

Preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony

Marriage Procedures and Guidelines for the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Dodge City, Kansas

Effective January 1, 2015

Your desire to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony is a great blessing for you and for the Church! We, the staff of the Cathedral, are eager to help you achieve this goal.

Marriage is more than a physical or emotional relationship. Marriage also involves the spiritual dimensions of the human person. For this reason, we encourage you to maintain a *spiritual* focus during this time of preparation for your wedding. Both our Catholic faith and the experience of many people also show the importance of maintaining chastity during this time of preparation. While there is a growing love between you and your partner, it will enhance your future marriage if you maintain the sexual chastity that is proper to people who are not married.

The following guidelines are meant to facilitate the preparation process and to help the parish to assist as many people as possible in making plans for marriage.

Elements of Marriage Preparation

The required steps of preparation for marriage in the Catholic Church are offered in hopes that the sacredness and beauty of the Sacrament of Marriage will be ever more apparent, that hearts will be touched by God's love, and that the grace of God will be manifest as these guidelines are followed (*Diocese of Dodge City Guidelines*).

- **Instrument-** Completion the *Prepare Enrich* couple assessment and discussion of the results with an assigned mentor couple, a priest, or pastoral minister.
- **Event-** Attendance at an Engaged-Encounter retreat weekend or couple-to-couple group session (see www.dcdiocese.org/engaged-encounter for Engaged Encounter dates for the Dodge City Diocese or www.ceewichita.com for the Wichita Diocese).
- **Sessions-** The Cathedral also asks couples to attend a session of *Theology of the Body* and also an *Introductory Session to Natural Family Planning (NFP)* as part of their preparation. The schedule for these sessions will be made available in the parish bulletin and website.
- **Other sessions with Priest, Pastoral Minister, or Mentor Couple** may also be required in helping the couple to develop an understanding and appreciation of the Sacrament of Marriage.
- **If the engaged couple is coming from another Diocese**, we ask that they participate in the approved marriage preparation program of their Diocese, with the inclusion of the Natural Family Planning Session.

Setting the Date

- You may schedule your wedding based upon the availability of the Cathedral and of the clergy that serve the Cathedral.
- You may schedule your wedding no sooner than four months after your first contact with those in charge of marriage preparation at the Cathedral. Allowing more than four months is advisable.
- Most weddings are at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. Because of Confession schedules and the Mass schedule, this is the preferable hour. No weddings can be scheduled later than 2:00 p.m.
- Please plan to begin the wedding at the scheduled time. Saturdays are a particularly full day for the priest, especially with confessions scheduled at 3:30 p.m. When weddings begin late it is difficult to meet the other obligations of the day.
- Weddings may be scheduled during the week, if desired. Weddings will not be scheduled on a Sunday.
- Should you desire a priest from another parish to celebrate your wedding, this is permissible. The time of the wedding would be guided by the norms set forth above. Priests or deacons from another diocese must present a letter to the Chancery stating that they are in good standing with their diocese or province.
- In the case of one or both persons having a previous marriage, discuss this with the person with whom you initiate marriage preparation at the Cathedral. Depending upon the circumstances of your first marriage, it may not be possible to set a date until an annulment process has been initiated and a final decision has been made.
- Weddings will not be celebrated during the Season of Lent. If exceptions are made, the exception is for the simplest of weddings (Normally to prepare for the Easter Vigil).

Required Documents

- ✓ Recent copies (within six months) of your baptismal record.
- ✓ Civil Marriage License from the court.
- ✓ A signed witness statement for each person verifying your freedom to marry in the Catholic Church.
- ✓ In cases where there has been a previous marriage to another person a copy of the divorce decree and marriage license. It may also be necessary to obtain an annulment through the Church.

Marriage Preparation Costs & Suggested Donations for Weddings

- **\$35 fee for preparation materials is required.** This can be paid to the parish office by cash or check or through the Prepare Enrich website.

The fees below do not cover even the cost of the wedding, much less the costs of operating the Cathedral. Your regular stewardship of tithe/alms is necessary to maintain the ministries at COLG. These fees are to be considered an extra donation of support. However, an inability to pay will not get in the way of a couple's celebration of the sacrament.

Location	Registered* Parishioners	Non-Parishioners
Sacred Heart Daily Mass Chapel	\$100.00	\$300.00
Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe	\$150.00	\$350.00
Sacred Heart Cathedral	\$250.00	\$450.00

** Registered parishioners qualify as the couple preparing for marriage, or their parents.*

- **To officially reserve your wedding date on the parish calendar, half of the total fee must be paid.** Should you cancel the wedding at least three months prior to the scheduled date, this money will be refunded upon notifying the Cathedral of the cancellation.
- **Completed payment of these amounts is due 30 days before the wedding.** Payment may be made in cash or by a check made payable to the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- **It is customary to give the Priest celebrating your wedding ceremony a monetary gift.** We also encourage you to offer a gift of some kind to the Sacristan (the person who prepares the Mass) and Altar Servers as well; taking into consideration they are typically volunteers from the parish.
- **It is important that the musicians for your wedding receive fair compensation.** Some of the musicians will have their own fees that they can discuss with you as you plan your wedding music. Please make the necessary arrangements with the cantor(s) and musician(s) before the wedding.

Use of the Facility

- Saturday weddings are scheduled no later than 2pm. Two rooms will be made available to the bridal party beginning at 10:00 a.m.: St. Dorothy (Bride's Room) and Fr. Handly (Groomsmen). For weekday weddings these rooms will be made available 4 hours before the start of the wedding

- The Church will not be available for photographs until 12pm (or two hours before the start of the wedding).
- **NO ALCOHOL** is to be brought onto the parish ground at any time. Please reverence the sacredness of this space by not consuming alcohol before the service. Consumption of alcohol could prohibit participation in the wedding.

Decorations

- Simplicity is suggested in the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Due to the size of the church, it is difficult for decorative items to be proportionate in the space.
- Saturday morning is becoming a common time for funerals. Should there be a funeral on the day of your wedding; the Cathedral will not be available for decorating until about 11:30 a.m. Please plan your decorations accordingly.
- Candelabra are discouraged because of the structure of the sanctuary platform. It is difficult to place them in an attractive way.
- Floral arrangements placed in front of the altar may not stand higher than the altar. Once again, simplicity is encouraged. Floral arrangements get lost in the large space of the Cathedral.
- Aisle runners are strictly prohibited due to danger that people can trip over them.
- Bows may be placed on pews. However nothing can be placed on a pew that restricts movement of the congregation to leave the pew for communion. Please do not attach decorations with any material that will damage the pews or any part of the worship space.
- If flower pedals are thrown in the aisle, it is the responsibility of the couple to have them removed promptly after the wedding.

Music

- All music must reflect a Christian understanding of love and marriage. Secular music may not be used either before or during the ceremony.
- Recorded music is not permitted before or during the ceremony.
- The pastor, or his delegate, reserves the right to review all musical selections.
- Guest musicians should be familiar with the structure of the Mass and are expected to provide appropriate music for the parts of the Mass such as the *Gloria, Holy, Holy, etc.*
- Catholic liturgies always prefer congregational participation. Therefore music known to all or found in the hymnal is preferred.

- It is the responsibility of the couple to make arrangements for the music for the wedding. If you are in need of suggestions for musicians and cantors please contact the parish office early in your marriage preparation so that we can provide a list of persons for you to contact.

Rehearsal

- Normally the rehearsal is the evening before the wedding. Please schedule the rehearsal well in advance of the wedding. Before confirming the time, please check with the priest who will witness your wedding to determine when he is available.
- Please ask your wedding party to arrive on time. Often the priest will have other commitments scheduled after the rehearsal.
- Out of respect for the house of God, please ask all who come to the rehearsal to avoid bringing food or drink into the Cathedral. Ask them not to chew gum and to step outside of the main body of the Cathedral to make or receive phone calls. Also, it would be helpful to request that phones be put on silent.
- If small children are present for the rehearsal, please ask someone to monitor their behavior. We do not want them to get accustomed to running in the church.
- The rehearsal is also a time in which the couple has the opportunity to go to Confession. All Catholics are encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Penance before they receive the Sacrament of Matrimony. Just as one should not receive the Eucharist when in serious sin; neither should they receive the Sacrament of Matrimony while in serious (mortal) sin. Even without serious sin, confession is encouraged as a way to prepare for the spiritual graces of the Sacrament.

Prayers and Readings for the Rite of Marriage

The Cathedral will provide a Wedding Liturgy Planning book containing the options for the prayers and readings of the Liturgy. Couples can obtain this book from the parish office and need to return their selections to the priest or pastoral minister at least two weeks before the rehearsal date. In cases of a marriage between a baptized and an un-baptized person please note that some of the prayers will be slightly changed.

Lectors & Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

- Lectors should be practicing Catholics (*instructions per Bishop John B. Brungardt*).
- The Scripture readings will be placed on the Ambo before the wedding. Those chosen to read the readings should make sure they have gone to the Ambo before the service to find the place in the Lectionary. It is also helpful to have spoken over the speaker system to get a feel for the projection needed to be heard. The rehearsal would be a good time to do this if the lector has not read at the Cathedral previously.

- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC) should visit with the presiding priest before the service begins so that they know what to do.
- EMHC's must be commissioned for this task by the Bishop. Eucharistic Ministers are commissioned for their own parish. Ministers from another parish should consult with the priest and ask to be commissioned for that particular instance in the parish.

Photography

- Please remember that the Cathedral is a place of worship, not a photographic studio. This means that there should be reverence during the time of taking pictures. Dress should be modest. Drinks and food are not to be brought into the church. Behavior is to be appropriate for the sacred space.
- **We ask that pictures do not begin before 12:00 noon** to avoid distractions for those going to confession and that all photography is finished by 4:00 p.m.
- During the service, photography is limited to the professional photographer and to one video camera.
- Should a couple not hire a photographer, they may designate one person to take photos and another to take a video.
- Please visit with the presiding priest before the wedding about where the photographer and videographer are permitted to stand during the ceremony.
- Members of the congregation are asked to limit their photography to the entrance procession and the exit at the end of the service. It is a time of worship and photography can be very distracting, especially to the person with a camera in their hand.

Clean-up

- **You are asked assign someone the task of cleaning up after the wedding.** We do not have a weekend janitorial staff. Shortly after 4:00 p.m., people begin to gather for the evening Mass on Saturday. The Cathedral must be clean and ready for the worshippers to arrive.
- You are also expected to have someone clean up the bride's room and the room in which the groom and groom's men have dressed.

Additional Notes

It is the responsibility of the couple to meet all of the requirements and to remain in contact with the pastoral minister and priest throughout the course of preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage.

Any changes from the above norms must be submitted to the personal consideration of the Pastor.