

The Sacrament of Marriage

Congratulations!

The South Seattle Cluster of St. Edward, St. George, St. Paul and St. Peter is glad to know of your plans to be married in the Roman Catholic Church. It is a special time in your lives, and it is a time of great significance for the Church

We celebrate together an event that affects both you and the Christian Community as you prepare to accept and embrace your vocation as a married couple in the Church. We are eager to help you understand the meaning, grace and power of the Sacrament of Matrimony. We want to help you make this a meaningful celebration of love, commitment, and faith as you begin your married life together.

We hope and pray that this period of preparation for your marriage will be blessed in every way. May God bless you in your love for one another.

This packet contains information to assist you with the many details of preparing for your wedding. In addition to this introductory page you will find:

- The Catholic Marriage
- Some Important Procedures and Information
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Preparation Checklist
- Wedding Liturgy Worksheets
- Wedding Music Information / Music Within the Wedding Liturgy
- Wedding Flowers and Decorations
- Wedding Photos and Videos
- The Celebration of Marriage Donation Worksheet
- Important contact information

The Catholic Marriage

Marriage is a Sacrament

A wedding is a sacred event. The love of a man and a woman is a reflection of God's love. Marriage and the marriage ceremony remind us of how God loves his Church; he loves his Church like it is his bride. Marriage, therefore, is a sacramental sign to the community of the real and active presence of God's love.

God makes his presence known to us through ordinary elements. In Mass we use bread and wine, in Baptism it is water and oil, and in matrimony it is the power of human love. In the Gospel, Jesus reaffirms the sacredness and permanence of marriage. In the sacrament of Marriage, a man and a woman promise to make present the dynamic love of Christ to each other and to the Church. While living out the mystery of their love, they become a source and a sign of God's love for the church community.

A Sacrament is a Community Event: A Catholic Wedding is More Than a Public Statement of Two People's Love!

The parish is primarily a community grounded on common expressions of faith. Any sacramental celebration in our parish is a celebration that affects the entire Church. Therefore, for weddings celebrated in our Church, we require that at least one of the persons is a practicing Roman Catholic who is registered and active in the parish. If they are active in another parish, the immediate family should belong to this parish. For Catholics a wedding is not simply a ceremony; it is a Liturgy of the Church, the beginning of a sacramental life. The Liturgy, whether it is a Mass or not, is a community prayer addressed to God by the Church. In the marriage ceremony, we celebrate in the context of our faith tradition. It is important to us that readings, music, and the other actions are consistent with our traditions for meaningful and prayerful Liturgy.

Important Procedures and Information

Marriage Preparation

Marriage preparation will entail collecting documents, such as baptismal certificates, statements of your freedom to marry, etc. Part of your preparation will be attendance at a course such as Engaging the Engaged, Engaged Encounter, a similar program at a campus Ministry Center, or individual pre-marriage counseling with a certified counselor. We need a minimum of six months to prepare a couple for marriage.

Wedding Times

Weddings may be celebrated on Friday evenings no later than 7:00pm and on Saturdays no later than 1:00pm. This is due to the parish Mass schedule on Saturday evenings.

Wedding Date

The requested wedding date will be noted on the parish calendar during your first meeting with the Pastor. When scheduling your wedding on the parish calendar, be sure to also schedule the time with the presider (priest or deacon) for your wedding. We are unable to celebrate a wedding in the Church unless all the paperwork and the preparation classes have been completed. We recommend that printing of invitations or programs not be done until after completion of the marriage preparation course. Weddings are not celebrated during Lent.

Paperwork

You will be required to present a baptismal certificate (issued from your church of Baptism within the last six months) upon meeting with the priest. Each of you individually will need to fill out a "Freedom to Marry" form with someone from the parish. Someone close to you (usually a parent or sibling) who has known you for at least five years will be asked to fill out a similar form. You must secure a civil license from your County Auditor within 60 days of your wedding and no later than three days before. The civil license should be left at the parish office at least one month prior to the wedding ceremony. We will fill it out and have it ready to be signed on the day of the wedding.

Presiding Priest or Deacon

A deacon or clergy friend/relative may preside at your wedding; however, any clergy from outside the parish must obtain official permission from the Archdiocese and the pastor. We would be happy to assist you in obtaining the proper paperwork to make this happen.

Wedding Receptions

If you wish to use one of the halls in our various parishes for your wedding reception, please contact the parish office as soon as possible to schedule your use of the facility. This is handled separately from the wedding itself.

Important Procedures and Information, continued

Wedding Coordinator

We expect that you will work with our wedding coordinator for the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. Please contact the office to confirm the date and time for the rehearsal with the coordinator at least four weeks before your wedding. It is his/her duty to assist you in the process of conducting the wedding rehearsal, coordinating with the presider, and access to the “bride’s room.” The wedding coordinator can also answer questions about decorating and placement of flowers in the church. The coordinator will be there to open the church for florists and photography. Outside wedding coordinators are not allowed for the church service. Since the wedding coordinators are giving a substantial investment in time, we suggest a \$150.00 stipend.

Use of Alcohol or Drugs

No alcohol is allowed before or during the wedding rehearsal or the wedding itself. Each person must enter into the relationship of marriage freely and of sound mind. This cannot be done under the influence of alcohol or other mood altering substances. If alcohol or drugs are used inappropriately prior to the wedding ceremony, the presiding minister **will** cancel the wedding. Please remind those in your wedding party about this important item.

Donations

Donations to the parish in association with a wedding are voluntary. It is suggested that a donation be considered which is proportionate to the cost of the wedding. In other words, you might consider donating an amount equal to a percentage (e.g. 10%) of the total cost for the wedding and reception. If a deacon or visiting clergy celebrates the wedding, an appropriate stipend to him is between \$150 and \$250. If the pastor celebrates the wedding, a voluntary stipend is appreciated.

We do not “charge” people for sacraments, however, we all know there are various expenses incurred for the use of facilities and the education and updating of ministers and programs. With this in mind we appreciate your thoughtful consideration of the following suggestions. (Also, please refer to “The Celebration of Marriage Donation Worksheet” at the end of this manual.) A typical donation to the parish is in the \$500 - \$1000 range. This donation helps defray the cost of the marriage preparation classes, educational materials, books, paperwork, and the consultation with the Pastor/wedding coordinator. All fees should be paid at least one month prior to the wedding. If you are unable to cover the costs of your wedding we ask you to talk with the priest to see what kind of arrangements can be made. **Note:** If the wedding takes place at a location other than one of our parishes (i.e.; out of state), a \$100 material and processing fee will be assessed.

Other Fees: Please refer to “The Celebration of Marriage Donation Worksheet”

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Address of the Church?

The official address of the church required for wedding invitations is:

St. Edward – 4205 S Orcas St, Seattle, WA 98118	St. George – 5306 13 th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98108
St. Paul – 10001 57 th Ave S, Seattle, WA 981798	St. Peter – 2807 15 th Ave S, Seattle, WA 98144

How do I plan the ceremony?

This marriage preparation packet contains a “Wedding Liturgy Worksheet” outline which will assist you in planning your ceremony with the presider and the wedding/music coordinators. Also available from the parish office is a book entitled *Together for Life* by Fr. Joseph Champlin which provides rich detail about the wedding liturgy and options for scripture readings and prayers. Please refer to the Selection Form in the back of the book. We ask that you fill it out to the best of your ability and make an appointment with the priest to finalize the liturgy no less than one month prior to the wedding.

May we have a Mass?

Where both bride and groom are practicing Catholics, a wedding ceremony including both a Liturgy of the Word and a Liturgy of the Eucharist, a Mass, is recommended. However, if one partner is a non-Catholic, a wedding ceremony including only the Liturgy of the Word is permissible.

Is a Ceremony outside the church building permissible?

Your wedding is a significant event in the life of our parish community. The bride and groom come to the church of their home, family and friends to publicly declare their love and commitment. In light of the fact that your wedding is a personal, public, and spiritual event, the only appropriate location for the ceremony is in the church. The Archdiocese of Seattle, following the Code of Canon Law of the Church, has asked us to adhere to this norm.

May we have our reception here?

We have a variety of spaces that may be reserved for wedding receptions. Contact the parish office as soon as possible to schedule.

May we choose any music we want?

Music must be liturgically and religiously appropriate. See the page entitled “Wedding Music Information” included in this packet. We ask that you refrain from choosing “The Wedding March.” It is not in keeping with Catholic liturgy.

Frequently Asked Questions, continued

Are there any limitations on dress for weddings?

Attire at weddings should reflect the sacred nature of marriage and the wedding liturgy, and also of the Church as a place of worship.

May we have an aisle runner?

Due to the danger of someone slipping, our insurance will not allow aisle runners.

May we have a Unity Candle?

The primary ritual sign of marriage is the exchange of vows and rings. Lighting of a Unity (or Wedding) Candle is not part of the Catholic wedding ritual. In addition, a Unity Candle can invoke a symbolism that is inconsistent with Catholic belief since we see the candle as representing the light of Christ. Also, in the tradition of a Unity Candle, two flames come together to form one and the two separate flames are extinguished. The Catholic perspective of marriage sees a man and a woman coming together to form one union, but the two still remain unique and separate individuals, each with an independent intellect, conscience and will. For these reasons, we recommend reserving the ceremony of lighting the Unity Candle for the wedding reception.

May we throw rice, birdseed, flower petals or have glitter?

No. For environmental, maintenance, and safety reasons, these are not allowed. Please see the “Wedding Flowers and Decorations” page in this packet.

May we use balloons as decorations?

We ask that you do not use balloons in the church. Reserve their use for the wedding reception. See the page entitled “Wedding Flowers and Decorations” for more information.

May we change the way the Church is decorated?

The highest priority is the celebration of the Church year and the Parish Liturgy. Decorations in the church serve to support Sunday and weekday worship. Decorations and furnishings are not to be moved. We invite you to coordinate the decorations that you wish to add with what is already established in the Church. Please contact the wedding coordinator for more details about flowers, decorations and church environment in general.

Can Father come to the Reception? To the Rehearsal Dinner?

It is customary to send an invitation to the Celebrant as a courtesy if you would like him to attend the Reception. If you wish for the Presider to attend the Rehearsal Dinner, please notify him as soon as definite plans have been made. Unfortunately, often the Priest will be unable to attend Saturday afternoon or evening receptions or dinners due to the Parish Mass schedule.

Frequently Asked Questions, continued . . .

How long can we use the Church before and after the wedding?

One can usually schedule the use of the Church two hours prior to the wedding. For Saturday weddings, the wedding party should be out of the Church by 3:00pm to accommodate the schedule for Saturday evening liturgies. Please note: there may be unexpected events, such as a funeral, which limit the availability of the Church for pictures and decorating.

May we have a receiving line?

We recommend planning for the receiving line at the wedding reception. However, a receiving line before the wedding, as your guests are arriving at the Church, or after the marriage certificates are signed following the wedding are allowed. Devote a full 30 minutes to the receiving line, and if planned before or after the wedding, please discuss this with the wedding coordinator so that she can help coordinate a smooth event.

Is there a bride's room?

The Children's Room is available for the bride and her attendants. Please consult with the wedding coordinator about the use of the Children's Room. On the day of the wedding, please assign someone to ensure that all your items are removed from this room before the wedding party leaves for the reception.

Marriage Preparation Checklist

- ❑ Meet with Pastor at least six months prior to your wedding date
- ❑ Read Marriage Preparation Packet no less than six months before wedding and note any questions you have
- ❑ Reserve your wedding date & presider no less than six months before wedding
- ❑ Make arrangements for reception no less than six months before wedding
Note: Most facilities require a deposit in advance and this may not be refundable after a certain date. Do not reserve facility before securing a wedding date & Presider!
- ❑ Choose your marriage preparation course no less than five months before wedding and let the Pastor know.
- ❑ Request required documents to be sent to Parish. Please submit to the parish as soon as possible, but no less than two months before the wedding. These include:
 - ❑ Baptismal certificate which must be a current copy issued within the last six months from the church where your baptism took place.
 - ❑ Letter of “permission” from your home parish for Catholics who are from another parish.
 - ❑ Decree of Nullity if necessary (if either party, Catholic or not, has been married in the past by civil or religious ceremony, an annulment is required.)
 - ❑ Complete “Freedom to Marry forms”
 - ❑ Have a relative or friend complete a similar “Freedom to Marry form” as your witness
- ❑ Complete marriage prep course about three to four months before the wedding
- ❑ Call Music Director to review music choices no less than three months before
- ❑ Apply for Civil License and turn in to Parish about four weeks prior to the wedding (do not apply earlier than 60 days prior—it is only valid for 60 days) The marriage cannot be conducted without this license.
- ❑ Meet with presider to go over the liturgy no less than four weeks before the wedding.
- ❑ Contact the wedding coordinator four weeks before the wedding.
- ❑ Pay all fees at least four weeks before the wedding.
- ❑ Plan for and use some quiet time together one to five days before your wedding. Pray and use this time to focus on the true meaning of the married life you are about to begin.

Wedding Liturgy Worksheet

Wedding Celebration Without Mass

***Entrance Procession**

(It is sometimes appropriate to use a hymn here)

Greeting

Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: _____

Read by: _____

*Responsorial Psalm (Always sung with Assembly)

Second Reading: _____

Read by: _____

Gospel: _____

Homily: (Presider)

*

The Wedding Rite

Exchange of Vows

*Exchange of Rings

Prayers of the Faithful read by: _____

*Nuptial Blessing

Concluding Rite

*Final Blessing

Introduction of the Couple

***Recessional**

() Indicates places where music would be appropriate*

Wedding Liturgy Worksheet

Wedding Celebration During Mass

***Entrance Rite**

Entrance Procession:
Gathering Hymn: (Optional)
Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: _____
Read by: _____
*Responsorial Psalm (Always sung with Assembly)
Second Reading: _____
Read by: _____
Gospel: _____
Homily (Presider)
*

The Wedding Rite

Exchange of Vows
*Exchange of Rings
Prayers of the Faithful read by: _____

Liturgy of the Eucharist

*Presentation of the Gifts by: _____
*Preparation of the Gifts
Eucharistic Rite
Holy, Holy, Holy
Mystery of faith
Great Amen
Our Father
*Sign of Peace
*Communion
*Thanksgiving Meditation

Concluding Rite

Nuptial Blessing
Final Prayer
*Final Blessing
Introduction of the Couple

***Recessional**

() Indicates places where music would be appropriate*

Wedding Music Information

Music is an important part of the Wedding Liturgy. Please work with the parish's music director. The music director will be a valuable resource as you consider what music to use and who will perform at your wedding.

Please give this information sheet to the musicians

Matrimony is a Sacrament celebrated within the context of a liturgy, either a Mass (Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist) or a Liturgy of the Word. In both cases the exchange of vows takes place after the readings and homily. Because weddings are a part of the liturgical prayer of the whole church and not a private ceremony of the couple or families, music should be selected for weddings using the same criteria as music for any other liturgy.

Music in Catholic Worship (US Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, 1972) gives three standards by which music for any liturgy must be judged:

- a) The musical judgment ~ are the music and text of good quality?
- b) The liturgical judgment ~ does the music fit into the flow of the liturgy? Would the piece be appropriate for a Eucharist with readings on the subject of married love?
- c) The pastoral judgment ~ does the music express the faith of the couple and the community? Is the music prayerful? Can the community participate in the music?

These three judgments have nothing to do with the style of the music. Music in any style can be appropriate if the three criteria above are observed. Two examples might be helpful:

- 1) *The Wedding Song (There is Love)* is appropriate for a Catholic wedding liturgy because of its references to Scriptures about married life. The phrase, "For whenever two or more of you are gathered in His name, there is love", reflects the belief that Christ is at the heart of Christian marriage.
- 2) The songs *Evergreen* and *Endless Love* are not appropriate. They are beautiful songs, but have no expression of faith or prayer. Because of this, these songs are best suited to the wedding reception.

Placement of Music in the Wedding Liturgy

This will be done in consultation with the parish's music director. It is recommended that you contact the music director at least 3 months prior to your wedding. Arrange a time to meet and to begin planning. Please note that pre-recorded music is not appropriate during the liturgy. The traditional model for music at weddings is with piano / organ and soloist. Couples need not feel limited to this. A good model to follow is the Sunday Eucharist itself, with congregational singing led by a cantor. This type of liturgical music is the norm and is highly encouraged. You may choose a mix of instrumental and vocal music. Again, please work closely with our music director.

Music Within the Wedding Liturgy

The following are options for using music within the wedding liturgy.
The list is not exhaustive, and all options need not be chosen.

Prelude: Organ / instrumental, or vocal solo(s)

Procession: Instrumental, assembly hymn, or vocal solo

Gathering Hymn: Optional

Responsorial Psalm: After the First Reading a psalm is sung

Gospel Acclamation: The Alleluia is sung before the Gospel by the cantor and assembly

After the Vows / Preparation of the Gifts: Vocal solo or instrumental

***Acclamations during the Eucharistic Prayer:** *The Holy, Holy, Holy ~ Memorial Acclamation ~ Great Amen* are sung by the assembly

Our Father: This is a prayer of the entire assembly and if sung, is sung by the assembly

***Communion:** Vocal solo, instrumental, or assembly singing

Recessional March: Organ / instrumental, or assembly singing

Postlude: Usually organ / instrumental

**These are included during Mass, but omitted in a non-Eucharistic service*

If the common format with piano and vocal soloist is chosen the question is often asked, “How many songs should we have?” For a Mass, the answer is usually three or four (prelude, responsorial psalm, after the vows and at communion). For a wedding liturgy without Mass, two or three songs are usually enough (prelude, responsorial psalm, after the vows).

Musicians

- You will need to contact the parish music director for a consultation about music.
- Parish musicians need not attend the wedding rehearsal.
- Please see “The Celebration of Marriage Donation Worksheet” for information about musician fees, which are separate from fees payable to the parish. Fees to musicians should be paid in full prior to the day of the wedding.
- Non-parish musicians need to work with our music director. Outside musicians are asked to respect the parish’s recommendations for music. Care should be taken to select only musicians who are experienced and capable of public performance, and knowledgeable concerning Roman Catholic Liturgy.

Wedding Flowers and Decorations

Please give this information sheet to your florist and any others responsible for wedding decorations.

Beauty and art enhance liturgical celebrations in the Church. We hope you will be able to individualize your wedding by the use of flowers and decorations while reflecting two basic demands of common worship: quality and appropriateness. The former demands honesty and genuineness in that which is used for decoration. The latter assumes that what is used has the capacity to serve, not distract from, the ritual action of the marriage ceremony.

Respect for decorations in the Church: The arrangements of the church décor even at special seasons such as Advent, Christmas, the Easter Season, and Pentecost must be respected. Such decorations will not and must not be taken down for the wedding. **Furnishings in the sanctuary will not be moved:** Anything that blocks the view of the sanctuary, altar or ambo is not permitted. Decorations may not be placed on the altar, or obstruct the view of or access to the sanctuary.

Set up: Due to the possibility of conflicting needs, it is normally expected that the church will be available for only two hours prior to the wedding.

Flowers: In general, live flower arrangements are preferred over artificial / silk flowers. The parish cannot be responsible for flowers and equipment (stands, etc.) left after the wedding, nor is the parish staff expected to wait at the church for flower and decoration removal. This must be done immediately after the wedding. If you would like any flowers to remain as part of the weekend liturgy, they are appreciated.

Candles: You may use the candles in the sanctuary. Candelabras are not available, and if you choose to rent them take care to protect the floor beneath them. Ask your florist about this. Candles may not be used in the aisles.

Pew decorations: Only use florist hooks for your decorations, instead of nails and tape, to attach flowers or ribbons to the end of the pews.

Aisle Runner: Runners are not permitted due to insurance restrictions.

Rice, confetti, birdseed, rose petals, potpourri and balloons: As noted in the “Frequently Asked Questions”, none of these are permitted either inside or outside the church, with the exception of balloons which may be used at the reception.

Clean up: Because other wedding or parish functions may follow, it is necessary to clean up the church immediately after the wedding. The sanctuary furnishings should be as they were found. We ask that all flowers, except those left for Sunday Mass, be removed. Parish staff must not be expected to wait at the church for the florist to return to finish the clean up. Please ask someone in the wedding party to take care of this for you.

Questions should be addressed to the wedding coordinator.

Wedding Photos and Videos

Please give this information sheet to your photographer and any others responsible for picture taking

Picture taking, including videotaping, is allowed in the church prior to, during and after the ceremony. However, the photographing or videotaping of a wedding should never cause a distraction or interruption to the flow and focus of the wedding liturgy.

The less movement by the photographer, the better.

Photographers shall not enter the sanctuary during the ceremony.

Video cameras should be placed discreetly.

The balcony is available during the wedding for photos and videos, and is often the best location for videotaping the entire liturgy.

Flash photos and video camera lights are not allowed during the ceremony!

We encourage taking photos before the wedding, as this usually makes the event flow more smoothly. The church will normally be available for this purpose two hours before the wedding.

All photography must stop no later than thirty minutes before the ceremony is scheduled to begin. This will allow the wedding party to focus on the greeting of guests, and allow the bride and groom time to reflect on the momentous event before them.

Questions should be addressed to the wedding coordinator

The Celebration of Marriage Donation & Fee Suggestions

While no one who is free to marry in the Catholic Church will be denied the sacrament due to poverty, there are many costs to celebrate a marriage at one of our parishes that will be absorbed by the parish if the wedding party does not pay for the services. We have offered this worksheet to help you discern a reasonable donation to the parish that will cover the services we offer below. Please check all that apply to you. If you are unable to provide the minimum suggestions for the services you require for your wedding, please discuss this with Fr. K. Scott Connolly, our pastor. He may be reached either by email, frscottc@stedwardparish.net or by telephone at 206-722-7888. We ask that you turn this form in to the parish with your check(s) no less than one month prior to the wedding.

Please turn in this bottom portion along with the check(s) to
the parish one month prior to the wedding

Names of bride and groom: _____
Date of wedding: _____
Time of the Service: _____

- (There is a \$100 materials and processing fee if we do your preparation at here and your wedding takes place elsewhere.)*

One check can be made out to the parish to cover the following (mark only those which apply to your wedding):

- FOCCUS: \$35 _____
- Stipend for the Presider: \$200 _____
- Donation for the parish: \$500 _____
- Hall rental for reception: \$1,000* _____

Separate checks must be made out for the following:

- Engaging the Engaged Classes: \$300 made out to Robert Fontana – Catholic Life Ministries. Classes are generally late January through Easter.
- Stipend for the wedding coordinator: \$150 and \$30 for the three altar servers
- Organist's fee for playing at the service: \$250
- Cantor: \$150 if cantor consultation is requested. (the cantor is optional for a wedding service that is not a mass, but is required for a wedding mass)

*If you or your immediate family is registered in the parish **and** has participated in our sacrificial giving program for over a year, we will charge a reduced fee of \$600.00 for the reception. *

Contact Information

St. Edward Parish, 4212 S Mead St., Seattle, WA 98118 – 206-722-7888

Pastor: Fr. K. Scott Connolly (Extension 112),
frscottc@stedwardparish.net

Parochial Vicar: Fr. Armando Perez (Extension 232),
frarmandop@stedwardparish.net

St. Edward Office Coordinator: Vince Sobrevilla, 206-722-7888
vsobrevilla@stedwardparish.net

St. Paul Office Coordinator: Anne Stanton, 206-725-2050
astanton@stpaulparish.com

St. George Office Coordinator: Ana Juguilon, 206-762-7744
ajuguilon@stgeorgeparish.com

St. Peter Office Coordinator: Ana Juguilon, 206-324-2290
anastpeter@broadstripe.net

Wedding Coordinators:

Kathy Dell, 206-760-7606, dellimagine@email.msn.com

Mary Antoinette, 206-779-5174, masmith@seattleu.edu

Musicians:

Diane Carrasca, 206-412-0826, carrascadi@gmail.com

Kyle Kirshenman, 206-681-6926, kirsky@gmail.com

Manuel Varona, 425-212-0032, manuelvarona@aol.com