



THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Congratulations on your engagement! The staff at Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church is excited for the opportunity to assist you in your preparation for and celebration of the **Sacrament of Christian Marriage**. We not only want you to have a beautiful wedding day, we want you to have a beautiful marriage!

A Sacrament is a sacred moment of encounter with God. This sacred moment is usually celebrated in the midst of the community of believers. The Sacrament takes place when believers make a decision to live in Jesus' Word with a heart open to Christ's love and saving power. Each Sacrament has its own sign or symbol. In Marriage, the couple themselves is this sign. Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church will help you prepare for the celebration of this Sacrament in your lives. The whole People of God will be strengthened by the Sacrament you will become. Therefore, the entire community rejoices in the lifetime commitment you are about to make.

Always keep in mind the sacramental nature of your wedding as you prepare for its celebration. Together with the Christian community, you will be celebrating your love and commitment in Christ.

PARISH RECOMMENDATIONS

There are two forms for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage: a **Wedding with a Mass**, or a **Wedding Outside of Mass**. Both are completely valid celebrations of the Sacrament, and both can be done with beauty, grace and style. There are various reasons a couple might choose one or the other, but this is one of the first things for the couple to discuss with the priest or deacon and determine.

ECUMENICAL MARRIAGES

Inter-faith and inter-denominational marriages are welcome at St. John's. Ministers who are not Catholic are welcome to participate in the wedding celebration, however there are limits to what they can do at the celebration. At your request, the priests or deacons of St. John's will be glad to participate in your wedding at another church.

PARISH REQUIREMENTS

PREPARATION

To aid in the development of your relationship and to prepare for the Sacrament of Christian Marriage, the parish requires that you fulfill the following requirements:

1. INITIAL INTAKE:

Your first step is to call the intake coordinator who will set the date. The coordinator can be reached at 651-633-8333. A \$50 deposit will be required at this time. **Please do not book your reception hall until after your date at the Church is set.**

After filling out the initial intake form, a priest or deacon will then contact you and set up a meeting. You will meet with the priest or deacon who will give you an overview of the further requirements and answer any questions.

2. PREPARE INVENTORY:

The priest or deacon will pass your names to the Prepare Coordinator who will assign a mentor couple. You will receive an email with a link to the PREPARE Inventory. This is a compatibility survey which indicates both the areas of strength in your relationship and areas where more discussion and growth is recommended. After completing the online survey, your mentor couple will contact you. The mentor couples are specially trained to help you process inventory and will generally meet with you three or four times to get to know you and review the results. Following the completion of your meetings with the mentor couple, they will send a feedback form to the priest or deacon who is preparing you for marriage.

3. FOLLOW UP MEETINGS WITH THE PRIEST OR DEACON.

The priest or deacon will contact you to set up more meetings to discuss the theology of marriage. They will discuss with you how Christ reveals God's sacrificial love for us and how married love participates in that sacrificial love. The priest or deacon will typically meet with the couple two or three times to do this. They will also complete any paperwork with you during this time.

4. ENGAGED RETREAT:

You will also be required to participate in an engaged couples retreat. The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis conducts a weekend retreat which is the best option. However, there are others that are offered in a variety of formats, locations and times. A sheet with the names of various locations and times offering retreats is enclosed in this packet. Further information can be found on www.archspm.org.

4. NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING COURSE

God had given us the beautiful gift of our fertility. It is truly a gift and Natural Family Planning helps us appreciate that gift even further. **We ask you to take the full course, not just the introductory session.** When you finish the course, you will be given a certificate of completion that we ask you to give to the priest or deacon you are working with. The courses and times can be found on sheet included in the folder the priest or deacon will give you.

5. DOCUMENTS:

You will be asked to provide Baptismal information for each of you. For Catholics, this must be a certified copy of your Baptismal Certificate **issued within the past six months.** This can be obtained by calling the parish at which you were baptized. For baptized non-Catholics, a photocopy or fax of the Baptismal Certificate is acceptable.

In cases where one or both of the parties had been previously married, further documents will be required, including copies of marriage certificates, divorce decrees or death certificates and annulment decrees, where necessary. The priest or deacon with whom you are working will be able to tell you what further documentation is required. He can also help you solve problems where documents are, for some reason, unobtainable.

6. WEDDING PLANNING WORKSHOP:

All couples who plan to be married at St. John's must attend The Rite of Christian Marriage - Planning and Preparation Workshop. This workshop lasts about an hour and a half, and covers the following topics:

- I. General Introduction to the Liturgy
- II. Choosing Readings and Prayers
- III. Wedding Music and Musicians
- IV. The Environment
- V. Questions and Answers

The Workshop is offered four times a year, so please plan ahead. Dates are enclosed, and further dates can be obtained from the Parish Center (651-633-8333). **Advanced registration is required.** COUPLES ARE NOT TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH MUSICIANS UNTIL THEY HAVE ATTENDED THIS WORKSHOP.

CIVIL REQUIREMENTS

MARRIAGE LICENSE:

The Pre-Marital Education Bill passed by the State of Minnesota provides for a \$75 discount on the marriage license if the couple has had 12 hours of marital education. The Pre-Marriage Retreat and Prepare sessions satisfy this

requirement. Upon completion of these requirements, the Priest or Deacon will complete a certificate that may be taken to the County Offices for this reduction in fees. Marriage licenses can be obtained at the County Court Administrator's Office (Section of Vital Statistics) at the County Courthouse. A license obtained in any county is valid for the entire State of Minnesota. The license is valid for six months from the date of issuance. **Note:** There is a seven-day waiting period after you apply. There is a fee for the Marriage License. Call the Courthouse for current fees.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

Marriage is a public Sacrament, that is a public sign of God's love and hence it happens in the Parish Church. If the bride or groom is not registered with the parish, we encourage to register and become more engaged in our parish life.

ENVIRONMENT:

Specific colors are used during the various seasons of the Church year. We suggest that you see the Church (preferably in the context of worship) at various seasons so that you will have some idea of the colors that will be dominant on your wedding day, since major decorations will not be changed to accommodate individual weddings.

The liturgical seasons and their primary colors are:

Advent:	blue-violet & grey
Christmas:	white, red, green & gold
Ordinary Time:	green (especially during summer & Autumn colors in the fall)
Lent:	purple
Easter:	white, gold & yellow

The priest or deacon, Wedding Coordinator, Liturgist or Music Director can tell you in what season your wedding will occur.

MUSIC:

In making musical judgments for the wedding liturgy, the key word is prayer. You are choosing to begin your married life in the context of worship. Other members of the community will gather with you to *offer* praise and thanksgiving to God and to pray that the richest blessings of God will be showered down upon you. The music chosen for your wedding liturgy should foster and deepen this sense of prayer.

Vocal music should be chosen primarily for its text, which should be identifiable as prayer. Any music that is purely secular in nature and does not speak to the Christian symbol of married love is not suitable. The love, the promise of faithfulness that images God, should be the focal point of the music.

Your wedding liturgy is celebrated within the context of this parish community and the faith it proclaims. Thus, this community asks you to share its Faith through music expressive of its traditions. The parish Music Director will help you by articulating these traditions and by offering suggestions for music and musicians.

By parish policy, all musicians, song leaders (soloists) and music are to be approved at least one month prior to the wedding by the Music Director. We recommend that parish musicians be used. Other musicians can, with the approval of the Music Director, be brought in from outside. The music director can be reached by calling the Parish Center (651-633-8333 ext.1212).

Remember, before you make arrangements with musicians, you are required to attend the Rite of Christian Marriage - Preparation and Planning Workshop. Call the Parish Center to register.

HOURS FOR WEDDINGS

Friday evenings: No later than 8:00pm
Saturday: 11:00am or before, and 2:00pm

We adhere to these times so that sufficient time and attention may be given to each wedding, as well as other parish services.

Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation or Major Liturgical Feasts (i.e. Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, or the Feast of St. John the Baptist [June 24]), nor during times of regularly scheduled parish services. Your wedding occurs within the context of this worshipping community. Since the season of Lent is traditionally a season of fast, penitence and preparation, weddings are normally not scheduled during this season.

TIMES FOR CHURCH ACCESS:

You may have access to the church for preparation and pictures no more than 2 hours prior to the ceremony, unless this is pre-arranged with the Wedding Coordinator. The preparation time may be limited due to a funeral, a prior wedding (if there is an 11:00 A.M. wedding, access to the church begins at 12:30 for the 2:00 P.M. ceremony) or, in the case of a Friday wedding, due to rehearsals. Time of access may be changed upon short notice due to a funeral.

After 11:00 A.M. weddings, the church must be vacated by 12:30 P.M. After 2:00 P.M. weddings, the church must be vacated by 3:30 P.M.

OTHER PRIESTS OR DEACONS:

A priest or deacon who is a friend or relative of the couple may perform the wedding ceremony at St. John's. He should also take part in the preparation and planning. You are responsible for confirming all arrangements with this person.

A priest or deacon who agrees to a wedding date is obligated to be present or to find his own replacement. Priests or deacons from outside the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis need to get a letter saying that they are in good standing. If they are from outside the state of Minnesota, they have to get licensed by the state of Minnesota to perform a wedding in Minnesota.

OTHER LITURGICAL MINISTERS:

These are special people whom you have chosen to help with your wedding. These would include the lector, the musicians, ushers, gift bearers, etc. It is important that the person chosen have the ability to fulfill their role.

MISCELLANEOUS

FLORAL ARRANGEMENT:

Please make all arrangements with the florist for floral arrangements. A key to flowers and decorations might be that of moderation.

AISLE RUNNERS:

Because of the incline of the center aisle, for safety concerns, we recommend that you not use an aisle runner or rose petals. Please also arrange for the florist to pick up any stands, plants or other property of theirs immediately after the service, as there may be other liturgies that follow your wedding.

CANDELABRA:

The church owns two seven-candle candelabra that you are welcome to use for a nominal fee (See Fee Schedule). Your florist may also bring in candelabra. Arrangements should be made for the delivery and pick-up of any candelabra brought in from the outside.

UNITY CANDLE:

If you choose to have a Unity Candle, you are to provide it. The church will provide the side candles. The Unity Candle is placed on a stand or table provided by the church.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:

Bows may be attached to the pews. This should be arranged with your florist. We request that if you choose to use bows on the pews, wire or a tape that will not leave residue be used. These bows are to be removed immediately following the wedding liturgy.

Keep in mind that some lighting, especially for a wedding on Friday evening, is necessary for guests to use programs and to feel a community relationship with one another.

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT:

You need to consider if there is a need for additional equipment, such as additional microphones and/or music stands, especially if you are having a duet, singing group or instrumentalists. Normally, the church has one microphone available for the soloist; however, two additional microphones can be provided for a total of 3 microphones for musical groups. To use the additional microphones, you are to arrange with your Wedding Coordinator or the Music Director no later than one week prior to the wedding.

THE REHEARSAL

Fees, for the Church and Wedding Coordinator, are due at this time.

These payments should be made in the form of separate checks to the Parish and Wedding Coordinator.

WEDDING COORDINATOR:

The Wedding Coordinator will conduct the rehearsal. The coordinator will also be present at the wedding itself to answer questions, to help with last-minute crises, and to get the wedding party organized. The Wedding Coordinator can also answer many questions about your Wedding beforehand. Please call and leave a message for the coordinator at the Parish Center, 651-633-8333.

THE WEDDING DAY

CHURCH CLEAN-UP:

All Couples are asked to insure that the church (including the church pews, Bride's Room, sacristy, and restrooms) are clean of all waste materials resulting from their wedding. It is the responsibility of the ushers to do this. They are also asked to return chairs and tables to their proper places after the ceremony. The goal is to leave the Church in the same way it was before the Wedding.

DRESSING ROOM:

The Bride and her attendants may use the Bride's room off the narthex. It contains a large mirror on the north wall for your use. The Groom and his attendants may use the 1st floor men's room off St. Paul's Plaza. The bridal party is asked to keep these rooms clean and free of refuse.

PHOTOGRAPHS:

As much as possible, couples are encouraged to have their formal pictures taken before the ceremony. Pre-ceremony pictures in the sanctuary should be completed at least 45 minutes prior to the ceremony. (Please see CHURCH ACCESS for times.)

Photographs are permitted during the ceremony. Because of the natural light in the Church, photographers rarely need to use flash, but if your photographer feels he or she must, please have this approved by the Wedding Coordinator or your presider.

VIDEOTAPES:

You are welcome to have your wedding ceremony Videotaped, but the person Videotaping should be encouraged to remain inconspicuous during the ceremony, and should not intrude between you and your guests.

ON THINGS TOSSED OR RISING:

Please do not throw rice, confetti, rose petals, or birdseed on the Church property. It can prove messy, but more seriously, can also present a real hazard to many elderly people and others whose footing is unsure. We also ask that you avoid helium balloons inside the Church, since one that escapes is nearly impossible to bring down.

SMOKING:

Smoking is banned everywhere in the Church, including the vestibules, the Bride's room and restrooms . There are ashtrays outside both main entrances

ALCOHOL:

Alcoholic beverages are not to be consumed on Church property, in the vestibules, or the Bride's room, restrooms, or the parking lots. Please inform you wedding party of this rule, and save it for your reception. The Bride and Groom are to avoid consuming alcohol before the wedding as well as it limits their freedom to truly commit to the Sacrament of Marriage.

SIGNING THE MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE:

The Best man and the Maid(Matron) of Honor are asked to sign the marriage certificate immediately following the Wedding ceremony. They should come to the sacristy after the ceremony.

FEE SCHEDULE

A \$300.00 fee is required at St. John's that includes the following:

	(Due at your final meeting with your presider)
\$150	Cost of PREPARE Scoring Church Use Maintenance & Equipment Training of Support Couples
\$150	Wedding Coordinator (Please issue a separate check or cash)

Additional considerations are as follows: Presider \$100

Musicians & Cantor (fees negotiated privately)

Candelabra \$25. Additional

Deposit (non refundable) due at the time of intake \$50.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST MARRIAGE PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS

6-12 MONTHS PRIOR TO WEDDING

- Call the Wedding Intake Coordinator at the Parish Office to set a wedding.
651-633-8333 ext.1219
- Send your \$50. deposit to the Parish Center Attn: Wedding Intake Coordinator
- Assigned priest or deacon will contact the couple
- Read wedding policy and complete necessary forms
- Meeting with priest or deacon
- Complete the Prepare Inventory that is emailed to you
- PREPARE couple will contact couple
- Meet with PREPARE couple for feedback sessions – 1-4 sessions
- Attend Pre-Marriage Retreat (“Living God’s Love” brochure in folder)
- Send in Baptism certificates, and other forms needed.

3-9 MONTHS PRIOR TO WEDDING

- Attend wedding workshop
- Receive “Marriage is for Keeps” planning guide
- Attend a Natural Family Planning class
- Complete follow up meetings with priest or deacon

2-3 MONTHS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING

- Set up Rehearsal date with Wedding Coordinator and Teri Shea 651-633-8333 ext.1237

2 MONTHS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING

- Obtain \$ waiver certificate for marriage license fee.
- Complete liturgy planning and rehearsal sheet
- Choose musicians with music director.

1 MONTH PRIOR TO WEDDING

- Meet with wedding coordinator
- Bring marriage license to priest or deacon
- Checks are due. (See fee schedule)

AFTER THE WEDDING

- Send back the evaluation form given to you at the wedding workshop. Please send back as soon as possible.

WEDDING CHECK LIST

- Have you filled out the intake forms?
- Have you given the priest or deacon copies of your baptismal certificates?
- Have you attended the Preparation and Planning Workshop?
- Have you contacted the musicians to set the musical arrangements for the wedding?
- Have you paid the appropriate fee for the pre-nuptial preparation program?
- Have you paid the appropriate fee for the Wedding Coordinator?
- Have you attended the required weekend retreat?
- Have you attend a Natural Family Planning Course?
- Have you contacted ushers for the wedding and for cleaning up the church afterwards?
- Have you arranged with the florist regarding flowers?
- Have you arranged for a time when they can set flowers up in church?
- Have you arranged for when they can pick up their property after the wedding?
- Have you set a time for the rehearsal?
- Have you contacted the Wedding Coordinator or Music Director about needs for additional microphone equipment?
- Did you get the \$ waiver for the Marriage License from the Priest or Deacon?
- Did you obtain the Marriage License?
- Have you brought the license to the priest or deacon prior to the rehearsal?
- Are the Best Man and Maid (Matron) of Honor aware that they must sign the Certificate of Marriage after the wedding?
- Have you contacted all who need to attend the rehearsal?
- Have you given everyone directions on how to get to the Church?
- Have you given a copy of the ceremony (including placement of musical selections) to the priest or deacon?
- Have you paid all fees for musicians before the wedding ceremony?
- Have you informed the Parish Center of your wishes regarding registration as parishioners?