

Wedding Liturgy



ST. JOSEPH PARISH
COCKEYSVILLE, MARYLAND



On behalf of St. Joseph Parish, we congratulate you on your engagement and upcoming wedding. We are honored that you have chosen to celebrate this wonderful sacrament with our parish family. Many efforts have been made to ensure that this wonderful time in your life will be one of great joy and celebration.

At St. Joseph Parish, we offer a comprehensive program to properly prepare you for marriage. This program meets the requirements of marriage preparation set by the Catholic Church. As you begin this exciting process, we ask you to contemplate daily the importance of this holy Sacrament. How does the love in your relationship reflect God's love?

We are pleased to assist you in your preparation, and we look forward to helping you delve into God's love for us and your love for each other. In order to assist you in planning your wedding liturgy, we have included some helpful information for the planning process, a list of guidelines for planning your wedding liturgy, and other recommendations that were put into place to help maintain the sanctity of your ceremony.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any other type of assistance.

With God's grace and blessings,

Monsignor Richard Hilgartner, Jr., Pastor

Fr. John Martinez

Deacon Ed Sullivan

Dr. Lynn Trapp

Amy Buttarazzi

Contact Information

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Place and Celebrant of your Marriage

A marriage is usually celebrated in the parish of the bride if both bride and groom are of the Catholic faith. When one party is not of the Catholic Faith, the parish of the Catholic party is the usual place for the ceremony.

The first point of contact for your wedding at St. Joseph's is a priest or deacon who is assigned to our parish. If you wish to have a priest or deacon who is not assigned to our parish celebrate the wedding liturgy, you are welcome to invite them. Regardless, a priest or deacon at St. Joseph should be contacted prior to any wedding planning.

When one party is not of the Catholic faith, and you wish for a minister of his/her faith to participate in the liturgy please contact the Pastor of St. Joseph.

Should there be special reasons to be married outside of a Catholic church, permission must be requested and granted by the Archbishop of Baltimore through St. Joseph's priest or deacon.



Required Documents

The priest/deacon will meet with the bride and groom individually to complete a pre-nuptial investigation questionnaire.

Proof of baptism

For a Catholic bride/groom, a baptismal certificate must be presented and dated no more than six months prior to the wedding date. You should obtain this certificate as soon as possible within six months preceding the wedding, by contacting the Church where you were baptized. A baptized non-Catholic bride/groom should present a certificate or other proof of baptism as soon as possible.

Confirmation

A recently issued Confirmation Certificate for a Catholic bride/groom is requested, but not required. The notation of Confirmation should be on the back of your baptism certificate.

Marriage License for Baltimore County

This must be obtained at the Baltimore County License Bureau at the Court House in Towson, MD. It is valid for use six months before the wedding date.



Marriage Preparation

All couples who plan to be married in the Catholic church are required to participate in a Marriage Preparation program. Topics covered in these programs include communication, decision making, problem solving, sexuality, spirituality, finances and parenthood.

In the first part of marriage preparation, participants will be given an online questionnaire called PREPARE/ENRICH. The reliability of the assessment and feedback guided by Facilitators help couples strengthen and enrich their relationships. Committed couples gain a deeper understanding of dynamics, personality, stress, and strength and growth areas. The objective results are used to illuminate a more clear understanding of themselves and their relationship while developing confidence and relationship skills.

In the second part of the program, we use the curriculum, Unveiled. The program prepares couples for the human reality of married life, with all its potential joys and sorrows, and unveils the mystery of married love as an icon of divine love. The program will aid the couple's communication in many areas, including expectations, decision making, problem solving, sexuality, spirituality, finances and parenthood.

We offer three options for marriage preparation:

1. Pre-Cana classes at St. Joseph Church

Sessions are led by two married couples generally on the last three Sundays of January and first two Sundays of February.

2. Sponsor Couple Program

This program involves the engaged couple meeting with a married couple who are members of the parish for at least four sessions scheduled at a mutually agreeable time.

3. Engaged Encounter Weekend

This is an in-depth private, personal marriage preparation experience within the context of Catholic faith and values. It is a weekend retreat away with other engaged couples, with time to dialogue honestly and intensely about their prospective lives together. Sessions are available most weekends. For more information and to enroll see www.mdcee.org.

There are other options outside our parish to meet the marriage preparation requirement which can be arranged through your St. Joseph priest/deacon. Proof of completion of marriage preparation is presented to the St. Joseph priest/deacon.

Wedding Liturgy

The priest/deacon facilitates the planning of your wedding liturgy. We provide a resource which outlines the liturgy and offers the opportunity for you to choose selections for prayers, vows, scripture and music.

There are two options for the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony:

1. The Sacrament of Matrimony celebrated at Mass

by a priest is the full liturgical prayer of the Church which includes Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist (Communion).

2. The Sacrament of Matrimony outside of Mass,

celebrated by a priest or deacon, is the Liturgy of the Word service and does not include Communion.

You may invite liturgical ministers to serve as altar servers, readers, musicians, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Liturgical ministers are coordinated through the priest/deacon and the Director of Liturgy/Music.

An important aspect of preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage for Catholic brides and grooms is to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) at some point before the wedding day. Consult the bulletin or website for times for Confessions at St. Joseph Parish or ask your priest to schedule an appointment.

We ask you to respectfully adhere to the following rules and guidelines that have been established to ensure your experience at our parish is sacred, welcoming, and safe:

- An appointment must be made early in the process with the Director of Liturgy/Music for liturgical planning. The Director of Liturgy/Music and Associate Director of Music serve as keyboard players for the liturgy. There are professional singers at St. Joseph who may serve as cantor. Any musicians outside St. Joseph Parish must be approved by the Director of Liturgy/Music. Only music which is acceptable for Sacred Liturgy will be approved.

- A wedding coordinator will lead the wedding rehearsal and be present at the wedding liturgy to organize the procession, answer questions and insure that all proceeds smoothly.
- The priest/deacon will schedule your wedding rehearsal, which is usually held the evening before the wedding. All who are participating in the wedding must be on time and in attendance.
- It is extremely important that the rehearsal and wedding start promptly.
- An individual must be at least five years of age to walk in the opening procession of the liturgy (i.e., ring bearer, flower girl.)
- A couple wishing to place flowers in the sanctuary make arrangements with a florist of their choice. The location of all flowers in the sanctuary must be approved by the presiding priest/deacon. Flowers may not be placed on the altar of sacrifice. It is strongly suggested that any flowers brought to the wedding for the sanctuary be left in the church after the wedding for the decoration of the St. Joseph worship space. Nothing can be attached to the church pews in a way that could cause damage to them.
- Existing liturgical decorations around the altar may never be removed or rearranged.
- A photographer may be retained by the couple. Pictures may be taken up to 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the liturgy and up to 30 minutes after the liturgy in the church. Photographers must conduct themselves appropriately without distraction. They are not allowed to enter the sanctuary.
- Videotaping is allowed as long as it is not a distraction. Videographers are not allowed to enter the sanctuary.
- Any extra lighting must be approved by the presiding priest/deacon and Director of Liturgy/Music.
- No alcoholic beverages are permitted on the parish grounds.
- While in church and on the church grounds, the entire wedding party and guests are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate, respectful manner.
- Aisle runners are not allowed in the church.
- Nothing can be thrown inside or outside the church (i.e., rice, rose petals, balloons.)

Fees

The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage in our parish is a joyful occasion for everyone. At St. Joseph we make every effort to ensure that all is a fitting venue and sacred event for you and your guests. Many people on our staff are involved in this effort: parish secretaries who prepare documents, church sacristans who prepare for the ceremony, maintenance people who make sure that the church is clean and in order for your guests, our wedding coordinator who ensures that the logistics of the rehearsal and wedding ceremony are properly conducted, the Director of Liturgy/

Music who is an integral part of the celebration, and, of course, our priests and deacons who prepare you for your wedding and have the joy of celebrating the Sacrament with you.

Our fees cover all these people and also help us to pay for facilities expenses. Considering all the money that you will be asked to spend on things such as flowers, dresses, tuxedos, limos and reception, you will no doubt understand that our fees are minimal in comparison, and are taking care of essential components of your celebration.

Church: <i>(includes sacristan, on-site wedding coordinator, wedding rehearsal, the liturgy, and marriage preparation here at St. Joseph)</i>	\$300 for parishioners \$500 for non-parishioners
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Gift to presiding minister:	<i>discretion of wedding couple</i>
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Organist/Pianist from St. Joseph:	\$250
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Cantor from St. Joseph:	\$150
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*Bless you on your Engagement
and Preparation for the
Sacrament of Matrimony*

Planning your wedding can be one of the most exciting times of your life. We are happy that you have chosen St. Joseph Parish to be part of your special day. We want to help you plan a wedding ceremony that is sacred and sacramental in accordance with the Catholic belief that marriage is a lifelong commitment. We look forward to working with you!





ST. JOSEPH PARISH
COCKEYSVILLE, MARYLAND

A Beacon of Faith, Worship, and Witness

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