

*The Sacrament
of Marriage*



*Planning
Guide*

*The love of
husband and wife
is the force that welds
society together.*

-St. John Chrysostom-



Congratulations!

A wedding is a time of joy for the engaged couple, your family and friends, and the church.

As you plan for your wedding, there will be many considerations including family expectations, civil laws, and church guidelines.

This planning guide is designed to help you plan and celebrate your wedding ceremony in a way that is joyful and keeps within our Catholic tradition.



The Sacrament of Marriage
is a covenant,
which is more than a contract.

Covenant always expresses
a relationship between persons.

**The marriage covenant
refers to the permanent
union between the
husband, wife, and God.**



Expectations of couples wishing to get married at Pax Christi or SS Peter and Paul:

- ♥ Meet with the priest or deacon who will be presiding at your wedding AT LEAST six months prior to the date of your wedding to plan your ceremony.
- ♥ Send a copy of the bride's and groom's Baptismal certificates to the parish office.
- ♥ Complete a pre-nuptial questionnaire.
- ♥ Complete a FOCCUS pre-marriage inventory and attend follow-up discussion sessions with a parish facilitator couple.
- ♥ Attend a Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter weekend as a couple. For a list of dates refer to the Diocese of Winona website (dow.org) or engagedencounter.org.
- ♥ Contact Mark Scheitel, Director of Music, at Pax Christi. (507-272-9756) He will assist you in selecting sacred music that will enhance your ceremony. If needed, he can give you suggestions for a vocalist. Mark will also review your wedding program prior to publication.

The marriage liturgy, by use of sign and symbols to engage our senses and soul, will help the Christian community experience God's presence in your wedding celebration.



If the bride and groom are both Catholic, we encourage you to have Mass with communion. If the bride and groom are of different faith denominations, we recommend **no Mass** with the wedding ceremony.

The reason for this is that if those attending cannot share in the entire liturgy (e.g. communion) at a time when unity is imperative, it is best to avoid the potential conflict of differences.

Ministries

The Assembly

All who gather to celebrate your marriage are encouraged to fully participate in the music and prayer as they give thanks for their role in your lives.

Bride and Groom

The Sacrament of Marriage is conferred on each other by the bride and groom. The priest or deacon represents the Church.

As Catholic Christians, we recognize marriage as a sacrament given to the couple by each other.

This means Christ has established it as a special means by which you receive God's strength and blessing. In addition, by your life and love you will be witnesses of God's love to those around you.

Eucharistic Minister

If your wedding liturgy includes Eucharist, three commissioned Eucharistic ministers are needed to assist in the distribution of communion. We encourage communion under both forms of bread and wine. Our Catholic tradition invites non-Catholics to come forward to receive a blessing, rather than receiving the Body of Christ.

Florist

Some flowers are welcome in the sanctuary. The seasons of the liturgical year are to be respected; decorations may not interfere with or change the prepared environment of the church. Flowers are never to be placed on the ambo (lectern) or the altar. Flower stands are available for your use.

Lector

Choose a reader qualified to speak publicly and proclaim the Word of God sincerely. You may have one person read the Old Testament reading, the New testament reading, and the Prayers of the Faithful, or choose three different people. Readers will have the opportunity to practice in our church.

Photographer

Photos are an important part of your day. Please ensure your professional causes as little disturbance as possible. They should meet with the priest or deacon to communicate specific requirements of time, location, and movement during the ceremony.

The Presider

The priest or deacon officiates the ceremony. In an inter-faith marriage, a non-Catholic minister is welcome to participate.

Ushers/Hospitality

We suggest you have two to four ushers who can make your guests feel welcome. They can distribute wedding programs and assist guests in finding a seat.

Witnesses/Wedding Party

As you exchange your vows, every member of the assembly serves as a witness. Three witnesses have specific roles:

1. Priest or deacon - the official witness of the church. He receives your consent to marry by asking three questions in the statement of intentions and by receiving your consent in the exchange of vows.
2. Best Man - witness that the wedding occurred.
3. Maid (or Matron) of Honor - same as Best Man.

** Please note**

The number of additional attendants should not be excessive and only two witnesses are to come forward at the time of the vows.



Expenses

Church Rental:

Members (bride, groom, or parents)	\$300
Non-members	\$500

(Must be paid prior to the wedding rehearsal)

Engaged Encounter or Pre-Cana retreat:

\$150 - \$250

Organist / Pianist \$150

Cantor / Soloist \$125

Marriage License

Olmsted County gives a \$40 discount
with verification of 12 hours of marriage
Preparation (\$115 regular price) \$75

Priest or deacon - All monetary gifts must be surrendered to the parish. If you prefer something more personal, a gift card is acceptable.

Policies

- ♥ Keys - the week of your wedding, please stop by the parish office (M-F 8:30-4:30) to sign out a set of keys to unlock the church. Please return keys Monday morning.
- ♥ Rooms/Building - the bride and bridesmaids typically get ready in our choir room, the groom and groomsmen use the library. When you pick up the keys, we will answer any questions about our facility.
- ♥ Safety - please avoid birdseed, rice, an aisle runner, or candles attached to pews.
- ♥ Alcohol - Your wedding is a sacred event. Please remind your wedding party that NO alcoholic beverages (including champagne) or mood altering chemicals are permitted on church grounds at the time of your rehearsal, before, or after your wedding.
- ♥ Clean up - Please invite a very responsible, mature adult to return every room and every space that you use back to its original order. Please remove trash and personal items. Thank you in advance.

Notes

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