

Dear Bride and Groom,

Welcome to St. Patrick's Church! You have come to this beautiful church for one of the most important events of your life, the Sacrament of Christian Marriage. The following guidelines and suggestions are offered to you so that your preparation may be as orderly and complete as possible.

This booklet has been prepared to answer most of the "usual" questions that are asked by couples preparing for marriage. If you have additional questions we will be happy to assist you.

The Common Policy for Catholic Marriages requires your active participation in marriage preparation: Pre-Cana (described in this booklet). In addition, you will be meeting with the priest or deacon who is helping you prepare for your marriage. Together you will discuss formation issues as well as liturgical preparations.

"A wedding is a day, a marriage is a lifetime." May the Lord bless you on your wedding day and all the days of your marriage.

In Christ's Love,

Fr. Bob Mitchell  
Pastor

## *Preparing For Your Marriage*

### **Marriage Preparation Process**

The usual custom for couples who wish to celebrate the Sacrament of Matrimony is to begin the marriage preparation process with the priest or deacon of their choice who will assist your preparation and witness your marriage vows. In the Catholic Church, the bride and the groom exchange vows – they marry each other. The priest or the deacon is the official witness for the Catholic Church and for the State of New Jersey.

The marriage preparation process should begin one year prior to the wedding date. The priest or deacon who will assist in your marriage preparation will provide all the necessary information concerning the requirements to participate in Pre-Cana. He will also obtain from you the required documents and complete the forms used for our Church records.

Normally, there are three meetings with the priest or deacon, as well as the Pre-Cana and a meeting with the parish music minister. You will also be asked to complete and review the FOCCUS inventory. If your circumstances require an alternate procedure, talk that over with the witnessing priest or deacon who will provide guidance.

## **Pre-Cana**

Before couples are married in the Catholic Church, we ask that you thoroughly prepare for this life-long sacrament. Marriage preparation or “Pre-Cana” is an umbrella term for the whole marriage preparation process. Programs are presented under the name of *Pre-Cana*. This preparation is not a one-day event but a timely process of preparing for marriage. We advise you to allow time for planning. You will need to identify a site for participation, consider scheduling (varies by location), and allow for participation in the program itself prior to your planned wedding date. Pre-Cana programs are held at many parishes and locally at *St. Paul Inside the Walls*, the Catholic Center for Evangelization in Madison. Their website has complete information, schedules, and guides for marriage preparation.

<http://insidethewalls.org/guide-to-marriage-preparation>.

Additional programs are available through the Paterson Diocese:  
[www.patersondiocese.org](http://www.patersondiocese.org).

## **Scheduling a Wedding**

Once you have spoken to the priest or deacon who will witness your marriage vows, you may schedule your wedding. Please note that the scheduling of a wedding date and time can only be done by a priest at Saint Patrick.

Saturday weddings are celebrated anytime from 10:00 A.M. - 2:30 P.M. On all other days, weddings are celebrated as times are available. However, weddings are not celebrated during Holy Week, Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, or on other days when major parish celebrations may occur.

## **Documents**

The documents that must be presented to the priest or deacon who will witness your marriage vows fall into two categories: those required by ecclesial law (Church law) and those required by civil law.

### ***Ecclesial Documents***

1. Roman Catholics – a NEW copy of your Baptismal Certificate issued by the parish in which you were baptized. Please contact the parish in which you were baptized directly asking for the Baptismal Certificate and any notations.
2. Christians who are not Roman Catholic - a copy of your Baptismal Certificate.
3. Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter Certificate of Completion.
4. “Letter of Permission” from the pastor of your Catholic Church, if neither the bride nor the groom are members of Saint Patrick Church.

5. "Affidavit establishing the freedom to marry" for both the bride and groom, if neither the bride nor the groom are members of Saint Patrick Church.

### ***Civil Documents***

Marriage License of the State of New Jersey. Licenses must be obtained from the town clerk or registrar in the municipality in which either applicant resides. If neither is a resident of New Jersey, the license must be obtained from the registrar of the municipality where the ceremony will take place - Chatham Borough municipal building. The bride and groom must appear in person to make the application for a marriage license and have with them one witness who is 18 years or older. A license will not be issued sooner than 72 hours after the application has been made. Once the marriage license is issued, it remains valid for only 30 days. Accordingly, we recommend that you carefully consider the "time requirements." For specific details on the process/requirements for application in Chatham Borough:

***<http://www.chathamtownship-nj.gov/Clerk.html>***

2. Civil Divorce Decree for a previous marriage that ended in divorce.
3. Certificate of Death for a previous marriage that ended by death.

## ***Preparing For Your Wedding Ceremony / Liturgy***

### **Nature of the Liturgy**

All wedding liturgies are celebrated according to the Roman Catholic Rite of Marriage. You will decide together whether you will exchange vows during a "ceremony" or "Nuptial Mass." The priest or deacon who witnesses your marriage vows can help you with that decision and with planning the wedding ceremony/Mass. He will give you a copy of the book titled "***Together for Life***." It contains an outline of the celebration plus a multitude of prayer, reading, and blessing options. At the back of the book is a form, "***SELECTIONS - for Marriage During Mass***" You can use this to record your selections for the Mass. Diocesan guidelines as well as those found in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and the *Rite of Marriage* apply to all wedding celebrations.

### **Interfaith Marriages**

Every effort will be made to accommodate the wishes of the bride and groom, including the participation of clergy from other Churches and Faith Traditions.

## Music

Music, including hymns and songs, enhances the celebration of your wedding ceremony / Mass. Our parish Minister of Music will work with you to coordinate your music. She will meet with you to discuss music selections, the use of a soloist/cantor and the option of additional musicians.

Maggie Hanson - Minister of Music, may be reached:  
(973) 635- 0625 x2161, [maggiehansonmusic@gmail.com](mailto:maggiehansonmusic@gmail.com).

The portions best set to music, and for which selections should be made are listed here. Additional music is sometimes selected (but not required) for the unity candle, a communion meditation, or a dedication to the Blessed Mother/Holy Family.

### Processional

One or two selections that accompany the party into the church

### Responsorial Psalm

One selection that reflects the nature of marriage

### Preparation of the Gifts (for wedding mass)

A selection that reflects the nature of marriage and/or community

### Communion (for wedding mass)

A selection that reflects our union with Christ in the receiving of communion

### Recessional

A selection that accompanies the joyful exit of the couple into the community and on to the reception!

For your convenience, musical suggestions for each part of the celebration are listed. Please consider and listen to your options and feel free to contact Maggie if you have any questions or concerns.

A half-hour of joyful music will be provided by the music minister prior to the celebration. The familiar Celtic Alleluia will be used for the Gospel Acclamation, and the joyful Storrington mass setting will be used for the Eucharistic Acclamations.

## Musical Suggestions:

### *Processionals & Recessionals*

- |                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Trumpet Voluntary - Stanley | 6 Ode to Joy          |
| 2 Pachelbel's Canon in D      | 7 Rondeau             |
| 3 Trumpet Voluntary - Clarke  | 8 Hornpipe            |
| 4 Trumpet Tune                | 9 March (Mendelssohn) |
| 5 Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring  |                       |

### ***Responsorial Psalms***

- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 10 All the Ends of the Earth     | 14 May the Lord Bless Us         |
| 11 We Are God's People           | 15 Lord Your Love is Everlasting |
| 12 The Lord is Kind and Merciful | 16 I Have Loved You              |
| 13 I Will Take the Cup of Life   | 17 We Praise You                 |

### ***Communion & General***

- |                                      |                             |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 18 Ave Maria - Gounod                | 30 The Summons              |
| 19 Ave Maria - Schubert              | 31 We Are Many Parts        |
| 20 Panis Angelicus                   | 32 Covenant Hymn            |
| 21 Come and Journey                  | 33 Taste and See            |
| 22 How Beautiful                     | 34 I Am the Bread of Life   |
| 23 I Have You                        | 35 One Bread, One Body      |
| 24 On Eagles Wings                   | 36 Seed, Scattered and Sown |
| 25 You Are Mine                      | 37 When Love is Found       |
| 26 Blessed Are They                  | 38 Wherever You Go          |
| 27 The Servant Song                  | 39 Open My Eyes             |
| 28 Not for Tongues of Heavens Angels | 40 We Praise You            |
| 29 We Have Been Told                 |                             |

These are only suggestions. Contact Maggie to discuss further.

### **Flowers**

Flowers can be placed in the Church to enhance the liturgical celebration of your wedding. During the different seasons of the Liturgical Year, the Church is decorated to reflect the spirit of the season. Normally, there are two arrangements placed in the niches in the Sanctuary. These flowers are delivered each Saturday and will be present throughout the weekend. If you choose to purchase flowers for these niches the regular arrangements should be carefully moved to the sacristy and replaced when your flowers are removed immediately after the ceremony. If you would like to purchase flowers for the niches that you will **leave** in the church please contact the parish office as early as possible so that our standing flower order can be adjusted. Flowers, candles, or other decorations may **never** be placed on the altar itself. Your florist should contact the parish office to schedule delivery.

Sharing flowers: If there is more than one wedding on the same day or weekend, you may wish to share the selection and cost of the wedding flowers. The parish office has that information. Wedding flowers are not required.

### **Decorating Pew Ends**

Ribbons and bouquets may be attached to the pew ends if they are attached with rubber bands, rubber clips, or rubber loops. **Wire or any kind of adhesive such as tape may never be used.**

Fire code prohibits candles, lanterns, or other such items on the pews or in the aisle.

## **Runners**

No runner is permitted in the Church due to our insurance policies.

## **Balloons, Birdseed, Confetti, Rice, Rose Petals, etc.**

To ensure the safety of the environment, our Church, and your wedding guests, please inform all who attend your wedding celebration that **nothing** may be thrown or dropped either inside or outside of the Church.

Please inform the Limo Service that it is not permitted nor appropriate for the bridal party to have drinks in front of the Church, or after the wedding ceremony.

## **Marriage Unity Candle**

The Marriage Unity Candle is an optional rite introduced to the marriage celebration in the United States. It is not a required element of the wedding celebration.

If you wish to light a Marriage Unity Candle after you exchange your marriage vows, you must purchase a 3-candle set at a local candle shop or religious article store.

The two side candles should measure 7/8 of an inch in diameter (standard size) and the marriage candle should be no larger than 3½ inches in diameter. Candles should be brought to the wedding rehearsal.

## **Flowers to Our Lady and the Holy Family:**

If you have a devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and wish to honor her and ask the Holy Family to bless your marriage, flowers may be brought to the Holy Family Statue during the wedding Mass, usually, after Communion. Indicate your choice on the *Selection Form - Other Special Elements or Alternatives in Our Ceremony*.

## **Photographs and Video**

The taking of pictures and use of video cameras are certainly welcome.

The photographer and videographer should meet with the priest or deacon who is officiating at the marriage 30 minutes before the celebration to discuss the parish guidelines. In general, the use of floodlights and flash equipment is limited to the entrance and recessional. At other times, available light should be used to avoid distracting the couple, family, and officiate. The photographer and videographer should be considerate of the bride and groom and those gathered for this wedding. Their movements should not distract from the celebration, nor block the ability of the congregation to view the ceremony. Neither the photographer nor the videographer may enter onto the predella or sanctuary, i.e. the area around the altar including the steps and choir.

If you wish to take pictures after the ceremony, the marriage must begin on time. The wedding party must depart the Church by 4:00 P.M. since the Church must be available for persons coming to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the 5:00 P.M. Mass. The parking lot must be available for parishioners arriving for the 5:00 P.M. Mass.

### **Printed Programs**

Saint Patrick does not provide this service. If you wish to have a wedding program, the priest or deacon may be able to provide samples of programs. It is advisable to ask the priest or deacon who will witness your marriage vows to review them before it goes to print.

### **Wedding Rehearsal**

The priest or deacon who will witness your marriage vows will conduct a rehearsal with the entire wedding party within a few days of the wedding date. The rehearsal should take no more than forty-five minutes.

Please make sure that the wedding party is punctual so that the rehearsal may begin on time. If a wedding consultant has been employed, the duties of the consultant are limited in the Church.

### **Promptness**

Contrary to popular misconception – being late for your wedding is never fashionable. Rather, it is inconsiderate. Please inform all who are involved that both the rehearsal and the wedding celebration will begin on time.

### **Fees and Donations to Saint Patrick's Church**

#### ***Church Donation***

\$750 Use of Church

This donation contributes to the heating, cooling, and upkeep of the church building.

\$150 Livestream

If you would like to have the wedding livestreamed.

*(The priest or deacon receives no part of the church donations.)*

#### ***Music Fees***

*You are required to use our Music Minister - Maggie Hanson*

*The fees listed apply even if an outside organist is used.*

#### **Music Minister**

\$350 Wedding for either a wedding ceremony or wedding mass

Includes services of music minister and one rehearsal.

\$50 For each additional rehearsal, if needed.

***Music Fees (Continued)***

Cantor

\$150 Cantor for the ceremony without mass

\$200 Cantor for wedding mass

-Music minister will arrange for a cantor/soloist. If you provide the cantor he/she should meet with the organist to coordinate the music prior to the wedding.

-The cantor normally sings the Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation and the Ordinary of the mass, and any special solo pieces selected.

***Please note that only ONE check should be submitted for ALL fees, made payable to St. Patrick Church.***

For your convenience, the submission of all fees and documentation will take place at your final gathering with the priest. At that meeting you should have:

All required documentation

**One** check for all fees