



## IMPORTANT MARRIAGE INFORMATION

### SETTING THE DATE AND TIME

Wedding liturgies are celebrated at St. Norbert Church on Saturdays at **10:00 AM, 12:00 NOON, and 2:00 PM**. Times for validations or “blessings” of civil marriage are arranged at the discretion of the parish priest. Rehearsals are held at **5:30 PM or 6:30 PM on Thursday and Friday evenings, except the 1st Friday of the month and Fridays in Lent**.

While scheduling the date and time of your marriage is obviously a very important part of your preparation, it is the serious responsibility of the priest or deacon to discern mature readiness on the part of the couple wishing to take this important step in the Church. **Consequently no date and time can be set by anyone other than the priests or deacon of the parish**. A **non-refundable** deposit is required to reserve the church for the time and date your request. (The balance of fees, including stipends for music, wedding coordinator, altar servers, and musicians, is due by your final meeting with the priest or deacon who will officiate at your wedding.)

### REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

**1. Baptismal Certificate**

A **new** copy of your baptismal certificate dated within 6 months of the wedding date. This can be obtained by contacting the church of Baptism and requesting a new certificate. (A photocopy of the one your parents have from the day of your baptism will not be accepted.) For those baptized in another Christian faith, a copy of the original baptismal certificate is sufficient.

**2. First Communion and Confirmation Certificates**

Copies of the originals are accepted.

**3. Testimony of Freedom**

This is a sworn statement, witness by a priest, minister, or public notary, attesting that you have never been married before, and that there is no known impediment to the marriage. This is normally filled out by the parents, or it may be completed by others who have known you most or all of your lives. **TWO** Testimony of Freedom documents are required for each party (total of four).

**4. Civil License**

Marriage licenses are issued by the State of California, and are valid for ninety days from the date they are issued. Please note that it is against the law for the ceremony to take place without civil license. The license should be given to the priest/deacon at your final wedding appointment.

Orange County Recorder  
211 W. Santa Ana Boulevard  
Santa Ana, CA 92702  
714-834-2500

## **MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

Aside from the paperwork and documents required, each couple preparing for marriage **MUST** attend a marriage preparation program. This requirement is to ensure that all couples preparing for marriage have at least a minimum foundation in understanding the principles of commitment and married love. The following Marriage Preparation programs are sponsored by the Diocesan Office for Marriage and Family Life:

- **Catholic Engaged Encounter Weekend**
- **Marriage in the Lord (series of four weekly evenings)**
- **To Trust Again (for couples who have been previously married)**

## **REHEARSAL**

The wedding rehearsal is conducted by the Wedding Coordinator. Rehearsals are scheduled through the coordinator, and take place on Thursday or Friday evenings at **5:30 p.m. or 6:30 p.m., except for the 1st Friday of the month and all Fridays in Lent**, according to the availability of the Church. Out of respect for both the Wedding Coordinator as well as any other rehearsals that may be planned, **please make sure that your entire wedding party arrives on time.**

## **WEDDING COORDINATOR**

All weddings at St. Norbert will have a parish Wedding Coordinator. The Coordinator will contact you approximately three months prior to your wedding. She will be able to answer many of your questions, and she will oversee the rehearsal and make sure that everything runs smoothly on the day of your wedding. Please see the enclosed fee schedule. For the name of the Coordinator assigned to your wedding, please contact Janine Kilgore at the Ministry Center Office, 714-637-4360.

## **THE WEDDING CEREMONY**

### **Priest / Deacon Presider**

The priest or deacon of St. Norbert Church are the only ones delegated by Bishop Brown to officiate at weddings in the church. Any exceptions must be discussed with and approved by the pastor, Rev. Bruce Patterson. In addition, a letter from the Catholic priest or deacon requesting delegation must be sent to Rev. Bruce Patterson in order for permission to be granted.

### **Mass or Simple Ceremony?**

Please discuss this issue with the priest with whom you are working.

### **Music**

Marriage is celebrated in the context of worship and therefore should reflect the musical styles incorporated into sacramental celebrations of the Catholic Church. With this in mind, music chosen for the wedding liturgy must be religious in nature, so that the spirit of prayer and celebration can be established to strengthen the expression of faith. No matter how personally meaningful love songs and secular ballads may be to the couple, these are best left to the reception where other dimensions of the wedding celebration prevail.

Selection of music for your wedding must be arranged by contacting our parish organist, Lois Holdridge at 714-870-1154 or email at [ljholdridge@earthlink.net](mailto:ljholdridge@earthlink.net), or by leaving a message for her with the Ministry Center Receptionist.

Kindly note that musicians from outside the parish music staff **ARE NOT ALLOWED**. Besides being unfamiliar with the proper timing and function that music plays liturgically, outside musicians do not have access to the facilities and equipment of the parish. In addition, all music in a Catholic liturgical setting is to live performance; that is, recorded music on tape or CD is not permitted.

Please note that fees for musicians are over and above those paid to the parish. Fees vary according to the number of musicians requested.

## **Ministers of the Celebration**

### **Lectors**

You may select one or two individuals, depending on the readings you choose, to proclaim God's word to the community gathered. Those whom you select should first and foremost be person of faith who actively participate in the liturgy of their church.

### **Gift Bearers**

For those who choose to celebrate the Nuptial Mass, it will be necessary to invite two people from the assembly to bring forward the gifts of bread and wine. It is often the practice that the mothers of the bride and groom are asked to share this function, but others may be chosen. Those who bring up the gifts are to be practicing Catholics.

### **Eucharistic Ministers**

Couples who celebrate the nuptial Mass may invite two guests who are commissioned as Eucharistic Ministers in their parishes to serve as Ministers of the Cup at you wedding. If none of your guests are Eucharistic Ministers, you may wish to select one or two other guests who are active, practicing Catholics and are willing to assist in the distribution of the Precious Blood at your wedding. They should be present at the rehearsal to go over the procedure, and check with the priest before the ceremony to receive necessary instructions. In some instances, the bride and groom may serve as Eucharistic Ministers.

## **Optional Elements to the Wedding Ceremony**

### **Flower Girls and Ring Bearers**

These roles are not required, and are not restricted to children. Please note that if you choose to have children function in these roles, **they should be at least 5 years of age or older**.

### **Flowers to Mary, the Mother of God**

In some cultures and traditions, this is a gesture of prayer and petition which normally takes place toward the end of the wedding celebration. The newly married couple asks Mary, as Mother of the Church and model of discipleship, to remember them in her unceasing prayer.

### **Arras and Lasso**

Within the Hispanic culture these elements which symbolize mutual support and unity in love may rightfully be integrated into the celebration of Christian marriage.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Flowers

Floral arrangements are optional. Two arrangements may be used on pedestals on either side of the sanctuary. The Wedding Coordinator will be available to assist your florist with the placement of floral arrangements. No candles may be used in the arrangements. Seasonal church decorations must not be moved. Floral arrangements are to be removed from the church following the wedding ceremony. Please give your florist a copy of the Florist handout for detailed instructions.

### Pew Decorations

The parish provides optional tulle pew bows. Pew decorations must hang from the pew ends, and may not extend above the back of the pews. No ribbon or tulle swags are permitted between pews. No tape or tacks may be used.

### Aisle Runner

Aisle runners are not permitted in St. Norbert Church. This is a safety issue, as a runner would be slippery on our tile aisle.

### Rice, Birdseed, Confetti, etc.

For safety's sake, the throwing of rice, confetti or birdseed in and around the church is not permitted. Likewise, flower girls are not to drop petals. Bubbles and bubble machines are not permitted.

### Photographer/Videographer

Photographers and video recordings are permitted during the ceremony, and posed pictures may be taken in the church following the ceremony. The church **must** be vacated by 15 minutes past the hour. (For example, if a wedding is scheduled for 2:00 PM., pictures may be taken in the church until 3:15 PM.) No allowances for additional time will be made if the ceremony starts late. Flash photography and / or video flood lights **ARE NOT PERMITTED** during the ceremony. Please see the enclosed guidelines for additional information, and be sure to give a copy of these guidelines to your photographer and / or videographer. **Any photographer or video technician who becomes disruptive or in any way violates the guidelines will be told to leave the church property.**

### Unity Candle

The "unity candle" is a commercial product of which no mention is made in the liturgical books of our church. It is **not** included in wedding celebrations at St. Norbert Church. You may wish to consider having a unity candle ceremony at your reception if you so desire.

## FLORIST AND PHOTOGRAPHER

We include for your convenience separate instructions for your florist, photographer, and videographer. Please give these guidelines to them as helpful directives as they serve both you and your special day.

## CHECKLIST

Because of the many details that must be attended to in preparation of the celebration of Christian marriage, we have included a Checklist that will hopefully be a helpful guide in organizing your planning for this special time in your life.