



Marriage Preparation

St. Patrick Catholic Parish

Packet for weddings at St. Patrick – Denison

MARRIAGE COORDINATOR

Mrs. Catherine “Cathy” Haraldsen acts as Marriage Coordinator for St. Patrick Parish. Please contact Cathy as soon as possible at 903-463-3275.

MARRIAGE

Christian marriage is the union of man and woman by pledge of lifelong fidelity. It is a union of two in one flesh. It is not merely a contract; it is an exclusive covenant relationship between a husband and wife that is to mirror the covenant of Christ with His Church and the love of God for us. The desire to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony reflects a willingness to live marriage as a vocation in, of and for the church. The Sacrament of Matrimony presents to a couple the opportunity to reflect to the community the unconditional love and forgiveness of Christ for us and for His bride, the Church. The couple confers the Sacrament of Matrimony upon one another with the officiant as the official witness of the church to their vows of commitment.

Oftentimes one spends many years preparing for a career which may include the completion of requirements for various educational degrees. The Catholic Church, in concern for your relationship and marriage, believes that a vocation as important as marriage should involve adequate preparation also. Couples seeking to be married in the Catholic Church are presently required to participate in a marriage preparation process.

WHAT IS MARRIAGE PREPARATION?

Marriage preparation offers engaged couples an opportunity to focus more fully on areas that are considered crucial to a lifetime of loving each other. It is a time to build on the specialness that is already present in you and in your relationship. It is an opportunity to take time out from the

“busyness” of planning the wedding to “retreat” to planning the lifetime of loving each other.

Your wedding should be a dignified and sacred occasion because it is a sign of your love for one another, God’s love and joy for you and the church’s desire to witness and support your Sacramental union. It is with this in mind that we outline here regulations, suggestion aids and other information for marriages in St. Patrick Parish. It is our hope that as we walk with you in preparation for your marriage and wedding day, you will experience the care and love of the people of St. Patrick.

REGULATIONS OF THE DIOCESE

1. Each party to a contemplated marriage must be at least 18 years old.
2. A couple should approach the parish at least six (6) months before the anticipated wedding date.
3. Each party must be free to marry in the Catholic Church, i.e. no previous marriages unless annulled, or death of spouse.
4. If a marriage has already been performed by a civil authority or minister of another denomination, it is usually not convalidated, “blessed” by a priest or deacon until after consultation.

PLACE OF MARRIAGE AND OFFICANT

1. The Dallas Diocese requires that all weddings are to be in a church or chapel. The Diocese does not permit home or garden weddings.
2. The officiant is normally a Catholic priest or Catholic deacon. An ordained minister of another Christian tradition may preside at the wedding with permission or may assist the Catholic priest or Catholic deacon.
3. Permission must be obtained from the parish priest in case of a Catholic priest or Catholic

deacon from outside the parish being invited of officiate.

4. Interfaith weddings may take place in the non-Catholic's place of worship with the Bishop's (or his delegate's) permission.

DATE AND TIME OF MARRIAGE

1. The parish office should be notified of the intended marriage at the earliest possible date. A minimum of six months advance notice is requested.
2. Customary wedding times are: Saturday at 11:00 AM, 2:00 PM or 6:30 PM. However, these times are flexible.
3. Rehearsal times are 6:00 PM the Friday evening before the wedding date but time is flexible.
4. Invitations should not be printed until the date and time have been finalized on the parish calendar.

DOCUMENTS AND WITNESSES

1. Each Catholic party must have a certificate of Baptism (with notations) dated no less than six (6) months prior to the marriage. This is obtained by writing/calling the parish where the party was baptized. If one party is a baptized non-Catholic, that party must provide proof of baptism as a Christian. These documents must be provided to the Church office one (1) month in advance of the wedding date.
2. A pre-nuptial investigation is completed for both bride and groom. Any prior marriages must have been declared null with proof of such provided. Any conditions declared by the Tribunal in the Decree of Nullity must have been satisfied and recorded.
3. A form which witnesses to the freedom of the couple to enter into marriage must be completed by a priest, deacon or delegate in the presence of a parent(s), other relative or close friend of both parties. We would like to

have the person to have known you at least since puberty.

4. Documents presented for the wedding will be files at St. Patrick's Parish.
5. The marriage license required by the State along with the envelope they provide you (make sure you put the proper postage on it) must be presented to the officiant at the rehearsal.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

The Catholic Diocese of Dallas desires the very best for couples as they prepare for marriage. The preparation for marriage should be a special time set aside for the couple to learn more about each other and to grow in their understanding of the vocation they are about to enter.

Canon Law requires that each couple preparing for marriage through the Catholic Church receive marriage preparation (Canon 1063).

1. Marriage preparation interview with the Pastor.
2. A Pre-Cana marriage preparation program is offered by the St. Patrick Parish. Each engaged couple is required to participate in these sessions.

CONVALIDATION

Couples seeking to have their marriage "Sacramentalized" are required to complete that parish based preparation at the discretion of the officiating clergy who will make a judgment based on the length of the irregular marriage and the couples' understanding of the marriage commitment.

LITURGICAL PREPARATIONS WEDDING PREPARATIONS

SCRIPTURES AND OTHER TEXTS

The booklet "Marriage is for Keeps" takes you through the entire wedding liturgy and certain approved scripture readings and prayers for marriage. You will be asked to select your own Scripture readings from this book. For a Christian marriage outside of the mass you should select one reading and a responsorial Psalm. For a marriage within Mass you should select an Old Testament reading, a Responsorial Psalm, and a New Testament reading. Father will select the Gospel Reading. You will be asked to fill out the form at the end of the booklet and return it to the officiant no less than one month before the ceremony.

The couple should receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the wedding. An appointment should be made with the priest well in advance of the wedding.

MUSIC FOR THE WEDDING

The Church has guidelines that prohibit the usage of secular (non-sacred) music during the Nuptial Mass, such as "The Wedding Song", "The Bridal Chorus" (Wagner) and "The Wedding March" (Mendelssohn) are not appropriate as well.

The Church Organist, Bill Nix, will provide the music for your wedding. Please contact him as soon as possible after selecting the date for your wedding. He may be reached at 903-465-7339, 214-707-8513, or by email at wknix1@att.net.

If there is no knowledge of what music is appropriate for the liturgy, the Church Organist will discuss the options for music and suggest songs from a list of suitable repertoire.

If you wish to have a vocalist the Church Organist will suggest one.

Recorded music is not allowed.

DECORATIONS

All decorations are to be completed within a reasonable time preceding the ceremony.

In the Sanctuary, floral arrangements are permitted on either side of the altar and near the ambo; candelabra may not be used. Flowers may not be placed on the altar. No floral arrangements are to impede the movements of the priest, altar servers or bridal party. Please keep in mind if you choose a wedding date that falls within the season of Easter or Christmas, church decorations will be in place and must remain.

The church does not own a Unity Candle stand so if you include this as part of the ceremony you must provide the stand and candles.

No pins, tacks, nails, scotch tape or glue may be used to attach any decorations to the furniture or walls of the church. No glitter of any kind can be used.

Aisle candles, aisle candelabra, or hurricane lamps are not permitted.

So as not to interfere with the parish schedule, the church must be left in an orderly condition soon after the ceremony.

The Church should be vacated by 12:30 following an 11:00 AM wedding, 3:30 PM following a 2:00 PM wedding and by 8:30 PM following a 6:30 PM wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Photographers are expected to contact St. Patrick's before the wedding ceremony. Flash pictures may not be taken during the service. Non-flash photos are permitted from behind the assembly.

Flash pictures are permitted as the wedding party enters and leaves the church.

The photographer is allowed 30 minutes after the wedding ceremony to take scheduled and final pictures. These pictures are allowed within the body of the Church and in front of the Altar, NEVER behind the Altar in the Sanctuary area. If there are questions as to where pictures are allowed please have the photographer contact the wedding coordinator.

Video photography should be done from a stationary position and unmanned outside the sanctuary area. Contact the wedding coordinator for approved placement of the camera.

CHURCH ETIQUETTE

The Church is a sacred place. Please refrain from loud talking, smoking and bring no food or drink into the Church or foyer areas.

Please remember a wedding in the Catholic Church is a Sacrament. Therefore, everything in the celebration should reflect holiness and reverence. Special care must be taken in selecting the bridal gown and bridesmaids dresses. Uncovered shoulders are not acceptable. All participants in the ceremony (readers, singers, etc.) should be dressed appropriately. Readers must be at least 18 years old.

Courtesy demands that all be prompt for the wedding, and a special request is made that all be prompt for the rehearsal. The rehearsal should last a maximum of 45 minutes.

Please refrain from throwing rice, bird seed, confetti, etc in the Church building or the outside area.

DRESSING AREA

Normally, the groom and groomsmen arrive at the Church already dressed in wedding attire. The bride and her attendants come with hair and make-up done. There is space in the reconciliation room for the ladies to dress.

FEES

The stipend for a priest or deacon to officiate at the wedding is \$300.00. The Church organist fee is \$300. These fees should be combined with the church fee of \$300.00 and be paid to the church one (1) month prior to the wedding date.

CONCLUSION

Your cooperation with our guidelines is deeply appreciated. It will also insure that your wedding day will be filled with happy memories, and will add to God's blessings in the years to come. If you have any further questions not covered above, please contact the wedding coordinator.

OCCUPYING THE FACILITY

- If your wedding is at **11:00 AM** you may occupy the facility at 9:00 AM. The church must be cleaned and vacated by 12:30 PM.
- **2:00 PM** you may occupy the facility at 11:00 AM. The church must be cleaned and vacated by 3:30 PM.
- If your wedding is at **6:30 PM** you may occupy the facility at 6:15 PM. **Please keep in mind that Mass will be going on until 6:00 PM.** The church must be cleaned and vacated by 8:30 PM.

Please stay true to this time frame.

NOTE: Do not forget to contact the County Clerk's Office regarding a Marriage License. This License must be presented at the Rehearsal.

COUPLE INFORMATION FORM

WEDDING DATE/TIME: _____

BRIDE'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE #: _____

CELL #: _____

EMAIL: _____

NUMBER OF ATTENDANTS: _____

GROOM'S NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE #: _____

CELL #: _____

EMAIL: _____

NUMBER OF GROOMSMEN: _____

PLEASE RETURN TO:

**CATHY HARALDSEN
C/O ST PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH
314 N RUSK AVENUE
DENISON, TX 75020**