

ST. ANDREW THE APOSTLE PARISH

400 MT PROSPECT AVE
CLIFTON, NJ 07012

MARRIAGE PREPARATIONS GUIDELINES

WEDDING INFORMATION

The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him. So the LORD God formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each living creature was then its name. The man gave names to all the tame animals, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals; but none proved to be a helper suited to the man. So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of man this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.

Genesis 2:18-24

“The intimate community of life and love which constitutes the married state has been established by the Creator and endowed by him with its own proper law...God himself is the author of marriage.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church

PARISH INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

When a couple marries in the Catholic Church, it is presumed that the couple intends to build and strengthen their marriage by participating in Church through the Sacraments and prayer. While respecting the faith of those who are not Catholic, we strongly encourage all couples to make Sunday Mass attendance an integral part of their marriage preparation. It is expected that members of the Catholic faith who request to be married in the Catholic Church are faithful in the practice of their faith, celebrating the Eucharist with their parish community each week.

THE GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

MEETING WITH A PRIEST OR DEACON

The Priest who is witnessing the Sacrament of Marriage will work with you on preparing the Ceremony using the book “*Together for Life*”, which includes the readings and prayers for both the Marriage Ceremony and the Mass. All preparation for your Wedding liturgy will be discussed and completed prior to the Wedding Rehearsal. The formal preparation for your marriage must begin one year prior to the date of the wedding. You will meet with the Priest, and you will also have to complete a Pre-Cana and a Wedding Rehearsal.

DOCUMENTS

- I. For Catholics, a recent Certificate of Baptism issued within SIX months of the wedding is required. (For non- I. Catholics, a Birth Certificate must be provided, and the date and place of Baptism or, if available, a Certificate of Baptism is necessary.) Please remember: we cannot use an old certificate or copies of an original. A new Baptismal Certificate must be issued in order to set a date.
- II. Confirmation and First Communion Certificates may be copies of the original. If you have not received that sacrament of Confirmation, it is highly encouraged to attend our RCIA (Rite for Christian Initiation for Adults) Program to receive on the Easter Vigil night.
- III. A Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter Certificate is needed for the files. Engaged couples are required to participate in Pre-Cana marriage preparation session(s). Attending an Engaged Encounter Weekend fulfills the Pre-Cana requirements. Schedules and applications are available at [St. Paul Inside the Walls - Guide to Marriage Preparation - Madison, NJ](#) (copy the link).
- IV. If an annulment has been granted for a previous marriage, the original copy of the annulment must be placed in your file. If an annulment is needed, forms for the dispensation will be filled out with you by the Priest.
- V. Authorization Letters: If you or your fiancé are not parishioners at St. Andrew's Parish, you must obtain a letter granting permission for you to have your Wedding Ceremony at our Parish.
- VI. The Civil Marriage License. The license can be obtained from City Hall. Please contact City Hall to make an appointment within 30 days prior to the wedding to apply for your Marriage License. The Marriage License can be obtained in the Municipality of the State in which the woman resides or in the Municipality in which the man resides if the woman is a non-resident of the state. The license, once granted, is valid for thirty days. The Marriage License must be brought to the Church Office for processing at least two weeks prior to the rehearsal.
- VII. Two witnesses: The best man and maid/matron of honor must be Catholic, 18 years or older, and they should exhibit a respect for the dignity of the Sacrament of Matrimony.
- VIII. Witnessing Minister: If you wish to have a Priest other than your Parish Priest, permission must be obtained from the Pastor. A Priest or Deacon from another Diocese must provide a good standing letter which comes from his own Diocese.

ISSUES NEEDING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

- I. **Parties under 21 years of age:** Pre-Marriage Counseling: Couples in which one or both parties are under 21 years of age will be directed to a counselor for an assessment. Couples may also be required to seek appropriate help and counseling if there are any serious emotional, psychological problems, or other personal or familial issues.
 - II. **Previous marriage:** If one or both parties have been married previously, please inform your Priest.
 - III. **Non-Catholic parties:** If one party is a non-Catholic, please inform the Priest or Deacon immediately SO that he may review the situation with you and secure any permission needed for a Catholic to marry a non-Catholic.
 - IV. Marriage is an act of will that signifies and involves a mutual gift, which unites the spouses and binds them to their eventual souls, with whom they make up a sole family -a domestic Church.""
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CHURCH PREPARATION

- I. **Wedding Services:** St. Andrew's Parish offers you the choice of a Wedding Mass (if both parties are Catholic, the couple is required to celebrate their wedding within Mass), or a Wedding Ceremony when one of parties is not Catholic (Ask the priest which can apply to your case).
- II. **Wedding Offerings:** The Church is usually the least expensive part of your wedding, yet it is the most important part. Please keep this in mind when making your offering:
 - Parishioner: \$750.00
 - Non-Parishioner: \$1,000.00
 - Late Fee: (Effective if Party is late 15 Minutes) \$250.00. No exceptions will be made.
 - This money will be received in the event the marital party is late for their scheduled time The church will wait for NO ONE except the two who are to be married. Lateness for private celebrations can cause conflicts with the communal celebrations of that day, please be courteous. If party is on time, the check will be returned to you. Please make Checks payable to: St. Andrews Parish Church.
 - All checks are expected to be submitted at the parish office two weeks prior to the wedding but no later the night of the rehearsal.
- III. **Donation or gifts to the Priest/Celebrant or Deacon:** There is no set offering, however, a free- offering is highly encouraged and it may be made at the time of the Wedding Rehearsal. If you decide to make an offering to the Priest/Celebrant or Deacon, please make checks payable directly to the individual Priest/Celebrant or Deacon by name.
- IV. **Music:** Music is an integral part of your Wedding Liturgy. It is mandatory that you utilize our organist and cantor at your Wedding Ceremony After scheduling your wedding date, please contact the Director of Music to secure the date. Our Parish musicians are professional musicians trained in liturgy, and are present at all Parish weddings. If you would like to have

a friend or family member participate in the music of your wedding, they may play/sing one piece, usually as a prelude or at the preparation of gifts. No arrangements are to be made with outside musicians without discussing with the Director of Music. The Music Ministry Director is Michelle Petrasek. The musician offerings are separate from the Church offerings. The Music Ministry personnel are employed for all wedding liturgies.

- To fee for each of them is \$250.00. Please make this payment separate from the initial Church donations. This may be submitted with the other checks 2 weeks before the wedding.

V. **Wedding times:** The times of celebration for Matrimony are;

- Saturdays: 1:00pm, 1:30pm, or 2:00pm Our Parish does not celebrate weddings when they conflict with scheduled services in the Church.
- If you are considering another day outside of the provided dates, please consult with the Priest or Deacon.

VI. **Rehearsals:** The Priest will arrange for the rehearsal, which is usually conducted two evenings before the wedding (Thursdays if the wedding is on a Saturday), unless arranged for a different day with the permission of the pastor. Please have all the members of the bridal party, including those who will be doing the readings, present at the rehearsal. The Bishop of the Diocese of Paterson requests that the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Confession be made available to all interested parties on the evening of the rehearsal. Please check with the priest or deacon for schedule or request an appointment. All are encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the day of the wedding.

VII. **Flowers:** Any flowers in good taste are allowed; they may remain in the Church following the wedding. It is the responsibility of the couple to make arrangements with a florist. Flowers may not be placed on the Altar (table) itself. Please advise the florist that tape or wire are not to be used on the pews; rubber bands can be used to secure the bows or flowers to the pews instead.

NOT PERMITTED

- I. **Dressing Rooms:** There are no dressing rooms at the Church. Please plan on dressing at home or at another location.
- II. **Runners and arches:** Runners are not allowed. We have been advised by our insurance company that runners present a hazard, especially to the elderly, and increase the potential of slip and fall accidents. Arches obstruct the view of the Sanctuary; they are therefore inappropriate and not allowed. Please remember that during your Wedding Mass, people will come to communion by the center aisle; do not use any decoration that obstructs the center aisle.
- III. **Tossing of flower petals:** Flower petals genuine or artificial, are not permitted. They present a hazard when dropped on the floor and cause extremely slippery conditions; they can also permanently stain the floors.
- IV. **Rice and Bird Seed:** Rice, bird seed, confetti, or balloons are not permitted in the Church or on Church grounds. Our insurance company requires that we strictly enforce this policy. Bubbles and Bells alternative and are permitted after the Ceremony.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- I. **Wedding Photographer and Pictures:** It is the responsibility of the couple to make the photographer and videographer aware of the following procedures at St. Andrew's Parish: Pictures and video recordings are permitted during the nuptial service provided that the photographer and videographer do not disturb the Ceremony. The photographer and videographer must consult with the Priest, Deacon or Wedding Coordinator before the Ceremony begins.
- II. **No equipment may be set up in the middle aisle:** This interferes with the procession and tends to block the view of the parents and congregation. Photographers and videographers are asked not to remain in the middle aisle for long periods of time and to never walk between the front pews and the Sanctuary/Altar. This is distracting and interferes with the ability of the congregation to participate in the Wedding Service. We find the best pictures of weddings are taken from the side Chapel area. At no time is the photographer or videographer permitted in the sanctuary or Altar area. The photographer and videographer are not allowed to place any equipment on the pews or furniture of the Church.
- III. Following the Ceremony, pictures may be taken in the Church if time permits. If there is a service scheduled in Church following your wedding, you must vacate the Church forty-five minutes prior to the beginning of the next service.

AS A COURTESY TO THE PRIEST, MUSICIANS, YOUR FAMILY, GUESTS AND OTHER EVENTS WHICH ARE SCHEDULED IN THE CHURCH FOLLOWING YOUR WEDDING, PLEASE ARRIVE ON TIME.

*Jesus said: From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female.
For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife,
and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh.
Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate.*

Mark 10:6-9

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