

**Guidelines for  
Marriage Preparation  
and the  
Liturgical Celebration  
of Marriage**



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# St. Patrick's Catholic Church

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**St. Patrick's Catholic Church**  
**Guidelines for Marriage Preparation**  
**And the Liturgical Celebration of Marriage**

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**The Sacrament of Christian Marriage**

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“Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of matrimony, signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5: 32). The spouses thereby help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and by the rearing and education of their children. And so, in their state and way of life, they have their own special gift among the People of God (1 Corinthians 7:7). – *Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, #11.*

**The Nature of Liturgical Celebrations**

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Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the sacrament of unity, namely, a holy people united and organized under their bishops. Therefore, liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church. They manifest it and have effects upon it; but they concern individual members of the Church in different ways (*Vatican II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, #26*). The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear and unencumbered by useless repetitions. Marriage is normally celebrated within the Mass, after the reading of the Gospel and the homily. Please keep in mind the fact that all liturgical celebrations in the church are first and foremost acts of worship of God the Father, through the Son, in union with the Holy Spirit. Secondly, these various rites celebrated in the Church accomplish a work commanded by God, namely, the union of man and woman in the bond of matrimony.



**A Prayer for Marriage**

Heavenly Father, through the intercession of the Holy Family, Help us treasure the gift of marriage that reflects the love of Christ for the Church, where the self-giving love of husband and wife unites them more perfectly and cooperates in your plan for new life created in your image. Help us support men and women in their vocation of marriage, especially in difficult times when they join their sufferings to the Cross. Help us uphold the institution of marriage in our society as the place where love is nurtured and family life begins. Help us acknowledge that our future depends on this love and on your providential care for us. Amen.

# Notes


# St. Patrick’s Catholic Church

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St. Patrick’s Catholic Church is the physical building in which the people of this Parish gather for liturgical celebration, among which is the prime act of worship of the Roman Catholic Church, the celebration of the Eucharist, the Mass. Each time our church is used, we gather to offer praise and thanksgiving to Almighty God. Within the context of our worship various rites of the Church are celebrated. In order to maintain a necessary spirit of reverence for the house of God, the following guidelines are to be observed by all couples planning to marry at St. Patrick’s Catholic Church.

As a rule, a Mass is customarily celebrated when both parties in the marriage are Catholic. If one of the parties is not Catholic, we will suggest that a Christian marriage service take place out of respect to the non-Catholic party.

## Marriage Formation

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- All couples in the Diocese are required to participate in some type of a formal marriage preparation program. Couples can fulfill this requirement by attending *The Diocesan Engaged Encounter Program*, [call (815) 221-6100 for more information]. Twice a year, a one-day wedding formation program is also available at St. Paul’s Church in Joliet (815) 725-1527.
- *Natural Family Planning Class* information is available as well. Couples are required to participate in these sessions and familiarize themselves with the Church’s moral teachings in the area of sexual behavior, to ensure a proper perspective within the context of Christian marriage.
- Couples will participate in the FOCCUS Program (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study). The FOCCUS Inventory will help give insights into the marriage relationship and will provide topics for follow up meetings with couples from the parish.
- Couples preparing for marriage are also expected to attend Sunday Mass, and to receive the Sacrament of Penance in preparation for the reception

of the Sacrament of Matrimony. In order to be properly disposed to receive the graces that Christ wishes to impart in the Sacrament, a person must be properly disposed. This disposition comes through a devout practice of the faith, and a worthy confession of sin before the reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Members of other faiths are strongly encouraged to participate regularly in worship according to the laws of their own religious communities.

## **Wedding License & Other Documentation**

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- The civil marriage license is to be obtained from Kankakee County, at the office of the County Clerk, located at 189 East Court Street in Kankakee. The license may be obtained within 60 days of the marriage but must be obtained at least one day before the wedding date. Check on civil holidays which may close the office at an unexpected time. More information about wedding licenses can be located at the end of this booklet. You may also visit the website of the Kankakee County Clerk at the following address: <https://www.kankakeecountyclerk.com/records/marriage-licenses/>.
- Catholics to be married are required to provide a recently issued *Certificate of Baptism* (dated within six months of the marriage). Non-Catholic parties are required to provide a photocopy of their Baptismal certificate, if they have been baptized in another Christian Church.
- *Affidavit forms* will be provided to the couple. These forms are for the testimony of two witnesses who have known the person to be married since the age of 14. Two witnesses are required for each party of the pending marriage. Witnesses can be parents, relatives, friends, etc. The form is to be taken by the witness to a Catholic priest, who fills it out with the witness, under oath, signs it himself, and applies the parish seal.
- Other documents may be required in special cases; for instance, St. Patrick's is in the Diocese of Joliet, which requires special counseling and testing of anyone who plans to be married before they reach the age of 19.
- For non-parishioners, a letter from your parish priest, granting permission for the wedding to take place, is required.

- ❖ All applicants age 16 or 17 will need consent of both parents, legal guardians or judicial approval. Applicants must present a certified copy of their birth certificate showing parents' names. The parents or guardians must also be present and show identification. Non-residents who require consent to marry must present a sworn statement from the County Clerk of the county where they reside signed by both parents or legal guardians with the County's seal attached.

### *Fee:*

- ❖ The fee for a marriage license is \$30.00. The marriage license fee is subject to change by state legislature.
- ❖ Individuals may request certified copies of their marriage license. The cost for one certified copy is \$10, and additional copies are \$4 each.

### **Office of the Kankakee County Clerk**

189 E Court St #1  
Kankakee, IL 60901  
(815) 937-2990  
FAX (815) 939-8831

Email: [countyclerk@k3county.net](mailto:countyclerk@k3county.net).

## Where Can I Get a Marriage License?

- ❖ Marriage licenses are issued at the the Kankakee County Clerk's Office at 189 E. Court Street in Kankakee.
- ❖ If you are being married in Kankakee County and need further information, please call (815) 937-2990 for further information.

### ***Where to Apply:***

Office of Dan Hendrickson, County Clerk  
County Administration Bldg.  
189 E. Court St.  
Kankakee, IL 60901

### ***When to Apply:***

You may apply for your marriage license during regular office hours which are 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

### ***How to Apply:***

Both individuals must be present to apply for a marriage license and must get married in Kankakee County. Marriage licenses are valid for 60 days beginning one day after the date issued. For example, a marriage license issued on May 1st may be used on May 2nd and within the next 60 days.

### ***Proof of Age:***

All persons must present proper proof of age identification, in the form of either a birth certificate or a valid driver's license or state I.D.

### ***Exceptions:***

- ❖ Persons divorced one year or less from the date of application are requested to supply proof of divorce decree.
- ❖ By Illinois law, first cousins cannot marry until the age of fifty. Persons under the age of sixteen cannot marry.

- If either party was previously married, documents must be submitted which prove the person is free to marry in the Catholic Church. If widowed, a death certificate of the deceased spouse is needed. If divorced, a copy of the Declaration of Nullity from the Church Tribunal must be submitted. No wedding can take place until annulment proceeds are completed.

## Ministers of the Wedding

- Ordinarily, the pastor of St. Patrick's will preside at the wedding (under normal conditions, the pastor of St. Patrick's will also conduct the marriage preparation for the couple). A relative of the couple who is a priest or deacon may, if the couple prefers, preside at the wedding. In that case, but always subject to the prior approval of the pastor of St. Patrick's, the visiting priest or deacon will be present for the rehearsal as well as the ceremony. *Please note: All policies here stated are to be followed, even when a visitor is asked to preside.*
- If the couple wishes to invite the presiding priest or deacon (and his wife) or other clergy in the parish to their wedding reception or to the rehearsal dinner, it is proper that they send invitations to them, just as they do to their other wedding guests. A proper invitation to the clergy will enable them to adjust their schedules, if possible.
- If you wish to provide Altar Servers. Lectors or Eucharistic Ministers, please make your request with the priest and arrange to give them a donation for their services, where applicable. Normally, two servers will be assigned to each wedding.

## Regarding Offerings to the Parish

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- For active parishioners at St. Patrick's Church, the usual offering to the Church is \$250, in addition to any offering for the altar servers and the clergy. For non-parishioners, the mandated fee is \$500 for the use of the church and a mandated fee for the clergy. A 50% non-refundable deposit is required to reserve officially the date and time. The deposit is due two (2) weeks following the initial scheduling of a wedding date. If for any reason the wedding is cancelled, the amount paid will be converted to a tax-deductible contribution in the name of the check writer.
- We also encourage you to make an additional gift to the Church for use in caring for the poor. When so much is being lavished, it is good to remember those who do not have as much. A suggestion would be to give an amount equal to the cost of one dinner at your reception. In that way, in your good fortune you remember those who do not eat as well.

## Scheduling the Wedding

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- Ordinarily, either the bride or groom must be either a registered Catholic member of St. Patrick's Parish or a child of a St. Patrick's member.
- NO other wedding plans should be made before contacting the Rectory Office. The wedding date is tentative until it has been documented that both parties are free to marry in the Catholic Church, and the pastor at St. Patrick's has made the determination as to the freedom of the parties to marry in the Catholic Church, specifically at St. Patrick's.
- The couple to be married must consider it their personal responsibility to provide documents and attend to requirements in a timely manner. Please keep the priest informed of the status of your preparations, changes of mail address and telephone number, etc., in writing. These communications should include the names of both parties and the date of the planned marriage.

## Obtaining a Marriage License – Kankakee County

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### *Marriage License Requirements*

- ❖ It is important to note that a marriage license is valid only in the county in which it is issued.
- ❖ Both parties must be 18 years of age in order to obtain a license.  
  
Persons who are 16 or 17 years of age may obtain a license only with consent of both parents.
- ❖ The cost of a marriage license in Kankakee County is \$30.00 payable by cash or check. Both parties must be present when applying for the license.

### *Required Identification*

- ❖ You must show two proofs of age -- one MUST BE a certified copy of your birth certificate; and one of the following: baptismal certificate, valid driver's license, school record, draft card, fire arms registration, military ID, or other document showing your date of birth.
- ❖ Certified copies of divorce decrees are required.
- ❖ If previous marriage has been dissolved by the death of a spouse, a certified death certificate is required.

### *When to Apply*

- ❖ A marriage license becomes effective one day from the date issued and is valid for 60 days from the date it becomes effective.



chalice reverently and firmly into your hands. Respond, "Amen" to the minister's invitation, "The Blood of Christ," and consume the Precious Blood. Then return the chalice to the minister. The same sign of reverence we make before receiving the consecrated host should be made before receiving the Precious Blood.

[5] When you return to your place after receiving Holy Communion, kneel and make an act of thanksgiving to Christ for having given Himself to you in the Eucharist. Even though the Priest and/or Deacon may be seated, the Congregation remains kneeling until the Eucharist is put away, and the DOOR OF THE TABERNACLE IS CLOSED. That is your signal to be seated, NOT when Father sits down.

**Music** – The music used at Liturgy, before, during and after is to be chosen and performed in accordance with sound liturgical principles. Music is at the service of the liturgy, and it should never dominate or impose itself upon the Liturgy. Music at Mass is prayer, and not a performance looking for the approval of an audience. Music must be sacred in nature, composed for liturgical use. Some classical music, when appropriate, is also permissible. A variety of styles is permissible.

\*By way of clarification, the principles and directives we follow at St. Patrick's are not simply the opinions of your priests or parish boards. They are taken from the Documents of the Church and are in accord with the Church's teaching. Our intention is to be faithful to our Catholic Faith: To treasure and safeguard the Liturgy which Christ, through His Church, has given us.

- At the initial meeting with the pastor of the parish, a tentative date and time for the wedding can usually be set. Diocesan policy requires that there be an interval of at least six months between this initial meeting and the date set for the marriage. In addition, the parish requires registration and participation in the parish for a period of three months before a date will be arranged. Please note that only a tentative date can be set until requirements are met, and approval, if needed, is given by the diocese.
- Weddings may be celebrated on Fridays afternoons (time TBA) or on Saturday afternoons at 12:00 or 2:00 p.m. There are NO Sunday weddings celebrated at St. Patrick's Church. Ordinarily, rehearsals are scheduled at 6:00 p.m. the day before the wedding. On their wedding day, couples generally are scheduled for hour hours in the church. Thus, if a Saturday wedding begins at 12:00 noon, the couple is allotted two hours in church (11:30 - 1:30); for 2:00 weddings, the couple is also allotted two hours (from 1:30 - 3:30).
- Please arrive 15 minutes before the rehearsal and 30 minutes before the ceremony. No food, drink, gum, the use of cell phones or inappropriate behavior should be brought into the church for the rehearsal or wedding day. Before departing the church, please remove all unwanted items, and make sure you take everything with you that should go.
- Rehearsal day and time are arranged with the priest at the time when the marriage date is confirmed. The couple should plan the liturgy for the celebration of the marriage with the priest *before* the rehearsal. At the time of the scheduled rehearsal, all participants should arrive on time, bringing their marriage license and fees with them. Fees for servers can be left with the priest, in an envelope, with the names or purpose on the outside. Bring everything you can to the rehearsal (wedding license, programs, unity candle, checks, etc.) so that the day of the wedding your only focus is on your future spouse. *The celebrant will not marry the couple unless the license is in their hand.*
- Note that the rehearsal is for the bridal party only; music is not played at the rehearsal.

## Showing Reverence in God's House

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- When coming to the Church for the wedding rehearsal, as well as the wedding itself, please remember that the church is the house of God. It is consecrated for sacred use only. Talking and visiting should take place in the Narthex of the church. Please be especially mindful of the fact that the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in our church and should be treated with great respect and dignity. Likewise, the sanctuary of the church, as well as its furnishings, are all consecrated for specific purposes. They are to be treated with proper respect and may not be moved or used for anything outside of the liturgy. Most especially, the altar itself is to be treated with great respect: It is consecrated and is a symbol of Christ himself. Absolutely nothing may be placed on the altar, except the bread, the wine and the book necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist.
- To prevent damage to the pews and other surfaces in the church, we ask that nothing be attached with tape, sticky tack, push tacks, glue, wire or paperclips.
- No balloons, butterflies or any other type of flying object may be stored or used in church or the vestibule.
- Food, chewing gum, and drinks of any kind are not to be brought and consumed in or around the church. The use of alcohol and tobacco is strictly and absolutely prohibited at any time on, or near parish property by persons participating in the rehearsal or in the wedding ceremony. This includes the wedding party, guests and others connected with the occasion. These substances and their use under such circumstances are inconsistent with the atmosphere of respect and reverence that ought to prevail; such behavior is also inconsistent with full, conscious and active participation by all at the marriage liturgy. Likewise, if alcohol is provided in the cars of the bridal party, we would ask that out of respect for the Church the bottles not be opened or visible until the doors of the cars are

*The Reception of Holy Communion* – Care should be taken to receive the Eucharist with utmost care and devotion. Christ is really and truly present, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the Eucharist.

- [1] Approach the minister of communion conscious of what you are doing, and who you are receiving. When the person in front of you is receiving make a proper sign of reverence by bowing your head (with hands folded), you may also make the Sign of the Cross. Then, step forward to receive.
- [2] You may receive either on the tongue or in the hand. Either way, stand close enough to the minister. If receiving on the tongue, extend your tongue to receive the host. If receiving in the hand, extend BOTH hands, one under the other so that the minister can see and reach them easily to place the host in your hands. Stand close enough to the minister of Communion. Then, step aside, take the hand from beneath the hand holding the host, and place the Eucharist reverently into your own mouth. Both hands should be clean and free (no keys, tissue, purse, children, rosaries, hymnal, etc. to endanger the Eucharist) to receive the host. If not, the option of receiving on the tongue is perfectly acceptable.
- [3] Respond audibly, "Amen," to the minister's invitation, "The Body of Christ." This is the proper and called for response by the Church. Anything else is inappropriate and fails to express the unity and faith caned for at this moment. Please do not change or add to the asked for response, "Amen."
- [4] Church teaching is clear: Christ is fully present – Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity – and is fully received under either species of the consecrated host or of the consecrated wine. The common practice in the Western Church is to communicate only the consecrated host. However, at times, and at the discretion of the Pastor of the Parish, the Precious Blood may be offered to the faithful. If you opt to receive the Precious Blood, take the

Dei Once Communion is finished; then stand from the Prayer after Communion until the end of Mass.

*Sitting* – The assembly sits for the Readings from Scripture, the Homily, the Preparation of the Gifts and after Communion (once the Eucharist is put away and the Tabernacle door is closed).

*Kneeling* – The people kneel from the conclusion of the Sanctus until the conclusion of the Final Doxology and Great Amen. During the Eucharistic Prayer, the Deacon will kneel from the Epiclesis until after the elevation of the Chalice.

*The Lord's Prayer / Our Father* – The Bishops of the United States specifically asked for the permission to have the people join the Priest in extending their hands in what is called the *Orans* position. This position of extended arms during public worship belongs to the priests alone. Likewise, the custom that has found its way into the Liturgy of joining hands during the Lord's Prayer was also rejected as an appropriate gesture, since it places improper emphasis on the communal aspect (horizontal dimension) of the liturgy at a moment when the focus of the Community should be on the immediate preparation of the reception of Holy Communion, with our attention directed toward Christ who is about to give us Himself as food for our journey. The custom was first observed in alcoholics anonymous groups and then it found its way into use in the Catholic Church through the Charismatic Renewal; but it has never been prescribed or approved for use at Mass. What is supposed to be emphasized at that point in the Mass is the vertical dimension of the Liturgy, our (personal and communal) encounter with the Lord in the Eucharist. When participating in the public worship of the whole Church our own likes and dislikes, our own preferences should give way to being of one mind with the Church. At Mass, we are to do as the Church intends, to worship as the Church worships, and to safeguard the Liturgy as a priceless treasure entrusted to our care.

closed and the bridal cars are moving away from church property. Finally, the use of cell phones is prohibited inside the church proper.



- Because we celebrate our liturgies in God’s house, a modicum of respect is expected for the parties celebrating the wedding. For those in the bridal party, modest dress is required, with no exposure of shoulders, chest or clothing above the knee. Strapless and low-cut gowns, though fashionable and popular, are not appropriate at a Catholic setting. If you select a strapless or low-cut gown, we ask that you also select a stole or short jacket to wear during the religious ceremony.

### Photographers

To be thoughtful of others, pictures and other effects from the weddings must be removed within 1 ½ hours from the start of the liturgy. An insert has been provided in this booklet that couples are asked to hand to their photographers and videographers prior to the wedding.

### Flowers

Flowers in the Church, if desired, are provided by the wedding party. They should neither be placed on the altar itself, nor block the view of the bride and groom, nor that of the guests. Should the florist ask, **the main aisle is 66 feet long**. Regarding decorating the Church with flowers, please call the parish office a few days prior to the wedding to find out if any other services will take place on the wedding day. If no other services or activities are taking place the day of the wedding, then arrangements can be made to allow the photographer into the church at an agreed upon time. Otherwise, please be prudent on days when other activities are taking place in the church the day of your wedding. *As a rule, no decorations may be removed from the sanctuary without prior approval from the pastor.*

**Bow of the head** – A bow of the head is a sign of honor and respect made at the naming of the Trinity (in blessings and Trinitarian Doxologies), at the names of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of the Saint in whose honor the Mass is being celebrated. A bow of the head is also made before receiving the Eucharist.

**Profound Bow** – A Profound Bow is made in respect. All make a bow of the body to the altar when approaching it or passing it and during the recitation of the Creed, in recognition of Christ incarnate, at the words, “By the power of the Holy Spirit... and became man.”

**Sign of the Cross** – We make the Sign of the Cross twice during the Mass: At the beginning of the Mass and at the Final Blessing. In addition, the “little Sign of the Cross” is made at the beginning of the Gospel, on the forehead, on the lips and over the heart (that the Word of God be in our minds, on our lips, and in our hearts). Note that *The General Instruction* provides for NO Sign of the Cross during the prayer after the Penitential Rite, when the celebrant says, “May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to Everlasting Life.” That Sign of the Cross that some priests and people make was never prescribed. No Sign of the Cross is used because, the priest’s words of “absolution” in this prayer lacks the efficacy if the Sacrament if Penance.

**Standing** – The assembly stands for the Entrance Hymn, the Opening Rites, the Gospel Acclamation and the Verse, the Gospel, the Profession of Faith, and the Prayer of the Faithful.

After the Preparation of the Gifts, the Celebrant invites the people to pray, with the words, “Pray, brethren, that our Sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.” In response to the invitation, the people FIRST STAND and then say, “May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.” This change is one of the differences we need to be attentive to in the Mass. Remain standing until the end of the Sanctus. Stand again once the Final Doxology and Amen have been concluded and maintain this posture until the conclusion of the Agnus

Lord instituted at the Last Supper and commanded the Apostles to do in his memory, are one and the same, differing only in the manner of offering, and that consequently the Mass is at once a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, of propitiation and satisfaction (*The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 2003).

## Regarding the Celebration of the Eucharist

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The Liturgy is always first and foremost the action of Christ. Thus, the principal actor in the liturgy is always Jesus Christ, the high priest, who by his own sacrifice on the cross has shown the Father perfect praise. As members of his body, we share in his sacrifice of praise. The unity of posture and gesture, like the unity of voice is both a sign and a help to building up of the Eucharistic assembly. *The General Instruction* explains that the people of God are to shun any appearance individualism or division, keeping before their eyes that they have only one Father in heaven and accordingly are all brothers and sisters to each other. (*The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 2003).

**Reverence in the House of God** – We should maintain a spirit of quiet and reverence in the House of God. Loud talking and visiting is out of place within the Church itself. Please use the vestibule for greeting and conversing with others. The Church and its sacred furnishings are to be treated with care and respect. Cell phones and pagers should be switched off. Men and boys are to remove their hats.

**Genuflection** – Genuflect on the right knee when entering and leaving your pew at the beginning and end of Mass. The genuflection is made as a sign of reverence and adoration of Christ, present in the Blessed Sacrament and reserved in the Tabernacle of our Church.

**Bows** – Only two types of bows exist in the current Roman rite: A bow of the head and a bow of the body, also called the profound bow.

## Other Options & Concerns for the Wedding Ceremony

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- **Candelabras** ~ Ordinarily candelabra are not to be rented and brought into the church for use. The draft created from the heating and cooling system makes a mess and is too difficult to clean up.
- **Unity Candle** ~ The lighting of the Unity Candle is optional, and some couples choose to include it in their ceremony. Should you choose this option, please purchase your own pillar candle and side taper candles *as a set*; please do not purchase any of the candles at a discount department store, as our experience has found that these candles are not strong enough to sustain themselves for a one hour wedding. The Church can provide a stand for the unity candles purchased. Nothing is to be placed on the altar table itself.
- **Receiving Line** ~ Usually, time does not allow for a receiving line at the church. It is preferred that your receiving line is held at your reception.
- **Rice, Bird Seed and Confetti, Rose Petals, Sparklers, Doves, etc.** ~ Throwing rice, bird seed, etc., creates a safety hazard. Such materials are neither to be thrown in Church nor on the parish grounds.

## Liturgical Texts

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The readings and prayers used during the liturgy must be taken from the approved liturgical books. Readings are chosen from those given in the wedding ritual. They are found in the Together for Life book given to you during the period of preparation. The priest or deacon will always read the Gospel passage. You may select someone to read the first and second readings; you may also select someone to read the Prayers of the Faithful.

## Music for the Ceremony

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St. Patrick's parish has a music policy for wedding music which is always to be followed. Music must be suitable for the sacred nature of the Liturgy. Couples must consult with the Director for Wedding Liturgies at St. Patrick's Church **before** making any other music arrangements or plans.

If you choose to engage guest musicians or instrumentalists for your wedding, please keep in mind the following considerations:

- [1] Does your guest have a thorough knowledge of the workings of Catholic liturgy?
- [2] Is your guest a confident, flexible, and skilled musician?
- [3] Do you personally know that your guest is a successful soloist for weddings?

Most guest singers and instrumentalists are comfortable with a brief rehearsal on the day of the wedding. As a rule, St. Patrick's will not be able to photocopy or distribute music to guests; they will need to purchase their own music and will need to provide accompaniment parts to the organist, if the music is not already available. Arrangements for guests are to be made well in advance of the wedding and will be subject to the approval of the music director.

## The Theology of a Wedding Celebration

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Several years ago, upon consultation with Bishops and Catholics throughout the world, Pope John Paul II ordered the revision of *The General Instruction*. His intention was to look at the reform of the Liturgy which was taken up by the Second Vatican Council and to call the Church back to a faithful interpretation and following of the Council's intention to truly reform the Liturgy of the Church. The fruits of the Holy Father's attempts to "reform the Reform" are *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (more or less, the instruction book on how Mass is to be celebrated). In March 2003, the Holy See confirmed the English Translation of *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, along with the adaptations to be followed in the United States. We should view the changes not as "change for the sake of change," but as a reminder and "calling back" to what had been in place for us to follow since the Council. With the recent changes the Church is calling us back to a more authentic celebration of the liturgy, focusing on doing what the Church intends, and ridding the liturgy of those practices and abuses which inappropriately, and in the name of "reform" found their way into the liturgy over these 40 years since the Second Vatican Council.

When he was about to celebrate with his disciples the Passover meal in which he instituted the sacrifice of his Body and Blood, Christ the Lord gave instructions that a large, furnished upper room should be prepared (Lk 22:12). The Church has always regarded this command as applying also to herself when she gives directions about the preparation of people's hearts and minds, and of the places, rites, and texts for the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist. The current norms, prescribed in keeping with the will of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, and the new Missal that the Church of the Roman Rite is to use from now on in the celebration of Mass are also evidence of the great concern of the Church, of her faith, and of her unchanged love for the great mystery of the Eucharist... In this new Missal, then, the Church's rule of prayer (*lex orandi*) corresponds to her perennial rule of belief (*lex credendi*), by which namely we are taught that the Sacrifice of the Cross and its sacramental renewal in the Mass, which Christ the