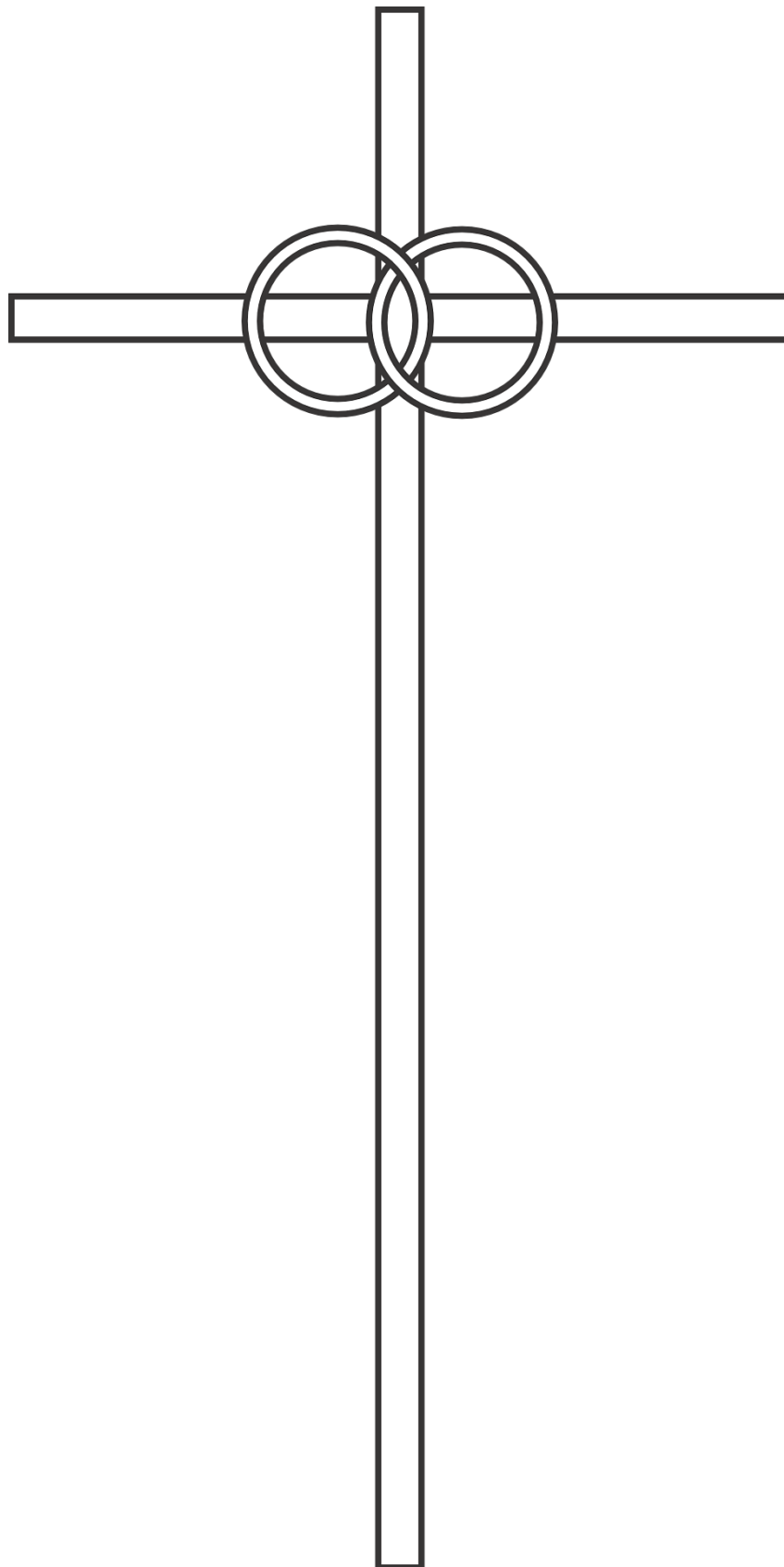


St. John Vianney Marriage Information Packet



Revised, 2024

Components of Catholic Marriage Preparation:

Preparation for marriage should begin at least 6-9 months prior to the intended Wedding date. It is expected that the Catholic party be a registered member of the parish and is regular in Mass attendance. If the Catholic party is not a registered member of the parish, he/she must obtain a letter of permission to marry from the pastor of the parish where he/she is registered. There are some date restrictions for non-parishioners. If you have not been confirmed, discuss this with the priest/deacon who is preparing you for marriage and he can let you know how you can be confirmed prior to the Wedding liturgy or soon after your liturgy.

The couple is to meet with the priest or deacon who will celebrate the Wedding liturgy with them. The initial meeting is to determine readiness for marriage. The couple is then asked to take the **Prepare/Enrich** inventory. It is a customized couple assessment completed online that identifies a couple's strength and growth areas. It is one of the most widely used programs for premarital counseling and premarital education. The priests and deacons of the diocese are trained facilitators who use the results to help a couple discuss and understand their strengths and growth areas and improve relationship skills. The couple is asked to take the inventory online at the same time and not to discuss their answers until they have completed the questions. Many couples enjoy going out for dinner after completing the inventory to discuss their responses with one another. The inventory is designed to stimulate a good conversation for the couple about the various topics which should be discussed prior to marriage. A couple will then typically meet with the priest/deacon two or more times to discuss the results.

A couple will also participate in a **Pre-Cana Day**. The Pre-Cana Day is a retreat/workshop experience for engaged couples. It is planned and facilitated by married couples of the parish and one or more of the pastoral staff members. The parish clusters with a neighboring parish, Saint Bede the Venerable, to host the day- long experience. A Pre-Cana Day is done each year at Saint John Vianney Parish in March, typically on the second Saturday of the month. The Diocese of Cleveland sponsors a number of other pre- marriage programs and they are listed on the Cleveland diocesan website - dioceseofcleveland.org. Go to the A-Z index and check out programs offered by the Marriage and Family Life Ministry. The priest/deacon who will celebrate your liturgy will help you to decide which Pre-Cana program is the best one for you to attend. A registration form for St. John Vianney Parish Pre-Cana is available on the parish website (SJVMentor.org), after the 1st of the year.

The Wedding rehearsal is typically done a day or two prior to the Wedding liturgy. There are individuals in the parish who will attend your Wedding rehearsal and Wedding liturgy to provide assistance to you and your family on your special weekend if you wish. Ask the priest/deacon for more information. It is customary to give them a stipend or donation for their services. It is not required that you use their services.

The Sacrament of Marriage

Sacraments are personal encounters with Jesus Christ. Every Sacrament brings us into contact with the saving activity of the Lord. The Sacrament of Marriage is a Sacrament of Vocation, a way of life that people choose to live.

The ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage are the bride and the groom. When they exchange Wedding vows, they share in the life of Christ that they received in Baptism. They become one on their journey to eternal life with God.

In the consent and Wedding vows, the couple agrees to unconditional love of one another, an exclusive life-long union to one another, and openness to children and raising children in the ways of Christ and His Church. Christ is the center of Christian marriage. Therefore, you should review your relationship with Christ and your willingness to abide by the faith that His Church professes.

Couples of different faith backgrounds need to honestly communicate where they are in each of their faiths and come to a mutual understanding and common way to express their faith as one. When a Catholic wishes to marry a non-baptized person or a person baptized in another denomination, the Catholic party must sign a promise in which he/she "affirms my faith in Jesus Christ, and with God's help, intend to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church ... promise to do all in my power to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and raised as Catholics." The other party needs to be informed of the promise and the obligation on the part of the Catholic party.

When two Catholics marry, it is expected that their marriage liturgy take place within the context of a Mass. When a Catholic marries someone who is not baptized, a Mass may not be celebrated and the marriage liturgy takes place within a liturgy not in the context of a Mass. When a Catholic marries a baptized Christian from another denomination, it is expected that the marriage liturgy take place not in the context of a Mass, unless permission is received from the Bishop to do so. The minister preparing you for marriage will help you to decide the best way to celebrate your liturgy. There are outlines for both types of liturgy below.

Required Documents

It is the responsibility of the couple to provide the following documents before the Wedding date.

Sacramental Record: Catholic parties are to obtain a baptismal certificate. The certificate may be obtained by calling or writing to the church where the baptism took place. The certificate needs to be a recent one (dated within six months of the Wedding) and it needs to be a certified copy. Drop it off at the church or give it to the priest at one of your meetings with him. If you are uncertain where you were baptized, he can assist you with finding out and obtaining a copy. Those who were baptized in another denomination should try to obtain a baptismal certificate from their Christian denomination or church.

Previous Marriages: If a person has been married before it is necessary to provide the following - either a death certificate of the former spouse (if a widow or widower) or a declaration of nullity (record of annulment). Couples who have been married before are not free to enter into any form of marriage preparation or schedule a Wedding without one of these.

Civil Marriage License: It is necessary to obtain a civil license **within sixty (60) days** of the Wedding date. It is obtained at the probate court of the county in which the couple resides when one resides in Ohio. If both parties reside out of state, ask the minister where to obtain the civil license. For Lake County, Probate Court is at 25 N Park Pl, Painesville, OH 44077. The phone number is (440) 350-2626. More details, requirements, & hours of operation are available at lakecountyohio.gov/probate-court. Please submit the license to the priest/deacon no later than the Wedding rehearsal. Call the Probate Court with questions.

Details Regarding the Wedding Itself

Because of the Sacred Nature of the Catholic Marriage, Weddings always take place within a Sacred Space (I.E. a church). Because of this, Weddings cannot be celebrated at reception venues, outside, etc. Please speak with one of the priests with any questions.

Regarding decorations and flowers, flowers are meant to add to the existing beauty of the church rather than distract from it. Flowers may be added to the pews and placed in the sanctuary of the church. However, they cannot be placed on top of the Altar or be higher than the Altar. As several factors will be evaluated to determine if flowers or other decorations are appropriate, it is best to ask the priest what you and/or the florist has specifically in mind *before* ordering. If there is another Wedding on the same weekend, **it is possible that you could work with the other couple and use the same flower arrangements to save money.** Feel free to ask the priest celebrating the Wedding if there are any other Weddings on the same weekend.

For a number of reasons, **birdseed, confetti, or rice** are not to be thrown at the bride or groom as they depart from church, nor are balloons to be released. Bubbles or bells may be used. It is preferable that an **aisle runner** not be used since it can become hazardous - people often trip on it when they enter or leave the church or when they process up the aisle for Holy Communion. If you wish to have a **printed program** for your guests, please show the program to the priest/deacon before it is printed. You are also responsible for assisting in removing all of the decorations after the Wedding.

Copyright laws must be respected. There is a **bride room** available off the gathering space of the church. Please designate someone to clean up the room after the Wedding and be sensitive to the bride who may have a Wedding after your Wedding. **No alcoholic beverages** are to be brought into the church before or after the Wedding liturgy. Please be mindful that the Catholic Wedding liturgy is to be celebrated in a dignified manner. Things such as **pets, wagons, and tricycles** cannot be used inside the church. Be careful with pew decorations to be sure that they do not damage the pew.

Be attentive and choose modest, beautiful dresses for yourself and the bridesmaids. Modesty is a virtue that shows forth one's inner beauty and keeps intact one's dignity. On a practical note, this means that the following should be avoided: low-cut fronts showing significant cleavage, low cut backsides, and open midsections. When in doubt, contact the parish office to determine if a questionable choice is appropriate. Keep in mind that almost all bridal shops offer the possibility of modifications. This presents an opportunity to modify gowns so that they are more appropriate for the Sacredness of the Wedding Liturgy.

Regarding arriving and setting up before the Wedding: The specific time that you will be able to arrive and use these rooms and other parish facilities is dependent on several factors. For example, if there is another Wedding or funeral before your Wedding, you will not be able to use the Bride's Room more than 45-60 minutes before your Wedding. If there is not a Mass, funeral, or Mass before your Wedding, the church will be available for you and/or vendors to setup flowers and other items an hour before the Wedding. It is sometimes possible to decorate earlier in the morning. However, this will be dependent on whether or not there is a Mass and/or funeral in the church prior to the Wedding. If the Wedding is on a Saturday, there is also the possibility of decorating the church the night before, at the rehearsal. However, this is also depended on Saturday morning funerals. Due to the short notice in which funerals can be scheduled, **you will need to check with the priest celebrating the Wedding within 5 days of the Wedding to verify the church's availability.**

There is not a specific requirement for the order of the **Wedding** procession. The details regarding the size and order of the Wedding procession should be discussed with the priest celebrating the Wedding. This is usually discussed within a month or two of the Wedding date, when you meet with the priest to plan the Liturgical details, such as Readings, Readers, etc.

Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist can assist with the distribution of Holy Communion if they are certified to do so by the Diocese of Cleveland.

Fees

Altar Servers: There are normally 2 servers to assist. It is customary to give each of them \$20.

Music for the Liturgy: The Music Director will discuss fees for the musicians. Each musician sets his or her own fee.

Priest/Deacon: There is no set fee for the priest/deacon or any obligation to pay him for his ministry. It is customary to *give* a donation of \$100 for the time he spends preparing you for this sacrament and celebrating it with you.

Donation to the Parish: If you or your family regularly supports the parish with your time, talent, and donations in the weekly collection envelopes, there is no fee for the use of the church for your Wedding. However, if you or your family has not supported the parish in the past with your

financial contributions, or if you are from another parish and are using our church for your Wedding liturgy, it is expected that you make a donation of \$150 to offset the expenses associated with the building and the maintaining of the church. .

Livestreaming Fee: If you choose to have your Wedding livestreamed on the St. John Vianney Website/Facebook page, there is a \$100 livestreaming fee.

Wedding Assistant, Debra Sobkowich: Debra Sobkowich is very familiar with the celebration of marriage at Saint John Vianney Parish. She is available to assist you at the Wedding rehearsal and on your Wedding day so that you have fewer things to worry about or attend to. She can be reached at 216-650-0434 or debrasob@aol.com to discuss the services she provides and the fees. It is not necessary to have her for the rehearsal or the Wedding liturgy, and you are free to bring your own Wedding planner or assistant as well. Many brides and families have found Debra to be very helpful.

Saint John Vianney Church Photography & Videography Guidelines

Photographers and videographers are welcome at Saint John Vianney Church. We simply ask you to respect the following guidelines.

Depending on the time and day of the Wedding, there may be scheduled events taking place in the church prior to the Wedding Liturgy, such as funerals or other Weddings. Do not assume that the space will be available to you more than a half an hour before the start of the liturgy.

Please be as inconspicuous as possible during the liturgy so as to not distract others from the sacred nature of the celebration. Please do not enter the sanctuary area at any time - that is the elevated portion of the church where the altar and the pulpit are.

The use of flashes and lights are permitted if they do not distract those who have gathered for the liturgy.

Pictures are permitted following the liturgy. Please consult with the priest as to the length of time that the church may be used for pictures. The length of time will depend on what else is going on in the church that day and is generally no longer than 20 minutes. On most Saturdays of the more popular months of the year there are two Weddings scheduled at the parish - one at 11:00 and one at 1:00. It is also possible that a funeral Mass would be celebrated on Saturday at 9:30.

Please control the noise level of the bridal party for post-liturgy pictures to the best of your ability. Remind them they are still in a sacred place reserved for prayer and worship of God. There is plenty of room in the gathering space for pictures as well as outside by our shrines and gazebo where we are not concerned about noise levels.

Please do not move any of the church furnishings for pictures. Please see the celebrant before the liturgy to ask questions or for further clarification of the above.

Wedding Liturgy Music Information

All Wedding liturgy music decisions will be made between the couple and the St. John Vianney Parish Music Director. Even if you are not hiring St. John Vianney Parish musicians for your Wedding, the director must be contacted before any arrangements are made regarding music.

Congratulations on your upcoming nuptials!

A few things to keep in mind as you begin the process of selecting music:

1. Fill out the “Wedding Liturgy Music Information Form below” and return it to the priest preparing you for marriage as soon as possible. The priest will send the information to the Music Director, and she will contact you. Once contact has been made, plans for your Wedding music can move forward.
2. Music at the church must be sacred in nature. Secular music is better suited for other parts of your Wedding day. St. John Vianney Parish does comply with diocesan recommendations on appropriate Wedding repertoire and the music director will guide you through the decision-making process and approve your music.
3. Budget \$200-250 per musician, as this is a typical musician rate. Musicians greatly add beauty to the liturgy and are well worth the investment!
4. Outside musicians must know the Catholic Mass. If they do not, you will be required to also hire an St. John Vianney Parish musician to attend your Wedding as a guide for the musicians.
5. When two Catholics get married, the Wedding generally takes place within the context of a Mass with Communion. However, **if one of the spouses-to-be is not Catholic**, Weddings do not include a full Mass with Communion. There are some exceptions, which you can discuss this with the priest preparing you for marriage. The details of both forms of Wedding are outlined below.
6. If you are having a Wedding Mass, you will be selecting music for the following moments: Processional/Opening Song, Responsorial Psalm, Offertory, Communion, and Recessional. If you are having a Wedding Ceremony (without Mass), you will be selecting music for the following moments: Processional/Opening Song, Responsorial Psalm, and Recessional.
7. Catholic Wedding Masses and Ceremonies do not include a unity candle.
8. Wedding Masses may include a moment to bring Flowers to the Holy Family.

Kathleen Schmitt, St. John Vianney Parish Music Director

kschmitt@sjvmentor.org

Wedding Liturgy Within Context of Mass

The Introductory Rites

1. **Welcome of the bride and bridegroom by the priest and procession into the church** (the welcome can take place at the door of the church or at the altar, depending on the style of procession chosen)
2. **Greeting** of the couple and congregation by the priest
3. **Gloria** (said or sung, except on certain occasions) and
4. Opening Prayer

The Liturgy of the Word

1. **Old Testament Scripture Reading** (nine options; if it is the Easter season, a reading from the Book of Revelation should be chosen instead)
2. **Responsorial Psalm** (seven options; many composers have set them to music)
3. **New Testament Scripture Reading** (fourteen options)
4. **Gospel Acclamation**
5. **Gospel** (ten options)
6. **Homily** based on the Scriptures, Church teaching on marriage, and the individual couple

The Celebration of Matrimony

1. Address to the couple by the priest
2. The **Questions before the Consent**
3. The **Consent** (two versions of the vows to choose from, and the couple can either say the words themselves or respond "I do" to the vows posed as a question by the priest)
4. The Reception of the Consent by the priest
5. The Blessing and Giving of Rings
6. The Universal Prayer/ Prayers of the Faithful

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

"The **Preparation of the Gifts** (the bride and groom may bring the bread and wine to the altar, or someone else may be invited to do so)

1. **The Eucharistic Prayer**
2. The **Lord's Prayer**, stopping just before "Deliver us... "
3. The **Nuptial Blessing** (three versions to choose from)
4. The **Sign of Peace**
5. **Holy Communion** (an appropriate Communion song should be sung)

The Conclusion of the Celebration: Solemn Blessing of the newly married couple and the congregation and **Dismissal & Recessional** (a hymn could be sung, or instrumental music could be played)

Wedding Liturgy Outside of Context of Mass

The Introductory Rites

1. **Welcome of the bride and bridegroom by the minister and procession into the church** (the welcome can take place at the door of the church or at the altar, depending on the style of procession chosen)
2. **Greeting of the couple** and congregation by the minister
3. **Collect/ Opening prayer** (six versions to choose from)

The Liturgy of the Word

1. **Old Testament Scripture Reading** (nine options; if it is the Easter season, a reading from the Book of Revelation should be chosen instead)
2. **Responsorial Psalm** (seven options; many composers have set them to music)
3. **New Testament Scripture Reading** (fourteen options)
4. **Gospel Acclamation**
5. **Gospel** (ten options)
6. **Homily** based on the Scriptures, Church teaching on marriage, and the individual couple

The Celebration of Matrimony

1. **Address** to the couple by the minister
2. The **Questions before the Consent**
3. The **Consent** (two versions of the vows to choose from, and the couple can either say the words themselves or respond "I do" to the vows posed as a question by the minister)
4. The **Reception of the Consent** by the minister
5. The **Blessing and Giving of Rings**
6. *Optional: a hymn or canticle of praise may be sung*
7. The **Universal Prayer/ Prayers of the Faithful**

The Concluding Rites

8. The **Lord's Prayer**
9. The **Nuptial Blessing**
10. **Blessing** of the newly married couple and the congregation
11. **Dismissal**
12. **Recessional** (a hymn could be sung, or instrumental music could be played)

Wedding Liturgy Music Information Form

Date of Wedding: _____ Time of Wedding: _____

Priest presiding at Wedding: _____

Bride's Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Groom's Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Are you having a Wedding Mass or a
Wedding Ceremony (without Mass)? _____

Are you interested in using St. John Vianney musicians? Y/N: _____

Are you interested in bringing your own Musicians? Y/N: _____

If you know the name(s) of the musician(s) you are interested in hiring (whether St. John Vianney musicians or others), please list their names, instruments, & contact information:

If you know what instruments you are interested in having, please select below:
(Check all that apply)

Organ _____ Piano _____ Trumpet _____ Violin _____

Other? _____

Is there any other information regarding music that you would like the music director to know at this point?

After filling out this sheet, please return to the priest with whom you are working. The Parish Music Director who will call you at least 2 months prior to your Wedding date concerning the above information.

