



STAGES OF MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Congratulations: You have already accomplished the first step in preparing to celebrate your marriage. You reserved a place in the monthly marriage preparation class at least nine to twelve months before the intended ceremony and, if you are planning on being married at Most Blessed Sacrament, you have reserved a place in the second monthly class which covers wedding liturgy and the place of music within the ceremony.

The Marriage Preparation Class is conducted by the Wedding Coordinator. She will familiarize you with the regulations set forth by this Diocese and by Most Blessed Sacrament Parish regarding the Sacrament of Marriage. One class will conclude with the marriage inventory Fully Engaged to be completed individually. The Fully Engaged will help you, and the sponsor couple assigned to you, understand the areas in your relationship which you will want to enrich during the period of preparation.

The Ceremony Class, the second monthly meeting, will cover the wedding liturgy and the role of music in the ceremony and a tour of the church. They will help you prepare for the day of your marriage vows.

Pre-Marriage Preparation Programs are required. Couples participate in all three of the following programs.

1. Married couples in our parish received training for Mentor Couple Ministry. They assist the engaged couple to come to know each other better and learn to communicate well with each other. The assigned mentor couple will contact the engaged couple; a meeting will be arranged by the mentor couple. Normally there are three or four meetings of two hours each. Couples find this experience quite helpful in developing their relationship and their ability to communicate with each other.

2. A Pre-Cana Conference is a one-day program. The day begins at 9:00am and ends at 4:30pm. Experts among qualified married couples and professionals deal with such things as finances, budgeting, the sacramentality of marriage, sexuality in marriage and other practical areas of concern for engaged couples.

3. Natural Family Planning

4. A Follow-up Interview with a priest or deacon will bring together all of the earlier preparations – the two classes, the programs described above, and the mentor couple review of the Fully Engaged Inventory.

- Civil permission for the Church's minister to witness a marriage in Texas must be obtained from a county courthouse in the State of Texas. This marriage license should be given to the priest or deacon at the time of their meeting. The license is only valid for 90 days after issuance and can be used only after 72 hours from issuance (a "waiting period" of three days).
- The Catholic parties must have a copy of their baptismal record, issued within the past SIX MONTHS. This must be obtained from the parish of baptism. When writing for the record, please indicate that you want it "with notations". This will indicate your freedom to receive the Sacrament of Marriage.
- A certificate of attendance at Pre-Cana is also required along with a certificate of completion for NFP.

All requirements, including the follow-up interview, must be completed 6 weeks prior to the wedding. If the wedding is taking place outside of MBS it must be completed no less than 8 weeks prior to the wedding date.





BUILDING USE PRIORITIES AND GUIDELINES

It should be realized that building priorities are somewhat flexible because all contingencies cannot be foreseen. Common sense and reason must prevail. As an active parish and community, we allow and provide for many separate and diverse ministries and functions which could meet concurrently. In particular, the kitchen can and may be allotted to several groups at one time, if circumstances permit. Following are some guidelines:

- ❖ Most Blessed Sacrament's buildings are "No Smoking" facilities.
- ❖ No parish-owned equipment or supplies may be removed from the premises.
- ❖ Drink and food are NOT PERMITTED in the church.
- ❖ The foyer of the church sanctuary is part of the church itself. Hence, it is subject to the same regulations as for the church, sacristies, chapel, and indeed, all other rooms in that part of the facility which are part of the church facility.

Other Useful Information

1. If the bride and her party wish to use some room other than the Bride's Room, adjacent to the foyer, for dressing and preparing themselves, this can be arranged at the time reservations are made for the church and other rooms in the facility.
2. Please ensure that fees for the musicians and facilities are paid at your meeting with our accompanist.
3. A room is available to be used by the groom and his party while waiting for the ceremony to begin.
4. Since the aisles of the church and the floor of the chapel are carpeted, there is no need for an aisle runner.
5. Only one hour is allotted for a wedding rehearsal unless other arrangements are made. The rehearsal will be conducted by our Wedding Coordinator.

Some people, however, who will work with you in making your marriage day special, are professionals who receive their wages from the work they do for you. Fees for these services have been mentioned earlier. You are asked to make these arrangements with these professionals and the fees they charge and to meet these obligations before the wedding rehearsal, just as you do with the florist, photographer and other wedding ceremony professionals.



THE WEDDING LITURGY AND MUSIC

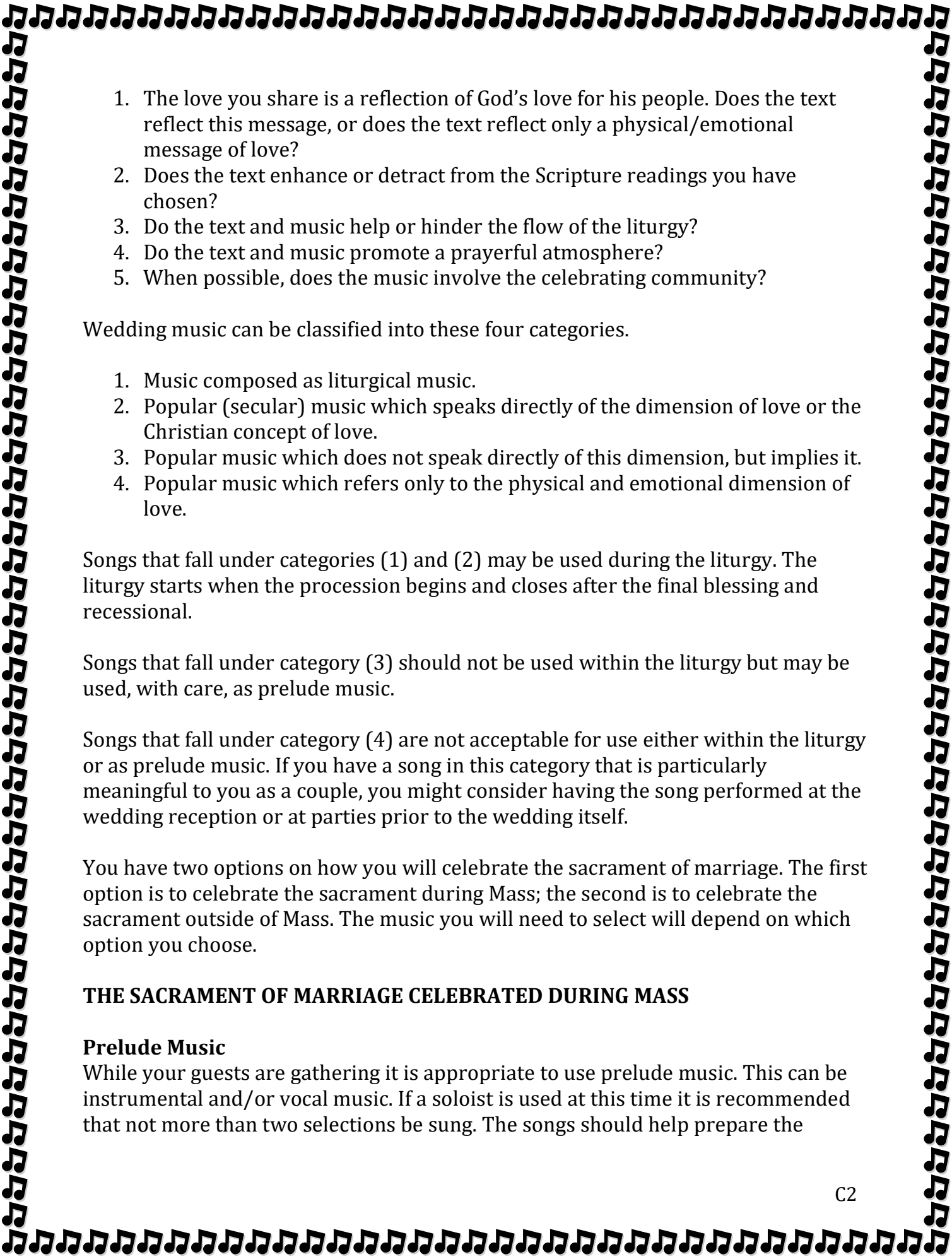
Planning your wedding is a most exciting time. There are so many details that will require your attention. One of the most important is planning the liturgy and the music that will be a part of that liturgy. In order to make your choices easier we offer the following information.

You will make a commitment during the wedding liturgy to love one another as God loves us. Your love for one another will be a reflection of God's love toward His people. Within the liturgy you seek God's blessing and help in your married life while offering honor, praise and thanksgiving to Him. The music selected should contribute to and foster the sacramental nature of this celebration. The music should reflect the reverence and dignity befitting the Sacrament of Marriage and the liturgy.

Music is not a separate entity that is "plugged" into various "spots". Rather, it is an integral part of the liturgy that performs a liturgical function. It should help unify, not hinder, the flow of the liturgy. Music should promote an atmosphere of prayer for those gathered to celebrate with you.

Vatican II Council called the people to full, active participation in celebrating the liturgy. Consequently, there are several sections of the liturgy in which the people are entitled to participate, whether the part is sung or recited. The friends and relatives you have invited are not merely spectators at an "event". They have come to share your joy, to be involved, to witness and to pray with you.

Therefore the text of the songs you choose will be of major importance and deserves careful consideration. The following list is a list of questions to ask yourself in order to insure your selection of the appropriate music.

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1. The love you share is a reflection of God's love for his people. Does the text reflect this message, or does the text reflect only a physical/emotional message of love?
 2. Does the text enhance or detract from the Scripture readings you have chosen?
 3. Do the text and music help or hinder the flow of the liturgy?
 4. Do the text and music promote a prayerful atmosphere?
 5. When possible, does the music involve the celebrating community?

Wedding music can be classified into these four categories.

1. Music composed as liturgical music.
2. Popular (secular) music which speaks directly of the dimension of love or the Christian concept of love.
3. Popular music which does not speak directly of this dimension, but implies it.
4. Popular music which refers only to the physical and emotional dimension of love.

Songs that fall under categories (1) and (2) may be used during the liturgy. The liturgy starts when the procession begins and closes after the final blessing and recessional.

Songs that fall under category (3) should not be used within the liturgy but may be used, with care, as prelude music.

Songs that fall under category (4) are not acceptable for use either within the liturgy or as prelude music. If you have a song in this category that is particularly meaningful to you as a couple, you might consider having the song performed at the wedding reception or at parties prior to the wedding itself.

You have two options on how you will celebrate the sacrament of marriage. The first option is to celebrate the sacrament during Mass; the second is to celebrate the sacrament outside of Mass. The music you will need to select will depend on which option you choose.

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE CELEBRATED DURING MASS

Prelude Music

While your guests are gathering it is appropriate to use prelude music. This can be instrumental and/or vocal music. If a soloist is used at this time it is recommended that not more than two selections be sung. The songs should help prepare the

community for the celebration of the liturgy. The Ave Maria may be sung while the mothers are being seated but is not appropriate for use during the liturgy.

Processional/Recessional

Normally a processional is accompanied by the congregation singing a hymn of praise. Because the attention of the congregation is drawn to the action of the wedding procession, an instrumental and/or organ solo is preferred.

However, if you wish to involve the congregation in an opening hymn of praise, it could be sung when the procession reaches the altar.

Wedding marches such as those of Wagner and Mendelssohn were not composed for use within the liturgy. In keeping with the principles of good liturgy from Music in Catholic Worship, these marches will not be used.

Responsorial Psalm

Ideally the responsorial psalm should be sung and should involve the congregation on the refrain. The soloist can serve as the cantor, leading the people on the refrain and singing the verses alone. Musical settings for all the psalms are available. Our accompanist can assist you in selecting.

Alleluia before the Gospel

The Alleluia is an acclamation; and if used, it is always to be sung. The soloist can serve as cantor, leading the congregation.

Preparation of the Gifts

Because of the limited amount of time, a short song or instrumental on organ or piano would be best.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

As previously mentioned, certain parts of the Mass are to be sung or recited by the entire congregation.

The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer can be sung if it involves the whole congregation. However, since full participation is desired, it would be better to recite it. Many people might feel uncomfortable trying to sing something if the music is unfamiliar.

Lamb of God is sung and led by the cantor.

Communion Song

A communion song can either be sung by the soloist or can involve the congregation.

Recessional

The recessional follows the final blessing. As with the processional, an instrumental and/or vocal solo is preferred.

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE OUTSIDE OF MASS

The instructions are the same as for marriage celebrated in Mass as far as prelude music, processional, responsorial psalm, alleluia and recessional.

As a couple you have a serious responsibility to select music that fosters the Christian concept of marriage. It is important that you contact Ann Wood at least two months prior to your scheduled wedding date.

At that time Ann will schedule a meeting with you to assist in the selection of music, recommend and schedule any soloists or instrumentalists that you might need, and tell you the fees for the musicians that you might want to hire as instrumentalists or vocalists.

Before your meeting with Ann decide which format of liturgy you will use and which readings you will have. A member of the wedding ministry will have helped you with it by this time. If you have particular songs you want sung, that you think are appropriate, please bring copies to that meeting. All music will need to be in compliance with copyright laws and approved by Ann.

The liturgy is a complex of signs expressed by living human beings. The music, therefore, should be "live." While recorded music might be used to advantage outside the liturgy, it should not be used within the liturgy.

Some exceptions to the principle can be had such as a prerecorded sound track combined with live voices and/or instruments to aid in the musical celebration. (Liturgical Music Today, follow-up document to Music in Catholic Worship.)





MUSICIANS AND FEES

The following members of the parish are usually employed as musicians for weddings.

If you want to hire them in their area of experience,
they will be happy to work with you at your wedding.
Their charges are a contract with you and not the parish.

*However, if the person is employed by the parish, the check would need to be payable to Most Blessed Sacrament.

Organist/Pianist	Ann Wood	817-938-3144
Fee: \$250		

Vocalist	*Sarah Moberley	210-793-2757
Fee: \$200	Mark Alarcon	214-790-1232
	Ellen Timberlake Volz	817-277-0637
	*Lisa Wangler	817-994-0054
	Sallie Magallanez	817-881-0853

Please text or make sure you leave a message. Make sure you leave your name, number & wedding date.

If the pianist or organist must practice more than one time
with the vocalist, there is an additional fee of
\$50 for each rehearsal.

All music to be used must be approved by the Parish Director of Liturgy.

Other Fees:

Priest: \$200
Deacon: \$150
Altar Server: \$50



FLORAL AND DECORATION POLICY (ENGAGED COUPLE)

1. Give the Florist's Copy of this policy to your florist so they can keep it and refer to it.
2. It is recommended that the florist visit the church before the wedding to become familiar with the church and setting. This will allow for a better idea of the placement of flowers, candelabra and decoration within the church. The visit should also include locating the bride-to-be and her party's dressing areas and the church office.
3. If flowers are placed on the floor in front of the altar, they should not extend past the top of the altar. Flowers for the wedding party may include silk or silk mixed with fresh flowers.
4. Open candles may not be used.
5. Nothing shall be pinned, nailed, taped, or wired to the altar or church furnishings, including the pews. Pew clips or ribbon loops only may be used. No tape on wood.
6. All sanctuary furnishings must remain in place.
7. Seasonal decorations, including banners or other liturgical items, shall not be moved for any reason.
8. Watertight containers are to be used for flower arrangements; any liquid spills should be cleaned up immediately.
9. The florist is responsible for cleaning up anything dropped from the flowers. They must leave the church in the same manner in which they found it.
10. Spraying or painting of any flowers is to be done outside the church building.
11. Flowers should be delivered one hour prior to the celebration. It is suggested that a member of the wedding party be on hand for the delivery.
12. The church staff is not responsible for the placement of, or any loss or damage to, wedding decorations.
13. Flower containers, stands, candles and all other decorations including pew bows must be picked up immediately after all pictures have been taken, not to exceed 30 minutes after the ceremony.
14. Rice, bird seed, flower petals or confetti are not to be used inside or outside the church buildings. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS .

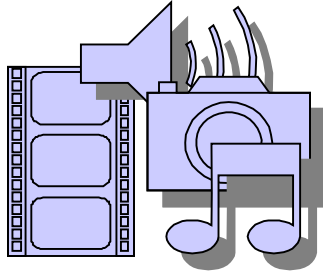
All of the above statements apply to the chapel as well as the church sanctuary.



FLORAL AND DECORATION POLICY (FLORIST COPY)

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PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOTAPING (ENGAGED COUPLE'S COPY)

We recognize the value of wedding photographs as a lasting remembrance and want to be cooperative while keeping uppermost in mind the necessity for maintaining the dignity and sacredness of the occasion. We ask that the photographer be familiar with a Catholic wedding ceremony as it is conducted at Most Blessed Sacrament. Photographs may be made:

- A. Before the ceremony in the areas where the bride-to-be and her party dress.
- B. Of the entrance procession
- C. The leaving of the altar in recession
- D. After the ceremony in the space in which the wedding took place.

We recognize that photographs taken at the entrance and recession might be taken with a flash or other supplementary lighting, but encourage these to be done toward the rear of the church and not in the altar area.

The chapel or church is reserved for the wedding itself. Any use of the chapel or church before the wedding must be coordinated with the Parish Wedding Coordinator so as not to interfere with other use of that area. Photographs after the ceremony are to be completed before the reception and within 30 minutes after the ceremony ends.

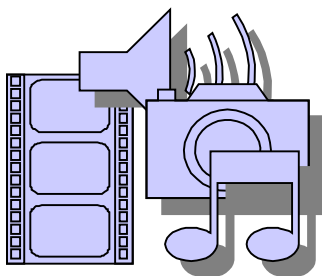
If you wish to include the priest, deacon, altar servers or other ministers in any of the photographs following the ceremony, you are requested to do those first. It is also a good idea to tell these people that you would like them to be included so they will be available.

Videotaping (without lights) may take place during the ceremony from the side or the back of the church only.

Photographers are not to stand on the pews or furniture in the church. The actions of the photographer should not detract from the ceremony nor interfere with it.

Wedding guests and family members with cameras should be requested to wait until the guests are dismissed to take photographs and then only after checking with the official photographer so that he/she can do his or her work within the time allotted.

Non-flash photographs may be taken during the ceremony.



PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOTAPING (PHOTOGRAPHER'S COPY)

We recognize the value of wedding photographs as a lasting remembrance and want to be cooperative while keeping uppermost in mind the necessity for maintaining the dignity and sacredness of the occasion. We ask that the photographer be familiar with a Catholic wedding ceremony as it is conducted at Most Blessed Sacrament. Photographs may be made:

- E. Before the ceremony in the areas where the bride-to-be and her party dress.
- F. Of the entrance procession
- G. The leaving of the altar in recession
- H. After the ceremony in the space in which the wedding took place.

We recognize that photographs taken at the entrance and recession might be taken with a flash or other supplementary lighting, but encourage these to be done toward the rear of the church and not in the altar area.

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HONORING ETHNIC AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS

Lazo - The lazo is an Hispanic custom. A large double rosary made from flowers, glass or other precious material is blessed by the presider. Immediately after the general intercessions, it is placed over the heads of the couple (resting on their shoulders) by another couple who exemplifies Christian marriage in the eyes of the bride and groom. It symbolizes lifelong binding and calls them to imitate the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph as the example for their lives. Like a lasso it joins them together. It is removed after the distribution of the Eucharist to the people.

Arras- The exchange of coins (arras) is also an Hispanic custom. The 13 coins are brought by the groom, blessed by the presider and presented by the groom to the bride. The presentation symbolizes the groom's willingness to provide the material necessities for the newly formed family. In accepting the arras, the bride receives this gift from her husband and promises on her part that everything given will be used with care for the benefit of the home and family. This exchange is then done by the bride to the groom as both share equal responsibility to the marriage & family.

Options from your particular culture which you wish to include in the ceremony can be discussed with Director of Liturgy & will then be discussed and approved by the presider.



ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL WEDDING?

When one of the parties is not of the Catholic religion, or baptized a Catholic and now inactive in the practice of the religion, we ask you to respect the role the Catholic Church plays in your life. In the talks with the sponsor couple, as well as the priest or deacon, we encourage you to discuss any questions you might have about the Catholic Church, especially as it will affect your married years together. The Catholic partner will be asked to make a commitment of living out her/his Catholic faith personally and with children born of that marriage. It is important, we believe, that everyone have an opportunity to be a member of God's people through the Sacrament of Baptism. Therefore, the Catholic spouse is asked to promise not only to continue living out his or her commitment to faith, but also to pass it on to children born of their marriage by seeing that they receive instruction in the Catholic religion and have the children baptized.

2. CAN WE BE MARRIED IN ANOTHER PARISH OR IN A NON-CATHOLIC CHURCH?

Yes, but we encourage couple to be married in the parish church of one of the parties. We are willing to provide the pre-marriage preparation as well as cooperate with the non-Catholic's minister in this area. We will send the needed documents to the proper pastor where the wedding will take place. Scheduling with the pastor who would receive your vows is the responsibility of the couple and would take place at the same time as the preparation is taking place with us.

3. CAN A PRIEST FROM OUTSIDE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH MARRY US AT MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT?

Yes, please let the priest or deacon at church know before making arrangements. Special documents from Diocese of the presider will be need to be completed 30 days before the wedding.

4. MUST WE CELEBRATE WITH A MASS?

Catholic couples are encouraged to celebrate their marriage at a Nuptial Mass. In the case of an interdenominational marriage, we recommend a wedding ceremony “outside of Mass” so that both parties and all of their friends may be fully included in the celebration.

5. IS THERE A MINIMUM AGE?

Yes, the minimum age is 18, provided the person has been out school for one year. In case of a young person requesting marriage, the priest is required to refer the matter to the bishop’s office for permission to witness the couple’s vows.

6. WHAT IF THERE IS A PREVIOUS MARRIAGE FOR EITHER PARTY?

If either one of the parties has been married previously, proof of freedom to marry both through certified decree of civil divorce AND Church annulment, or a certified death certificate must be obtained before the Catholic Church, through a minister, may witness your marriage vows. Please speak to the Director of Liturgy as soon as possible to get any paperwork and/or decrees obtained at least 30 days before the wedding.

