

## Wedding Guidelines at Nativity

The following information will help you plan your wedding day at Nativity. These guidelines are designed to ensure a beautiful and memorable liturgy while also maintaining the dignity and solemnity proper to any celebration in the House of the Lord.

Like any liturgical celebration, the Nuptial Mass focuses first on the adoration and worship of God. Within that context, we beseech the graces and blessings of God upon the man and woman who approach His altar seeking to be united in holy matrimony. The Nuptial Mass will follow the proper rubrics as set forth in the Roman Missal and according to Catholic Tradition.

### Setting the Date:

Remember that we cannot finalize the wedding date until the bride's and groom's freedom to marry in the Church is established. The required documentation includes both baptismal certificates and the completed 'B Forms' you were given at the initial meeting.

### Beginning on time:

It is vitally important that we begin the liturgy on time as scheduled. This shows respect for the guests, ministers, musicians and all others present. There are often events scheduled later in the day for which the Church will be needed. We wish to provide ample time for the solemn celebration of the wedding as well as picture taking afterwards. Beginning late may result in less time for pictures, and in extreme cases, a shortening of the liturgy itself.

### Marriage License:

The couple must obtain a civil marriage license and present it to the priest no later than the day of the wedding rehearsal. Typically, a license is valid for 60 days, so please ensure you obtain your license within that timeframe. The parish will return the license to the proper authorities after the celebration.

Important!! The priest cannot perform the wedding without the proper marriage license in hand.

If you are already civilly married, please provide a copy of your original marriage license with the initial documentation.

### Dress and Decorum:

As befits the House of the Lord and the solemn celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony, proper dress that is tasteful and modest – particularly for the bridal party – is essential and expected. Please bear this in mind when making your dress selections.

At all times within the Church, respectful behavior proper to the occasion and the sacred setting is expected.

### Nuptial Mass:

For two Catholics planning to marry in the Church, it is fitting and proper that the wedding take place in the context of a Nuptial Mass. It is a beautiful testimony of the couple's faith that their first act as husband and wife is the rendering of worship and thanksgiving to God through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and receiving from the Lord the great gift of His Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist.

If either the bride or groom is not Catholic, it is more appropriate that the celebration be a simpler Liturgy of the Word without Mass. This option maintains all of the other elements of the celebration but omits the Liturgy of the Eucharist and distribution of Holy Communion, which would only be distributed to the Catholics present.

### Music:

Music adds to the beauty and solemnity of this happy occasion and serves to unite all those present in the worship of God and in beseeching His blessing upon the newlywed couple. It is the couple's responsibility to contact our parish music director, Mary Ann Crawford, and our organist, Rodolfo Gramcko, to arrange for the wedding music. Their fees are \$150 each and should be paid directly to them.

A substantial repertoire of classical and traditional music is available. As is appropriate to the setting, only sacred music is allowed – no secular music or recorded music is permitted. Given the nature of the sacred celebration and to ensure the proper flow of the liturgy, we do not allow outside musicians, including family members, to sing/perform during the Mass.

You can reach Mary Ann at 954-547-6542, or simply speak with her after Mass in the choir area.

### Flowers and Decorations:

If you wish to provide flowers, please limit them to two standing bouquets, to be placed near the altar in the sanctuary. We do not allow streamers, runners, balloons or any decorations on the pews.

We would be pleased to accept the flowers as a donation to the Church for use after the wedding.

### Photography:

The use of a photographer and videographer is allowed. Please ask them to meet with the priest well before the liturgy begins for instructions about where they can stand or place their equipment. They will not be allowed to use flash photography or artificial lighting once the Mass has begun. The use of drones is not permitted.

After the liturgy, the bridal party will have 30 minutes to take pictures. Please maintain decorum during this time and ensure that all pictures are tasteful and modest.

As noted above, beginning the liturgy on time is important. A late start may result in a shortened time for pictures.

### Rehearsal:

We will plan a rehearsal a day or two before the wedding day. This is a vital part of the preparation that will ensure a smooth and beautiful celebration. All members of the wedding party, plus the couple's parents, readers, flower girl, ring bearer, ushers and anyone who will have a "moving part" in the liturgy should attend.

It would be helpful to assign two people to assist with the doors during the entrance procession and invite them to the rehearsal.

If you have not already done so by then, you should bring the civil marriage license to the rehearsal and give it to the priest.

### Readers:

You may invite family members or friends to proclaim the first and second readings of the Mass. Please select people who can read with clarity and devotion, and please provide them with a copy of your chosen readings so they can practice beforehand. The readers should be

invited to the rehearsal in order to familiarize themselves with the setting and the sound system.

Please see the section on readings. There are a number of appropriate readings for the celebration from which to choose. Should there be another reading you would like proclaimed, please discuss it with the priest.

The cantor typically will sing the Responsorial Psalm, and the priest/deacon will proclaim the Gospel reading and Prayers of the Faithful.

#### Cultural additions:

Certain cultural additions to the liturgy, including arras (coins), lazo (Rosary), mantilla (veil) and flowers to the Virgin are permitted. Please discuss these in advance with the priest if you would like to use them.

#### Miscellaneous:

We cannot permit runners down the aisle or the throwing of flower petals, birdseed, bubbles, rice, etc. anywhere on Church property.

If you would like a gift procession, you may assign 2-3 people to bring the bread and wine forward during the offertory.

We will typically schedule two altar servers to assist during the wedding. A small gratuity to them would be appropriate and appreciated.

Nativity is not equipped with a bridal dressing room.

Weddings during the season of Lent are permitted, but bear in mind the penitential nature of this season, which should be respected while planning for the celebration.

The bride and groom in particular should plan on making a sacramental confession before their wedding day. You may go to confession during the regularly scheduled hours offered at the parish, or the priest would be happy to make special arrangements if desired.