

## WEDDING GUIDELINES

ST. MARY'S VISITATION

Catholic Parish † Elm Grove, WI

## Introduction

Congratulations on your engagement! It is a great joy when two people commit themselves to lifelong love and fidelity in the Sacrament of Marriage! This booklet is designed to help you as you move through your engagement and prepare to be married at St. Mary's Visitation Parish.

Marriage is one of the seven sacraments of the Church. It was instituted by Christ to convey particular graces to those who celebrate the sacrament, enabling them to live out their love for each other in mutual, lasting fidelity. Marriage is also a sacramental symbol of the love Christ has for His Church—a love which is permanent, faithful and fruitful.

You will find in this booklet most of the information you need to know about the preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage, as well as for your wedding.



## Marriage Preparation Checklist

Couple: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial Fee Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Sacrament of Marriage Class: \_\_\_\_\_

In Perfect Union Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage Ritual Overview Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Baptismal Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Baptismal Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor Couple: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Engaged Enrichment Certificate: \_\_\_\_\_

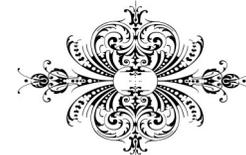
Natural Family Planning Workshop: \_\_\_\_\_

Director of Music Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Wrap-Up Meeting with Priest: \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage License Obtained: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Fees Paid: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Wedding Fees**

### ***Marriage Fee & Deposit***

\$100.00 (Made payable to St. Mary's Visitation Parish)

Paid at the beginning of the marriage preparation process.

### ***Stipend***

\$75.00 (Made payable to St. Mary's Visitation Parish)

Paid at the rehearsal.

### ***Director of Music***

\$250.00 (Made payable to the Director of Music)

Paid at the rehearsal.

### ***Cantor***

\$125.00 (Made payable to the cantor)

Paid at the rehearsal.

### ***Sacristan***

\$50.00 (Made payable in cash)

Paid at the rehearsal.

### ***Altar Servers (Two)***

\$25.00 Each (Made payable in cash)

Paid at the rehearsal.

*Please note that a gift to the priest at your wedding*

*of \$150—\$250 is also customary.*

## **Scheduling your wedding**

We recommend calling the parish as soon as possible to begin planning a wedding date. Scheduling the date requires coordination between the couple to be married, the priest or deacon who will witness the wedding and the schedule of the parish. The Parish Secretary will be your initial contact and will help you to select a tentative date and then will coordinate with the priest or deacon to see if they are available. If your wedding is to take place during a Mass, a priest will witness your marriage. If your wedding is to take place outside of a Mass a deacon will witness your marriage. As soon as the availability of a priest or deacon is set, the Parish Secretary will notify you and the submitting of a non-refundable deposit officially confirms the date. If there are more than one request for the same date, the couple with the deposit in first is given preference for that date.

Please note, that the Archdiocese of Milwaukee requires at least six months between the beginning of marriage preparation and the wedding. St. Mary's dates these six months from the formal beginning of preparation at the Sacrament of Marriage Class to the day of the wedding.

## Preparation Process

After the date for your wedding is officially scheduled the parish priest will contact you to begin the preparation process. Scheduling for the various aspects of preparation are the responsibility of the couple—please make sure you are keeping track of where you are in the process and what steps are next.

**Sacrament of Marriage Class** – This class is the first step in your preparation. There you will learn about the Church’s understanding of marriage and the preparation process will be outlined in detail. Please see our website for upcoming dates and times and to register.

**Marriage Compendium** - This overview of the sacrament, issued by the bishops of Wisconsin, is required reading and should be completed as soon as possible.

**Marriage Ritual Overview** - This booklet reviews the Marriage Ritual and outlines the theology of marriage using it.

**Sponsor Couple** – As part of the marriage preparation process you will be assigned to a parish couple that will discuss marriage and your relationship, identifying strengths in your relationship and helping to discuss any concerns which may be present. You will meet at least twice with the couple, the

the side of the pews should be attached using either a removable hook or with wire.

### *Photographer*

As we are sure you would like to preserve the memories of your wedding with pictures and / or a video, photographers are welcome to be present for your wedding. Photographers may use flash photography at the procession and the recession, but are to refrain from using flash photography at all other parts of the liturgy. Also, they should refrain from entering the sanctuary, though they may use the choir loft at the discretion of the musician who is playing for your wedding. The same guidelines apply for those who are filming a video.

### *Guest Priests or Deacons*

Priests or deacons who are friends of the bride and / or groom are welcome to witness your marriage at St. Mary’s Visitation Parish or to be present for it. Please notify the Parish Secretary if this is the case when you schedule your wedding, as proper paperwork needs to be collected and filed.



### *The Wedding Party*

At a wedding there should always be a Best Man and Maid-of-Honor who serve as the official witnesses to the marriage. If you would like more couples to be in your wedding they are certainly welcome to be there. However, any wedding parties that are larger than six couples (including the Best Man and Maid-of-Honor) become difficult to manage, so we would respectfully request that there be no more than six couples.

### *Ushers*

Ushers are an important component of helping a wedding to begin on time and to run smoothly. We ask that two ushers be available and also attend the wedding rehearsal.

### *Appropriate Dress*

Dresses for either the bride or bridesmaids should be modest and becoming. Dresses that are short, strapless or excessively tight are not appropriate for Christian worship.

### *Flowers*

Please note that flowers can be placed in the sanctuary of the church, but not on the altar nor any place that would disrupt the movements of the liturgy. Also, flowers which are already present in the sanctuary should be left in place. Flowers can be placed on the side of the pews, but must not be attached using adhesives or anything else that would cause damage to the wood. Any flowers placed on

first session will include the taking of the FOCCUS inventory and the further session(s) will include a discussion of the inventory.

Engaged Enrichment Day – This day functions under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. You will be given a set of dates and locations to choose from. This day includes an overview of marriage and a chance to hear from couples who will share their experiences with you.

Natural Family Planning Workshop—This workshop, offered by the Archdiocese, focuses in on a proper understanding of marital intimacy and the fruitfulness to which marriage calls the couple.

Baptismal Certificates—A recently issued (within six months) copy of your baptismal certificate is needed for your wedding file.

Wrap-Up Meeting – After these steps are completed contact the priest or the deacon who will witness your marriage to set up a final meeting. Due to the demands of the parish's schedule, plan to meet with the priest during parish office hours which may require you to take off of work. They will discuss what you have learned during your time of preparation, fill out official paperwork and plan the wedding liturgy, with the exception of the music (see following page).



*The Marriage of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph*

## **The Wedding Liturgy**

The sacramental liturgy is an exercise of the Church and because of that is governed by the marriage rituals of the Church.

### *Music*

The parish Director of Music will help you to select appropriate music for the celebration of your wedding. If an instrumentalist is requested, she will contract with them on behalf of the couple. Please note that outside musicians can not be used at a wedding at St. Mary's. Please contact the Director of Music through the parish offices no more than ten months before your wedding and no fewer than three months before your wedding.

### *Traditional Latin Mass (Extraordinary Form)*

Pope Benedict XVI gave all Catholics the freedom to receive the sacraments according to the traditional Roman Rite as in force in 1962. Couples being married at St. Mary's can request the traditional marriage rites of the Church which consist of the traditional marriage service followed by the celebration of a Traditional Latin Mass. Please make this request known at the time of either scheduling your wedding or at the Sacrament of Marriage class, as a slightly different form of preparation for the wedding itself is followed.

### *Order of Worship*

An Order of Worship for the wedding will be provided to the couple by St. Mary's.

### *Rehearsal*

A rehearsal for your wedding will take place on the evening prior to the wedding, usually at 4:00 PM or 5:00 PM. At the rehearsal the priest or deacon will walk you and the wedding party through the wedding ceremony itself. Be on time for the rehearsal and encourage your wedding party to be so as well. For the rehearsal those who are participating in the wedding should be present – this includes the bride and groom, their parents, any members of the wedding party, the ushers and readers.

We also ask that the marriage license and any fees be brought to the church on the night of the rehearsal.