



St. Bernadette Marriage Policies

Since the Church views marriage as a life-long commitment and a community celebration, the couple must undergo marriage preparation *within their local community*. In asking to be married at this parish, you are stating that you want the members of this Catholic community to witness and to support you through your preparation program and throughout your married life in thought and in prayer. The preparation focuses on three key issues: the relationship between the two persons to be married, the couple's responsibility within the community, and the couple's relationship with God.

The priests, deacons, and coordinator reserve the right to delay and/ or refuse to witness the marriage of any couple not regularly practicing their faith at home and in church. This means that if you never attend mass and/or you are not living your lives according to Catholic teaching, then the priest, deacon, and/or coordinator has the right to refuse to witness your marriage.

Before planning the wedding, the parties in a mixed marriage (where one party is not Catholic) should discuss raising their children in the Catholic faith. The Catholic party is required to sign a promise that he or she will do all in their power to see to it that the children will be baptized and raised as Catholics.

Individuals who have previously been married may be required to obtain an annulment. In the annulment process, the Church is evaluating the validity of a previous marriage to determine whether that relationship was a true sacramental marriage, as understood by the Church. This must be granted before you reserve the church or chapel for a wedding date. Therefore any tentative hold of a date for your wedding is strictly that, *tentative*, pending the status of the annulment.

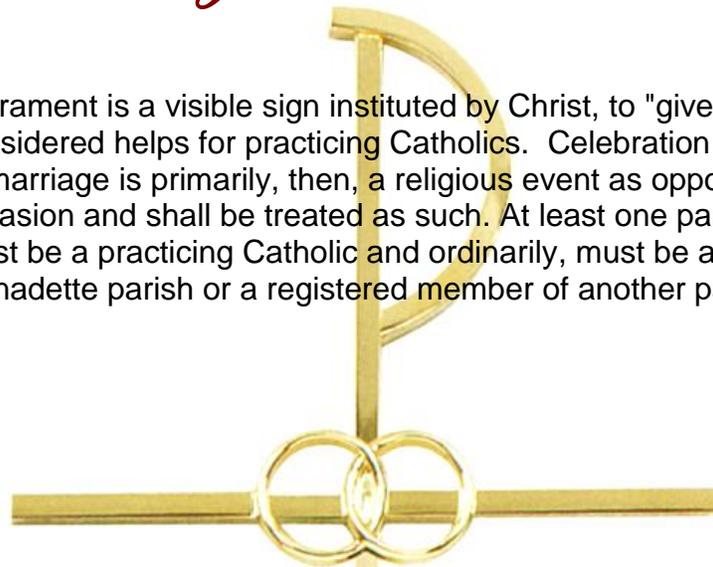
If deemed necessary by the priest, the deacon or the coordinator, the couple may be referred to Catholic Family and Community Services or another qualified service for professional counseling in the following situations:

- ✘ One or both of the couple is under age 18;
- ✘ There is evidence of a lack of maturity or compatibility, or any other indication of lack of readiness for the sacrament;
- ✘ A pregnancy or prior birth is involved;
- ✘ There is undue pressure to marry;
- ✘ A prior relationship is affecting expectations of the new relationship;
- ✘ There are indications of current or past addiction by one or both parties.

Marriage is a Sacrament



sacrament is a visible sign instituted by Christ, to "give grace;" they are considered helps for practicing Catholics. Celebration of the Sacrament of marriage is primarily, then, a religious event as opposed to a social occasion and shall be treated as such. At least one party in the marriage must be a practicing Catholic and ordinarily, must be a registered member of St. Bernadette parish or a registered member of another parish.



PHOENIX DIOCESAN MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM

According to the Diocese of Phoenix, couples must begin the marriage preparation process *at least nine months in advance of the proposed wedding date*. Components of the marriage preparation program for the Sacrament of Marriage include, but are not limited to:

- ✘ An initial meeting or interview with designated priest or deacon
- ✘ Completion of the FOCUS Pre-Marital Inventory
- ✘ Completion of an approved course in natural Family Planning
- ✘ Completion of either "Evenings for Engaged Couples" or "Engaged Encounter Weekend"
- ✘ Completion of God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage

The couple, particularly the Catholic party, must be registered, active members who are attending Mass regularly, giving of their time, talent and treasure, and, have an understanding that the celebration of the sacrament of marriage will be preceded by the sacrament of Reconciliation.

ST. BERNADETTE PARISH REQUIREMENTS FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION



ompleting marriage preparation is required for all couples wishing to be married at St. Bernadette's. {Depending on the couple, the time to begin marriage preparation at St. Bernadette is determined as follows:}

- ✘ If the couple is comprised of two Catholics, both of whom are registered and active St. Bernadette parishioners, then they may start marriage preparation immediately following initial interview.
- ✘ If the couple is comprised of two Catholics who are both registered parishioners, but not active in the parish community, then they must become active in the parish for a period of 3 to 6 months prior to start of marriage preparation.
- ✘ If the couple is comprised of two Catholics, neither of whom is registered at St. Bernadette, nor active in the parish, then the couple must first become registered members of the parish for at least 6 months, and be active for a period of 3 to 6 months prior to the start of marriage preparation.



Of special note: In the case of the couple being comprised of two Catholics who are registered at another Parish(s), then the following requirements are in effect:

1. Couple must provide a written record of who oversaw the preparation and when and where the marriage preparation was completed.
2. Marriage preparation file must be presented to designated priest or deacon.
3. Couple must agree to follow all of St. Bernadette's marriage policies and guidelines.
4. Presider must be approved in advance.
5. Parish Music Director must coordinate/oversee the music and any musicians.
6. St. Bernadette staff must oversee the rehearsal.
7. St. Bernadette Marriage Coordinator oversees rehearsal and nuptial mass/rite of marriage.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS FOR MATRIMONY

St. Bernadette requires the following documents for matrimony:

- ✘ Recently issued (within the past six months) Certificate of Baptism with notations. If notations of the sacraments of First Eucharist and Confirmation are not recorded on the Baptismal certificate, written proof of reception of those sacraments will be required.
- ✘ Prenuptial Inquiry
- ✘ Affidavit of Free Status (freedom to marry)
- ✘ Arizona Marriage License
- ✘ Other documents may be required

COHABITATION BEFORE MARRIAGE



Christ calls His followers to a life of Gospel values that run countercultural to the secular values of our culture. This means, we are called to keep His commandments and the teachings of the Church. Couples living together before marriage must acknowledge that this practice is contrary to the scriptures and not in keeping with Catholic teaching.

Such couples must complete the preparatory program and attend Mass regularly. The couple may be required to refrain from receiving Holy Communion and/or to live as brother and sister during this period. The couple should make a thorough confession prior to their wedding. A priest or deacon may provide further clarification and guidance during the couple's initial interview and subsequent meetings.

THE CHURCH



Catholic churches are consecrated for the worship of God. *An attitude of proper reverence and respect must be maintained at all times.* Care shall be taken at all times to avoid disturbing the prayer of others or the worship of the community.

Food or drinks of any kind are prohibited in the worship space. Smoking and chewing gum are also not permitted. The consumption or use of alcohol by any member of the wedding party or guests in or around the church building or on Parish grounds will result in the immediate cancellation of the ceremony and its related reception/celebration.

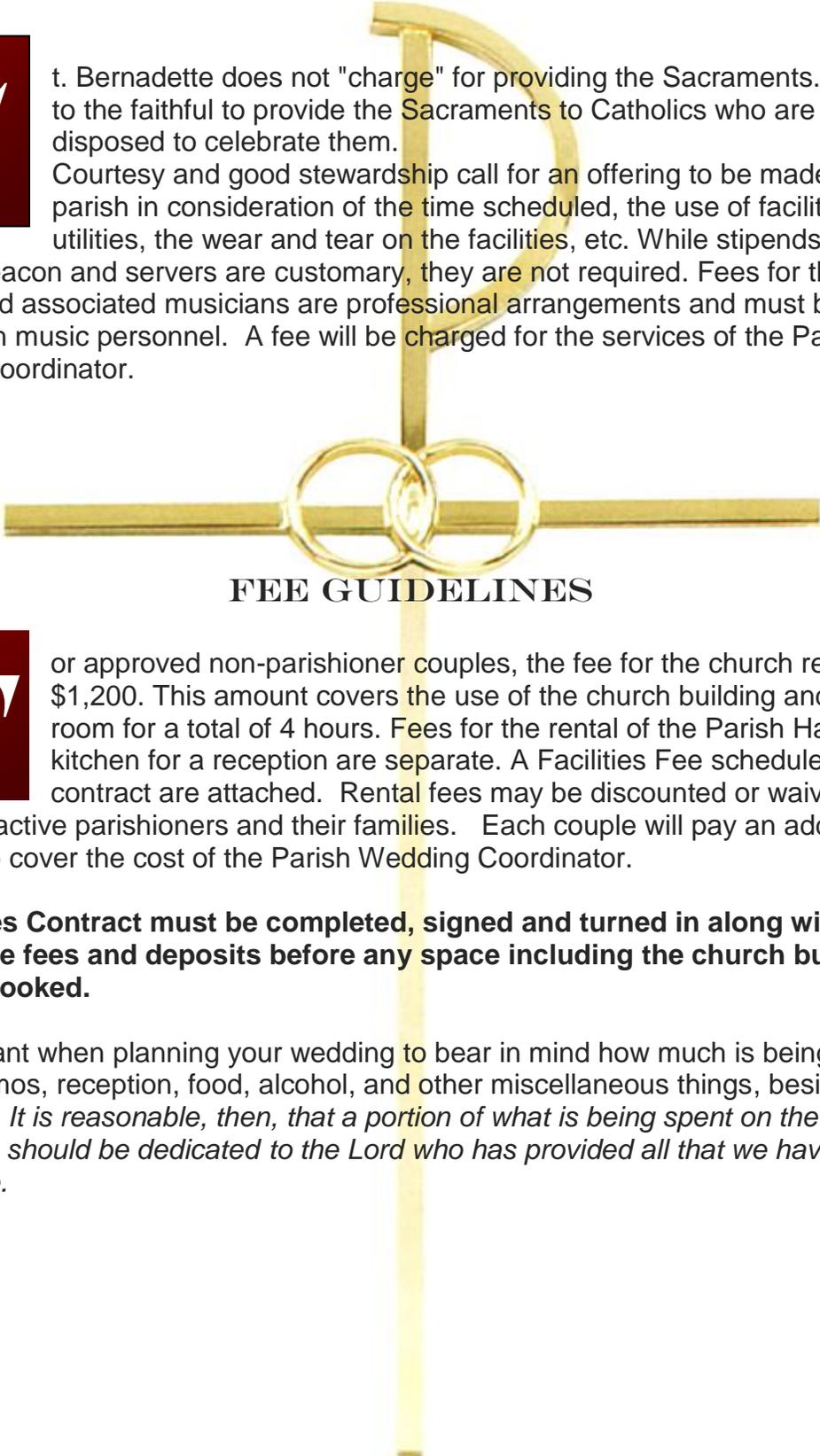
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION & FEES



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t. Bernadette does not "charge" for providing the Sacraments. It is a duty to the faithful to provide the Sacraments to Catholics who are properly disposed to celebrate them.

Courtesy and good stewardship call for an offering to be made to the parish in consideration of the time scheduled, the use of facilities and utilities, the wear and tear on the facilities, etc. While stipends to the priest or deacon and servers are customary, they are not required. Fees for the Music Director and associated musicians are professional arrangements and must be resolved directly with music personnel. A fee will be charged for the services of the Parish Wedding Coordinator.



FEE GUIDELINES



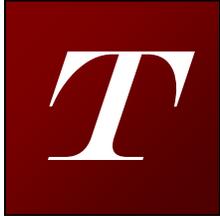
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For approved non-parishioner couples, the fee for the church rental is \$1,200. This amount covers the use of the church building and bridal room for a total of 4 hours. Fees for the rental of the Parish Hall and kitchen for a reception are separate. A Facilities Fee schedule and contract are attached. Rental fees may be discounted or waived for registered active parishioners and their families. Each couple will pay an additional \$150 fee to cover the cost of the Parish Wedding Coordinator.

A Facilities Contract must be completed, signed and turned in along with the appropriate fees and deposits before any space including the church building are officially booked.

It is important when planning your wedding to bear in mind how much is being spent on dresses, limos, reception, food, alcohol, and other miscellaneous things, besides the ceremony. *It is reasonable, then, that a portion of what is being spent on the entire celebration should be dedicated to the Lord who has provided all that we have and all that we are.*

DATE & TIME OF WEDDINGS



The date of the wedding will be set following the review of the FOCCUS Pre-Marital Inventory. Weddings are celebrated on available Saturdays; normally, at either 11:00 AM, or 1:00 PM, or on Friday afternoon between 2:00 PM and 4:00 PM. Ordinarily, a maximum of one hour can be set aside for pictures and decorating at St. Bernadette *before* a wedding. This time allotment will depend on the day you have chosen for your wedding and the master calendar of St. Bernadette Parish.

Ordinarily, the church's bridal room may be entered a maximum of 1.5 hours before any wedding. This allotted time, however, will depend on the day you have chosen for your wedding and the master calendar of St. Bernadette Parish. It is absolutely imperative that all individuals connected with the Rite of Marriage arrive at least 60 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the liturgy. This includes the bridal party, parents, liturgical ministers, etc.

Ordinarily, weddings are not celebrated during Advent or Lent due to the penitential character of these seasons. Only in extraordinary cases may weddings be scheduled during Advent or Lent. The public celebration of the sacraments in Lent should be characterized by a certain restraint.

Those who seek to be married during Lent should be advised to take account of the penitential season and thus accept a limitation of outward signs of solemnity and festivity. In practice this means that, whenever possible, marriages during Lent should be discouraged. At a Lenten celebration of marriage, flowers could be used in moderation, but removed after the celebration.

Weddings may not be scheduled during Holy Week (the week leading up to Easter Sunday).

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL



Wedding rehearsals are conducted by the designated priest or deacon and are scheduled for two hours. The first hour is reserved for the bride and groom only. The second hour will include the entire wedding party including all liturgical participants. The Parish Wedding Coordinator, the sacristan and the altar servers will all participate in the wedding rehearsal.

All of the people who will be in the wedding including both sets of parents, liturgical ministers (EMs, lectors), groomsmen, bridesmaids, ring bearer and flower girl, etc. *must be at the rehearsal.*

According to Diocesan policy, all Lectors and Eucharistic ministers must be confirmed Catholics in good standing. If the Eucharistic minister is from another parish, they must

provide proof of training and commissioning. If the Lectors or any other members of the wedding party are not present at the rehearsal, they will forfeit their role in the wedding ceremony.

Rehearsals are routinely scheduled for the day/evening before the wedding according to church availability. Regular parish liturgy and devotional activities, as well as parish staff schedule, require that rehearsals begin promptly at the scheduled time. This is also a simple courtesy to all involved. Tardiness will result in an inadequate rehearsal or cancellation of the rehearsal altogether. **NOTE: Prior to the wedding rehearsal, couples are expected to instruct the wedding party about proper church behavior and decorum.**

Typically, the musicians do not attend the wedding rehearsal. If it is necessary, due to the complexity of the music, an additional stipend will be negotiated.

FLOWERS & DECORATIONS



Floral arrangements must be approved in advance of the wedding and should be simple and tasteful. *No existing church decorations, flowers or furnishings may be moved.* Bows or flowers for the pews are prohibited. The use of adhesive tape, or tacks, or wires is not permitted to attach flowers to any of the areas of the church building.

All decorations and floral arrangements must be removed

immediately following the wedding.

St. Bernadette's does not allow the use of runners down the center or side aisles of the church; nor is any sort of arch in front of the Altar or interior doorway allowed. No flower petals or other items may be dropped or thrown at any time during or following the celebration. Unity candles are prohibited.

The throwing or releasing of anything, such as rice, confetti, birdseed, flower petals, doves, et cetera, is not permitted. This practice creates challenges for maintenance and clean up, but also is potentially dangerous. Couples are cautioned to inform everyone attending the wedding that this practice is not allowed anywhere on the church grounds.

PHOTOGRAPHY



uring the celebration of Marriage, stationary video equipment may be set up at the rear of the church or in the choir loft, and off to the side of the sanctuary (the Altar area). Flash photography is not permitted during the celebration of the Marriage.

Under no circumstances is any photography or video technician permitted in the sanctuary, nor are roving cameras permitted during the celebration of Marriage.

Ordinarily, 45 minutes are permitted following the wedding celebration for photography. After the 45 minutes are up everyone should begin leaving the church, as we have other events planned in the calendar and or cleaning that needs to take place.

MUSIC



wedding is an act of sacred worship of God and the celebration of a sacrament of the Church. *Remember, a wedding is primarily a religious event.* Music must always be religious in nature as well as in good taste. Purely secular music, such as heard on the radio or in popular settings--the kind of music which would not be appropriate for Sunday Mass--is not considered appropriate for a wedding.

The proper use of music in a wedding ceremony is to support the liturgy. This includes the time before the ceremony begins, during the ceremony, and immediately following the ceremony. The use of CDs, recorded music (instrumental or otherwise), videos,

and/or slide shows are never appropriate in the church. These types of activities are much better suited to receptions or to rehearsal dinners.

The Music Director will assist you in your selection of appropriate liturgical music. The Music Director must approve any and all arrangements for music. St. Bernadette's is unable to accommodate musicians other than those utilized by the parish, except with the expressed written approval of the Director of Music, and then, a Parish musician bench fee will still apply.



SIZE OF BRIDAL PARTY

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lease keep in mind that a wedding is a sacred act of worship, and not a secular celebration or pageant. The size of the wedding party should not detract from the celebration of the sacrament and should not unnecessarily lengthen the procession. **Ordinarily, there should be no more than six couples.**

DELIVERIES & VENDORS

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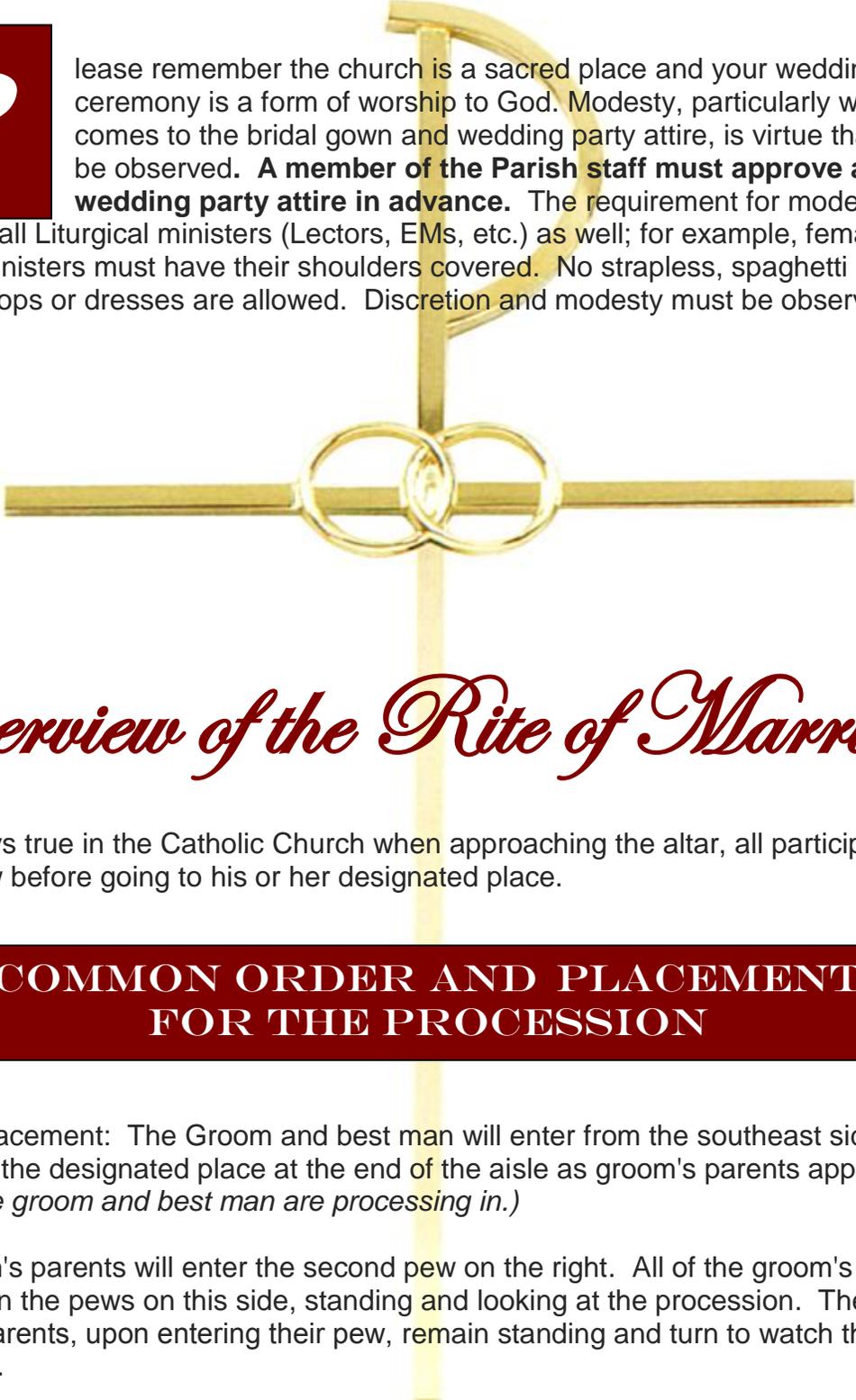
he parish is not responsible for anything that you have delivered to the church (flowers, decorations, etc.). Unless other formal arrangements have been made, deliveries to the church should not be made more than two hours before the ceremony. We will not sign for any deliveries; you must have someone here. You are also responsible for clean up and removal of all equipment, flowers and decorations.

Outside professional wedding coordinators are not allowed to participate in or to direct any part of the celebration of the sacrament of marriage. They may, however, oversee rehearsal dinners or receptions in the Parish Center or gym.

ATTIRE/DRESS CODE

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lease remember the church is a sacred place and your wedding ceremony is a form of worship to God. Modesty, particularly when it comes to the bridal gown and wedding party attire, is virtue that must be observed. **A member of the Parish staff must approve all wedding party attire in advance.** The requirement for modesty extends to all Liturgical ministers (Lectors, EMs, etc.) as well; for example, female liturgical ministers must have their shoulders covered. No strapless, spaghetti strap, or tank-style tops or dresses are allowed. Discretion and modesty must be observed at all times.



Overview of the Rite of Marriage

As is always true in the Catholic Church when approaching the altar, all participants should bow before going to his or her designated place.

COMMON ORDER AND PLACEMENT FOR THE PROCESSION

General Placement: The Groom and best man will enter from the southeast side and proceed to the designated place at the end of the aisle as groom's parents approach *(Unless the groom and best man are processing in.)*

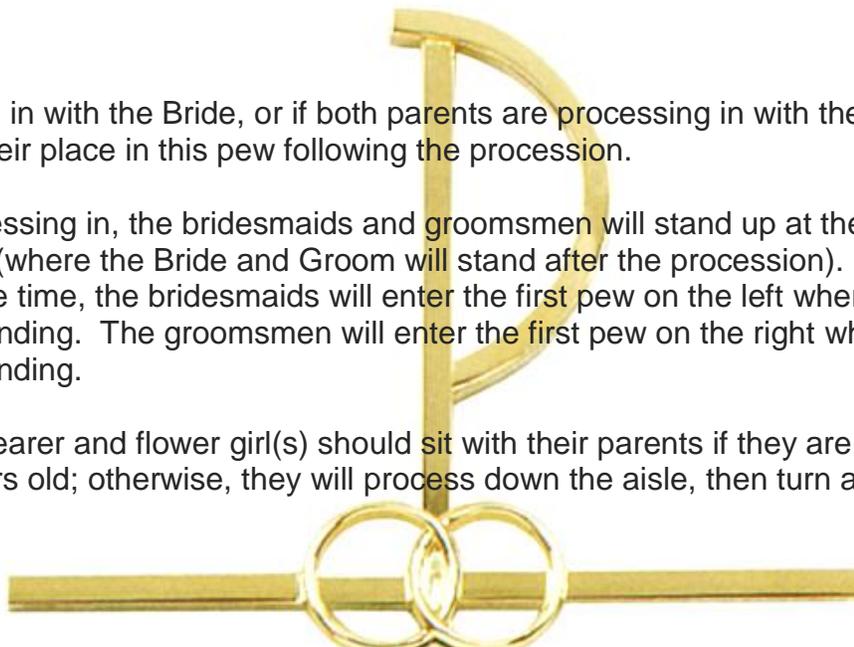
The Groom's parents will enter the second pew on the right. All of the groom's family should be in the pews on this side, standing and looking at the procession. The Groom's parents, upon entering their pew, remain standing and turn to watch the procession.

The Bride's parents will enter the second pew on the left. If the mother is seated prior to the procession, then she will stand and face the procession. If the father of the Bride is

processing in with the Bride, or if both parents are processing in with the Bride, he/they will take their place in this pew following the procession.

After processing in, the bridesmaids and groomsmen will stand up at the front near the Altar area (where the Bride and Groom will stand after the procession). When it is the appropriate time, the bridesmaids will enter the first pew on the left where they will remain standing. The groomsmen will enter the first pew on the right where they will remain standing.

The ring bearer and flower girl(s) should sit with their parents if they are younger than seven years old; otherwise, they will process down the aisle, then turn and walk around



the front pew (depending on which side of the family they are from) and enter into the far side of the second pew.

The maid/matron of honor will process down the aisle and stand next to where the bride will be, at the bottom of the steps, allowing her to help the bride with her train, her veil, and her bouquet.

The best man will already be up front with the groom (unless he is processing up the aisle with the maid of honor, after which, he will stand next to the Groom).

THE CEREMONY

During the Processional, as the bride and her father (and possibly the mother) approach the front of the aisle, he/they will shake hands with the groom and remove the blusher veil from bride's face (if one is worn). At this time, the bride's father (and possibly the mother) will go to his/their pew (second pew on the left).

Once the bride and groom are in place, the bride hands her bouquet to the maid of honor.

After the opening prayers, the readings take place. One or two readings may be used. The readings are to be proclaimed by a by a practicing Catholic. After the reading, the psalm is sung. From this point forward, the priest/deacon directs the ceremony.

After the homily, the priest will ask the bridal couple to stand. At this time, the bridal party will also step forward to witness the consent, the vows, and the exchange of rings.

At this point in the ceremony, The General Intercessions are read. The General Intercessions may be read by a practicing Catholic, a deacon, or the priest.

In the case of the Rite of Marriage outside of Mass, next would be the Lord's Prayer, the Nuptial Blessing, the offering of flowers to the Blessed Virgin, and the Final Blessing.

The Mass continues with the Liturgy of the Eucharist, Offertory, Consecration, Lord's Prayer, Nuptial Blessing, Sign of Peace, and Communion. After Holy Communion, the Bridal couple may visit the Blessed Mother with flowers. Upon their return to the front of the sanctuary steps, the entire wedding party (groomsmen and bridesmaids) will then be invited to join the bride and groom.

The couples will return to their places and the maid of honor will hand the bridal bouquet back to the bride.

The priest gives the Final Blessing, introduces the married couple, and the recessional begins.

Immediately upon leaving the nave (the central part of the church), the wedding party, the parents, the grandparents, etc., proceed back into the nave to begin taking pictures (for the allotted 45 min.) Usually the first pictures are taken with the priest/deacon. The couple proceeds to the sanctuary for the signing of the marriage license. If the bridal couple is not already civilly married, then they, along with the priest, will sign the marriage license at the table (near St. Joseph). This happens immediately following the wedding.

WEDDING LITURGY PLANNING

The first step in planning your wedding liturgy is identifying people who will assist with the mass. These people will have specific assignments:

1. **Readers(Lectors)**—Persons responsible for Scripture readings during the ceremony. Please note: The readers will need to practice the readings and be very comfortable with them PRIOR to the ceremony. *Please indicate that they will sit on far left of third pew on the north side, unless they are part of the wedding party, or the immediate family in the second pew.*
2. **Gift Bearers**—The persons responsible for bringing the gifts forward during the Mass. These persons should sit where they can easily exit the pew and move to the back of the church.

Everyone in the wedding party must be lined up in the narthex (the vestibule) *no later*

than five minutes prior to beginning of Mass or Rite of Marriage (according to the preparation sheet filled out by the bride and groom prior to the wedding rehearsal). **It is extremely important that we start on time.** If we start late, it will impact your allotted picture time. A late start can also mean that you run the risk of having only the Rite of Marriage (If this applies) and not a Mass.

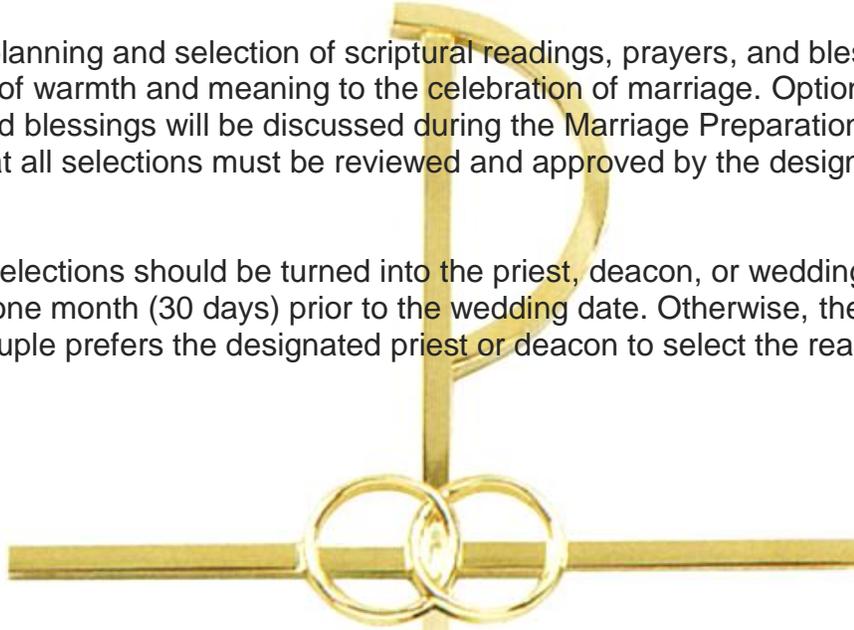
ORDINARY PROCESSION IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

- ✘ The Groom enters from the sacristy with the best man (unless processing with parents) and waits for the bride in front of the first pew on the right hand side.
- ✘ The Groom's Parents--The groom's parents may escort him in first, in which case he would be dropped off by them after bowing to the altar together, and the groom will then wait up front for the bride in front of the first pew on the right hand side.
- ✘ The Bride's Parents--When the bride's father escorts the bride, then the mother of the bride walks in unescorted or is seated ahead of time. Both of the bride's parents may escort her in if they want to.
- ✘ The Bridesmaids and Groomsmen-- However the couple want them paired up is fine. There is six couple limit (suggested).
- ✘ The Maid/Matron of Honor-- She walks in alone, or she can walk in with the best man.
- ✘ The Best Man-- is up front beforehand with the Groom, unless he walks in with the Maid of Honor.
- ✘ The Ring Bearer (Walk in!) *No wagons or motorized devices.*
- ✘ The Flower Girl(s) (Walk in!) *No wagons or motorized devices! No flower petals may be dropped.*
- ✘ The Bride processes in with her father, or both her father and mother.

PERSONALIZING YOUR CEREMONY

Prayerful planning and selection of scriptural readings, prayers, and blessings add a great deal of warmth and meaning to the celebration of marriage. Options for readings, prayers and blessings will be discussed during the Marriage Preparation sessions. Keep in mind that all selections must be reviewed and approved by the designated priest or deacon.

Scripture selections should be turned into the priest, deacon, or wedding coordinator no later than one month (30 days) prior to the wedding date. Otherwise, the assumption is that the couple prefers the designated priest or deacon to select the readings.



EUCCHARIST

The marriage of two Catholics takes place at a Nuptial Mass, wherein the couple receives the Body and Blood of the Lord in Holy Communion. Only chalices and sacred vessels of the parish may be utilized in accordance with liturgical norms.

The marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic may be limited to the Rite of Marriage, which includes scripture readings, the exchange of vows, and the Nuptial Blessing. The marriage between a Catholic and a Non-Christian (non-baptized) may not take place within the celebration of the Mass.

ST. BERNADETTE MARRIAGE/WEDDING POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing this document, we acknowledge that we have received, read and understand the Wedding Policies of St. Bernadette Roman Catholic Church. We agree to abide by these policies and to comply with all requirements. Violation of these policies may result in the cancelation or postponement of your wedding.

Groom's Name _____
printed

Groom's Signature _____ Date _____

Bride's Name _____
printed

Bride's Signature _____ Date _____

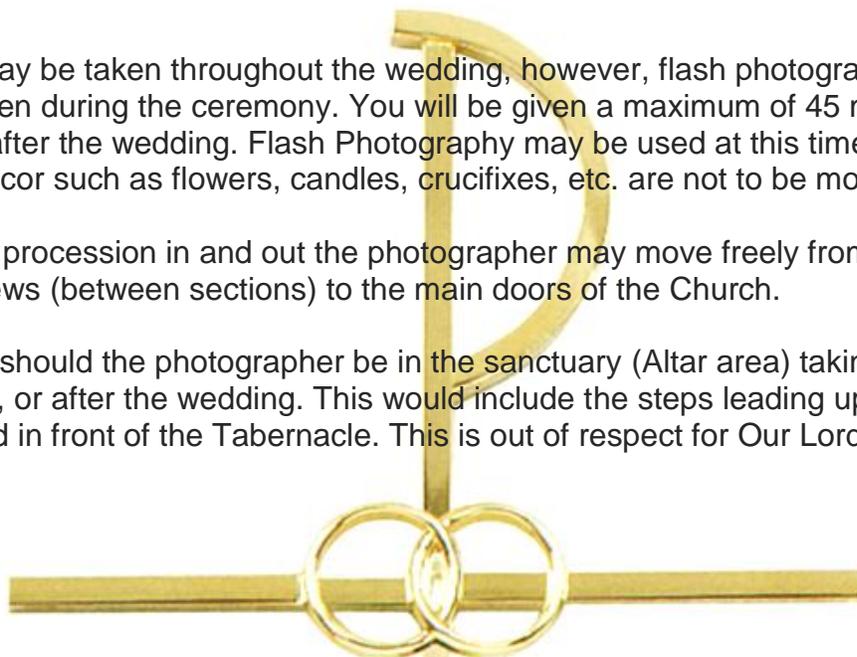
Parish Witness Name _____
printed

Witness Signature _____ Date _____

SPECIAL NOTATIONS OR COMMENTS

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY & PHOTOGRAPHY AGREEMENT

1. Pictures may be taken throughout the wedding, however, flash photography is strictly forbidden during the ceremony. You will be given a maximum of 45 minutes for photography after the wedding. Flash Photography may be used at this time. St. Bernadette décor such as flowers, candles, crucifixes, etc. are not to be moved.
2. During the procession in and out the photographer may move freely from the midway point of the pews (between sections) to the main doors of the Church.
3. At no time should the photographer be in the sanctuary (Altar area) taking pictures, before, during, or after the wedding. This would include the steps leading up into the sanctuary, and in front of the Tabernacle. This is out of respect for Our Lord.



4. The photographer may position himself/herself to the left of the sanctuary (Altar area), in the choir loft, or in the middle of the Church (midway point) during the exchange of vows, not distracting or obstructing the view of the people.
5. Family and friends who wish to take photos must be able to do so without the use of their flash and may not in any way move or place themselves in a manner that would interfere or detract from the sacred celebration. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to convey this policy to their family members and friends.

Please submit this signed Photography Agreement to the Parish staff at least two weeks prior to the wedding. The Groom, Bride, Photographer, and Videographer must all sign this document.

By signing this document, I agree to abide by the Photography Policy of St. Bernadette Catholic Parish. I understand that this policy will not be changed at the wedding rehearsal or on the day of the wedding. Violation of this policy may result in the immediate stoppage of photography/videography services and privileges.

Groom's Name _____
printed

Groom's Signature _____ Date _____

(continued)

Bride's Name _____
printed

Bride's Signature _____ Date _____

Photographer's Name _____
printed

Photographer's Signature _____ Date _____

Videographer's Name _____
printed

Videographer's Signature _____ Date _____