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**THE CHURCH OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT**
The Sacrament of Marriage
An Information Guide for Weddings

WHAT IS MARRIAGE

"The marriage covenant, by which a man and a woman form with each other an intimate communion of life and love, has been founded and endowed with its own special laws by the Creator. By its very nature, it is ordered to the good of the people, as well as the generation and education of children. Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of a sacrament." - Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1660

These reflections by the Church point to the deep and lasting significance of the step you are taking in your lives as a couple, as a family, and as part of the Church. We look forward to the celebration of your wedding at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament.

INITIAL ARRANGEMENTS

To prepare properly for your wedding and for the vocation of married life, please contact the parish rectory at least six months prior to your intended wedding date. The period serves both as a time of "engagement" for you as a couple and gives the parish the necessary lead-time to facilitate your preparation for marriage and the wedding ceremony itself. One of the parish priests will meet with you to begin the process of preparation for marriage here. Ordinarily, both members of the couple should be present for the initial and subsequent meetings with the priest. Obviously the very nature of marriage as a life-long, adult commitment, requires that arrangements with the Church should not be delegated to parents, wedding coordinators, or others assisting with wedding plans and details. Only when you as a couple have met personally with one of the parish priests will a definite wedding date be set. At the initial meeting, the priest will also explain the legal and other requirements which must be fulfilled in order for you to be married at the Church.

WEDDING DATES & TIMES

Weddings are generally celebrated at the Church on Saturdays at 11am, 1pm, and 3pm. Other dates and times may be available after discussion with one of the parish priests. The liturgical calendar and other scheduled events in the Church may also have to be considered when settling a wedding date or time.

DOCUMENTS

At one of your meetings with the parish priest, he will conduct a formal interview called "The Matrimonial Investigation" with each of you individually. The purpose of the interview is to record some essential biographical information and to confirm your freedom and readiness to marry in the Catholic Church. During the time between the initial meeting with the priest and the actual wedding, "Affidavits of Freedom" signed by relatives or others who can testify to your freedom to marry may also be required. All Catholics who are preparing for marriage must also provide a recently issued baptismal certificate from your Church. You can obtain this by contacting directly the parish where you were baptized. Baptized and non-Catholics must provide equivalent proof of Christian baptism in the form of a church certificate or other official documents. For the wedding itself, the City of New York requires a current civil marriage license.

Finally, if you are planning to be married in a parish outside the Archdiocese of New York but plan to do your marriage preparation here, a transfer fee of \$25 is requested. A parish priest will prepare the necessary paperwork and mail them. If you are planning to be married out of the country, the transfer fee is \$150.

PERMISSIONS & DISPENSATIONS

In the case of a marriage between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic or between a Catholic and an unbaptized person, a permission of dispensation from the Archbishop is needed. To apply for this, the Catholic party will be required to sign a short declaration, in the presence of his/ her fiancé, reaffirming his/her faith in Jesus Christ and intentions "to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church," and also promise "to do all in my power to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and reared as Catholics." The priest who is preparing you for marriage will discuss this and any other requirements with you.

CHURCH FEES

- PARISHIONERS \$500
- NON - PARISHIONERS \$1000

Parishioner means that you are a registered, contributing member of the parish for at least one year prior to the date of the wedding. All checks should be payable to The Church of the Blessed Sacrament.

MUSIC FEE

\$550

As soon as your date has been scheduled, please contact the Director of Music Ministries, Jason Roberts at JRoberts@blessedsacramentnyc.org. All fees are due one week prior to the wedding.

Please know that we follow strict guidelines as to what music is permitted during the wedding ceremony or Mass. As per Archdiocesan regulations, only Catholic Liturgical music is allowed.

FLOWERS

Floral arrangements for the wedding are welcome. They should be of such a nature and size as to enhance the beauty of the ceremony without overshadowing the wedding or the altar. Please consult with the priest well in advance regarding any floral arrangements or other decorations that may be in place in the church on the date of your wedding.

No tape, tacks, staples or nails are to be used to attach floral arrangements to the pews. For safety reasons, no throwing of rice, flower petals, confetti, or birdseed is allowed either in the church or on the steps or sidewalk.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographers should consult with the priest before the beginning of the ceremony. They may not stand in the sanctuary area or use any additional fixed lighting.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

Sometime prior to the actual wedding, the priest who will preside at the ceremony will meet with you to help you plan the wedding in accordance with the appropriate liturgical norms. You may also wish to schedule a rehearsal with the priest during the day or evening prior to the wedding. It is generally desirable that as many members of the wedding party as possible be present for this rehearsal - especially those who have been chosen to proclaim the scripture readings and petitions of the General Intercessions. To avoid conflicts with other scheduled events in the church, it is prudent to schedule the date and time of the rehearsal as far in advance as possible.

To avoid any embarrassment the day of the wedding, we require that you bring the license to the rehearsal.