

MARRIAGE PREPARATION INFORMATION
ST. HUBERT PARISH
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Preparation is the secret to success. Without it we must struggle through unknowns and hope we end up doing the right things at the right times. Studies on marriage reflect that couples who are well prepared before marriage have much less of a tendency to end up in divorce court. We here at St. Hubert pledge to do everything we can to prepare you the best way possible for your life-long commitment. We have established guidelines of preparation that are requirements for marriage here at St. Hubert. These requirements and the sequence in which they occur are:

1. First interview with the deacon
2. Contact parish Music Director (a year to 18-months before the wedding is not too soon)
3. Administration and Follow-up of a Premarital Inventory (FOCCUS)
4. Attendance at a Marriage Preparation Program
5. Follow-up meeting with the deacon
6. Meeting with pastor (if he will be the presider at your liturgy)
7. Rehearsal
8. Wedding

You are also strongly encouraged to attend our Wedding Workshop, which is offered several times during the year. The Workshop will be helpful as you plan your wedding liturgy. You may attend the Workshop at any time.

FIRST INTERVIEW WITH A DEACON

The beginning of your marriage preparation occurs when you schedule a meeting with the deacon who will be assisting you in the marriage preparation process. By the end of this first meeting you should have the date of your wedding confirmed on the parish calendar. According to St. Hubert policy, wedding dates must be set **at least** six months prior to the wedding. This allows for adequate time to complete the marriage preparation process. At the first interview you will receive a copy of the book Together for Life which has information on planning a Catholic wedding.

ADMINISTRATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF A PREMARITAL INVENTORY - FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study)

FOCCUS is an inventory offered as a tool to help identify your couple strengths and areas of growth that are a part of your relationship, to date. At your first meeting with the deacon, he will explain the FOCCUS inventory process for you. It is not a test to determine if you should or should not be married; rather it is a vehicle to help enhance your relationship as a couple and foster better communication between each other.

ATTENDANCE AT A MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM

After the FOCCUS Inventory process has been completed you are required to participate in a Marriage Preparation Program. You may attend the St. Hubert Marriage Preparation program or attend a program sponsored by the Archdiocese. You will receive information on upcoming dates at St. Hubert from the deacon at your initial interview. Information on Archdiocesan marriage preparation programs can be found at familyministries.org (click on the Engaged tab).

MEET WITH PARISH MUSIC DIRECTOR

It is your responsibility to contact the Director of Music regarding your options for musicians and musical choices for your wedding liturgy. See the handout ([Music for the Wedding](#)) given to you by the deacon at your first meeting for information regarding policies and fees.

A year or longer is not too soon to contact the Director of Music.

THE WEDDING WORKSHOP

Your marriage is an expression of your worship of God. We want to do all we can to aid you and your guests to experience the presence of God at the wedding liturgy. Planning the liturgy for your wedding, including the music, is your responsibility as the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage. Because we realize that most couples do not have a lot of experience planning a liturgy, we encourage you to attend the Wedding Workshop. We encourage you to bring friends and relatives who will be helping you make decisions or who will be involved on the day of the wedding to the Wedding Workshop.

The Workshop will give you a detailed understanding of what will take place on your wedding day, whether a Mass or a ceremony.

A particular focus of the Wedding Workshop is choosing music for your wedding. At the workshop you will have the opportunity to hear several options for music and listen to the cantors and instrumentalists available through the parish.

CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE DURING MASS OR CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE OUTSIDE OF MASS

Whenever we gather to pray, Sunday Mass is the model. Catholics have a right to celebrate their marriage during Mass, by virtue of their baptism, if that is your preference. Marriage outside of Mass, a “non-Eucharistic liturgy” (ceremony) omits those elements of the rite relating to the Eucharist and thus Holy Communion is not offered. Consider a wedding outside of Mass if your marriage is an inter-faith marriage, or if a number of non-practicing Catholics will be at church that day. That is to say, if there are going to be many non-Catholics present at your wedding, a ceremony offers you the opportunity to join your two families together at the wedding liturgy without excluding those who cannot be invited to receive communion.

While the bride and groom confer this sacrament upon one another, a priest presides at Mass. A deacon generally presides at a ceremony.

INTERFAITH MARRIAGES

A non-Catholic minister is always welcome to take part in the ceremony. If you plan on including another minister, please let your presider know as soon as possible so that he can make contact, and discuss what part the visitor would like to do (perhaps a Scripture reading, homily, or a blessing.)

FOLLOW-UP MEETING WITH DEACON

After you have completed your marriage preparation, contact the deacon to schedule your second interview. During this time, you will reflect on your preparation up to this point, get answers to any questions that you may still have and complete the paperwork required by the archdiocese.

The following documents will be needed at the second interview:

1. A new Baptismal Certificate (for Catholics) issued within the last six months. This can be obtained from the church of baptism. For other Christian faiths, a baptismal certificate is also required, but need not be new.
2. Copy of Confirmation Certificate, if not indicated on Baptismal Certificate
3. Witness Affidavits: Two witnesses are needed to establish freedom to marry for both the bride and the groom if the two are not personally known by the deacon arranging the marriage.
4. Prenuptial Questionnaire: This basic legal record of the marriage will be completed by the deacon at the second interview.

MEETING WITH THE PASTOR

If Fr. Rizzo will be the presider at your wedding, an interview with him will need to be scheduled so he has a chance to meet and talk with you before your wedding.

CHURCH OFFERING

The church offering to St. Hubert is generally \$425; however Sunday weddings require a fee of \$575. This offering helps to defray the many costs incurred in setting up and performing a wedding at St. Hubert. Please present this offering on the night of the rehearsal. The priest or deacon at your wedding does not receive any part of the offering. A separate stipend for the presider is always greatly appreciated. If you ask a visiting priest or deacon to come to witness your marriage, please arrange to make your gift to him in addition to St. Hubert Church's offering.

ALTAR SERVERS

We provide two altar servers for your wedding Mass unless you inform us that you have your own (relatives or friends). The customary offering for altar servers is \$10 each. Mark two envelopes "altar server", place your stipend in each (cash please), and give to the deacon at the rehearsal. He will pass them on to the altar servers on the day of the wedding. Altar servers are not needed for a wedding ceremony outside of Mass.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

A Cook County marriage license **must** be obtained at least one day and no more than 60 days prior to your wedding date. You cannot be married in the State of Illinois without a valid marriage license. For information on getting a marriage license in Cook County go to www.cookctyclerk.com. You must bring the marriage license to the rehearsal.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING LITURGY

Use your copy of the book Together for Life to plan your wedding liturgy. The back of the book has a form to fill out as you make your choices for the liturgy. (Forms can also be found online at togetherforlifeonline.org.) Bring your completed form to your second interview with the deacon.

A couple of clarifications for the selection form from the book:

- The Responsorial Psalm is always sung and is chosen with the Music Director.
- If you are having Mass, Communion is always under both kinds.

LECTORS

Lectors proclaim the Word of God at the liturgy. A lector should read well and be comfortable speaking in front of a group of people. You can ask one or two friends or relatives to be a lector at your wedding. If you have a friend or relative who is a lector at their parish, they would be an excellent choice for your wedding; they are already trained in this ministry and will be comfortable performing this ministry on the day of your wedding. The lector must practice reading the selections before the ceremony. Make sure you get copies to them well in advance. The lectors should attend the wedding rehearsal to have a chance to practice reading and to get used to using the microphone.

PHOTOGRAPHERS & VIDEOGRAPHERS

The photographer and videographer must follow the parish policies for taking pictures/video. Your wedding liturgy is a sacred ceremony and the movements of the photographer should not distract from the prayerful atmosphere of the liturgy.

All picture taking must be completed in church 1 hour and 45 minutes after your wedding time. Your cooperation and consideration in this matter are necessary for the scheduling of the Mass that follows yours.

FLOWERS & CHURCH ENVIRONMENT

Flowers and floral arrangements may add to the celebratory atmosphere of the wedding experience. However a few helpful and necessary guidelines will assist your planning of this liturgy.

- Ask the deacon working with you to highlight the liturgical season that your wedding is being celebrated during. Depending on the season, there may already be a variety of flowers present in the church. For example, during the Christmas season there will be poinsettias throughout the Church. Being familiar with the environment of the church at the time of your wedding can assist you greatly as you determine how many flowers you'll need. Seasonal parish floral arrangements or decorations are not to be removed, changed, or rearranged.
- Because of local fire ordinances, candlelight ceremonies are not permitted. This prohibits the use of hurricane candles, torches, or candelabras in the church.
- Aisle runners create a slip and fall hazard on the tile floor. They are not permitted.
- Bows or floral decorations can be attached to the pews only with elastic or rubber bands. However, access to or from a pew cannot be obstructed by decorations of any kind.
- If you include a flower girl in your wedding party, she cannot drop petals in the church.
- If you have flowers we suggest you keep them to a minimum and feel free to take them to the reception after your wedding ceremony. No flower arrangements are to be placed on the altar. No floral arches are to be placed in the aisle.

RICE, BIRD SEED, ETC.

St. Hubert prohibits the throwing of rice, bird seed, confetti, etc. Please inform friends and relatives who may prepare small containers of things to throw. We ask that you pick up wrappings, ribbons, boxes, etc. (Bells or bubbles have been acceptable alternate practices that require no clean-up.)

STARTING ON TIME

It is very important that you arrive at the church ahead of time so that your wedding begins on time. This is out of consideration for the events following yours.

AFTER THE CEREMONY

Due to 4:30 PM Mass on Saturday, the wedding party including the limo must leave the premises and driveway by 3:45 PM. The general rule for all weddings is that by 1 ¾ hours after your wedding time, you must be gone to allow for the next wedding, Mass, or church event.

MAINTENANCE

St. Hubert does its best to provide you with a clean and tidy environment for you to celebrate your wedding. Please make sure that when your wedding is completed the church is kept clean. Perhaps before the wedding you can appoint someone from your wedding party or friends to walk through the pews and pick up any ribbons, worship aids, tissues, etc. There is no maintenance staff available in the parish on weekends to clean up after you and the events scheduled in the church after you deserve the same courtesy of cleanliness that you do.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

The wedding rehearsal usually takes place the night before the wedding. This date and time can be checked at your first interview with the deacon, but will be confirmed at the second interview.

The rehearsal will begin promptly at the scheduled time. All those participating in the wedding need to be at the rehearsal. Please allow 45 minutes to an hour for rehearsal time.

Please note that the presider and musicians are not usually present on the night of the rehearsal, so any questions for them about your wedding need to be resolved before the rehearsal.

Please inform all attending the rehearsal and the wedding that the church is the House of God and a place of reverence. Children are not to be left to run around the church. Loud or improper language should be avoided as should the use of any alcoholic beverages. Should anyone in the wedding party come into the church intoxicated they will be asked to leave regardless of their role in the wedding party.

Bring the following to rehearsal:

_____ **Marriage License**
_____ **Cantor's fee**
_____ **Altar server envelopes with payment**
_____ **Worship Aids (optional)**

_____ **Church donation**
_____ **Accompanist's Fee**
_____ **Unity Candle (optional)**
_____ **Presider's Stipend (optional)**