

**ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

509 West Magnolia Avenue
Fort Worth, Texas 76104
(817) 923-1911

CONGRATULATIONS!

On behalf of the parishioners and staff of St. Mary of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church, I congratulate you on the occasion of your engagement and your forth-coming marriage in the Church. The union of husband and wife in Holy Matrimony is similar to the relationship between Christ and His Church, and it is a godly example to others. Consequently, the way of life you are about to enter is as beautiful as it is important.

We at St. Mary's are committed to assisting you in every way possible as you prepare for this new life as husband and wife. It is our prayer that this time of reflection will bring you closer to each other and closer to God who willed that you should be husband and wife. Further, it is our hopeful expectation that you will live out your married life here at St. Mary's, raising your children here, and serving God with us. Should you have a question or a need, please feel free to contact us at any point in your preparation.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Fr. John Perikomalayil, H.G.N,

Pastor

MARRIAGE PREPARATION AT ST. MARY'S

Marriage preparation in a Catholic parish is a process designed to bring the engaged couple to a deeper affection and appreciation for each other. Further, its purpose is to give them an informed understanding of the Church's teaching on marriage, and the rights and duties of husband and wife to each other, to their children, to the Church, and to society. At first glance, the process may seem complex; in fact, it is simple. It has only one aim—to bring you to the day of your wedding well prepared to enter married life.

These are the steps in the Marriage Preparation Process.

1. You will have an initial interview with the wedding coordinator/priest to begin paperwork and go over Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire. At this meeting you will be given all information required for your wedding. Here is a list of information you will receive along with a brief description of what is required:

a) **Below is list of the marriage preparation courses mandated for completion by the Bishop:**

- **Fully Engaged** – At your initial interview you will be given a Fully Engaged workbook. Fully Engaged is a program for engaged couples to help them learn more about the Sacrament of Marriage. It is a Catholic catechetical premarital inventory designed to help engaged couples solidify the foundation upon which they, together with Christ, will build their Sacrament of Marriage. The Fully Engaged Inventory will be sent to you by email within 24 - 48 hours after the 1st meeting. If you do not receive this email, please call the parish office. Once you have completed this Inventory, call the parish office to schedule your next meeting. **(It is advised that you finish the 1st 4 workbook topics prior to your 2nd meeting)**
- **NFP (Natural Family Planning)** - This course takes a minimum of 3 months and can be done in person or online. As a couple there are many factors to consider when selecting an NFP method. The website below gives brief overviews of each method. It is recommend that you read over them and visit the provided website for more information. <https://fwdioc.org/nfp-methods-instructors>. Once you have decided on a method you can register at this website. <https://fwdioc.org/natural-family-planning> Once your course is completed you will need to bring in the Certificate of Completion and turn it into the office.
- **Pre – Cana (Today, Tomorrow. & Always for Co- Validation)** - This is a 1 day or 2 weeknights onsite retreat that includes a series of talks and activities on topics such as: Marriage as a Sacrament, the Vows, Sexuality in the marriage as God planned it to be, Natural Family Planning and more. This course fills up fast so it is important that you sign up and register as soon as possible.

You can find more information and online courses and registration for the Pre- Cana Retreat and NFP classes at www.fwdioc.org/marriage-family-life.

b) Sacramental Records

- A copy of all sacramental records is required. The **Baptismal** or **Profession of Faith Records**, for Groom and/or Bride, if Catholic, must be issued within last 6 months with notations.
- The sacramental records must be turned in no later than 8 weeks prior to your wedding date and should be issued no later than 6 months prior to your wedding date.

c) Together For Life-

- This is the booklet that you will use to decide on your readings for your wedding ceremony. It contains all parts of the mass. It is important you keep up with this book. You will fill out the Selection Form at the end of this book and bring to your final meeting

d) Witness Affidavits

- As a couple, you will receive a total of 4 witness affidavit: 2 for the bride and 2 for the groom. Both the bride and groom will need to have them filled out and signed by either a family member or person you have known for 10+ years. You will turn these for the Priest to sign preferably by the 2nd meeting or by or no later than 8 weeks prior to your wedding date.

e) Marriage License

For couples who have never been married

- For couples who have never been married-A State Marriage license will need to be obtained no more than 90 days prior to wedding date and turned into the office no later than 6 weeks prior to the wedding date.

For couples who are civilly married

- For couples who are civilly married seeking co- validation- A copy of the original marriage license should be turned into the office no later than 6 weeks prior to wedding date.

- **For those Previously Married:**

For couples who were previously married and marriage has ended in divorce- You will need proof of Lack of Canonical Form(in case of a previous civil marriage) or a Decree of Nullity (in case of a previous Church marriage). If you do not have this you will need to locate your Divorce Decree and then contact to Terry Hostler at terry@stmarysftw.org and he will advise you how to proceed.

**At each step it is your responsibility
to arrange for your next appointment.**

At any point in during the Marriage Preparation, we are always here help.
Please do not hesitate to contact the parish secretary by calling the Parish office
at 817-923-1911 or you may email Elizabeth Soriano at
elizabeth@stmarysftw.org

What to Expect during the Marriage Preparation:

1. **After the 1st meeting (initial interview)**, please see the parish secretary to set your wedding & rehearsal date and time and pay the required deposit. You will also receive information regarding music options here at St. Mary's and it is advised you contact them as soon as possible so there are no scheduling conflicts and to discuss fees (please refer to the Music Fees Section on Page 7)
2. **At your 2nd meeting** you will either meet with the Priest or Sponsor Couple and will begin to go over the results of your Fully Engaged Inventory. **It is imperative that you complete the first 4 topics in the workbook prior to attending this meeting.** The Fully Engaged preparation will continue until all portions of survey are completed and reviewed. This can take up to 4-5 meetings at most and each meeting will be at least 1 hour long. You will need your workbooks and required topics completed prior to each meeting. It is also recommended that you and your fiancée have scheduled your Pre Cana Retreat and NFP classes by this meeting or the next. **The Fully Engaged Preparation, Pre- Cana Retreat, and NFP Classes are required for you to attend and are mandated by our Bishop.**
3. **On your 3rd meeting** you will continue with Fully Engaged Survey material. It is also advised that you bring your required sacramental records and any certificates of completion for Pre Cana and NFP Classes. You will also need to be picking readings from your book Together for Life.
4. **Your 4th meeting** with the Priest you will complete the Fully Engaged Preparation and a certificate of completion will be given to you to take with you to the Marriage License office for a discounted License fee.

PLEASE NOTE - You must obtain your marriage license from the State of Texas **at least 6 weeks** before your wedding date and it must be turned into the parish office no later than 6 weeks prior to your wedding date. If you do not have a marriage license, you cannot be married by the Church. You can contact the County Clerk for Tarrant County at (817) 884-1195 for more information.

Prior to your last meeting all course completion paperwork and sacramental records should be completed and turned in. If you have not already done so, it should be in the parish office no later than 6 weeks prior to the wedding date

5. **The Final meeting** will need to be scheduled no later than 2 weeks prior to your wedding date. At this meeting you will meet with the rehearsal coordinator and Father Jaison. You will need to have your readings picked out from the **"Together for Life"** book given to you at the 1st meeting and bring these with you. You will go over these readings with the rehearsal coordinator and the Priest. You will also go over the rehearsal time and how the rehearsal will proceed. All the details of your wedding will be finalized at this meeting.

REHEARSALS –

The date of your rehearsal is most likely the day before your wedding. It is imperative you and your wedding party are on time for rehearsal. Only 1 hour is allotted for your rehearsal. If you are more than 15 minutes late, your rehearsal will be canceled and will not be rescheduled. All of the bridal party and anyone participating in the wedding ceremony (readers, bridal party, ushers, etc) should attend the rehearsal. If you have a personal wedding coordinator, please understand he/she is not allowed to

As a reminder, Before receiving the Sacrament of Marriage, you are required to go to **Confession**. Confessions are held on every Wednesday at 6:30PM and on Saturday at 3:00pm or you can schedule a different time with Fr. John during the week. Please do not wait until the last minute. **It is advised you schedule a confession 1-2 weeks prior to your wedding date.**

NOTE: No confessions will be heard on the day of rehearsal.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

A Church wedding is a sacramental act. Your marriage is a sacrament. Through this sacrament the grace of God is bestowed upon the couple to make them husband and wife. The gift of this grace is the central focus of the wedding and everything done in the wedding must reflect this reality. The following are guidelines to help you as you plan your wedding day.

Photography—

Due to our busy liturgical schedule, time for photographs on the day of the wedding is very limited. It is important that you make a thoughtful selection of the photos you want in advance and follow these guidelines carefully . . .

1. You will have no more than 30 minutes for photos following the wedding—* Please note: The Celebrant (Priest) will take photographs immediately after the Mass with the couple.
2. During the wedding, pictures may be taken from the *rear* of the Church, or from the left side and with *available light* only—that means, ***no flash***.
3. Once the wedding begins the photographer must remain stationary off to the side. Not at any point during the ceremony is the photographer to be in the aisle.

Videography—

1. The wedding may be “videoed” by setting up a stationary camera. No roving camera man is allowed!
2. Only available light may be used.(**NO FLASH!!**)

Flowers—

The following displays of **fresh flowers** may be used—(**artificial flowers are never allowed**)

- a. A spray of fresh flowers placed on the floor directly in front of the free-standing altar (Low altar)
- b. Two arrangements of fresh flowers placed on the “retable,” the shelf above the high altar—
- c. Only Bows or fresh flowers placed on the ends of the pews up to the 8th row. **No tape or adhesive may be used to attach the arrangements to the pews.**
- d. A bouquet of fresh flowers for you to place on St. Mary’s altar (this is optional).
- e. No runners or Flower arrangements/décor in the aisle as this is a trip hazard.

“Throwing” Rice, Bird Seed, Confetti, Blowing Bubbles or Jumping the Broom is not permitted due to the risk of someone slipping and falling. Please save these for your Reception Hall.

Flower Girls and Ring Bearers

Flower Girls and Ring Bearers are welcome. It is best if they are at least 6 years of age. Children who are younger often become frightened when it comes time for them to process into the Church. Flower girls **may not** throw flower petals in the aisle.

The “Unity” Candle

Unity candles are not used at St. Mary’s and are not permitted in Catholic Weddings. The prime symbol of your unity as a newlywed husband and wife is the marriage vows you have just exchanged. (However, a Unity Candle works beautifully as the centerpiece at your reception!)

The Arras and Lasso/Rosary

These traditions are permitted if desired. Please let us know if you would like these employed into your wedding ceremony

- **Arras** - These should be given to the Acolyte prior to the ceremony
- **Lasso/Rosary** – This should be given to the Acolyte prior to the ceremony. The Sponsors/Padrinos of the Lasso will come up and place it on the couple when instructed. The sponsors/Padrinos should be present at the Wedding Rehearsal.

**We would like to thank you for choosing St. Mary of the Assumption
Roman Catholic Church for your wedding ceremony.**

We hope your experience has been exceptional and memorable!

**We are always excited to hear feedback on how we can improve your
experience, so please don’t hesitate to share this with us by emailing**

administrator@stmarysftw.org.

Fees for Weddings are as follows:

\$690.00 for Parishioners (music is not included) *This fee is for parishioners who have been registered and active and have contributed \$1000 annually.*

\$820.00 for Parishioners (music not included) *This fee is for parishioners who are registered and have contributed **less than** \$1000 annually*

\$1,000.00 for Parishioners (music not included) *This fee is for non –parishioners.*

There is a **\$140.00 non-refundable deposit** required to set a wedding date and all fees must be paid **two weeks prior** to event. No exceptions.

Changing Wedding Date- *If the need to change a wedding date arises, this deposit is transferrable but only 1 date change is permitted.*

Music & Fees – Musicians must be contacted immediately after deposit for the wedding date is paid. If this is not done so music may not be available for your wedding.

All Music must be approved by our Director of Music. There is a list of music available on our website at <https://www.stmarysftw.org/marriage-preparation>.

Outside musicians are not permitted. The only exception to this is, if our musicians are not available on the date of your event. In such case, the substitute musician must be approved by the Pastor.

*** Mariachi Bands are NOT allowed during Weddings.**

*** Pre-recorded music is NOT allowed during Weddings.**

Certain music is not appropriate during Mass and you will be asked to save it for your reception.

Contact information for musicians:

English - **Organist - Van Bui**– bvan@stmarysftw.org

Fee: \$250.00 for mass, w/ Prelude \$350.00

Cantor – Cassie Reyes cassie@stmarysftw.org

Fee: \$125 for mass, w/ Prelude \$150.00

Spanish- **Spanish Choir David Garcia** (682) 551-8729 dmsgarcia@att.net

Fee: \$200 for mass