



St. Paul's Catholic Church

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1. General Guidelines

As Catholics, we believe that marriage is a Sacrament, and that the wedding ceremony is primarily an occasion of liturgical worship and prayer. It is therefore, very important that the various elements of the ceremony itself be in harmony with the accepted principles of good worship, and that they be conducive to communal prayer. It is also important that they be in good taste: A Catholic wedding should not be viewed as an opportunity for excessive display. There are numerous opportunities at the wedding reception to include elements of a more theatrical or secular nature. Anything that would distract from the prayerful nature of the wedding ceremony should be avoided. If you are tentatively planning anything that is out to the ordinary, please discuss it with the pastor *well in advance*.

2. Papers Needed

- A. Baptismal Certificates: Required for all Catholics; this must be a recently issued original (sealed) copy; it must have been issued by the church in which the person was baptized within **6 (six) months** of the wedding. This document may be obtained by writing or calling the church in which you were baptized.
- B. Marriage License: A marriage license may be procured from any town or village clerk in the State of New York. See legal requirements of New York State (page 3). A valid marriage license must be brought to wedding rehearsal.
- C. At least one of the parties must be a member of Saint Paul's parish; otherwise you will need to obtain from your Pastor a letter granting permission for the wedding to take place at Saint Paul's.
- D. If you were married before, then you must present a copy of your civil divorce decree and a copy of your Church Annulment Decree.
(N.B. A Church Annulment is required even for a Non-Catholic). If you do not have the Annulment we cannot schedule the wedding. Please talk to the Pastor if you have a previous marriage.

3. External Contacts

- A. MUSIC: Please make contact with one of the following organists:

Mark Radlowski
1203 Thorn St.
Utica, NY 13502
(315) 732-5187

Rita Ossont
1818 Dunham Road
Rome, NY 13440
(315) 337-3928

If you desire another organist, permission will be granted if appropriate. If you choose your own organist, it is understood that he/she should be an accomplished organist.



B. FLOWERS: You are to make your own arrangements for flowers for the church and sanctuary. If there is more than one wedding the same weekend, you are more than welcome to contact each other and go in together for the flowers. You may also use some of the artificial flowers that the church owns, talk to Father Kelly about this.

C. AISLE RUNNER: **NO** aisle runners are allowed.

4. OFFERINGS:

A. Church: You are welcome give the Church and servers whatever you consider appropriate, in accordance with your circumstances. As a guide, however, the offering normally given to the Church is \$125.00. This offering includes a modest stipend for the priest, the use of the church, janitorial service and materials used in marriage ceremony preparation.

Please bring the candles (large candle and the set of 2 smaller candles) with you to the rehearsal. The candles will be given back to you after the wedding service (or Mass).

B. Organist:

Organ only (with Mass Parts sung) \$125.00

Organist as Vocalist: add \$25.00

Rehearsal with vocalist: \$20.00 each time

5. REHEARSAL:

A rehearsal time will be arranged in consultation with the priest who will be officiating at the wedding ceremony. All members of the wedding party, including the ushers, bridesmaids, Maid or Matron of Honor, Best Man, readers (if any) and the Father of the Bride should accompany the couple to the rehearsal if possible. Because there are sometimes several weddings scheduled the same weekend, it is essential that all involved be on time for the rehearsal and the wedding itself.

**** PLEASE BRING THE MARRIAGE LICENSE TO THE REHEARSAL ****

6. SACRAMENT OF PENANCE:

An opportunity will be given, either before or after the rehearsal (in consultation with the priest) for any who wish, to receive the sacrament of Penance. It is recommended that Penance be received by anyone who has been away from the sacraments for a considerable period of time. However, if someone has a problem that might require longer discussion, it is recommended that he/she receive penance in advance of the rehearsal, possible by making an appointment with the priest.

7. RECOMMENDATION:

No rice or birdseed should be used to shower the couple. Bubbles or some other method should be used to greet the couple.



8. **CHILDREN:**

The inclusion of children in a wedding ceremony must be looked at realistically.

Please remember that young children have a very short attention span, which makes it very difficult for them to sit quietly and attentively through ceremonies which they do not understand. Therefore, we strongly discourage having any pre-school age children as participants in the ceremony, e.g. as flower girls or ring bearers.

9. **PRE-CANA PROGRAM:**

The Diocese of Syracuse requires a suitable program of preparation for marriage. This will be arranged for you by the priest who is assisting you in planning the wedding. Engaged encounter is another program of preparation available to you. Talk to Father Kelly about this.

10. **PLANNING THE CEREMONY:**

We recommend using the planning guide "Together for Life", by Msgr. Joseph M. Champlin. It thoroughly explains all of the available options in the wedding ceremony, e.g. readings from scripture, prayers, etc. A copy of this booklet is available from the priest.

11. **LAY PARTICIPANTS:**

A. LECTORS (Readers) are recommended. One is sufficient, two are recommended, as many as 4 may be used.

B. PEOPLE TO PRESENT BREAD & WINE (GIFTS):

At least 2, no more than 6 ordinarily. The presentation of gifts is recommended but not required.

C. EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS: for Communion under both species, one or two officially commissioned ministers may be used.

D. MOTHERS: may light candles next to Wedding candle.

12. **CONCERNING MIXED MARRIAGES:**

A. Permissions from the Bishop is required for a priest to perform a marriage when one of the parties is not Catholic. The Catholic party must agree to continue to practice his/her religion. This includes the intention of bringin up children in the Catholic tradition.

B. A CLERGYMAN OF ANOTHER RELIGION:

May take part in the ceremony. In special circumstances, permission may be obtained for this clergyman to be the principal officiate, and at a location other than a Catholic Church.

C. EUCHARISTIC HOSPITALITY:

This is the welcoming of individual Anglican and Protestant Christians to receive Holy Communion in our Roman Catholic parishes on particular occasions and under certain conditions in accordance with the procedures of the Diocese of Syracuse. For further explanation, please discuss this with the priest.

13. **LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OF NEW YORK STATE**

- A. A couple who wish to be married in the State of New York must apply for a marriage license in person and together to any town or city clerk in the state.
- B. A physical examination and blood test are no longer required in connection with applying for a marriage license, however, when applying for a marriage license, both parties must present documentary proof of age and identity, e.g. a birth certificate, a baptismal certificate, a valid driver's license, or some other acceptable proof. If you were previously married, you must also present the civil divorce decree or a death certificate as proof that the previous marriage has legally ended.
- C. A marriage license is valid for 60 days from the date of issue. Please remember that an interval of 24 hours is required between the time the license is issued and the time the marriage ceremony can take place (A license obtained at 4pm on Friday, can not be used for a 2pm wedding on Saturday).

14. **MUSIC AT CATHOLIC WEDDINGS**

Certainly every marriage is unique in that it is a covenant between two unique individuals. Naturally, you will want a ceremony which reflects you as much as possible. In choosing to have a sacramental marriage, you have chosen to have a ceremony which not only reflects your own uniqueness, but one which is consistent with accepted principles of good worship and the guidelines for the celebration of this sacrament. Therefore, it is important that you know the guidelines and that you plan in accordance with them.

To be perfect, music should follow the guidelines for music used in connection with the Liturgy; specifically:

- A. Congregational singing is encouraged;
- B. Specific elements of the Mass should always be sung by the congregation, such as the Alleluia (before the Gospel), the Holy, Holy, Holy , the Memorial Acclamation and the Great Amen;
- C. If the Lord's Prayer (Our Father) is sung, it is always to be sung by **ALL and Never as a Solo**;

If you have any additional questions about the music, be sure to discuss the ceremony with the pastor and musicians responsible for your music program as soon as possible. Music is an important part of any celebration. You will want every note played and every word sung to be as perfect as possible.

