



Planning a Wedding at CGS



18511 Klein Church Road | Spring, TX 77379 | Phone: (281) 376-6831 | Fax: (281) 376-8945 | www.cgscchurch.com

Table of Content

Contact Information	Page 3
Marriage Preparations Steps	Page 4
Outline of Preparation Process	Pages 5 - 7
Witness Affidavit of freedom to Marry	Pages 8 -9
Marriage License “Together in Texas”	Page 10
Wedding Party and Rehearsal	Pages 11 - 13
Other Considerations prior to Rehearsal & Wedding	Pages 14 - 15
On The Wedding Day	Pages 16 - 17
Music Planning Worksheet	Pages 18 – 19
Liturgy Planning Worksheet	Pages 20-23
Photography	Pages 24 - 25
Florists and Decorations	Pages 26 - 27



CONTACT INFORMATION

Wedding Orientation

Clergy Assistant

Nadia Jara

nadia_jara@cgscc.church

Sponsor Couple Program

Hector & Marianne Suarez

Liturgy Director

Jeremy Hearne

jhearne@cgscc.church

Music Director

Ken Morrison

ken.morrison@cgscc.church

Pianist

Carol Wilson

carol@carolwilsoncpa.com

Pianist

Jesse Reyes

jgreyes@aol.com

MARRIAGE PREPARATIONS STEPS

6-8 months before the Wedding

Scan to Register



Pre-Marriage Form

Marriage Orientation 2nd Sunday of the Month

We invite all couples seeking information about marriage preparation here at CGS to attend our orientation meeting at 12:45pm in English and 2:45pm in Spanish.

Fill out the “Engaged Couple Pre-Marriage form online.”

Upon receiving the Engaged Couple Pre-Marriage form, the Wedding Orientation Coordinator will reach out to you.

Clergy/Couple Meetings

Make an appointment with Priest or Deacon

Begin Collecting Documents

Bride and Groom’s Sacramental Records. (Issued within 6 months of the wedding)

Witness of affidavits two per person

Register in the “Fully Engaged” program. Couple will receive a login code by email.

After receiving results from Fully Engaged questionnaire

Call Rejoice Parish Counseling at 844-295-3167 and set up an appointment with a counselor.

Meetings with clergy continue as needed

4 -5 months before the Wedding

Couples meet 5 to 6 times with the sponsor couple who will be assigned.

Attend a Natural Family Planning (NFP) orientation meeting.

After last session with Sponsor Couple

Make an appointment with clergy to discuss planning the wedding liturgy.

Complete selection of prayers, readings, vows, etc.

6 weeks before the wedding

Contact CGS Music Ministry to plan for the music.

3 -4 weeks before the wedding

An assigned wedding/worship coordinator from CGS will contact you.

1-3 days before the wedding

Rehearsal

Wedding Day



WEDDING PROCESS

OUTLINE OF PREPARATION PROCESS:

We welcome you to Christ the Good Shepherd (CGS) as you prepare yourselves to enter into the Sacrament of Matrimony, joining together in a covenant relationship with one another and with God. We hope that this final preparation process you are now entering will be a rewarding part of the marriage preparation you initiated under the guidance of your family, friends and community. The procedures used here at CGS are intended to help you continue to grow in communication, understanding and love not only during the next six to nine months of immediate preparation but also for the remainder of your lives as husband and wife. This outline of the process for preparation consists of the following steps:

1. Completion of the Engaged Couple Pre-Marriage Form online. Following today's orientation, you will be assigned a Priest or Deacon who will supervise your individual preparation for marriage and celebration of your wedding at CGS or another church. (If you have met previously with a priest or deacon who has agreed to prepare you for marriage, you should, nevertheless, complete an Engaged Couple Pre-Marriage white form, found in this booklet.) Although you are encouraged to become a registered member of the parish, formal registration is not a requirement for preparation and/or celebration of your wedding at CGS. However, we do want to know where you regularly attend Mass.
2. **IMPORTANT:** YOU SHOULD NOT CONTRACT A RECEPTION DATE/TIME UNTIL YOU HAVE MET WITH A PRIEST OR DEACON REGARDING THE DATE AND TIME OF THE CELEBRATION OF YOUR WEDDING AT CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD. A DATE/TIME FOR YOUR WEDDING CAN NOT BE ENTERED INTO THE CHURCH CALENDAR PRIOR TO THIS INDIVIDUAL MEETING.
3. At your first meeting with the priest/deacon he will learn more about you as individuals and as an engaged couple. He will also confirm that you are "free to marry in the Catholic Church". If either the bride or groom has been previously married (in a Catholic church, in another church, or civilly by a Justice of the Peace) and divorced, he will discuss the appropriate course of action to take regarding an annulment, which is required before your wedding preparation can begin. (If you have been married to one another in a non-Catholic service and now wish to have a "Catholic wedding," he will discuss the procedure for a "validation" of your existing marriage.) Although co-habitation does not prevent you from being married in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, the priest/deacon will discuss the circumstances surrounding this choice. The date and time of the celebration of your wedding at CGS may be "placed" into the church calendar by your Priest/Deacon thus reserving your choice. The date and time for your rehearsal may also be entered **and lastly appropriate dress attire for the bride, groom and wedding party during Mass / Liturgy.**

4. At your first meeting, you will be requested to register in the “Fully Engaged” Program online and complete their questionnaire your responses to this inventory will serve as guides in future conversations relating to your preparation for marriage and a onetime meeting with a professional counselor with Rejoice. If needed a follow-up meeting will be schedule by your Priest or Deacon. After your meeting, he will see your readiness for the “Sponsor Couple “program. Your assigned sponsor couple will contact you to set up the first of 5 to 6 meetings you will share together.
5. At some point in the series of meetings, you and the priest/deacon will complete a “Pre-nuptial Questionnaire” form which contains information required by Archdiocesan regulations (canon law) for a Catholic wedding. Prior to this meeting, you will need to have obtained a recent (within the past 6 months) “certificate of baptism,” if you are a baptized Roman Catholic or baptized in another faith. If your future spouse is not a baptized Catholic, you and your priest/deacon will also complete additional form(s) required for a “mixed” marriage. (The Non-Catholic party must be aware of these requirements but does not need to complete any such forms. A non-Catholic may marry a Catholic in the Catholic Church, providing that the appropriate form has been completed allowing this action.)
6. Your statement that you are “free to marry in the Catholic Church” and your potential for a permanent, faithful marriage open to children require corroboration by parents, relatives or others who have known you for a substantial period of time. This affirmation is provided through the completion of a “*Witness Affidavit of Freedom to Marry*” forms from the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston on page 9. “*Christ the Good Shepherd/Wedding Procedures.*” You should give these documents to your chosen witnesses (two for the groom and two for the bride). These witnesses must complete the form and return it to the Priest/Deacon who is preparing you for the Sacrament of Matrimony. Please note – they are to be signed in the presence of a Priest/Deacon or other staff person in the Parish and sealed with Parish seal.
7. Natural Family Planning Information meeting – CGS requires attending an orientating of Natural Family Planning. (NFP) is fertility awareness, which is simple knowledge of a couple’s fertility. A married couple can use NFP to either achieve a pregnancy or to postpone a pregnancy. Participating NFP is 100 %natural – there are no drugs, chemicals o devices involved. Information will be emailed to the couple to register for a class.
8. The state of Texas recognizes the importance of pre-marital counseling and education for preparation of a permanent, loving relationship in Marriage. The program to promote this married relationship is called “*Together in Texas.*” Additional information is provided on pg. 10 of this booklet. Christ the Good Shepherd Sponsor Couple Program counts for this preparation.
9. Usually at the last formal meeting, often held a month before the scheduled rehearsal date, you and priest/deacon will go over plans for the celebration of your wedding. Well in advance of this meeting, the bride and groom with the clergy should have decided upon the readings and blessings which will be an integral part of their wedding liturgy. The planning booklet, “*Together for Life,*” containing alternative readings and blessings this book will be given at one of your meetings with the clergy. You are urged to complete the helpful form in this booklet before your final meeting with your assigned priest/deacon.

Throughout this process, we hope that the accompanying information relating to Wedding Procedures at CGS will be useful to you. We urge you to review this material and bring any questions to the attention of your priest/deacon who will do whatever he can to make your celebration of your wedding and the continuation of your lives together in Sacrament of Matrimony be as joy-filled and as fruitful as possible.

10. CGS allows for the celebration of the rite of marriage on any Saturday **weekend** which is not a “Holy Day of Obligation.” Weddings are not allowed from **Saturday Vigil of Palm Sunday** through the second Sunday of Easter. Although weddings may be held during Advent or Lent, you are again reminded about the liturgical decorations which are limited at these times (see pg 26.) Saturdays are reserved, in general for **Baptisms**, Weddings and Quinceañera celebrations. Since the church facilities are often scheduled for other activities during most weekdays and evenings, it is very difficult to reserve them for weddings at these times. (Exceptions to these general restrictions may be discussed with the Priest/Deacon preparing you and who would be witnessing your exchange of vows.) The usual wedding ceremony requires 45 – 60 minutes, either with or without a nuptial Mass. You will be allowed to have twenty (20) minutes of photography after the service. Because there is a 5:30PM Mass scheduled every Saturday, the normal time for **weddings: 11:00am, 1:00pm, and 3:00pm**. Friday weddings are allowed, please schedule this with the Priest/Deacon with whom you are working. *"Until you're meeting with your priest or deacon, your wedding date and time will not be booked on the calendar. Tentative dates will not be scheduled."*



WITNESS AFFIDAVIT OF FREEDOM TO MARRY

When a couple enters into the covenant of matrimony with one another they exchange vows indicating their individual and joint commitments, without any modifying conditions, for a permanent marriage lasting until the death of either spouse. Throughout their married life they pledge that they will remain faithful to one another. Furthermore, the acceptance and raising of children is expected as a natural outcome of this matrimonial relationship. In undertaking these obligations of permanency, fidelity and openness to children, it is expected that each of the partners will give totally of their being for the sake of their partnership of marriage, in a sacrificial giving of themselves to one another.

Although the bride and groom publicly make these vows at the time of their wedding, the conditions allowing them to fulfill these vows should be apparent to those who have lovingly known the bride or the groom prior to their engagement. These individuals are usually their parents, other living relatives, or long-time friends. The attached forms are used to obtain this confirmation on behalf of the couple.

These forms also serve to affirm that, to the best knowledge of the respondents, i.e. “the witnesses,” there are no reasons which might preclude a valid marriage in the Catholic church, i.e. they are “free to marry” in the church. It should be noted, for example, that a person who has previously been married, regardless of the form of the wedding, cannot be married in the Catholic Church unless a decree of nullity for any prior marriage has been granted by the appropriate diocese. Relationships due to biological or legal events, as well as any vows taken for a celibate life, e.g. Catholic priesthood, must also be addressed before a Catholic wedding can occur. Finally, the individual bride and groom should in no way be forced into a marriage.

In order to respond formally to these events, a copy of a form used by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston accompanies this information page. ***This form is to be completed by two (2) “witnesses” for the bride and two (2) for the groom.*** These “witnesses” may be relatives or friends who have had a long-standing knowledge of the bride or groom.

The respondent must sign the completed form and return it to Christ the Good Shepherd along with witness and seal of the Church as soon as possible so that it can be included with other documents essential for the process of marriage preparation in the Catholic Church. ***Please encourage your witnesses/respondents to return the forms to the attention of the priest (Fr.) or deacon (Dcn), who is preparing you for the Sacrament of Matrimony.***

- Fr. James Burkart Fr. Joseph Nguyen Dcn. Stacy Millsap Dcn. Greg Bower
 Dcn. Miguel Quiñones Dcn. Lolo Villafranco Dcn. Dominic Madrid Other _____

(The bride/groom should check one name before giving a copy of this to each “witness.”)

The completed form should be sent to the clergyman indicated above at the following address, or personally delivered to the Presider at your first meeting.

Christ the Good Shepherd Catholic Community
18511 Klein-Church Rd Spring, TX 77379

Note: This information page should be given to each “witness” as an explanation of the need for the completion of the accompanying form and its immediate return for the preparation process for your marriage. The “c” or “cc” numbers given in the form refer to church regulations (canon law) pertaining to the statement.



ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON
WITNESS AFFIDAVIT of FREEDOM TO MARRY
(cc. 1067; 1069)

Purpose: To seek your understanding of the bride/groom's intention and readiness to enter into a sacred marriage (including convalidation).
Four witnesses are necessary—two witnesses for the bride and two witnesses for the groom.
Witnesses ideally should be family members or friends who have known the bride/groom for at least ten years.

Name of [] Bride or [] Groom: _____

- 1) Do you agree to answer the following questions truthfully insofar as you are aware?
[] Yes [] No
How are you related to this person? _____ Year you met this person: _____
(father, mother, brother, sister, friend, etc.)
2) Does this person intend in this marriage:
a) To give sacrificially of self for the total well being of each other and the marital partnership? (c. 1055, §1)
[] Yes [] No*
b) To accept children lovingly from God and see to their upbringing? (c. 1055, §1)
[] Yes [] No*
c) To make an unconditional, permanent commitment, lasting until the death of his/her spouse? (cc. 1056; 1102, §1)
[] Yes [] No*
d) To be faithful to his/her spouse? (c. 1056)
[] Yes [] No*
3) Was this person ever baptized? (c. 1086)
[] Yes [] No [] Uncertain If yes, which denomination? _____
4) Has this person ever been married at any time in his/her life by a priest, deacon, minister, rabbi, civil official, common law, etc.? (c. 1085)
[] Yes [] No If yes, how many times? _____

List the full name(s) of previous spouse(s): _____

How did the marriage(s) end? [] Divorce [] Death of spouse [] Catholic annulment [] Other: _____

If married previously, is this person meeting his/her moral/civil responsibilities to the former spouse(s) and any child/children? (c. 1071, §1, 3°)
[] Yes [] No*

- 5) Is this person related to his/her intended spouse by blood, marriage or legal adoption? (cc. 1091-1092; 1094)
[] Yes* [] No
6) Has this person been ordained a Catholic priest/deacon or been in a Catholic religious community? (cc. 1087-1088)
[] Yes* [] No
7) Is any person or circumstance forcing or putting pressure upon the bride/groom to marry? (cc. 1057; 1103)
[] Yes* [] No
8) Does this person have or has ever had any physical, mental or emotional, alcohol and/or drug related difficulties? (cc. 1057; 1084; 1095)
[] Yes* [] No
9) Do the parents (guardians) of the bride/groom have any reservations about this marriage?
[] Yes* [] No

Explain any previous response that included an asterisk ().

If you know any reason(s) why this marriage should not occur or information you believe should be made known about this proposed union, explain:

Signature of Witness _____

Signature of [] Priest or [] Deacon or [] Lay Pastoral Assistant _____

Type/print name _____

Type/print name _____

Parish _____

PARISH SEAL

City/State _____

Date signed _____



MARRIAGE LICENSE

A wedding license issued by the state of Texas is mandatory before a wedding can legally be performed. This license can be obtained at any courthouse in the state. This license must be issued within 90 days of the scheduled wedding and at least 72 hours before the scheduled time of the wedding (unless a waiver is obtained with the issuance of a certificate from the Texas preparation program: “Twogether in Texas”.) Although the license may be given to the priest or deacon at any time during this 30-day period, **IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT THE WEDDING LICENSE IS GIVEN TO THE PRIEST OR DEACON BEFORE THE REHEARSAL BEGINS.**

“TWOGETHER IN TEXAS”

The state of Texas recognizes the importance of pre-marital counseling and education for preparation of a permanent, loving relationship in Marriage. Towards this goal, the state has instituted a program called “Twogether in Texas” which

1. Offers a certificate upon completion of the authorized classes whereby the couple, presenting this certificate to a county clerk, can save \$60.00 on the cost of a state of Texas wedding license.
2. Allows the couple to have the “72 hour waiting period” waived when obtaining a wedding license.

On the other hand, the Catholic Church, recognizing the importance of the Sacramental nature of Matrimony, while accepting the state program, requires that a couple be prepared by a priest, deacon or designated lay minister prior to the exchange of their vows in the Catholic Church.

Couples desiring to be married at Christ the Good Shepherd must still meet with a priest or deacon for their marriage preparation. In addition, these couples, at their own choosing, may participate in the state program: “Twogether in Texas.” There is no charge by the state for classes offered by an authorized program.

www.TwogetherInTexas.org

Although the Certificate received upon completion of the 8-hour course is presented to the County Clerk when the state license is obtained, you are requested to show this Certificate to the priest/deacon at CGS preparing you for a Catholic wedding so that a copy of this document can be placed in your matrimonial file maintained by Christ the Good Shepherd.



WEDDING PARTY AND REHEARSAL

Your wedding party consisting of family and friends are important participants in the celebration of your Sacrament of Matrimony and in your living out the covenant relationship you are entering. During the meetings with the priest or deacon who is preparing you for this sacrament, you will discuss the role of each person taking part in the wedding service. Every member of the wedding party is expected to attend the rehearsal, which is usually scheduled for the Friday evening before your Saturday liturgy.

One or two **wedding coordinators** (CGS member parishioners) are assigned to assist you and the priest/deacon at your rehearsal and on the day of your wedding. These coordinators are trained and informed about all aspects of the church building and wedding ceremonies here at CGS. Communicating and working with them can help to assure that your church celebration will be a coordinated and pleasant experience. If the priest/deacon preparing you has not identified your coordinator(s), you may call the parish office (281-376-6831) **one (1) month** before your wedding to obtain their names and telephone numbers. It is the wedding coordinator's responsibility to initiate the interaction among you. They will be pleased to offer their assistance prior to and at the time of your wedding.

The **Rehearsal** is the beginning of the celebration of your wedding. Everyone should arrive early, out of consideration for the church community and the presiding minister. Many times, there are several rehearsals or other functions scheduled for the church building on the same evening. If members of your wedding party arrive late, your rehearsal time may be shortened and the entire gathering would be less prepared for the wedding ceremony, itself. (If your rehearsal is scheduled for 6:00 pm, you may need to tell friends or relatives who are habitually late that it begins at 5:30 pm! Furthermore, some first-time visitors find it difficult to locate CGS or are delayed by Friday night traffic.) The priest or deacon, with the active assistance of the parish's wedding coordinator(s), conducts the rehearsal, not the couple nor their parents. Do not hire a wedding consultant for your celebration at CGS; you may engage such a person for the reception which follows.

The minimal numbers of participants for a Catholic wedding are the couple to be married, the priest or deacon who will hear their exchange of vows, and two witnesses to these vows. (Remember: the bride and groom are the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony!) Additional members of the wedding party may include additional bridesmaids and groomsmen; parents of the bride and groom; **lectors** of the Scriptures proclaimed during the liturgy (please note, these proclaimers of the Word of God must be instituted lectors either at Christ the Good Shepherd or another Catholic Community. If you do not have anyone who is an instituted lector to proclaim the readings, CGS will assist you), cross bearer and ushers.

Flower girls and ring bearers, along with "junior bridesmaids" might be included. If the Sacrament of Matrimony is celebrated within the context of a Nuptial Mass, there should also be altar servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (these persons are formed in the proper manner of the distribution of Holy Communion. If you do not have anyone in your family who is an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, CGS will assist you), cross bearer, etc. The following comments about members of the wedding party might be helpful.

WEDDING PARTY AND REHEARSAL (continued)

1. **Bride:** the traditional wedding gown for the bride that is worn in the Church must have covered shoulders. If a strapless or spaghetti strap gown is chosen the shoulders must be **covered during the ceremony** with another garment. It must first be approved by the presider. Dresses with excessive displays of skin or cleavage will require a shawl or cover-up during the Mass or Ceremony. Additionally, tightly fitted clothing, in any way, is not allowed.
2. **Best man and Maid/Matron of Honor:** They do not need to be Catholic; however, they need to adhere to the same dress code as the bride. They are close friends or relatives of the couple. They are the required two witnesses for the exchange of vows. In Texas, they do not need to sign the wedding license.
The Best man may carry the ring(s) used in the wedding ceremony.
3. **Wedding Attendants:** They do not need to be Catholic; however, they need to adhere to the same dress code as the bride. There may be an equal number of men and women, although this is not mandatory. The entrance procession and the placement of the wedding party (and other active participants) will be determined **by the Presider** at a meeting in advance of the time of the rehearsal.
4. **Other Attendants:** (Flower Girl, Ring Bearer, Jr. Bride's maid) CGS has a 5-year-old minimal required age for members of the wedding party, such as flower girl(s), ring bearer(s), *et al.* If a child is in the entrance procession, the couple is encouraged to designate a "catcher" who sits in the second pew and takes custody of the child during the service. Young children may take part in the photography sessions before or after the service.
 - a) **Flower girl:** Artificial or real flower petals cannot be distributed at any time during the service. A flower girl may carry a basket of flowers.
 - b) **Ring Bearer:** The actual rings should be carried by the Best Man or the Maid/Matron of Honor. (The Best Man, having pockets in his jacket, may carry both rings.) The young ring bearer may carry a traditional pillow with representational rings tied to it. (If real rings are tied to the pillow, make sure the wedding coordinator is aware)
5. **Readers/Lectors:** Readers of the Scriptures proclaimed during the liturgy (please note, these proclaimers of the Word of God must be trained and commissioned lectors either at Christ the Good Shepherd or another Catholic Community. If you do not have anyone who is a trained lector to proclaim the readings, CGS will assist you). Usually there are two different people: one for the Old Testament and another for the New Testament. (The cantor leads the congregational response for the sung responsorial Psalm.) The priest or deacon proclaims the Gospel Reading. The priest or deacon may also lead the Prayers of the Faithful, although a friend or relative may also participate in "proclaiming" who are already commissioned as lectors. If you need assistance CGS can provide lectors.

6. **Parents of the Bride and Groom:** Since the Groom and the Bride are the ministers of the Sacrament, the Sacrament of Matrimony envisions that they will walk in together. However, the bride and/or groom may be accompanied by her or his own parents. Please discuss this with your presider.
7. **Grandparents and other honored guests:** They may be seated in the front rows with the parents of the couple. They may be seated when they arrive at the wedding or may be before the formal procession. The parish Priest or Deacon and the wedding coordinator should be informed of such preferences and any other seating considerations.
8. **Other Liturgical Ministers:** If the wedding is celebrated in the context of a Nuptial Mass, other Catholic participants should be identified at the time when the service is planned. They may include altar servers, cross bearer, those bringing forward the gifts of bread and wine to be consecrated, and Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Communion. (The priest may distribute the Eucharist without further assistance)
9. **Non-Catholic Ministers:** If you desire to have a non-Catholic minister participate in your wedding service, this person's role should be discussed in advance with the priest/deacon preparing you for the wedding.
10. **Ushers:** Even without a Nuptial Mass, several people may be designated as ushers or greeters (ministers of hospitality.) Their function is to expedite the movement of guests from the Narthex into the Sanctuary in a timely fashion. You may wish to include friends or relatives as part of the wedding party without their having to bear the expense of tuxedos or gowns. (Women may also serve as ushers or greeters.) Although some believe that groomsmen can perform this function, they are often involved with the groom or in photo sessions immediately before the service and cannot participate as fully as would be needed to assure that guests enter the Sanctuary, and the service can begin as scheduled.
11. The priest or deacon witnessing your exchange of vows will sign this license following the wedding. He may make a photocopy for you; however, the original must be sent by CGS to the State of Texas in order for your marriage to be legal. The State of Texas will return the official marriage license to the address provided.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS PRIOR TO REHEARSAL AND WEDDING

1. **The Sacrament of Reconciliation:** A Catholic bride or groom is strongly encouraged to celebrate this Sacrament (Confession) in advance of celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony. Arrangements should be made with a priest for this purpose. Anyone from the wedding party wishing to celebrate Reconciliation should also make arrangements to do so in advance of the rehearsal so as to have sufficient time for this sacrament. (Routinely, Reconciliation is celebrated in the CGS chapel on Saturday from 9:30AM to 10:30AM and **Tuesday 5:00PM – 6:00PM**. However, this may not fit with your wedding scheduled for a Saturday afternoon; those wishing to receive this sacrament should plan accordingly.)
2. **Music:** The bride and groom must meet with the Music Director (Ken Morrison) or his representative (Carol Wilson) well in advance of the scheduled wedding. The selected music must be liturgically appropriate and recognizable to all gathered as prayer. For that reason, secular “love songs” cannot be used before or during the marriage liturgy; they are appropriate for the reception which follows the wedding. The music list for the marriage liturgy includes a processional (instrumental or sung) ; an entrance hymn, a Gloria (proper to a nuptial Mass), a Psalm and response, a Gospel acclamation, an acclamation after the exchange of vows and a canticle after the exchange of rings, and a recessional (sung or instrumental). In addition, a Mass requires all the commons for the Liturgy of the Eucharist as well as a Song during Communion. The music requires a primary accompanist (usually a keyboard player on piano or organ) and a cantor. Additional options would include a soloist; and additional instruments such as harp, brass, string quartet, bells, etc. The final choices are made by the couple in consultation with the Music Director. It is the responsibility of the couple to pay the employed musicians the amount of \$150 **each**. **The payment should be made to them one (2) month before the date of the wedding date.**
3. **Fees and Stipends:**
 - a) There is a usage/maintenance fee for the church facilities. This is \$ 450 for the use of the main church building for weddings for active registered “parishioners” and \$800 for “non-parishioners.” The fee for the use of the chapel is \$125 for registered parishioners and \$ 200 or non-parishioners. (A “parishioner” is a bride or groom who attends Mass regularly at CGS, or who is an active registered member of CGS for six months before the date of the wedding, or whose parents either attend Mass regularly at CGS or are active registered members of CGS. A “non-parishioner” is a person who routinely attends Mass, or is a registered member, at another parish and wishes to use the facilities of CGS, usually because of its “convenience.”). There is also a \$75 fee for each Wedding Coordinator **and pay directly to them**. (According to the number of bridal party). **The payment should be made (2) months before the wedding date.**



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS PRIOR TO REHEARSAL AND WEDDING *(continued)*

a) A bride and groom are pleased with the assistance offered by the priest or deacon preparing them for marriage, may offer a voluntary stipend or gift directly to him, as the couple sees fit. There is absolutely no requirement for offering a stipend/gift. If you wish to include the priest or deacon (and the deacon's wife) in your rehearsal dinner or reception, please let them know in advance with an invitation.

b) Checks for the usage of the main church or the chapel may be made out to Christ the Good Shepherd and sent to our office: 18511 Klein-Church Rd, Spring, TX 77379 (or left in a designated envelope at the front desk) **two months prior** to the date of the wedding. Payment for musicians should be made **directly** to them by check or cash **before the wedding** and Payment for the wedding coordinator(s) should be made directly to her/them by check or cash.

c) If you wish to use the large hall at CGS for your reception, you must make arrangements separately through the front desk. This is an individual financial matter and is not made through the priest or deacon preparing you for marriage. You must follow CGS's policies and procedures regarding the use of this facility and, in particular, all policies relating to the consumption of alcohol.

f) Couples are reminded that the consumption of alcoholic beverages is strictly forbidden on the church grounds or in the church buildings, except for their use within the reception hall in accord with separate policies governing the use of this facility. You are responsible for the actions of your guests by making sure they are aware of these policies.

h) Payment for any physical damage to the facilities of Christ the Good Shepherd is the responsibility of the bride and groom.

4. Other Preparations Before the Rehearsal

Use of the "Bride's Room" (Room A110) and Groom's Room .The Bride's Room (A110) may be used for dressing on the day of the wedding. This room includes full-length mirrors and an adjoining restroom. Rooms are assigned when your wedding date is booked. Due to scheduling demands, access to these rooms is typically limited to one **(1) hour** before the start of the wedding. Please plan to vacate the room shortly before the ceremony begins. For the safety of personal belongings, we strongly encourage you to remove all items from the room before the start of the wedding. A second room, often in the same building, will also be assigned for use by the groom and groomsmen prior to the ceremony. There is no charge for the use of these rooms by the bride and groom. **If you wish to request additional time, you may do so through your worship coordinator, subject to availability.**



THE WEDDING DAY

The day of your wedding should be a day of joy and thanksgiving. You are about to enter into a covenant relationship with one another and with your God for the rest of your lives. However, for some, it can be a day filled with stress rather than pleasure. We encourage you to relax. It will be a beautiful celebration and a fun-filled reception by your friends and relatives. (If any small thing goes “wrong,” only you and your priest or deacon will know about it and none of us will tell anyone else!) The following comments are intended to make your wedding celebration less stressful.

1. **Entire Wedding Party:** Although many guests seem to arrive at weddings moments before the scheduled beginning time, all members of your wedding party are expected to be present and ready to begin at the scheduled time. The immediate wedding party (bride, groom and attendants) should count on arriving two hours before the wedding, especially if they are to dress at CGS. If you dress elsewhere, an hour is usually sufficient for pre-wedding photography. (A wedding prior to yours may preclude your arriving much earlier. You are urged to check for other scheduled events before making your final plans for this.) And remember to bring everything you or your attendants will need. That includes the rings!
2. **Interaction with guests:** The bride and groom are usually very involved with dressing and with interacting with members of the immediate wedding party so that there is only a minimal opportunity for you to greet guests prior to the wedding. Often this hospitality is offered in the Narthex (vestibule) by your parents who, after a brief welcome, transfer the quests to the ushers who will assist in seating them. Since the wedding service is expected to begin at the scheduled time, parents and other greeters may need to prompt guests to be seated rather than to congregate in the Narthex before the service. The bride and her party will be sequestered in the bride’s room and be brought into the Sacristy by the wedding coordinator a few minutes before the procession begins. Although the groom and his party may visit with guests in advance of the service, they should wait in the priest’s sacristy in the main church prior to the procession. (The groom and his best man will be requested to stay in the priest’s sacristy shortly before the service, allowing late arrivals to be seated more quickly.)
3. **Guest Book:** If you have a guest book for visitors to sign at the church, you will need to appoint a friend or relative to oversee this process. You will need to provide your own book, etc. Please mention your request to the wedding/worship coordinator to make sure it is added in the setup for a podium. The Guest Book has to be brought to CGS at the date of Rehearsal. The parish wedding coordinator will provide a table (with a cloth covering) in the Narthex. The guest book will be “closed” about ten minutes before the procession is to begin so that late arrivals may be seated. The person in charge of the guest book should take it to the reception site for a continuation of an opportunity to sign it. Any wedding

booklets you may have had made are usually distributed by your ushers. The person responsible for your guest book should be delegated with the responsibility of taking all of the remaining wedding booklets to the site of the reception.

4. **Late Arrivals:** Your guests will not be allowed to be seated by an usher using the central aisle a few minutes before the procession begins. Late arrivals will be directed from the Narthex towards other entrances into the sanctuary. (This precludes the appearance that they are part of the wedding party!) Recalling the difficulty some first-time visitors have in locating CGS, you are urged to encourage your guests to arrive in advance of the time given in your formal invitations.
5. **Procession:** You need not be concerned about the line-up and procedure for the entrance procession. The parish wedding coordinator will assist in positioning all participants and assure that they enter at the appropriate **time according to what was planned previously with your presider/priest or deacon.**
6. **Cultural Adaptations:** specific cultural adaptations may be included in your wedding service. These should be discussed with the Priest/Deacon who will be witnessing your exchanges of vows. The exchange of the arras may be made by the groom and bride. The symbolic union represented by the lazo may be incorporated at the time of the nuptial blessing. The appropriate participation of the padrinos should be discussed with the presider when you are planning the **liturgy**. The words and blessings may be exchanged in either **English or Spanish spoken and understood by the couple. All other cultural adaptations must be discussed with your presider during the liturgy planning meeting.**

If the Mass or ceremony is to be bilingual, the couple should consider the inclusion of the non-spoken language used for the readings in any printed materials distributed to their guests. **Make proper arrangements at the time of the liturgy and music planning.**

Religious Articles, bibles, rosaries gifts etc. will be bless at the end of Mass. Please notify your presider during the time of planning liturgy meeting.

Finally: enjoy your new union as husband and wife! May God continue to be with you for the rest of your lives.





MUSIC PLANNING WORKSHEET FOR WEDDINGS

Please contact the CGS Music Ministry no later than six weeks before the wedding to finalize music selections appropriate for the ceremony. Contact information can be found on page 3.

Bride and Groom: _____

Date of Wedding Liturgy: _____ Time: _____ Nuptial Mass: Yes No

Presider (Priest or Deacon; Visitor): _____

Musicians: _____

GATHERING RITES

PRELUDE MUSIC: _____

Reception of the Couple

PROCESSIONAL/SONG OF GATHERING: _____

Sign of the Cross/Greeting, Introduction

SONG OF GATHERING (*if not part of the processional*): _____

GLORIA (*if Mass*): _____

Opening Prayer

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Old Testament Reading

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: _____

New Testament Reading

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: _____

Gospel, Homily

CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

Address to the Couple, Questions before Consent, Consent (Exchange of Vows), Reception of the Consent

Acclamation of Praise after Reception of Consent: _____

Explanatory Rites, Blessing of Rings, Exchange of Rings

Song of Praise after Exchange of Rings: _____

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS (*if sung*): _____

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

YES NO

Preparation of the Table and Gifts: _____

The Eucharist Prayer/Aclamations:

Holy, Holy, Holy _____

Memorial Acclamation: _____

Doxology/Great Amen: _____

The Lord's Prayer

Sign of Peace

Lamb of God: _____

Communion Song: _____

Prayer after Communion

CONCLUDING RITE

RECESSIONAL/FINAL SONG: _____



Wedding Planning Sheet

Take time to prayerfully complete this form before your liturgy meeting with the clergy. Please fill out only those parts in black. The clergy will complete the parts in blue.

PART 1: WEDDING INFORMATION

Bride's Name:

Bride's Phone:

Bride's Email:

Groom's Name:

Groom's Phone:

Groom's Email:

Florist Name:

Time Expected to Arrive:

Please read the **Guidelines for Florists** included in your wedding packet and share that information with them.

Photographer Name:

Time Expected to Arrive:

Videographer Name:

Time Expected to Arrive:

Pictures/Video will be done: Before During After

Please read the **Guidelines for Photographers/Videographers** included in your wedding packet and share that information with them.

Guestbook: Yes No

Worship Aids: Bride will bring her own Slides

Celebrant:

Number of Guests:

Number receiving Communion:

Gift Bearers (carry bread and wine to the priest): Yes No

Names of Gift Bearers:

Ushers:

Liturgy Type (select all that apply): Mass Liturgy of the Word
 Matrimony Convalidation Catholic & Unbaptized
Language: English Spanish Bilingual Other
Wedding Date: _____ Time: _____
Rehearsal Date: _____ Time: _____
Location: Church Chapel

PART 2: LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Needed: Yes No
Number of Ciboria: _____ Number of Chalices: _____

*If EMHC are provided, they **must** be commissioned by the Catholic Church.*
Names of EMHCs: _____

Special Arrangements/Instructions: _____

PART 3: WEDDING PARTY

Mother of the Bride:
Father of the Bride:
Mother of the Groom:
Father of the Groom:

Step-Parents (if any):

If any of the above are to be pre-seated before the wedding party, please indicate that.

Maid of Honor:

Best Man:

Ring Bearer:

Flower Girl(s):

Bridesmaids:

Groomsmen:

PART 4: ORDER OF PROCESSION

Bride and Groom (select one):

Together

Each with parents

Groom, then Bride

Deacon (if assisting):

Celebrant:

Cross Bearer:

Altar Servers (if any):

Maid of Honor & Best Man:

Order of procession to be completed by clergy below:

PART 5: WEDDING READINGS

First Reading: B-

Name of Lector:

*All Lectors (readers) **must** be Lectors commissioned by the Catholic Church.*

Psalms: C-

Second Reading: D-

Name of Lector:

*All Lectors (readers) **must** be Lectors commissioned by the Catholic Church.*

Gospel: F-

PART 6: WEDDING LITURGY

Collect (Mass only): A-

Questions before Consent: G-

Consent (Marriage Vows): H-

Blessing & Exchange of Rings: I-

Universal Prayer: J-

Universal Prayer Additions (if any):

Eucharistic Prayer (Mass only): K-

Preface (Mass only): L-

Nuptial Blessing: M-

Prayer After Communion (Mass only): N-

Final Blessing: O-

PART 7: CULTURAL ADAPTATIONS

Arras: Yes No

Sponsors (if any):

Lazo: Yes No

Sponsors (if any):

Additional Sponsors (if any):

Flowers for the Blessed Virgin: Yes NO



FOTOGRAHY AND VIDEO

The celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony should be a memorable event in a couple's mutual lives. Nevertheless, they must recognize that this event is a sacramental moment and not merely a photo-opportunity. The focus must be on the joining of the couple in a covenant relationship and not upon the photographer(s) "covering" the ceremony. Consequently, the following procedures must be followed by all those who will be filming the wedding service.

1. The accompanying "Guidelines for Photographers" **should be given to your photographer(s)**, particularly if they have not participated previously in a wedding service at CGS.
2. Basically, the photographer(s) cannot stop any action in order to obtain the "best shot." This means they must not intervene in the entrance procession, the exchange of vows, etc. Cameras should be limited to the back of the sanctuary and **FLASH IS NOT PERMITTED. Under no circumstances are they permitted on the altar, in the Music area or between the altar and the guests (the congregation.)** Although they may be stationed at either side of the altar area, they must not in any way impede the entrance of the wedding party. Photography conducted during the service must use the available (natural) lighting. Operators should not move during the ceremony in any manner that would distract the guests' participation in the liturgy. Parts of the ceremony may be "re- staged" following the service, with the consent of the officiant (priest or deacon.)
3. Procedures relating to still photography also apply to videography. It is suggested that video camera operators attend the rehearsal in order to plan for the coverage on the day of the wedding. They may take informal videos during the rehearsal; but again, they should be unobtrusive during the process.
4. Although no announcement will be made prior to the service regarding candid photography during the liturgy, couples are requested to urge friends or relatives prone to such action to **refrain from using flash cameras during the service.** (Their use is very distracting to the wedding party and the officiant facing them!) Cell phone photographs should also be limited. Again, although an announcement may not be made prior to the service, common courtesy urges that all cell phones, per se, be turned off or set to a non-ringing status during the liturgy.
5. Formal photography in the church, before and after the liturgy, should be limited to **twenty (20) minutes** for each period. (There may be another service following or preceding your wedding that would require set-up, or take-down, time. To allow for the 5:30 pm Mass on Saturday, all photography must end **no later than 4:45 pm.**)
6. Photography is permitted in the Bride's Room prior to the wedding. The outside gardens are also available, weather permitting.



GUIDELINES FOR FOTOGRPHERS

Dear Photographer,

We welcome you to Christ the Good Shepherd to photograph the Celebration of Marriage. We gladly make our facilities available to you to help the bride and groom have pictures to remember this most important day in their life. At the same time, we need to clarify a few limitations that arise because the day you come to photograph this particular wedding may have other events scheduled immediately before or after this service. We solicit your cooperation with the persons who are ministering at the wedding, namely the priest or deacon and the parish's assigned wedding coordinator.

1. To protect the solemnity of the Sacrament, photography and videography equipment is restricted from the raised altar platform area, the Music area and the central aisle. The equipment locations should be in the back of the sanctuary. (Usually during the exchange of vows the couple will face the congregation and the back of the sanctuary.) Throughout the ceremony, available natural lighting should be used. **Do not use flash cameras during the service. Obviously, still or video photographers are not permitted on the altar platform or music area during the service.** They are permitted in the areas adjacent to each side of the altar area but should be as inconspicuous as possible during the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony.
2. In order to obtain "the best shot," the wedding party must not be halted during either the processional or recessional. Following the wedding, specific actions, e.g. exchange of rings, may be "re-staged" with the consent of the presiding priest or deacon.
3. Because of other commitments for the use of the church and the limited availability of maintenance staff, the photography session in the Sanctuary (and Narthex/Vestibule) must be restricted to **twenty (20) minutes** before and after the service. It should be limited to the wedding party only. For afternoon weddings, **all photography must end no later than 4:45 pm** to allow for preparations for the 5:30 pm Saturday Liturgy.
4. Photography is permitted in the Bride's Room prior to the wedding. The outside gardens (Marian, St. Francis, and Sr. Alice) may be used as sites for photography before or after the service, weather permitting.

Bride: _____

Groom: _____

Wedding Date: _____ Time: _____

Celebrant: _____



FLORISTS, FLOWERS, AND OTHER DECORATIONS

Many believe that the sanctuary of Christ the Good Shepherd is attractive in its design and seasonal decorations so that additional flowers, etc. are not needed for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Couples are encouraged not to go to expensive lengths to add supplemental ornamentation. Furthermore, the seasonal decorations on the altar platform cannot be removed for the wedding service. The accompanying Guidelines for Florists should be given to your florist, particularly if they have not provided flowers for other weddings at CGS. In addition, the bride and groom should be aware of the following recommendations or practices.

1. Large displays of flowers are not encouraged. Any flowers used for the service must be removed by your florist immediately following the service. Flowers are not permitted on the altar table, in front of Tabernacle or the chair(s) occupied by the priest or deacon, nor in any location that would impede movement around the altar, kneeler, bench or lectern/ambo.
2. Although weddings are permitted during **Advent** and **Lent**, florists should be reminded of the nature of these “penitential” times. If you should choose to add flower arrangements for the wedding, they should be in accord with the liturgical season. Existing floral displays cannot be removed to accommodate your flowers. This is particularly the case during the Christmas and Easter seasons. During these seasons flowers are not allowed except the bride’s bouquet
3. Physical alterations or additions are not permitted to the altar area. This includes the use of arches, columns, etc. (Love bird cages are not permitted! Pets are not permitted.) Decorations may not be hung on the wall behind the altar.
5. The dispersal of flower petals, rice, birdseed, confetti, **bubbles**, etc. is not permitted either inside or outside the church. Decorations on the pews, e.g. bows, must be attached only in a manner that will not damage the wood. No tape of any kind is to be used to affix such decorations. The roping-off of pews along the central aisle is not allow, since it causes guests to sit on the outer ends of the pews with few in the center. The use of a runner in the central aisle is not allowed.
6. Your assigned parish wedding **worship** coordinator will be available to assist in the distribution of boutonnieres and corsages to members of the wedding party. This person will coordinate with your florist who is responsible for the placement and removal of all flowers and decorations.



GUIDELINES FOR FLORIST

Dear Florist,

We welcome you to Christ the Good Shepherd to help create a beautiful environment for the Celebration of Marriage. We appreciate your help and concern. We hope that this outline of what is available, and some other suggestions will help to coordinate our efforts on behalf of the bride and groom.

What is available at the Church

1. The environmental backgrounds in the sanctuary, used for the liturgical year, cannot be removed, or altered. You may need to acquaint yourself with them in advance of the date of the wedding, especially if it occurs during the Seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent or Easter. (The church decor is less elaborate during "Ordinary Time," when many weddings occur.) Since the wedding will take place in a sacred place, additional construction, e.g. arches, columns, is not suitable.

Placement/removal of floral decorations and candles:

1. Large displays of flowers are not encouraged. Any flowers used for the service may be placed within thirty (30) minutes before the schedule of the wedding and you must remove them immediately after the ceremony. (Other weddings or liturgical events may be scheduled prior to or following the service where your decorations are used.) Church personnel are not responsible for removing these decorations.
2. Floral arrangements must not be placed on the altar table, in front of the Tabernacle, the chairs to be occupied by the priest or deacon, or in any location that would impede the movement of anyone around the altar, the kneeler, bench or lectern/ambo.
3. Decorations on the pews, e.g. bows, must be attached only in a manner that will not damage the wood; no tape of any kind is to be used.
4. **The dispersal of flower petals, rice, birdseed, confetti, bubbles, etc. is not permitted either inside or outside the church and grounds.**

Questions concerning the placement of flower arrangements or other decorations should be addressed to the assigned parish wedding coordinator who will be available prior to the ceremony to assist in the distribution of boutonnieres and corsages to members of the wedding party.

Bride: _____

Groom: _____

Wedding Date: _____ Time: _____

Celebrant: _____

Notes

Prayer for a Holy Marriage

Holy Father, I place this marriage in your hands because it belongs to You. I pray that with all humility and gentleness, with patience, we bear one another in love like You have called us to do. I pray that we remain eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Let us seek to keep the peace within our marriage while the enemy uses things to stir up trouble, let us put aside our impulsive emotions so that we can create lasting joy,

Amen.