



## **Scioto Catholic Consortium Celebrating Your Marriage**

Congratulations on your engagement! We welcome your inquiry about marrying in in the Scioto Catholic Consortium. We are happy to assist you as you prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Matrimony and promise to do all we can to make your wedding day reflect the importance and beauty of your commitment.

The Catholic Church esteems marriage as sacred – one of the seven sacraments of the continual presence of Christ among us. Saint Paul says the union of husband and wife is a sign of the union of Christ and the Church.

In witnessing your marriage, our Church community desires to uphold and support you faithfully for the rest of your lives as you grow together in God who is Love. We undertake this work with you as you begin preparing to live the Sacrament of Marriage.

This booklet is intended to inform you of the preparation process here at Holy Redeemer and St. Mary. It will also help you plan a wedding at Holy Redeemer and St. Mary churches in conformity with the Church's understanding of Christian Marriage. We desire to work with you so that your wedding may be a faith-filled, dignified, beautiful and memorable celebration. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your questions.

### **Who May Be Married in the Scioto Catholic Consortium**

Church law guarantees that active, registered members of the parish, who are in good standing with the faith and morals of the Catholic Church, have the right to marry in their proper parish church. Either the bride or groom must be a baptized, confirmed Catholic.

**ACTIVE-REGISTERED IN GOOD STANDING WITH FAITH AND MORALS OF THE CHURCH**  
means:

1. Someone who has been registered in our parish for one year before the scheduled date of the marriage; and
2. Someone whose contribution file indicates attendance (Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation) and support (regularly giving to our offertory collection and/or fulfilling a pledge to our parish.)

3. Children of “registered” and “active” parishioners are considered members for the purpose of marriage and may be married in the church without the facility usage fee, if they are attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.
4. **The couple is not living together.**

NON-REGISTERED OR NON-ACTIVE means:

1. Someone who has not been registered in our parish for at least one year before the marriage.
2. Someone whose contribution file does not indicate attendance at Mass on Sunday and Holy Days and support (who does not regularly give to our offertory collection and/or fulfill a pledge to the parish.)
3. **Couples who live together.**
4. If even one of the above criteria can be established, the couple will be considered non-registered or non-active parishioners.

### **The Marriage Preparation Process**

Whether you are an active/registered or non-registered/non-active member, the marriage preparation outlined here is required for a wedding at an of the Parishes in the Scioto Catholic Consortium.

1. Contact the pastor, read this book, and sign an agreement.
2. All Catholics will need to get a current (within the last 6 months) copy of your baptismal certificate from the parish where you were baptized. The baptismal certificate should include the full notations of all the sacraments you have received.
3. If you are not a parishioner, you will need to provide a letter from your pastor granting his permission for your wedding. Return the information and signature page at the back of this book to him. It is advisable for you to contact the pastor as soon as you are engaged or one year before your desired date.

The preparation process meetings with priest or deacon who is preparing you, including take and reviewing the PREPARE & ENRICH inventory. The Inventory is a series of questions designed to facilitate discussion between the couple and mentor couple about topics related to married life. The couple’s responses to the survey will be an aid to other parts of the preparation process.

You will also need to attend an Engaged Encounter weekend and training in Natural Family Planning ([www.ccli.org](http://www.ccli.org)). Information on Engaged Encounter can be found at [www.engaged.org](http://www.engaged.org). The last step in preparation is to meet with the priest preparing you at least one month before the date to plan the ceremony. All parts of the preparation process are to be completed before this last meeting, if the wedding is to proceed as planned.

### **Setting the Date and Time**

A wedding date may be set only after meeting with the pastor. Weddings may be scheduled on Saturdays between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00p.m or after 6:00pm. For weddings on other days of the week, special arrangements can be made with the officiating priest. All decorating must be done after the last event at the church on Saturday mornings or evenings (for 6:30pm weddings). All photography must be finished by 3:00pm.

The time of the rehearsal is set with the officiating priest. Rehearsals start promptly at the established time and last less than one hour.

### **Documents Needed**

- **Baptismal Record:** A copy of your baptismal certificate, issued in the last six months, is required for your wedding file. Information about your confirmation must be included. Contact the parish of your baptism and ask them to send a copy of your baptismal certificate with “notations” of all sacraments received and with the parish seal stamped upon it. Non-Catholics are encouraged, but not required, to produce a baptismal certificate. These must be sent to our office prior to the meeting with the priest in order to set a wedding date.
- If either of you has been married before, an annulment declaration from the Church must also be presented. Please note that an annulment is a process that may take more than a year to complete.
- **Engaged Encounter Certificate:** the certificate of attendance at Engaged Encounter is also to be presented as part of your marriage file.
- **Natural Family Planning Training Certificate.**
- **Marriage License:** the civil license is given to the priest at the time of the rehearsal. You must apply for a marriage license in the county of your residence. While marriage licenses are valid throughout the State of Ohio, some restrictions vary by county. Please confer with your county courthouse for applicable restrictions.

### **Officiating Priest**

Normally, the parish priest or deacon who has assisted in your preparation for marriage will officiate at your marriage ceremony. A priest who is your relative is welcome to officiate at the wedding in one of two ways: he may concelebrate the ceremony or he may be the principal officiant if it is arranged with the pastor. If a priest from outside of the Scioto Catholic Consortium is officiating, he will need to sign the Visiting Priest Agreement and will need to provide a letter from his bishop guaranteeing he is in good standing. The agreement and letter should be given to the pastor of Holy Redeemer and St. Mary by the time of your last meeting.

Please contact the Secretary of State for information pertaining to the civil license necessary for an out-of-state priest or deacon to preside over the ceremony:

Secretary of the State of Ohio

180 East Broad Street Columbus, OH 43215

614-466-4980

[www.state.oh.us/sos](http://www.state.oh.us/sos)

### **The Liturgy of Marriage**

A Church wedding is a sacred ritual of the Church celebrated by the participants. As such, the religious nature of the ceremony is carefully preserved.

Your wedding is a part of the faith life of our parishes. You, as the ministers of the Sacrament, have chosen to express freely your love and commitment to each other. The Rite of Marriage

is centered on the exchange of vows and the blessing and exchange of rings. The ritual conveys the Church's desire to witness your vows, to strengthen your fidelity to them, and to prayerfully support you in your life together. As with all liturgical celebrations, the full and active participation of those present is desirable. **The Rite of Marriage takes place in one of two contexts: within Mass for two baptized, confirmed, and practicing Catholics or outside of Mass if either the bride or groom is not Catholic. Customs not contained in the Rite of Marriage are prohibited in Church but may be appropriate at the wedding reception.**

All wedding plans are finalized with the priest before the rehearsal.

### **Readings**

The Rite of Marriage includes selected scriptural readings and prayers. You will find these selections on the parish website.

### **Music**

Only liturgically appropriate music may be used at weddings. Popular, secular music or music from the theater is reserved for the wedding reception.

Only the parish musicians may be used. Please refer to the Wedding Music Guidelines that accompany this booklet. Organists and cantors must be paid before the start of the ceremony.

### **Ministers**

Friends and relatives of the couple may participate in the liturgy in various roles. You may wish to select individuals to serve as readers and gift bearers at the liturgy. So, that these ministers feel comfortable, they should be properly trained. Decisions about these ministers may be made when the liturgy is planned with the priest.

If you wish to invite children to be part of the ceremony, they must be 5 years or older.

## **Environment**

### **Decorations**

Very simple decorations are appropriate to enhance the liturgical space of both churches. No decorations are to be placed on the altar. Normally, two live flower arrangements placed near the altar are sufficient for a wedding. The flowers are given to the church for the weekend Masses. Seasonal decorations (e.g. Easter) provide the environment for all weddings during those seasons. Florists will need to read and sign a Florist Agreement. This should be returned by the final meeting with the priest.

For safety reasons, the use of candelabra, lamps, and floral displays with candles is prohibited. **An aisle cloth is not used in our Church.**

**The unity candle is not part of the Catholic Rite of Marriage; therefore, it is not included in the wedding ceremony.**

For aesthetic and safety reasons, rice, birdseed, confetti, balloons, soap bubbles, alcohol, gum and food are not permitted on Church property. If any of the wedding party have alcohol or drugs or are found to be under its influence at the wedding, the wedding will be immediately cancelled.

### **Dressing Facilities**

A room can be made available for the bride and bridesmaid for dressing. Security is limited; please do not leave valuables in the room or church. After the ceremony, the rooms are to be clean and furnished as found. **No alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs/paraphernalia or firearms are permitted on the church property prior to, during and after the wedding. The bride and groom are responsible for communicating this to members of the wedding party and family members.** Disregard of this policy will result in immediate cancellation of the wedding ceremony and forfeiture of deposit.

### **Chewing Gum**

Because of the sacredness of the worship space, chewing gum during the ceremony or rehearsal or at any time inside the church is not permitted.

### **Receiving Line and Guest Book**

Out of courtesy for your guests and out of respect for the sacred space and service schedule of the Church, receiving lines and guest books are held at the reception and not at the Church.

### **Photography**

Photographers are welcome to take pictures before, during and after the ceremony. The Church itself is not a studio but a sacred place in which a community of believers worship. The photographer and videographer should keep this in mind before, during and after the celebration of marriage. We ask that the following rules be observed:

- Photographers and videographers may not enter the sanctuary (raised platform around the altar).
- Formal portraits with studio equipment such as screens, props, etc. are not to be used in the Church.
- Church furnishings are not to be moved for pictures.
- Flash photography may be taken during the processional and recessional only and not during the ceremony itself.
- The photographer is not allowed to stop or slow the procession (only from front of church and not in the aisle) or any other part of the liturgy.
- Photographers should be prepared to begin taking the formal pictures immediately after the wedding party leaves in the recessional. Pictures may be taken while the congregation departs.
- All photography is to be finished by 3:00pm.
- Family and friends typically want to take pictures during the wedding. In order to prevent situations that distract from the sacredness and dignity of the ceremony, please consider placing a sign at the door, a note in the program or have the cantor request that guests avoid excessive picture taking.
- Photographers/videographers are to read and sign the Photographer/videographer Agreement. This must be turned in at the final meeting with the priest. Photographers who violate this agreement will not be allowed to return to the churches.

## **Situations Requiring Special Attention**

- Co-habiting couples present a serious concern for the Church. Co-habitation and sex before marriage are grave sins and contrary to the sacramental good of Marriage. Living together before marriage seriously compromises the teaching of the Church on the Sacrament of Marriage. It also can compromise the freedom of couples to enter into Marriage; statistically, the divorce rate is higher among couples who lived together prior to their wedding. The decision to live together deliberately or inadvertently shows disregard for the sacred nature of the marriage vocation and covenant. Couples are encouraged to move out. If this is not possible they should at least sleep in separate bedrooms and abstain from sexual relations and inform their family and friends of this change in lifestyle.
- Pregnancy is another concern. If the pregnancy affects the timing of the marriage, the couple may undertake preparations in the usual manner. If the pregnancy affects the decision to marry, the couple may be asked to delay setting a date until it is established that both bride and groom are able to give full and free consent to the responsibilities and obligations of marriage.
- At least one party to a Catholic marriage must be an active, practicing Catholic. Sometimes a couple that does not regularly practice their faith approaches the Church requesting a wedding date. Often the preparation period for marriage will be extended so that the couple may demonstrate their good intentions, begin active practice of the Catholic faith, and restore their connection to the community of faith.
- An annulment is required for anyone who has been previously married. This applies to both Catholics and non-Catholics wanting to marry Catholics. If either one of you has been married before, please inform the priest at the first meeting. He will be able to explain the annulment process and will be ready to help you begin the application.