

WEDDING GUIDELINES

Cathedral of St. Raphael & St. Patrick Church

Congratulations on your engagement! The parishioners and staff at the parishes of St. Raphael and St. Patrick parishes rejoice with you at this joyful time. We look forward to celebrating the mutual love you have discovered and commend you for your desire to declare and seal it publicly and permanently, in the Sacrament of Matrimony. In this way your love and life together will serve those around you as a symbol that Jesus Christ is alive and present to the world.

This sacred covenant of marriage is a symbol of the union between Christ and the Church. Therefore, married love must be permanent, life-giving and freely shared.

May the components of marriage preparation help you to radiate Christ's unselfish love, growing closer to God and to one another through these experiences.

PREPARATION COMPONENTS

PARISH REGISTRATION

Marriage is relational, involving interactions among the couple, God, and the body of Christ – the church. Either the bride or groom must be registered in a Catholic parish, faithfully practicing the Catholic faith, hopefully confirmed, and supporting their parish. If both parties are living elsewhere, delegation (permission) from the local pastor will be needed. This presumes membership in another Catholic parish.

TIMELINE

Six to Twelve months prior:

- Engaged couples should be registered, practicing members of their local parish or a Catholic parish in the area where they reside.
- Contact the parish secretary for a date (\$100 nonrefundable deposit requested to hold date). The secretary will inform the priest/deacon who will contact you to schedule an initial meeting appointment (up to 3 additional meetings will follow). It should not be presumed that with a deposit that the wedding date is automatically confirmed until meeting with the priest, meaning caution should also be exercised in confirming a hall for a reception.
- Register and participate in one of the marriage preparation programs, locally or elsewhere, or meet with sponsor couple after the initial meeting.
- Attend Music Workshop at the Cathedral – a schedule will be provided by the clergy helping you prepare. Please inform the priest/deacon when you have attended.

Four months prior:

- Obtain the marriage license from a courthouse in Iowa; the license must be presented to the presider no later than the wedding rehearsal.
- Make final donation to church for use of facilities.

One month prior:

- Obtain the rings, if doing so, but not a requirement for marriage.
- Complete the liturgy preparation with priest/deacon.

- Forward to the priest/deacon any worship aide drafts sent to the Director of Music.

The week before:

- Sacrament of reconciliation
- Wedding rehearsal (bring marriage license to rehearsal). At the Cathedral it is recommended that the wedding party park in the rear parking lot since only the door of the Cathedral Center will be unlocked.

RETREATS: In addition to regular meetings with a priest/deacon, you will also attend one of the following retreats to provide a comprehensive wedding preparation experience. Please note that if preparation will occur elsewhere outside the Archdiocese, a similar program must be approved by the preparing priest/deacon before registering as an alternative to the below.

1. Sponsor Couple Program (\$30 for materials) – Recommended option – Engaged couples meet with a married couple from the parish to read and discuss various issues related to married life for approximately 5 sessions of an hour each at mutually agreed upon location and time.
2. Pre-Cana (in the Archdiocese) (\$45-55: 2017) is a one-day retreat experience hosted at various locations across the archdiocese. (Dubuque sites include lunch)
3. Engaged Encounter (in the Archdiocese) (\$300: 2017) is a retreat that begins on Friday evening and concludes on Sunday, hosted at American Martyrs Retreat House in Cedar Falls. (Includes lodging and meal)
4. Two Become One (in the Archdiocese) (\$130: 2017) is a retreat of a day, especially geared for a couple in which at least one of the persons has been divorced or experienced the death of a spouse. This retreat is also hosted at American Martyrs Retreat House in Cedar Falls.

To register for #2-4, visit <https://www.dbqarch.org/offices/familylife/marriagepreparation-program/>

Couples are encouraged to complete an NFP awareness program.

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

As individuals and as a couple, you need to be spiritually prepared for two to become ONE. Disciples of Jesus Christ are persons of prayer. Learning to pray together is important in growing in love, forgiveness, and fidelity, and in becoming a sacrament and symbol of God’s love to others. We suggest that you:

- pray together
- worship at Mass together weekly
- go to confession
- reflect upon the Scriptures for your wedding
- consider what the sacrament of matrimony will add/bring to your current relationship
- pray at your wedding rehearsal

MARRIAGE DOCUMENTS

The church requires the bride and groom to complete several forms to determine suitability for marriage and capability to minister the sacrament to each other.

You will need to provide your baptismal certificates from the parish of your baptism issued within the last six (6) months, unless you were baptized in the church in which the wedding will take place. Certificates should be obtained from the church of baptism and mailed to the attention of the preparing priest/deacon at: 231 Bluff St., Dubuque, IA 52001.

The Catholic Church usually requires two (2) witnesses for each person (preferably parents) to meet with a priest to testify concerning the couple's freedom to marry. In the event the parents are not in the Dubuque area, the form may be filled out with a priest in the parent's parish of residence.

The Pre-Cana, Engaged Encounter and Sponsor Couple certificates must be given to the celebrant.

A marriage license from the State of Iowa is required for the marriage and should be given to the priest at the rehearsal or before. Visit any courthouse in the state of Iowa. There is a waiting period of 3 days, so do not delay. A marriage cannot be performed without a valid license.

CONDUCT

The wedding couple is responsible for the conduct of their guests. The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is to be respected at all times by everyone present regardless of religion.

Alcoholic beverages, drugs, or weapons are not allowed in the church and are not to be consumed on parish property or nearby before, during or after the wedding or rehearsal. Breaking this rule may result in the cancellation of the wedding.

Food, pop, water bottles are not to be taken into the Church. Please do not use the altar as a table for cameras, purses, or other belongings. Gum is also prohibited.

The throwing of rice, bird seed, confetti, rose petals, etc. is forbidden because they do not have a place in a Sacramental Marriage, are dangerous for people who may slip and fall because of them, and require cleaning before the weekend parish liturgies. Flower petals also make a mess and are not allowed.

VISITING CLERGY

Visiting priests, ministers and rabbis are welcome to participate with the permission of the pastor at a level permissible by the Ecumenical Guidelines. A set of guidelines will be made available to give to a visiting priest.

WEDDING LITURGY

THE MARRIAGE RITE

A wedding in the Catholic Church involves the reception of a sacrament. Excessive ostentation is in poor taste and should be avoided. Modesty in the house of God should be upheld. To keep the focus on God and you, the ministers of the sacrament, we request no more than 6 bridesmaids

and 6 groomsmen. Based upon our experience, we recommend that children under the age of 4 not be part of the wedding party.

To select scripture readings, the priest/deacon will provide you with a copy of *Together for Life* which contains reading suggestions. The clergy will also provide a wedding planning sheet to help with all the details of the wedding liturgy.

As a courtesy to all those involved both the rehearsal and wedding will begin on schedule.

The marriage of two Catholics should ordinarily be celebrated within the Eucharistic Liturgy. A nuptial service outside of Mass is usually more appropriate for an inter-faith marriage between a Catholic and a person of another Christian denomination. Moreover, due to the acknowledged divisions among Christians, those who are not Catholic may not receive Holy Communion. We continue to pray for the efforts of ecumenism.

Clean-up of the church, parish hall, restrooms and grounds after the ceremony is the responsibility of the couple. Please inform your ushers that this is part of their duties. Please have them remove all trash, placing in the proper receptacles near the parish center or taking off premises. We do not have weekend maintenance service.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Select an experienced reader who will not detract from the liturgy and who can proclaim the Word of God.

The couple is encouraged to have one to three Eucharistic Ministers who have been commissioned to help distribute communion. (Three is the ideal if there is a large number of Catholics in attendance at the wedding).

If Mass is being celebrated, one to two people will need to bring the gifts of bread and wine forward.

TIMES FOR WEDDINGS

Weekdays time to be determined
Saturday between noon and 2 pm*

*Due to weekend Mass schedule the presider may not always be able to start later than 1:30 pm. The couple will negotiate the time with the presider.

WEDDING MUSIC

Your wedding is a sacred rite taking place in a sacred place. The music reflects and aids in the worship for all of your guests. To assist you in musical selection, our parish has developed a Wedding Music Workshop. The priest/deacon coordinating the wedding liturgy will communicate those dates with you. They are a complimentary service and are held from 1-2:30PM in the Cathedral.

Jim Mendralla, the Director of Music and Liturgy for the Cathedral, serves as coordinator of music and the accompanist for weddings. Even if the couple wishes to use their own musicians, they need to engage the services of Jim Mendralla for music selection and coordination of the

music at the wedding. Any exceptions to this are made only after consultation with Mr. James Mendralla, the pastor, or associate pastor.

All questions regarding music selections are addressed at the music workshop or in later consultation with Jim. At the workshop he will explain to the couple the various fees charged for his services and other musicians.

The music chosen for the wedding should be appropriate for a church service, that is, it needs to have a faith dimension, which helps the gathered community to pray, be artistic in quality, and music that fits the spirit and structure of the liturgy.

Only religious/sacred music is allowed during the Marriage Rite. Even prelude and postlude music should complement the sacred reality of Sacramental marriage, and should therefore be religious in nature. Musical selections during the wedding should not be so long that they detract from the smooth flow of the ceremony.

Pre-recorded music used at weddings is not permitted.

WEDDING FEES

Church Facility* Parishioners**: \$250; includes \$100 nonrefundable deposit (see below)

Non-parishioners: \$600; includes \$100 nonrefundable deposit

Altar Servers \$10 per server if arranged by parish

Celebrant A stipend if you wish

Music Ministers Coordinated with James Mendralla

* Facilities donation includes: Heat/AC, light, water and electricity for rehearsal and wedding, locking/unlocking for rehearsal and wedding, use of bridal rooms in basement and kitchenette, preparation materials used in meeting with the clergy.

** Parishioner Expectations: Becoming a parishioner means choosing life-long spiritual growth with a worshipping community: i.e. Celebrating with us at Sunday Mass, raising your families in the parish, and stewardship commitment of contributing time, talent, and treasure.

DECORATIONS

Appropriate decorations such as flowers on the high altar, or on stands near the altar of sacrifice are fine. However, no flowers are allowed on the altar of sacrifice or in front of it. None of the sanctuary furniture is to be moved to accommodate flowers or other decorations.

Please direct your ushers to remove the flower boxes, personal marriage booklets, and do the necessary cleanup of the church. In short, all facilities should be left in equal or better condition than found.

Aisle runners are not to be used. Pew decorations such as bows are not recommended but allowed if they are attached without adhesive. Plastic clips may be used. Fire code does not permit candles to be placed on pews.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Pictures may be taken at any time during the wedding by the official photographer, but from the main floor of the church, not the sanctuary or choir loft. Use of flash is prohibited during the liturgy. The photographer is a *guest* of the church.

Pictures may be taken one and one-half (1½) hours before and one-half hour (½) after the wedding. The Sanctuary may be used for these photos, but we ask everyone to maintain proper respect for the Blessed Sacrament. Please ensure children are not running around in the sanctuary area.

Videotaping is allowed. Before the ceremony the videographer should consult with the celebrant for guidelines. Photographers and videographers are not permitted in the balcony.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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