

## 20. MUSICIANS:

Only parish musicians are permitted to use the organ or keyboard. The fee is \$125 and should be given to the organist at least one week before the wedding. If another organist/keyboard player is requested, the Director of Music must approve the organist; a bench fee of \$125 must be paid before the wedding. Parish cantors/song leaders are essential to lead the singing (fee is also \$125.) Outside instrumental accompaniment may perform the Prelude, the Bridal party and bridal procession, the Offertory song, the post-Communion/Marian reflection and the exit procession; in order to ensure a proper flow to the liturgy, parish musicians must perform the Mass service music (Psalm Response, Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen and Agnus Dei.) Music during the wedding celebration is to be sung by the assembly—they are not merely spectators! Solos may be done before the ceremony, at the presentation of the gifts or second Communion song. Outside singers are allowed but must be knowledgeable of liturgy and approved by the Director of Music. A rehearsal fee of \$25 per practice session hour may apply.

Please contact the Director of Music Debbie Cunningham at 856-461-2274.

## Wedding Guidelines



**“AND JESUS WAS THERE”**

John 2:2

The Parish Community of  
**JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

856-461-0100

Worshipping at

St. Peter's  
102 Middleton  
St.  
Riverside, NJ  
08057

St. Joseph's  
805 Warren St.  
Beverly, NJ  
08010

Revision 8 May 2009

**Dear Friends,**

**You have made a decision that quite literally will affect the rest of your lives. To marry in Church signifies your commitment to Jesus and His teachings. It is therefore imperative that you realize that there is much preparation that will lie ahead for you.**

**Please be aware that in order to have a dignified wedding for you and your guests, we have prepared the following guidelines based on experience, the customs of our day, and both civil and Church law.**

**We are honored that you have chosen our parish community as the place for your wedding. We will assist you in every way we possibly can. We congratulate you and pray God's blessings on your evolving love!**

## **19. MUSIC:**

Music during the celebration of the wedding ceremony or Mass must be liturgical (appropriate for the ritual actions taking place.) Since marriage is a sacrament, the music stresses the role of God in the blessing of marriage. Weddings celebrate life—live music implies life. Instruments, especially trumpet, violin, flute, guitar can be used to enhance the music.

Secular (popular) music that refers only to the secular nature of love and not the sacred union of the couple and their relationship to Christ is not permitted. "Our song" - unless appropriate to the marriage rite, is better played at the Reception.

Blessed Mother songs should be used only at the dedication to Mary or before the ceremony since nothing in the wedding ritual refers specifically to Mary.

The Lord's Prayer demands congregational participation—it is not a solo.

## **17. PHOTOGRAPHERS / VIDEOGRAPHERS:**

In order to eliminate distraction and confusion, your photographer and/or videographer must meet with the celebrant before the ceremony.

## **18. DECORATIONS:**

Flowers should be delivered to the church prior to the time of the wedding ceremony, on the same day of the wedding. They must be delivered already arranged in vases or containers. The parish will provide them when possible. Flowers that are placed before the altar for a wedding are a gift to God's house and are not to be removed after a wedding ceremony. No runners are permitted. No flowers, ribbons or other decorations may be attached to the pews using wire or tape. These materials scratch or disfigure the finish. Florists are to use hooks that hang on the end of the pews. Candles may be used in the floral arrangements, but individual tapers (i.e. candle light ceremonies) are not permitted.

## **1. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

### For Catholics:

A Baptismal Certificate, First Communion Certificate and a Confirmation Certificate issued within six months before your wedding.

### For Non-Catholics:

A Baptismal Certificate issued within six months before your wedding.

### Pre-Cana/Engaged Encounter:

Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter instruction must be attended within nine months before your wedding. Instruction is scheduled throughout the year in various parishes in our area. A booklet with dates and places scheduled can be obtained in the Parish Office.

## **2. MIXED MARRIAGES:**

In the case of a "Mixed Marriage", the non-Catholic party, in order to sufficiently understand the religion of the Catholic spouse, should be instructed by the preparing minister (priest or deacon) in the essentials of the Catholic faith and be informed of his or her role in the marriage. It will be necessary to request the Bishop for a dispensation or permission. The preparing minister will discuss this with you. 3

### **3. WITNESSES:**

Two witnesses, usually the best man and the maid or matron of honor, are required. The witnesses need not be Catholic. However, the witnesses must not be lapsed Catholics or a person who might be a source of scandal.

### **4. TIME OF WEDDING:**

It is customary in our parish for weddings to take place on Saturday. Because of the extensive use of the church building on Saturday evenings and Sundays, it is not possible to schedule weddings at these times. The schedule for Saturday weddings is:

1PM with Mass  
2PM no Mass permitted

Because of the close scheduling, it is imperative that the wedding start on time.

### **5. THE WEDDING REHEARSAL:**

The wedding rehearsal is usually scheduled on the evening before the wedding. The bride and groom and all members of the wedding party should arrive at the church at the scheduled time. The groom must present the marriage license and the Church stipend, altar server stipends and other donations to the celebrating minister at the wedding rehearsal.

### **16. PROPER DECORUM IN CHURCH:**

The church is a sacred place. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the Tabernacle. At the wedding rehearsal please observe the silence and reverence proper to the house of God. We ask that you request your wedding guests to observe proper decorum in Church: please ask your guests not to throw rice, bird seed, confetti or rose petals at the church entrance. This creates a hazardous condition as well as a cleaning problem. Rice can cause slipping on the church steps. In addition, couples must refrain from releasing birds, balloons, etc. Any questions that you might have will be gladly answered by the minister.

While maintaining the proper silence and reverence, the main altar may be used as a setting for taking photographs. However, this must not interfere with weddings that may follow. Please make it clear to your photographer that his time for taking post-wedding pictures in church is limited to 30 minutes. The church must be vacated by 3:20PM due to our Confession and Mass schedule.

#### **14. BOUQUET FOR THE BLESSED MOTHER:**

The bride and groom may wish to place a bouquet of flowers at the Blessed Mother's altar at the end of the wedding ceremony. If you wish to do this, please inform the minister in planning your wedding liturgy.

#### **15. OFFERING TO THE CHURCH:**

The Church stipend on the occasion of marriage is three hundred dollars (\$300). It is considered a gift to God on the wedding day and a small token of appreciation to assist in the upkeep of the parish and the special requirements for your wedding. It covers the cost of cleaning and setting up the church before and after your wedding. This stipend should be presented to the minister at the wedding rehearsal, The minister himself receives no part of this offering. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Pastor before the wedding date.

#### **6. CONFESSION:**

An opportunity for celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be provided by the priest following the wedding rehearsal (or arrangements can be made if the celebrant is a deacon.) Catholics are strongly urged to take advantage of the opportunity.

#### **7. HOLY COMMUNION:**

At the marriage of two Catholics, the bride and groom are invited to receive Holy Communion, welcoming Jesus to be with them as they begin their new life together. It is the privilege of the Catholic bride and groom and the Catholic members of their wedding party to receive Holy Communion under both forms (bread and wine) during Mass. If you desire this, please inform the priest at the wedding rehearsal.

If the marriage is not celebrated as a Nuptial Mass, the Catholic bride and groom should receive Holy Communion at one of the earlier Masses on their wedding day.

## **8. PARENTS OF THE BRIDE AND GROOM:**

It is customary for the father of the bride or some other male relative to escort her to the altar. Modern practice permits the mother to join in this act if she wishes. The parents of the bride and groom are seated in the front pews, immediately behind the wedding party.

## **9. CELEBRATING MINISTER:**

In our parish it is customary that the priest or deacon with whom you make the original contact in scheduling your wedding is the one to officiate. However, if you wish, you may request any of the other clergy in our parish to celebrate your wedding ceremony. This must be done at the original contact in order that he may schedule interviews and arrangements with you. If you have a priest/deacon relative or friend from outside the parish you may request that he officiate at your wedding. In such cases you must contact him and make certain that he accepts the invitation. The cleric must then contact us, telling us of his acceptance. All details of the wedding ceremony must be discussed with the parish priest. He and he alone, has final say as to the wedding ceremony in accordance with parish and ecclesiastical policies.

## **10. LECTORS:**

One or two Lectors are needed for the wedding liturgy. They may be a relative or friend who will read the Scripture at the wedding ceremony. The Lector(s) may also be a member of the wedding party. The minister should be informed of your choice of Lector(s). Lectors should attend the wedding rehearsal.

## **11. ALTAR SERVERS:**

Two of our altar servers are assigned to assist at your wedding. It is customary to give \$25 to each server in appreciation of their service. These two stipends are presented at the rehearsal. If you have relatives or friends who are altar servers, you may request that they serve at your wedding. Please notify the minister if this is the case.

## **12. “UNITY CANDLE” CEREMONY:**

Recently the use of the “Unity Candle” has become common at weddings. This is not formally part of the Catholic wedding liturgy and is permitted, but not encouraged. If you wish to do so, discuss it with the minister who is officiating at your marriage. If you wish, a blessing which may be used at your Reception in conjunction with the Unity Candle can be provided.