

***MARRIAGE, YOU, and
HOLY CROSS PARISH***



***Holy Cross Parish
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***Information and Guidelines for Celebrating the Sacrament of
Matrimony***

Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage. We are happy that you chose Holy Cross Church to celebrate this special Sacrament.

Weddings are joyful times for couples, for their families and friends, and for the Parish community. The Church welcomes you as you celebrate your marriage, a visible sign of God's invisible blessings and of the Lord's presence in your lives. Great care is taken to see that the prayers and Sacred songs for this special time are reverent, grace-filled, and open to the movement of God's Spirit among us.

We celebrate the Sacrament as a community, inviting our brothers and sisters in faith to join us and asking for their prayerful support. The presence of relatives and friends adds to the joy and thanksgiving of the occasion. The Sacrament is always a public celebration of the Parish family and the whole Church.

Since we are celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony and not simply having a wedding, Holy Cross Parish provides the following guidelines. They have been established through years of experience and are aimed at trying to serve you better. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to talk to the Priest who is helping you in the preparations.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. It is presumed that the bride or groom is a member of Holy Cross Parish and that the Catholic party/parties are practicing the faith, i.e., going to Mass each week and frequently receiving the Sacrament of Penance.
2. There are some couples who are not members of our Parish or Diocese. We are happy to accommodate those couples when possible.

3. The couple planning to marry should expect to meet with the Priest to fill out the necessary forms and to make preparations for the actual celebration.

THE PROCESS

Preparation for marriage takes at least six months. It begins by meeting with the Parish Priest, where information is gathered and the process mapped out. There are four major phases in the preparation: Introductory, Assessment, Enrichment and Liturgical.

1. Introductory – An initial interview and discussion of your relationship and faith experience. During this time, you will complete the marriage form.

2. Assessment – The completion of the *Pre-marital* Inventory and a discussion of the results.

3. Enrichment – The attendance of a pre-marital preparation experience (Pre-Cana, Engaged Encounter, etc.) – in Springfield or some other convenient location. To find a convenient program, please go to:
<http://diospringfield.org/wp-content/uploads/Marriage-Prep-Schedule-2015-2016.pdf> Click on “Marriage Preparation Booklets (see Page 4 for locations).

4. Liturgical – A discussion of the marriage ceremony, and the selection of readings, Ministers, and music.

Your Priest will guide you through each phase. **Most essential to this time of preparation is the practice of your faith and being part of the Church.** You are publicly declaring your love before God and God’s people. Your faith commitment will make your wedding celebration a true celebration of your love of God and each other. For Catholics, a worthy confession prior to your marriage is recommended.

SOME PRACTICAL INFORMATION

There are many things to take care of as you get ready for the day of the wedding. Some highlights that pertain to Holy Cross include:

ALTAR SERVERS: Two servers are scheduled for each wedding. If you have a special request for specific servers, please talk to the Priest not less than a month before the wedding.

DOCUMENTS: Prior to the ceremony, the bride and groom must provide the following documents: Catholics must have a copy of the certificate of Baptism dated within six weeks of the wedding, and certificates of First Communion and Confirmation. This is only necessary if the above

Sacraments were not celebrated at Holy Cross. These may be obtained by contacting the Parish in which the Sacrament(s) took place. A non-Catholic who is baptized must submit a copy of the Baptismal or Christening record. A non-baptized person is asked to provide his/her birth certificate. The couple must give the Priest the state marriage license at the wedding rehearsal. The Priest will fill it in after the ceremony and mail it back to City Hall.

ENVIRONMENT: Flowers and other plants may be used in the Sanctuary. No flowers or plants are placed on the Altar itself. If a unity candle is used, the couple provides it, brings it to the rehearsal, and takes it after the service. A runner or white carpet is not permitted; neither is confetti or rice (inside or outside the Church).

MARRIAGE LICENSE: This is the responsibility of the bride and groom. You must appear together at City Hall to apply for a marriage license. There is a three day waiting period. For more information contact the City Clerk's Office in Springfield by dialing 3-1-1.

MUSIC: **Diocesan guidelines direct that participation of the congregation be according to usual liturgical practice.** Secular (popular, movie, Broadway songs, etc.) are not used – they are more suited for the reception than for the church. Mr. Bill Lucia, our Parish Music Director, is in charge of coordinating the music at all our wedding celebrations. Contact him well in advance (782-3928) in order to meet with him and discuss music. Mr. Lucia is ordinarily the musician at all celebrations, selecting a member of the parish Music Ministry to provide vocal leadership. Participation of a guest musician is limited and subject to an additional fee.

OFFERING: A stipend of \$500, made payable to Holy Cross Parish, is **due one month prior to the service.** This stipend includes the Church offering; Music Director/Organist and Music Minister/Cantor. It does not include a gift for the Altar Server(s), or additional musicians/cantors that you may require.

OTHER PRIESTS AND MINISTERS: If you have a relative or close friend who is a Priest and you would like to invite him to witness your marriage, you are most welcome to do so. Please discuss this with the Parish Priest so that the necessary permissions, both legal and ecclesiastical, can be obtained. If one of the parties is a member of a Protestant Church, his or her Minister is most welcome to be a participant in the wedding ceremony. Particulars can be worked out with the Priest arranging the wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY: Both photography and videography are allowed at Holy Cross. If you are having both, be sure to let each know the other will be present. Restrictions are few and have to do

primarily with location. Access to the choir loft will only be allowed to one designated photographer. The Sanctuary space is Sacred. Therefore, access to the Sanctuary is very limited. Most photographers are professionals who have had experience in our church. We ask every photographer and videographer to meet with the priest at least twenty minutes prior to the ceremony.

REHEARSAL: The rehearsal time should be reserved when the wedding is booked. All readers, those bringing up the gifts, and all others involved in the wedding, should be present at the rehearsal. Please be on time for the rehearsal which usually lasts about thirty minutes.

AFTER THE WEDDING

You are now a new family and it will be your responsibility to register or update the registration information at the Parish in which you will be living as soon as possible. As a Catholic family, you receive a call and a challenge. “The laity are gathered as the People of God and make up the Body of Christ under one Head. ...they are called upon as living members, to expend all their energy for the growth of the Church and its continuous sanctification.”
(Dogmatic Constitution of the Church)

Please remember the Sacredness of marriage. Besides being a meaningful social occasion for you and your families, it is a profoundly Sacred happening, as you are receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony. By your marriage in the Church, you are making a public statement of your faith and your fidelity to each other and to Christ, within the community of the Church. Please take this time before marriage to spiritually prepare yourselves for life together, as married people of the Church.



When love is found and hope comes home,
Sing and be glad that two are one.
When love explodes and fills the sky,
Praise God and share our Maker's joy.

Praise God for love, praise God for life,
In age or youth, in husband, wife.
Lift up your hearts, let love be fed
Through death and life in broken bread.

(Hymn: *When Love Is Found*)