

St. Catherine of Siena Parish



Wedding Preparation Guide

*In joining your lives may God grant you both...
Love... to afford each other a special quality of time
together.*

*Joy... in the accomplishments of one another.
Understanding... that your interests and desires
will not always be the same.*

*Friendship... based on mutual trust.
Courage... to speak of a misunderstanding
and to work on a solution
before the setting of the sun.*

*Compassion... to comfort each other in pain and
sorrow.*

*Foresight... to realize rainbows follow rainy days.
Imagination... to keep with you part of the child you
used to be.*

*Mirth... from your sense of humor.
Awareness... to live each day with the knowledge
that there is no promise of tomorrow.*

*May God bless you and keep you
in the Palm of His hand.*

PART ONE: *Preparing For Your Wedding Day*

1. **Interviews with the Priest**

Setting the Date and Time: All couples who wish to be married at Saint Catherine's must begin by having an interview with one of the parish priests. This meeting with the priest will confirm the wedding date and time and familiarize you with the various tasks you will need to complete in preparation for your wedding. According to the policies of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, you may have your wedding either in the church of the bride or the groom and there must be *at least six months* from the time of scheduling to the wedding day. Weddings are normally celebrated at Saint Catherine's parish on Friday evenings at 5:00 pm or Saturdays at 11:00am and 2:00 pm. Once your wedding date and time are confirmed, you can change it at any time by contacting your priest interviewer in writing at 321 Witmer Rd., Horsham, PA 19044. If your fiancé is not Catholic and you wish to have your wedding at his or her non-catholic church, you must still meet with one of the priests of Saint Catherine's to complete the necessary Catholic paperwork and preparations. If you wish, a priest will try to be present at your non-catholic Ceremony. **N.B.** Any change or cancellation of your wedding should be made *in writing* to your priest interviewer at Saint Catherine's Parish.

Visiting Clergy. You are welcome to have another Roman catholic priest in good standing (e.g. friend or family member) celebrate your Wedding Mass or Ceremony here at Saint Catherine's. Please provide the priest interviewer at Saint Catherine's with your priest's name and address. Please note that the priest interviewer here must still conduct all other paperwork and preparations at Saint Catherine's. If one of you is a member of another Christian church, you are also welcome to have your *non-Catholic Clergy person or minister be present at your Marriage Ceremony; please inform your Priest interviewer of your minister's name and address.*

2. Documents Needed.

At your initial interview, you will be asked to provide one or more of the following documents that will be necessary to properly process your marriage registration; Your priest interviewer will tell you exactly what documents will be necessary.

Baptismal Certificate. If you are baptized Catholic, you must provide a *recent or newly issued* baptismal certificate dated within six months of your wedding.

Do not use any older certificates your family might already have from your youth; instead, contact the church where you were baptized, tell them you are planning to be married and ask for a new copy of your baptismal certificate. **N.B.** If you were baptized here at Saint Catherine's, we will automatically provide that information for your wedding.

If you were baptized in another Christian denomination, you must submit an original certificate or any statement or letter from your church of baptism

Affidavits of Freedom to Marry. We ask that you provide two witnesses (e.g. parents, family or long time friends) who will sign affidavits attesting that you are free to marry. Your priest interviewer will provide you with the necessary forms to use. These affidavits should be signed before a Catholic priest to be official. Be sure to provide name, address and phone number of those people who are providing the witness testimony.

Other Church Documents. Depending on your personal situation, your priest interviewer may need to arrange special permission for you to be married, for example, to marry someone who is not catholic or to be married in a non-catholic church or a non-Christian ceremony. Your priest interviewer will inform you of these special permissions if they are necessary. **N.B. If you have been previously married in any kind of civil, religious ceremony or even common law arrangement, please notify your priest interviewer of this fact.**

Civil Marriage License. You should apply for your Pennsylvania marriage license about eight weeks prior to your wedding day; licenses are valid for 60 days. You may apply for a Marriage license in any county of the state in which your marriage takes place

3. Pre- Cana Instruction

In addition to your documents and paperwork, you will be asked to attend a special Catholic pre wedding preparation program called *Pre-Cana* (in remembrance of the biblical story of Jesus present at a wedding feast in Cana). These instructions will assist you in better preparing you for your future married life. Presentations will be given in the areas of: personal communication, conflict resolution, adjustments from single to married living, financial issues, in-laws, sexuality, parenting, spirituality and tips on planning your wedding day. When you finish your Pre-Cana instruction you will be provided with a **special certificate or tickets of completion**. Please return your certificate or tickets to your priest interviewer along with your other required documents.

Log onto the Archdiocese of Philadelphia website, www.archphila.org/home.php to find out about the different pre marriage preparation classes available to you.

St. Catherine's has offered Pre Cana classes in the past but because the availability of our classes is uncertain, we urge you to investigate other sources.

4.Planning your Wedding Mass or Ceremony

Choosing a Nuptial Mass or Ceremony- Engaged couples in which one of the parties is a *baptized non-catholic Christian* have the option of having their wedding in either a Nuptial Mass or Wedding Ceremony (i.e. Marriage rite without sacramental Mass).

If you choose to have a Nuptial Mass, please note that according to church law, the priest is not allowed to offer Holy Communion at the wedding to anyone who is not Catholic. Engaged couples in which one of the parties is *not baptized* are required to Celebrate their wedding as a Ceremony. It is required that both parties be baptized in order to have a Nuptial Mass.

Planning your Marriage Liturgy- After you have completed the Pre-Cana instruction you will receive the book Entitled “TOGETHER FOR LIFE”. With this book you can choose the various biblical readings, prayers, and blessings to be used for your wedding day. Included at the end of this policy manual are two liturgy planning sheets for either a Nuptial Mass or ceremony. Please fill out the appropriate sheet including all choices for your wedding day. Please indicate the correct *element or item number or letter* found in the liturgy planning book for each of your selections. The liturgy planning sheet also allows you to include those family or friends whom you wish to proclaim readings or prayers of intercession, those who will be bringing up the offertory gifts, as well as additional elements (*see below*) in your wedding. This liturgy sheet should be filled out and submitted to your priest interviewer along with your other wedding preparation documents.

Additional Elements- You are permitted to have a *Presentation At The Blessed Virgin Mary Altar*: where the bride or couple offers flowers and private prayers of intercession to our Blessed Lady. Please make the selection on your liturgy planning sheet found at the end of this policy manual if you wish to include this option.

Wedding Booklets- If you plan to print a special wedding booklet, a sample is provided in your Marriage Preparation Folder for your assistance and convenience. Please be sure to provide a copy of your wedding booklet to your priest celebrant.

Altar Servers- Two altar servers from Saint Catherine's will be assigned to assist the priest on your wedding day. If you wish to have special altar servers either from Saint Catherine's Parish or from members of your family or friends, please inform your priest interviewer as soon as possible.

PART TWO:

1. Rehearsal

Rehearsal date and time should be scheduled through the rehearsal coordinator after Pre-Cana instruction. All members of your bridal party as well as any readers and those in the offertory procession should be present for the rehearsal. Bridal consultants may be present but should check with the person conducting the rehearsal for policies and procedures. We ask that all the people in your wedding party **be on time for your rehearsal and follow carefully the instructions given by the coordinator conducting the rehearsal.**

All catholic persons are strongly encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) in preparation for their wedding day. However, Confessions are normally **not** provided at your rehearsal time. You are requested to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation at some time other than the rehearsal.

Confessions are heard weekly at Saint Catherine's Parish on Saturdays: 3:30pm to 4:30pm. or by special prior appointment.

2. Photography

Still Photography. Professional flash photography is permitted during all Saint Catherine's weddings. Photographers are permitted anywhere *outside* the sanctuary area (i.e. outside the altar rail) but we ask that your photographer meet with your priest celebrant on your wedding day before the service begins to discuss particular policies and restrictions.

Videography. Video camera photography is also permitted during weddings. Video cameras should *be mounted on tripods with no external or additional lighting.*

Camera operators should be *outside* the church sanctuary. Wireless microphones are permitted but their use should be checked first with the priest celebrant for possible frequency conflict, as he will also be using wireless amplification during the wedding. Please have your videographer also meet with your priest celebrant on your wedding day before the service begins to discuss policies and restrictions.

Pictures after Wedding. You are allowed to have wedding photographs taken in church after your wedding *if there is time permitting.* More time may be allotted if there is no wedding following a morning wedding. Marriages at 2:00pm must be finished by 3:30pm due to parish Sacramental Confessions and the evening Vigil Mass. We ask that all family and bridal party members maintain an attitude of reverent respect and decorum especially at the altar area and near the rear confessionals following weddings particularly during wedding photographs and the receiving line.

3. Church Decoration

Flowers- You may provide additional flowers in the sanctuary. If you would like to *leave your flowers then they will be on the altar at all the Masses that weekend in celebration of your wedding*. All flowers should be fresh cut; no dried or silk flowers. You may share the cost of floral displays with other couples who are planning their wedding on the same day; ask your priest interviewer if you wish to contact other engaged couples. You may put flowers in front of the altar or anywhere in the sanctuary but we ask that you do not disturb any parish displays, which may be on the windowsills along the church walls. If you plan to celebrate your wedding during the liturgical seasons of Advent or Lent, we ask that you respect the penitential nature of these times and keep your floral displays simple while respecting the parish liturgical art and environment which may be present in the church. **N.B.** Saint Catherine's parish Decorates its church with numerous plants, trees and flowers during the liturgical seasons of Christmas and Easter. We ask that *you do not put flowers in the sanctuary during the seasons of Christmas and Easter*, as it is both unnecessary and most times contradictory to the art and environment already in place.

Pews and Bows- Pew bows are permitted with the following restrictions: limit them to the bridal party and family pews, and attach them with clips or ribbons; *do not use adhesive tape*. Only the parish altar candles are permitted to be used during your wedding. ***No additional candles either in the church aisles or along the windowsills are permitted.***

Church Decoration (continued)

Unity Candles: This ceremony is not permitted in Church. Please refer to separate booklet about the proper time/place to include the Unity Candle in your Wedding celebration.

(revised 8/2013)

Aisle Runners: We do not allow the use of Aisle Runners due to the hazard they pose to those walking to the pews.

(revised 8/2013)

4. Other Issues

Before the Wedding. Please make every effort to ensure that you and your bridal party *are on time for your wedding*. We understand that it is a very busy day, but in fairness to your priest celebrant, invited guests as well as other celebrations that will be scheduled in the church on that same day, we ask that you be ready to begin at your Designated time.

Receiving Line. You are permitted to have a receiving line in the church vestibule following your wedding. Please be mindful of your time allotment if you wish to have wedding pictures taken as well. (*See “pictures after the wedding” on previous page*).

Rice, Confetti, etc. Please be advised that you are not permitted to throw rice, confetti, bird seed, or any other material either inside or anywhere on the church grounds because it pollutes the church property and makes walkways and entrances more hazardous for those attending the evening Vigil Mass. WE also discourage the release of helium balloons anywhere on the church grounds because it is harmful to the environment. We ask that you communicate these prohibitions to all family and friends who will be attending your wedding. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

General Conduct. While we hope that your wedding day is a joyful and happy event, we ask that you bear in mind that it is a spiritual, liturgical celebration. We ask that you, your wedding party and guests conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to such a celebration especially during the rehearsal, before, during and after the wedding itself both inside the church building and outside on the church grounds.

Catherine of Siena Catholic Church

Marriage Fees

*All fees for your wedding should be remitted to Saint Catherine of Siena Church **prior** to your wedding. We ask that you place each payment in a separate envelope with the name of the fee marked on the outside. The fee for the church should be a check made payable to St. Catherine of Siena. The fee for the rehearsal coordinator should be made payable to Lori Ingersoll. All other payments should be made in cash as the accompanists and servers vary from wedding to wedding. Please drop off your fees to the Parish Office at least 5 days before your wedding date. We ask that you make the following payments:*

Church Fee (*for use of church, heat, A/C, electricity, etc.*).....\$200
Non-Parishioner\$325

Organist Fee\$135
Cantor Fee..... \$135

Contact our music coordinator at weddingmusic@stcatherineschurch.org

(N.B. Fees for some musicians, cantors, guitarists, groups, and choir may be different)

Rehearsal Coordinator.....\$75

Sacristan.....\$50

Altar Server Fees (2) (*please put in separate envelope*).....\$10



*And they lived
happily ever after!!*