published in each other's parish.
2. **Bridal Carpet (runner):** Due to safety issues, and the material of the runner the "Bridal Carpet" (runner) is ***not allowed***. Please inform the florist or Limousine Company, so as not to charge you the fee.
3. **Bridal Dress and Bridesmaids' Gowns:** Out of respect for the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament and the holiness of the Sacrament of Matrimony, we request the gowns worn by the bridal party be appropriate and modest for Church. Men in the bridal party are to wear leather shoes only, no sneakers or casual shoes are appropriate for Church.
4. **Civil License:** One must have a civil license to marry in the State of New York. A license can be obtained in any Town/City Hall within the State of New York. The license is valid for 60 days with a 24 hour waiting period. It is your responsibility to obtain the license. No ceremony can take place without a license.
5. **Documents:** You are responsible to obtain the following documents:
 - ❖ A new and updated Baptismal Certificate – this certificate dated **six months** prior to the wedding and can be obtained by calling or writing the parish of your baptism.
 - ❖ Catholics should also obtain First Communion and Confirmation certificates.
 - ❖ If there has been a previous marriage, a death certificate or a "Declaration of Nullity" must be obtained.
 - ❖ A Letter of Permission from the bride's parish, if the bride is not from St. Margaret.
 - ❖ A civil license (#4 above)

6. **Flowers:** All floral arrangements must be discussed with the priest. There is NO “official” florist for the parish. Floral arrangements and other appointments must be worked around the furnishing of the Church. Church furnishings and liturgical decorations are not to be removed or touched. Traditionally, two baskets of flowers are left on the Altar as a remembrance of your wedding. *There are to be no archways or throwing of flower petals inside or outside of the Church.*
7. **Music:** Music is an integral part of the celebration of Marriage. Please contact the Music Director, Mr. Mark LaRosa 908.670.9475 to discuss your selections. Appointments are made after one of the Sunday Masses. NOTE: Only sacred music (music written for the sole purpose of use in Church and the glory of God) is to be sung or played. No Broadway or popular tunes will be allowed in Church. Such music is more effective at the reception.
8. **Online Premarital Inventory:** Each couple must complete a premarital inventory called: *Catholic Couple Checkup*. The priest will discuss in detail this new procedure.
9. **Pre-Cana Preparation:** Every couple must attend Pre-Cana preparation program. Either a Saturday session, or an Engaged Weekend. You need to register for Pre-Cana on line at **NYFamilyLife.org**. Pre-Cana and its schedule will be discussed with you by the priest.
10. **Priest or Deacon Visitors:** If you have a relative or friend, they are most cordially welcomed to witness your ceremony. Please inform the parish priest.
11. **Rehearsal:** Please arrange the date and time with the priest. It is imperative that rehearsals begin on time. Other couples may have their rehearsals that night as well. The marriage license, the Church Fees, the Ceremony Programs, anything that belongs for the Church ceremony should be brought that night.
12. **Video/Photographer:** Photographers must contact the priest prior to the ceremony. Videotaping that requires additional lighting or wiring is not permitted. In most cases, the ordinary lighting of the Church should suffice. Photographers are not

allowed in the sanctuary area. They are not to interfere with the flow of the ceremonies at Church.

13. **Wedding Fees:** The offering for your wedding is \$800. The fees for the organist and singer, priest and Church are included. The fees are to be paid on the night of the rehearsal. There are no other fees for the Church or musicians.

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