

Pax Christi Catholic Church

The Sacrament of Matrimony Planning Guide

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

-Saint John Chrysostom



Congratulations on Your Engagement!

As you plan for your wedding, there will be many considerations including family expectations, civil laws, and church guidelines. This guide is designed to help you plan and celebrate your wedding ceremony in a way that is joyful and keeps within our Catholic tradition. You are preparing to enter into a covenant with one another and with God!

A covenant is more than a contract. A covenant always expresses a relationship between persons. In the marriage covenant, permanent union between the husband, wife, and God is established. This union strengthens the couple to be faithful to each other by a special grace, and is for the mutual support of spouses and the procreation of children.

The following pages in this guide will provide you with tools for the preparation process and all the details you might consider as you plan your wedding ceremony. We are excited to assist and walk with you in this joyful time of preparing to let “Christ abundantly bless this love!” Let us know if you have any questions or concerns. Know that Pax Christi is praying for you!

Yours In Christ,

Father Will Thompson

Timetable of Marriage Preparation at Pax Christi

At least six months prior to the anticipated date of your wedding liturgy

- Meet with the priest or deacon who will be presiding at your wedding
- View “Beloved” as a couple, a six-part series on the Sacrament of Matrimony

Five months before wedding

- Complete a prenuptial questionnaire
- Send a copy of the Bride’s Baptismal Certificate to Pax Christi’s parish office
- Send a copy of the Groom’s Baptismal Certificate to Pax Christi’s parish office
- Complete a FOCCUS pre-marriage inventory

Four months before wedding

- Begin FOCCUS follow-up discussion sessions with a parish facilitator couple **OR**
- Attend a Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter retreat weekend as a couple
- Begin Natural Family Planning sessions

Two months before wedding

- Meet with a priest or deacon to discuss the theology and spirituality of marriage
- Contact our Director of Music, Mark Scheitel, to discuss music for your ceremony

Other suggestions to get the most out of the preparation process

- Join an Alpha Group Together
- Check Out a Young Adult Ministry Event Together
- Join a Bible/Adult Formation Study Together
- Get Involved in a Parish Ministry
- Attend Mass weekly
- Read a book together: “Love and Respect,” “The Five Love Languages,” and “The Good News About Sex and Marriage” are good options

Details concerning items above can be found on the following pages of this planning guide. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to ask one of our priests deacons or staff members.

Important Resources and Contacts

Baptismal Certificates

These are kept on record at the parish where you were Baptised. In order to obtain a copy contact your parish of record and have them send a copy to Pax Christi. If you were Baptised at Pax Christi you are good to go!

FOCCUS Inventory and Parish Facilitators

The FOCCUS Pre-Marriage Inventory is a conversation tool designed for couples preparing for marriage. We will match you with a couple from the parish who will help facilitate conversations. Couples find this extremely beneficial in the preparation process.

Pre-Cana/Engaged Encounter Retreat Information

Couples are asked/required to attend a retreat together before they receive the Sacrament of Matrimony. These retreats are hosted by the Diocese and/or Organizations that provide retreats on a regular basis. For more information and to sign up for a retreat visit any of the following websites or talk to one of our priests or deacons for more information:

-Diocese of Winona-Rochester

dowr.org/offices/life-marriage-family/marriage-preparation

-Engaged Encounter

www.engagedencounter.org

Natural Family Planning

Natural family planning is fertility awareness, which is simply knowledge of a couple's fertility. It is 100% natural — there are

no drugs, chemicals or devices involved, which is one reason many today find it to be a positive and refreshing alternative to contraceptive methods. NFP honors our dignity as persons by respecting the natural rhythms and functions of the body. It is very common to hear couples who use NFP speak of an increased awe and respect for femininity and their mutual fertility, and a greater sense of empowerment through self-knowledge.

Lisa Lomneth

lomneth.fertilitycare@gmail.com

FORMED.ORG

FORMED.ORG provides thousands of movies, videos, audios, and ebooks to anyone who is interested. In addition to "Beloved," you can find many other great resources for growing in your faith. Visit paxchristichurch.formed.org and create a free account.

Parish Contacts

Father Will Thompson wthompson@paxchristichurch.org	507-282-8542 x101
Father The Hoang the.hoang@paxchristichurch.org	507-282-8542 x119
Deacon Chris Orłowski chris.orłowski@paxchristichurch.org	507-282-8542 x111
Mark Scheitel, Director of Music music@paxchristichurch.org	
Joyce Lehman, Coordinator of Alpha joyce.lehman@paxchristichurch.org	507-282-8542 x108
Bea Velez, Receptionist receptionist@paxchristichurch.org	507-282-8542 x100

Ministries and Roles

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.

Witnesses/Wedding Party

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

Priest or Deacon - The presider of the wedding and 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.

Best Man and **Maid/Matron of Honor**- They witness that the wedding occurred and sign the wedding license after the ceremony.

Please note that the number of additional attendants should not be excessive. If this happens, only two witnesses are to come forward at the time of exchanging vows.

Ministries and Roles (Continued)

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.

Reader

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.

Eucharistic Ministers

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.

A Note About Receiving Communion (feel free to include this language in your programs):

Since the Church is divided she asks that only Catholics in good standing and not currently in the state of mortal sin receive communion. However, because our deepest desire is the unity of all Christians and all peoples, those in attendance and participating in this celebration today are invited to come forward at the time of communion to receive a blessing. Simply indicate your desire for a blessing by crossing your arms over your chest.

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 seats.

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 top of the ambo (lectern) or the altar. Flower stands are available for your use. Real flowers are not to be dropped on the floor in the procession by the flower girl.

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 prior to the ceremony to communicate specific requirements of time, location, and movement during the ceremony.

Associated Costs/Suggested Donations

The following are suggested based on past trends and known costs to the parish. We will never turn a couple away from Sacrament of Marriage due to financial burden. If you have concerns or are in need of assistance please discuss with one of our priests, deacons, or staff members.

***\$300 Marriage Preparation Process and Church Reservation**

Paid directly to the parish (cash or check)

*\$500 for non-parishioners (The bride, groom, or a parent(s) of the bride/groom are considered parishioners).

(Variable) Pre-Cana/Engaged Encounter Retreat

Paid directly to hosting Diocese/Organization

\$115 Marriage License

Apply through any county in Minnesota in person or online at

co.olmsted.mn.us/prl/vitalrecords/Pages/MarriageLicense.aspx

Request an "Educator's Statement" before applying in order to save \$75. You must apply at least five business days before the wedding and the license is valid for up to six months.

\$150-\$250 Accompanist

\$150/ea. Cantor(s)

\$125/ea. Soloist(s)

Accompanist, cantor and soloist honorarium paid directly to individual(s).

(Variable) Priest/Deacon

All monetary gifts are surrendered to the parish. If you prefer to give something more personal, a gift card is acceptable.

Facility policies

Keys

- Pick-up keys the week of your wedding at the parish office (open M-F 8:30-4:30).
- Please return the keys on Monday.
- When picking up the keys we will answer any of your questions about the facility.

Rooms

- Bride and bridesmaids typically get ready in our choir room.
- Groom and groomsmen typically get ready in our library.

Safety

- Please avoid birdseed, rice, aisle runners, and/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 ceremony.

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!

Pax Christi Catholic Church | 4135 18th Avenue NW Rochester, MN 55901 | 507-282-8542 | paxchristichurch.org

Notes: