

Our Mother of Sorrows & Holy Cross Churches

WEDDING GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

Dear Bride & Groom to-be,

Thank you for thinking of Our Mother of Sorrows and Holy Cross Churches in which to celebrate your love for one another through the Sacrament of Marriage. The celebration of a wedding is a special occasion not only for you as the bride and groom, and for each member of your family and friends, but is in fact part of the worship life of our parish community and the entire Church. It is a time to celebrate the love our God has for each of us modeled in the love the bride and groom have for each other. It is a time of grace and blessing in which the sacred becomes the center-point of two lives joined in holy matrimony.

It can also be a time of high emotions and stress. We want to assist you in preparing both for the day of your wedding, as well as living the Sacrament of Marriage all the days thereafter. While the wedding day is important, living your marriage requires you both to rely on God's love that comes to us through the regular celebration of the Sacraments, especially Reconciliation and the Eucharist.

The pastoral team at Our Mother of Sorrows and Holy Cross strive to help you prepare in such a way as to eliminate your worries so you may focus on the blessings which are prevalent throughout the process. What follows this letter is an outline of the process of sacramental preparation and the answers to many of the questions you may have about having your wedding celebration here. Please take time to review it thoroughly. It is suggested that you print out the outline as it can be handy for keeping track of the appointments needed throughout the process.

While the primary contact for your sacramental preparation will be the Parochial Vicar or Deacon, please know our entire nuptial team will be praying for you as you draw closer to your wedding day and each of us will do our best to assist you in making this celebration beautiful, reverent, and filled with joy.

In Christ,

Father Bill Coffas, Pastor
Parochial Vicar

Father Justin Miller,

Deacon Joseph Placious
Wedding Coordinator

Grace Hubbel, OMOS

Dr. Beata Golec, Director of Music
Administrative Assistant

Ola Mscichowski,

Our Mother of Sorrows | Holy Cross
WEDDING GUIDELINES

“Faithful. Exclusive. Lifelong.”

The Catholic Church believes and teaches that marriage is a faithful, exclusive, and lifelong union between one man and one woman, joined as husband and wife in an intimate partnership of life and love. Marriage exists so that the spouses might grow in mutual love and, by the generosity of their love, bring children into the world and serve life fully.

Moreover, we believe the natural institution of marriage has been blessed and elevated by Christ Jesus to the dignity of a sacrament. In this way, the love of husband and wife becomes a living image of the way in which the Lord personally loves his people and is united with them.

God is the author of marriage. It is both a relationship of persons and an institution in society. However, it is not just any relationship or simply another institution. We believe that, in the divine plan, marriage has its proper meaning and achieves its purposes.

*- from the USCCB 2003 statement on
the Promotion, Preservation and Protection of Marriage*

Echoing the sentiments of the United States Bishops, the pastoral team at Our Mother of Sorrows and Holy Cross seek to serve all couples desiring to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony in a way that compliments the needs of the couple with the liturgical, pastoral, and sacramental requirements of the Church.

To this end, all couples seeking to have their wedding celebration at Our Mother of Sorrows or Holy Cross must adhere to the guidelines which follow.

It is advisable to print out this guideline to use throughout the preparation process.

Rehearsal: _____

Wedding: _____

General Outline of the Process of Preparation and *Rough* Timeline

INITIAL CONTACT

At least 6 months
date.

prior to desired
wedding date.

Before any date can be entered on the parish calendar - couple must meet with the Parochial Vicar or Deacon to determine sacramental disposition to book a

IT IS HIGHLY ADVISED NOT TO SCHEDULE/BOOK A DATE AT ANY VENUE FOR THE WEDDING RECEPTION UNTIL YOUR DATE IS SECURED ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR.

2nd Meeting

4-5 months
before scheduled
wedding date.

A pre-marital investigation will be undertaken by the Parochial Vicar or Deacon, under oath, to determine sacramental readiness of the couple and to make sure no impediments to the marriage are withstanding.

- Please bring your official baptismal certificates which may be obtained from the **church where the baptism took place within six months.**
 - At this meeting, a copy of the diocesan Pre-Cana schedule will be given. Couple is advised to schedule Pre-Cana as soon as possible after this meeting. [Additional fee required]
 - Couple will be encouraged to contact Music Director to make musical choices for wedding. They will also be given "Together for Life" book to look at reading choices for the liturgy
 - Couple will be given "Fully Engaged". This is an online tool that identifies strengths and growth areas for your relationship.
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3rd Meeting

3 months before
wedding date.

Facilitated discussion of "Fully Engaged" results - Part I

4th Meeting

2 weeks after

Facilitated discussion of "Fully Engaged" results - Part II

previous meeting.

Final Meeting

~ 1 month prior
to wedding date.

Couple to meet with Wedding Coordinator for final review of wedding outline.

- Couple should wait until after this meeting before printing any programs for the wedding.

Our Mother of Sorrows and Holy Cross Nuptial Pastoral Team

Priests: Fr. Bill Coffas or Fr. Justin Miller

One of our priests, depending on availability, will preside & officiate your wedding IF IT IS A MASS.

Deacon: Dcn. Joseph Placious, Holy Cross

Will handle all preparation for the sacrament, be your point of contact until after the final meeting and preside & officiate your wedding IF IT IS A CEREMONY OUTSIDE OF MASS.

Wedding Coordinator: Grace Hubbel, OMOS or Dcn. Joseph Placious, Holy Cross

Will handle the wedding rehearsal, collect fees and coordinate the wedding on the day itself.

Director of Music: Dr. Beata Golec

The music director, Dr. Beata Golec, performs all wedding ceremonies at Our Mother of Sorrows and Holy Cross Churches. She assigns cantors who sing liturgical music during the wedding ceremony and will recommend and provide contact information for additional musicians such as flute, violin, or trumpet players, if their services are desired. The wedding services delivered by the director and the cantor are provided by the church. Additional musicians' stipends must be worked out individually with them via a contract. Please contact Dr. Golec at least three months before your wedding to schedule a consultation. Make sure to allow 45-60 minutes for the meeting, as you will finalize all the music selections for the ceremony during that time.

Dr. Golec's email is Beata.Golec@dor.org

Office Secretary:

Will receive your call at the parish and direct you to the appropriate person to handle your inquiry and will post your "Banns of Marriage" in our parish bulletin for the three weeks prior to your wedding.

Fees and Times

Cost of Wedding: \$550

It is often a surprise to couples that there is any cost involved. While there is certainly NEVER any charge to administer and/or receive a sacrament, the costs of a wedding certainly are above and beyond most usual celebrations. The fee charged goes to cover the fee for music, the wedding coordinator and the real facility costs of preparation, cleaning, heating/cooling for this extraordinary celebration.

A deposit of \$250 is required by check made out and mailed to Our Mother of Sorrows or Holy Cross, respectively, c/o Wedding Coordinator within a week of the first meeting when a date is officially set. Under certain circumstances, the deposit is fully refundable.

The balance of \$300 by check similarly filled out is to be given to the wedding coordinator at the beginning of the wedding rehearsal the night before the wedding.

Times for Weddings: Due to our other weekend celebrations and possible funeral liturgies, our weddings are only scheduled at the following days/times:

Saturdays **OMOS - 1 PM** with the rehearsal the night (Friday) before at 5 PM
 Holy Cross – 1pm with the rehearsal the night (Friday) before at 6:15 PM

Because there are other events and liturgies that take place on any given day, as a general rule, you will have access to the church one hour before your wedding and a half hour after (for photos).

Please plan accordingly.

The Rehearsal

There is to be no apparent use of alcohol/drugs by any participant of the wedding at either the rehearsal or the wedding itself.

To make sure all details of the wedding ceremony/Mass run smoothly, OMOS and Holy Cross use our own wedding coordinator who runs the rehearsal and the details of participation on the day of the wedding. Even if you have hired an outside coordinator for your wedding, our coordinator will be the point of coordination while you are on campus at OMOS or Holy Cross.

All participants involved in the wedding ceremony MUST be at the rehearsal. This especially includes the witnesses (best man and maid of honor) and any person taking part in the procession, reading, serving, greeting, etc. Please note: our clergy and musicians are not normally at the rehearsal.

Please arrive promptly so the rehearsal can start on time. Please allow one hour for the rehearsal in the planning of your night.

What to Bring:

- Balance of wedding fee [check made payable to Our Mother of Sorrows or Holy Cross, respectively.]
- Wedding License [Obtained from the City or Town Clerk's office.] Please note that a Marriage License is not valid until twenty-four hours after issuance and only remains valid for approximately two months. SO, get your wedding license a few weeks prior to the wedding date. Without it, there cannot be a wedding in church. NO LICENSE, NO WEDDING!

"Your" Wedding is Actually "Our" Wedding

Another thing that catches brides and grooms off guard is the fact that "your" wedding is actually part of the full sacramental life of the Church and the Our Mother of Sorrows/Holy Cross Parish. Because of this, certain expectations should not come as a surprise to you:

- The **ENVIRONMENT** of the church on the day of your wedding will be decorated as per the liturgical season in which your wedding takes place. For instance, many weddings take place during the summer months in which the Church finds itself in Ordinary Time when the predominant color is "Green." Sometimes our liturgy committee has established certain decorative features to highlight the season. Nothing may be changed or removed for your wedding day. To help you coordinate colors, flowers, etc. simply ask about the season or decor when you attend the planning session for your ceremony (see general outline above).
- The **MUSIC** for your celebration must comply with diocesan and parish guidelines for use within the Nuptial Mass. The use of pre-recorded music and secular songs are not acceptable for the

wedding liturgy within or outside of Mass. If you have a “special song” that fits into the aforementioned categories, try working it in at your rehearsal dinner or the reception. Working with our music director is the best way to accomplish these goals.

- The **FURNITURE** at Our Mother of Sorrows and Holy Cross is not to be moved or removed. Nothing can be “adhered” or otherwise “affixed” to the furnishings. All aisles and exits must remain clear to allow safe entry and exit from the building. For this reason, an aisle runner (usually called a “crash”) is not permitted.
- The **FLOWERS** for your celebration can add a beautiful touch to the prayerful aesthetic but should remain simple and elegant (your florist can help with this) Flowers for a wedding should resemble what is used on any given Sunday. Arrangements can be placed on the floor in front of the altar but never on the altar itself. Flowers should never inhibit the flow of the presider or any participant and should be placed so as not to block sight of any liturgical action either at the altar or the ambo (where readings are proclaimed.) As a general rule, the use of artificial flowers is discouraged. Flower petals, rice, etc. are not permitted to be dropped on the church property (including during the procession or outside following the wedding).
- The **PHOTOS and VIDEOS** for this celebration are important but never more important than the prayer and reverence of the liturgy which they capture. The atmosphere of prayer and reverence must be preserved. You should review the following rules with your photographer and videographer before signing any contract:
 - Photographers and videographers are not permitted in the sanctuary at any time.
 - During the liturgical celebration, no photos or videos are to be taken by any person standing in the sanctuary.
 - Movement in the center aisle must be confined to the procession and recession only.
 - The procession and recession may not be stopped for photos.
 - Flash photography is not permitted during the readings, the homily, the Consecration or the Communion procession.
 - The use of video lighting (light bars, extension lighting, etc.) is not permitted at any time.
 - Use of extension cords that cross any aisle must be taped to floor with ONLY gaffers tape.
 - The wedding coordinator has the final say in any photographic or video action that day. It is suggested the photographers and videographers review their plan with the coordinator as soon as possible before the wedding.

Other

- The nuptial ceremony has many different symbols of unity intrinsic to the celebration itself. For this reason, the use of a unity candle, unity sand or other symbols is discouraged.
- Apart from the altar candles already existing and used during the routine celebration of the liturgy, lit candles or candelabras are not permitted for safety reasons.
- Programs showing the order of service and participants are acceptable but should not be made prior to the final review of the wedding outline (see outline above). It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make sure all leftover programs are removed from the church pews and floor after the wedding.
- Gifts and stipends to the officiant are never expected and remain the sole discretion of the couple.

First Issued: 15 August 2019 - Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Second Issue: 6 June 2021 - Feast of Corpus Christi

Third Issue: 10 August 2023 - Month of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Fourth Issue: 5 January 2025 – Feast of the Epiphany