

Preparation for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage



*Soon you will be participating in the
Sacrament of Matrimony.
On behalf of the Clergy and Staff
of St. Paul of the Cross,
we pray that Our Lord may bless you
in this time of preparation
with much holiness and peace.*

*The following guidelines are intended
to assist you as you plan for that day which,
before God and His people,
you will promise to love until death,
to live together for life.
Responsible participation
in this marriage preparation
process indicates a serious understanding
of the lifetime commitment
you will make to one another.*

ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH

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SCHEDULING

Ideally, you should contact our Parish Office at least six months to one year prior to your proposed wedding date. During the initial interview with the Priest or Deacon, tentative wedding and rehearsal dates can be scheduled. However, these dates are not finalized until all the necessary requirements have been completed and a deposit has been made.

Our weddings are held on Saturdays at 12:00, 2pm or 2:30 pm.

FOCCUS PRE-MARRIAGE INVENTORY

FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study) is required as part of the marriage preparation process. This inventory incorporates Catholic teaching about faith and marriage and utilizes a trained sponsor couple approach to help couples prepare for your lifelong commitment to each other. It is administered by a couple from our parish, who will contact you several months before your marriage. If you have any questions, call the parish office.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Also required as part of the marriage preparation process, the **Diocesan Marriage Preparation Program**, is a full-day schedule which helps to promote and enrich your relationship based upon open and honest communication between you as a couple. You may register online at www.diocesepb.org/marriage-preparation-program-registration-form#

For those who have been previously married and completed the annulment process, a special breakout session is offered at select Marriage Preparation programs. Call the Office of Family Life at the Diocese of Palm Beach (561-775-9557) to register for this program. The cost per couple for both programs is \$90, which includes a continental breakfast and lunch. Dates do fill up quickly because of great demand.

DOCUMENTS & FORMS

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATES

Catholics must obtain from their parish of Baptism a certificate **updated within 6 months prior to Marriage**. Baptized non-Catholic Christians should present a **copy** of their original Baptism certificates.

2. At the first meeting with a Priest or Deacon, the PRE-NUPTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE (Form A) is completed, along with any other documents which may be appropriate to a couple's particular circumstances. (Dispensations, Annulments, Permissions, etc.) You will also be given witness forms which will need to be completed.

Note 1: Couples in need of Annulments may need extra time (more than a year) for all documents to be completed.

Note 2: In the case of a wedding at St. Paul's where the couple lives elsewhere, all documents and forms should be prepared and completed by you and your parish priest. He should then submit the completed file a few months in advance to your Diocese and then to the Marriage Tribunal, Diocese of Palm Beach, P. O. Box 109650, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410.

3. MARRIAGE LICENSE

This is an absolute legal requirement for marriage in the state of Florida. The following guidelines apply in Palm Beach County:

- (a) Both parties must apply together, and each must submit a valid photo ID. such as a U.S. Drivers License, Federal or State ID, or passport showing name & date of birth. Birth certificates or green cards are not acceptable.
- (b) Application fee of \$93.50. The discounted cost is \$61, if you present a copy of your certificate from the Marriage Preparation program.
- (c) Applications are only accepted between 8:00am & 4:00pm Monday through Thursday. It takes approximately 20 minutes and no appointment is necessary.
- (d) A Marriage License may be used immediately and is only valid for 60 days. It is valid in any county in Florida, and no waiting period is required.

- (e) If either party has been married before, and the marriage ended in divorce, you must know the exact date of the final divorce. If the marriage ended by death, you may present a copy of the death certificate, but it is not required.
- (f) During your wedding ceremony, the Priest or Deacon, as well as your Best Man & Maid/Matron of Honor, will sign the license. The Parish Office will handle mailing the license & the Clerk of the Court will mail your certified copy of the License within approximately 3-4 weeks. For further information, call the north County Courthouse at 561-355-2996.

OFFERINGS

The Church offering is \$500 (\$250 for use of the Chapel) from parishioners who are registered for at least six months prior to setting a wedding date, or \$750 (\$350 for the Chapel) from non-parishioners. A deposit of 50% is required to hold your wedding date/time. The remainder is due at least one month in advance of the wedding date, which will cover the following stipends:

Use of Church at Rehearsal & Wedding (A/C, lighting, etc.)
Books & Materials; FOCCUS Program & Clergy Stipend

MUSIC

Music has an important and special place in your wedding. Secular or popular music is inappropriate for use in church and should be reserved for the reception. Contact our music director who will gladly help you with your selections from appropriate sacred music.

REHEARSAL & WEDDING CEREMONY

The date & time of the rehearsal should be scheduled with the Priest or wedding coordinator well in advance. Please bring your marriage license, a copy of your program and unity candle set (if you are using them) to the rehearsal. Please be punctual. The wedding party should always be properly dressed for Church out of respect for the Blessed Sacrament. Low cut dresses or gowns are inappropriate.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Catholics are strongly urged to make use of this Sacrament prior to the wedding. Confessions are heard from 8:30 AM on Saturdays or by appointment with a priest.

CONTEXT OF THE WEDDING RITE

The ideal setting for the Sacrament of Matrimony is within Mass, which celebrates God's greatest act of love for us and offers us the opportunity to receive the Eucharist. However, for pastoral reasons, the option of having the wedding *ceremony* outside of Mass is given.

Conference Room

This room may be used before the wedding by the bridal party. There are water fountains outside the Conference Room. **No food or drink (especially alcohol) is allowed in this room.** After the wedding & pictures, you are responsible for leaving the room the way you found it.

The Scripture Readings & Prayers

The Priest or Deacon will help you choose the appropriate prayers and readings for your wedding ceremony. You may choose one or two readings from the *Together for Life* booklet. The Priest or Deacon will proclaim the Gospel. He may also read the other reading(s), or you may invite one or two people to read.

Exchange of Vows & Blessing of Rings

By the solemn exchange of vows, you bestow the Sacrament upon one another. The Priest or Deacon may invite you to declare the vows, or he may ask the vows with you responding "I do". The blessing of rings follows the vows.



The Wedding Candle (Optional)

You may wish to purchase a candle and together light it at the altar, expressing your new communion with Christ and with each other. The candle stand can usually be rented through the florist. For fire hazard reasons, we do not allow candles on the pews. Dripless candles are allowed on the altar.



Rice and Birdseed

The throwing of rice, confetti or birdseed is not permitted on Church grounds. There is a danger of someone slipping or falling on the sidewalks or pavement.

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Wedding Mass)

Following the Preparation of the Gifts, the Mass proceeds as usual. There are special prayers & blessings for the Bride and Groom. The Peace Greeting may be extended to your family and wedding party if you wish. Holy Communion may be received under both species, the sacred Body and Blood of Christ, by the bride and groom.

Prayer to the Blessed Mother (Optional)

The Groom may escort the Bride to offer their prayers before the Blessed Mother.



Flowers

Flowers may be placed at the sides of the altar. Flowers and ribbons are not to be taped, glued or wired to the pews. Please use rubber bands or cloth ties. White runners are available from most florists, though this is not necessary in our carpeted Church. The aisle in the church is approximately 67 feet long, the aisle in the Chapel is 30 feet long. If the Flower Girl will be dropping petals, they must be made of silk and picked up after the wedding.

Wedding Reception

Our beautiful Ave Maria Banquet Room is available for receptions and seats over 300 people. Our Parish Hall holds up to 175 guests. Call the Parish Office for more information.



WEDDING GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS CHURCH

We welcome both still and video photographers. Due to the sacredness and the solemnity of the ceremony, the following is required of all photographers:

1. *Prior to the Ceremony:*

At no time should the photographers enter the Sanctuary (marble area).

2. *The Seating of the Mothers and the Procession:*

Flash photography may be used as they come down the aisle. Do not stop any of the attendants or obstruct the flow of the procession.

3. *During the Ceremony:*

Flash photography and flood lights may not be used. Pictures without flash may be taken from the back of the Church. No movement in the front carpeted area is acceptable or allowed.

Videographers may be stationed and remain in one place throughout the ceremony.

4. *Following the Ceremony:*

Flash photography may be used as the wedding party leaves the Church. Pictures may be taken in front of the Sanctuary for a limited time of 30 minutes following your wedding. Other ceremonies may follow and the Church will need to be rearranged.

Thank you for your cooperation.