

CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

Marriage Preparation

&

Wedding Guidelines

(Revised September, 2005)

The following guidelines are intended to explain what this preparation will include and to answer some questions you may have. Please feel free to ask any questions, or make any requests, if your concerns are not answered.

1. MARRIAGE PREPARATION

The couple planning for marriage is expected to contact the parish at least six months in advance to begin the preparation. An expectation of Catholics marrying in the church is that they are involved in a parish. Because we wish to give priority to parishioners of Resurrection, non-members will be offered a date for the wedding on a Friday night or a Saturday at 12:00 noon or before, when the request is more than six months before the requested date. Within six months of the requested date, the time may be on Saturday afternoon, 3:00 p.m. or before. This will not apply when one of the other parishes in Rochester is under construction and the pastor of that parish requests the use of Resurrection Church.

You are considered to be a member of Resurrection if you or your parent/s are registered in the parish.

Finalization of the marriage date depends on successful completion of marriage preparation. The preparation will include the following:

- A. Meetings with the priest for sacramental counseling, marriage forms, and to discuss your choices of readings, prayers, etc. for the wedding ceremony .
- B. Discussion and review of the Pre-Marital Inventory (FOCCUS) with the priest or a married couple. This is not a test but a tool for discussing the various aspects of married life and assessing the couple's readiness for marriage.
- C. Attend Pre-Cana/Engaged Encounter sessions. There are many options from which to choose.
- D. Overview of the Catholic faith for those entering interfaith marriages.
- E. Marriage License: be sure to bring this to the priest on or before the day of the wedding rehearsal. (Note: Minnesota law requires a minimum five day waiting period from the purchase of the license to the wedding.)
- F. A baptismal certificate must be provided for both the bride and the groom, unless they were baptized here at Resurrection parish. A copy may be obtained from the church where each was baptized, and it should be issued within the past six months. Please bring it in as soon as possible. A baptismal certificate for non-Catholic Christians is also needed.
- G. Meet with the Director of Liturgy to choose the music and plan the ceremony.

A Catholic may be married in a non-Catholic church, by a minister of that church, if there is good reason and the Catholic party sees his/her parish priest and obtains the proper permission. All of the above preparations must be completed as well as whatever is expected by the non-Catholic church.

2. WEDDING LITURGY PREPARATION

DATE: The date for the wedding needs to be confirmed by the priest before it is set. Weddings are discouraged during Lent.

TIME: Friday wedding times may be in the afternoon or evening. Saturday weddings may start no later than 3:00 p.m. When there are two weddings on a Saturday, the first wedding, including the pictures, is to be finished by 1:00 p.m.

THE CEREMONY: Marriage is an intensely personal event in the lives of two people. Yet Christian marriage is more than just a private celebration of their love. Because it takes place in the presence of the community, the wedding – with all its rites, prayers and music – should acknowledge their presence and invite their active participation in praise of God and support of the two for whose marriage they have come to witness. Each action of the marriage rite reveals the covenant theology of the rite – the equality of the partnership and the self-giving love that imitates the love of Christ, the love that the couple has as ministers of the sacrament. What happens before or after the ceremony is extra. It is difficult for all present to enter into the spirit of the wedding if everything but the liturgy is stressed by the couple and families.

For the interfaith (mixed marriage) ceremony:

The minister of the non-Catholic party is most welcome to participate in the ceremony if the couple wishes. The invitation is extended by the couple after discussing it with the priest. The role which the minister will play is to be determined by the priest and the couple while respecting, as much as possible, the wishes of the minister. Serious thought should be given to the question of whether or not the wedding will take place within the celebration of the Mass. Ecumenical sensitivity might warrant the ceremony being celebrated with a Liturgy of the Word because at this time the Eucharist cannot be shared with Christians of other faith traditions.

MUSIC: Music at a wedding liturgy is to express the faith of those gathered to worship. Texts of songs used at worship are not just an expression of the bride and groom's love for each other. Songs that do not express Christian love and center that love in Christ, such as show tunes, romantic hit tunes or Broadway favorites, are not appropriate choices for the marriage service or Mass. They can be used at the reception or other social functions connected with the wedding. Congregational singing led by a song leader would be the NORM and not the exception. We recommend (as a minimum) singing a Gathering Song, the Psalm Response, and the acclamations at the Mass. The Lord's Prayer is recited together as community especially when non-Catholics are present. It is the one prayer we share in common and therefore can pray together. Ways to involve the assembly (family & friends) are: reading the Scripture selections, reading the Prayer of the Faithful, bringing up the gifts (bread & wine), and as song leader/musicians if they have experience with Catholic liturgy. If a non-parish musician needs instruction or supervision to operate our sound system, a \$25 stipend will be charged for that service.

UNITY CANDLE: We would like to address the popular use of a Unity Candle during the wedding liturgy. It is not a part of the Marriage Rite of the Catholic Church, but finds its origins in our secular culture. Used as a sign of unity, it duplicates, and therefore diminishes, the profound symbol of unity the wedding rings hold. At Resurrection, the candle is lit as the opening procession ends. Therefore, there is no special song to accompany the lighting.

CHURCH FACILITIES: The liturgical year is to be respected in planning the environment of the marriage liturgy. The colors and decorations already present mark the particular season and should not be removed or moved for the wedding liturgy. Decorations may be added.

A room is available for the bride and her attendants to use in preparation for the wedding. This room, as well as other areas used, should be left in the condition in which they were found. Collect and dispose of flower boxes, programs, pins, etc. If a runner is used (the aisle is 65 feet long), have your ushers remove it after the ceremony.

The Great Hall may be reserved for wedding receptions subject to the guidelines set down in the rental agreement. See the parish office for details.

You are asked to observe the following policies at our facilities:

1. Our church complex is smoke free.
2. No alcohol is to be consumed on church grounds.
3. Clips provided by the parish or similar devices are to be used for attaching bows, etc. to the pews. No tape is to be used.
4. Food and drink is allowed only in the Great Hall.
5. No rice, confetti or bird seed is to be thrown on Resurrection property, nor are balloons or soap bubbles to be released inside or outside the church.
6. Candles must either be in a hurricane lamp enclosure or on a surface that prevents wax from dripping on the floor.
7. The reception line, if it is at Resurrection, is to be in the narthex.

FLOWERS: The number and placement of flowers and decorations should not interfere with the liturgical ceremony. These should not be put on or in front of the altar. Any flowers left in the church or Great Hall will be gratefully appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO-TAPING: The photographer you have selected to record your wedding is welcome at Resurrection. It is expected that they will be professional in their work. The sacred nature of the church must be respected by both the photographer and those being photographed. This is to be noted particularly during picture taking in the sanctuary before or after the ceremony. Things that are moved for pictures should be returned to their original places and any special requests should be cleared with the priest.

STIPENDS: The stipend offered on the occasion of a wedding goes to the church to help defray the costs of lights, heat/air and cleaning. The suggested amount is \$150. Your generosity is very much appreciated.

An offering or gift to the priest is not expected and is not necessary. If one is given, it is understood to be a personal gift and is over and above the offering to the church.

Fees for the musicians are set by them. Check with them when you make arrangements.

SPECIAL REMINDERS: If you plan to invite the priest to the rehearsal dinner or to the wedding reception, please do so a week or two ahead of time.

Marriage is a sacrament and one should be prepared spiritually to celebrate it. Therefore, it is appropriate to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before the wedding day.