

# WEDDING GUIDELINES

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## CELEBRATING HOLY MATRIMONY

**The Wedding Party**—keeping in mind that the wedding is about the reception of a Sacrament ministered between the couple and God, we suggest no more than 4 bridesmaids and 4 groomsmen. Also, based upon our experience, we strongly recommend that children under the age of 4 not be part of the wedding party.

**The Procession**—in general, we envision that the bride and the groom would process in with their parents after the servers, priest, and the bridal party while the Opening Hymn is sung, much like a Sunday Mass. If the couple desires to enter the church with instrumental music, a gathering song must follow.

**Readers**—couples should make a copy of their selected readings for their reader(s) review. Please select an experienced reader (or readers) who will be comfortable in reading and not detract from the liturgy.

**Visiting Clergy**—priests, deacons, ministers, and/or rabbis are welcome to participate, but with the permission of the pastor. Please discuss this with him.

*In the case of a Mass (\*):*

**Presentation of the Gifts**—at least 2 people will be needed to bring the gifts of bread and wine forward at the preparation of the gifts.

**Communion Ministers**—couples should ask between 3-5 people who are extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to be present.

\* *Please remember that due to the sad divisions still present among Christians, those who are not Catholic may not receive Holy Communion.*

*Common Questions:*

**The Unity Candle?**—the revised Order of Holy Matrimony does not provide for inclusion of this ritual. Instead, after the consent an acclamation is sung, and after the giving of rings, a hymn may be sung by the assembly. A unity candle perhaps could be lit as part of a prayer at the reception. *Sand is not allowed in the church either.*

**Presentation to Mary?**—the revised Order also does not provide for inclusion of this ritual. The couple might witness their devotion to our Lady by the singing of a Marian song during the liturgy or including a prayer to our Lady at the rehearsal or after the liturgy.

## DECORATIONS

Appropriate decorations, such as flowers on the high altar or on stands near the altar, are fine; however, no flowers are allowed on top of the altar or in front of it. None of the sanctuary furniture is to be moved to accommodate flowers or other decorations.

Aisle runners are not to be used. Pew decorations, such as bows, are not recommended but allowed if they are attached without adhesive. Plastic clips may be used. Fire code does not permit candles to be placed on pews. Please have your ushers remove any decorations, flower boxes, and wedding programs, as well as do all the necessary cleanup of the church.

The throwing of rice, bird seed, confetti, rose or flower petals, etc. is forbidden, as they do not have a place in the Liturgy, nor are they safe for people who may slip on them—in addition, they make a mess.

## PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

Pictures may be taken **one and one-half (1½) hours before** and/or **one half hour (½) after** the wedding. The sanctuary may be used for these photos, but we ask everyone to maintain proper respect for the Blessed Sacrament. Pictures may be taken at any time **during** the wedding *by the official photographer*, but only from the main floor of the church and not the sanctuary. Preferably no flash photography during the liturgy.

Videotaping is allowed; but the videographer should see the celebrant for guidelines well before the ceremony.

## CONDUCT

**The wedding couple is always responsible for the conduct of all their guests.** The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is to be respected at all times by everyone present, regardless of their religion. Please do not use altars as tables for cameras, purses, or other belongings.

**Alcoholic beverages and drugs are strictly prohibited** and are absolutely not to be consumed on parish property or nearby, or at any time before, during, or after the wedding or rehearsal. *Breaking this rule will result in the immediate cancellation of the wedding.*

**Food and drink are not allowed in the church** itself and must remain downstairs. Please be sure to be tidy and to clean up after yourselves.