



ST. MALACHY'S
THE ACTORS'
CHAPEL
ROMAN CATHOLIC
CHURCH

GUIDELINES FOR MARRIAGE CELEBRATIONS

revised 1.22.2020

Congratulations! Planning for your marriage ceremony involves numerous details. These guidelines are designed to expedite the sacramental, musical and practical areas of your marriage ceremony for you, for the priest or deacon, and for the musicians who will be involved. Please review carefully for time sensitive informational purposes. And remember, you are in Midtown, New York City, land of street fairs, marathons, random street closings due to construction, and the like. You are advised to add at least one hour to your intended arrival time for both the rehearsal and the wedding.

SCHEDULING

Couples should contact the parish at least **six months** (one year is ideal) in advance of any anticipated date for the wedding. The church wedding date can only be set upon the Pastor's agreement and by paying the deposit fee. *If you are not a parishioner of St. Malachy's*, a letter of permission to marry elsewhere must also be provided by your home parish in order to set the wedding date.

The Director of Music at St. Malachy's Church oversees all instrumental and vocal music for marriage celebrations. Arrangements for a consultation with the Director of Music should be made after the initial meeting with the Pastor and at least two months prior the scheduled wedding date.

PRE-CANA AND MARRIAGE PREPARATIONS

Couples marrying in the Catholic Church are required to take a marriage preparation program, often referred to as Pre-Cana. At St. Malachy's Church we offer Pre-Cana in two separate formats: Archdiocesan-led and private.

Archdiocese of New York Marriage Preparation – As this program serves all of the Archdiocese of New York, there are multiple options for attendance. Visit www.nyfamilylife.org or call 646-794-3185. Besides registration and available dates and times, there is additional course information, including:

The FOCCUS Couple Communication Test – This is an excellent tool for helping couples make sure they have communicated on all the important issues affecting their relationship. Couples take this test on their own time, and then meet with a facilitator to discuss their FOCCUS report. The FOCCUS test can be taken online, or can be mailed to couples.

Class in Fertility Care – In the Fertility Care class, women are taught how to observe their fertility signs. This gives women the ability to identify when they are fertile and, importantly, to monitor their

health. Several classes in Fertility Care are offered every month. It's important that men also attend this class. Knowledge of Fertility Care has been shown to facilitate greater intimacy between husband and wife.

Private-format Pre-Cana – Couples who need to complete their Pre-Cana program in a restricted amount of time have the option of meeting privately with the Pre-Cana instructor at a time of mutual convenience. Before meeting with the instructor, couples must first complete the FOCCUS couple communication test.

Pre-Cana Program Fee – Fees vary depending on the type of program selected. The fee for our private-format program is \$250 per couple. This fee may be negotiated with demonstrated need. For more information on the program, and to register, please contact Peter McFadden (contact information listed at end of this document).

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

The Marriage Ceremony in the Roman Catholic Church celebrates the Christian faith of the couple that is nourished by the Word of God proclaimed in the Scriptures and, for two Catholics, the Body and Blood of Christ shared in the Eucharist. It celebrates God's grace at work in the life of the couple uniting them in the self-giving love that Christ has called us all to have for one another. For this reason, the music, the clothing, the decorations, and any activities that have come to be part of the Church Wedding Ceremony are to draw attention to and highlight the spiritual dimensions of the ceremony, never overshadow or distract from it.

Good taste and moderation are key principles.

The Church allows certain cultural adaptations within the ceremony as long as they are in keeping with the nature and spirit of the liturgy. Such adaptations should not be overpowering. Be careful not to duplicate symbols that might have similar meanings: for example, the lasso and the unity candle are both cultural adaptations that emphasize the union of two persons into a new life in Christ.

Anyone who has a liturgical role (i.e., lector or reader) in the wedding is expected to have a sense of reverence for that role and reasonable competence in fulfilling it, and must be a practicing Catholic, a practicing Christian or a member of the Jewish faith.

Photographs at a wedding ceremony are very important. All efforts will be made by the parish priests to accommodate the photographers' needs within the limitations of what is sacred and holy. **All photographers and videographers must follow the setup guidelines of Saint Malachy's Church.** Absolutely no pictures can be taken from behind or either side of the sanctuary. The photographer/videographer must meet with the priest before the ceremony. The choir loft and center aisle are accessible during parts of the liturgy. Body microphones are allowed for audio / video purposes.

The preferred times for weddings to be held at St. Malachy's, subject to availability, are **3:00pm on Fridays** and **1:30pm or 3:00pm on Saturdays**. Other times may be possible upon request, please ask the Administrative Assistant.

VISITING PRIESTS, DEACONS OR CLERGY OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS

Visiting priests and ecumenical clergy are welcome to take part in the wedding ceremony. If a priest or deacon other than the one assigned to Saint Malachy's Church would like to preside at the wedding ceremony, this

needs to be approved by the Pastor. Priests or deacons from outside the Archdiocese of New York must provide a letter of good standing (known as celebret) to the Pastor. Ministers of other faiths must contact the Pastor to discuss their possible role in the ceremony.

The Domestic Relations Law of the City of New York requires that all visiting priests be registered with the City Clerk's Office in order to legally perform weddings anywhere within the City of New York. To download the registration form, please go to:

<http://nycmarriagebureau.com/about/officiantregistrationinfo.html>

MUSIC FOR THE CHURCH

In planning music for the church celebration, please keep in mind that the liturgical celebration is a religious and sacred event. Any music that may be heard in the context of sacred liturgy throughout the church year as well as Sunday Mass would typically be appropriate. While this places restrictions on some music, there are numerous possibilities for appropriate music – cf. page 6. What may not be appropriate for the church ceremony is many times quite suitable at the wedding reception.

St. Malachy's Church provides its own professional Organist and a staff Cantor for all wedding ceremonies. A guest vocalist, through audition and with necessary credentials, may sing an appropriate accompanied solo during the ceremony or Mass by approval of the Director of Music. Guest instrumentalists are welcome to perform live music during the Prelude (while the guests are arriving), during the Offertory, after Communion, and / or during the Recessional upon approval of the Director of Music. The parish choir may be requested (two months in advance) for the wedding at an additional fee of \$950, which will support the volunteer music ministry.

Under no circumstances are electric guitars, electronic keyboards or any pre-recorded music permitted in religious and sacred events at St. Malachy's Church. The organ is the only liturgical keyboard instrument that may be used during the wedding liturgy.

THE CHURCH BUILDING

1. The main aisle is 75 feet long, from the foot of the step at the Sanctuary in the front to the main church doors in the back. There are 8 pews on either side of the main aisle.
2. **No confetti, rice, birdseed, flower petals, etc.**, may be thrown on church property.
3. The use of a white runner is **prohibited**.
4. The responsibility for disposing of the boxes in which the flowers come, as well as all plastic wrappers, pew bows, etc., is that of the florist or the person in charge of flowers. Please convey this instruction to the florist or to the person in charge of flowers.
5. Flowers for the church are the responsibility of the couple. Flowers are not physically placed upon the altar table. It is appropriate to have two arrangements on the highaltar.
6. If you wish to use pew bows or pew flowers, you may attach them only by a rubber band, string or special clip. No tape is to be affixed to the pews, as this would take the finish off the wood.
7. If you wish to use a Unity and Individual candles, you or your florist should provide the candles and their protective holders. Candles may not be placed on the altar itself.

OFFERINGS AND FEES

1. The offering of the marriage ceremony for non-parishioners is **\$1,360**. The reduced offering for the marriage ceremony is **\$1,060** for registered parishioners and members of the performing arts and entertainment industry. These fees include the offerings to the church, the priest, the sacristan, server, wedding coordinator (rehearsal and ceremony), the organist and the cantor. Please remit payment to the Administrative Assistant at the parish. Cash and check are acceptable forms of payment.
 - 1a. If a dispensation of any kind is needed for the couple to marry in the Catholic Church (this is most common, but not exclusive to, if one of the parties is a non-Catholic) then there is an additional **\$50** fee.
 - 1b. If the wedding is *not* occurring at St. Malachy's, but we are preparing the pre-marital paperwork for you, there is a flat fee of **\$250** to cover all postage and administrative expenses.
2. A non-refundable deposit of **\$150** is due upon reserving your wedding date.
 - 2a. If you are not a parishioner of St. Malachy's, a letter of permission to marry elsewhere must also be provided by your home parish in order to set the wedding date.
3. If you wish to invite additional vocalists or instrumentalists (string quartet, harpist, trumpeter, etc.), the music they will perform must be approved by the Director of Music ahead of time. Any additional agreed-upon fees would be paid by you directly to those additional musicians including the Director of Music for contracting. If any of them were to be accompanied by our Organist, there would be an additional **\$50** fee payable directly to the Organist for a **mandatory half-hour rehearsal at or before the time of service**.
4. **All balances must be paid four weeks prior to the wedding celebration** or by a previously agreed term set in writing.
5. The parish choir, upon availability with two months notice, may be arranged upon request for an additional offering of **\$950**. This offering is established to support the music ministry.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

1. Call the Parish Administrative Assistant to **book the date of your wedding**. Send in your non-refundable deposit with the signed form on page 9. Your date will not be reserved until the deposit has been received and approved by the Pastor.
2. Schedule an **initial conversation with the Pastor**.
3. Register for and **attend the Pre-Cana** sessions.
4. Request a new copy of your **Baptismal Certificate** from the Church in which you were baptized. The certificate should not be older than six months and must be mailed to the parish.
5. Schedule a meeting with the parish priest in order to fill out a **Pre-Marital Investigation Form** and discuss the details of the Marriage Ceremony. At least one other meeting will be necessary.
6. Both the Bride and Groom must have a close relative or friend (preferably a parent) fill out and sign before a Public Notary the **Affidavit of Freedom to Marry** on page 8, or another comparable form.
7. **Fill in the Liturgical Outline Sheet** that corresponds to your ceremony, found on page 7. You may choose to have up to three readers. A practicing Catholic or a practicing Christian member of the family, or a friend who is of the Jewish faith, may be invited to do the first reading from the Hebrew

scriptures (Old Testament). Refer to www.catholicweddinghelp.com for detailed information and planning suggestions for all aspects of the sacred wedding ceremony.

8. Arrange a **30-minute consultation with the Director of Music** to be attended by the Bride and Groom only in order to finalize the selection of the wedding music, according to the **guidelines found on page 6, at least two months prior to the wedding date.**
9. Catholics preparing for marriage should make it a point to celebrate the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** (confession) some time prior to the wedding date. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available at Saint Malachy's Church every Saturday afternoon from 4:30 to 5:00 PM, Monday -Friday after the 12:05 PM Daily Mass, or by appointment.
10. Come to the Wedding Rehearsal **with all the appropriate documents**, including the NYS Marriage License, which must be signed by the priest before you leave. **NOTE: The bride and groom are responsible for obtaining these documents.**

WEDDING REHEARSAL

1. The time for the wedding rehearsal is arranged beforehand and reserved by contacting the Administrative Assistant.
2. On the date of the wedding rehearsal, please bring your NYS Marriage License, a completed wedding ceremony planner (page 10 of this document), and any other necessary papers.
3. Note: **There is no music at wedding rehearsals.** Any rehearsal between the Organist and guest vocalists or instrumentalists (if any) is to be scheduled at another time mutually agreeable to them.
4. All parties who will take any part in the ceremony (i.e. bridesmaids, groomsmen, parents) must be present.
5. Finally, be on time. Plan ahead!

PARISH STAFF

Pastor

Rev. John F. Fraser
212-489-1340, ext. 102
frfraser@actorschapel.org

Private Pre-Cana / Marriage Preparation

Peter McFadden
646-341-0848
mcfadden@mac.com

Director of Music

Stephen Fraser
212-489-1340, ext. 131
music@actorschapel.org

Administrative Assistant

David Bodenschatz
212-489-1340, ext. 100
parishoffice@actorschapel.org

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WEDDING MUSIC

Processional & Recessional Music

Trumpet Voluntary	J. Clarke
Trumpet Tune	H. Purcell
Voluntary in C	H. Purcell
Rondeau	J. Mouret
Procesión Alegre	Gary Cornell
Rigaudon	A. Campra
Hornipe (Allegro Maestoso)	G. F. Handel
Toccata (Symphony V)	C.-M. Widor
Wedding March	F. Mendelssohn
Other selections upon request may be considered	

N. B.: The “Bridal Chorus” from Lohengrin and the Wedding March from A Midsummer Night’s Dream are selections from a secular opera and ballet respectively. In the case of the Bridal Chorus, the bride is delivered to her husband as chattel and not of her free will; in the case of the Wedding March, the music is played at the marriage of a donkey and the Queen of the Fairies. [The Bridal Chorus is not permitted at St. Malachy’s – The Actors’ Chapel.]

Gathering Hymn (optional) (sung after the processional)

God In The Planning	GC-868
Joyful, Joyful We Adore You	W-525
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	W-588
Within Your House, O God, Today	W-743
O Father, All-creating	W-744

Favored Vocal Solos (including but not limited to the following)

Ave Maria	Schubert/Gounod/Saint-Saëns
Panis Angelicus	C. Franck
Jesu Joy of Man’s Desiring	J. S. Bach
Laudate Dominum (Praise be to God)	W. A. Mozart
Ave Verum Corpus	W. A. Mozart
Not for Tongues of Angels	Michael Joncas
(May Love Be Ours Lord)	

Inappropriate Vocal Solos (including but not limited to the following)

The Wedding Song: There is Love
Beautiful in My Eyes
The Wind Beneath My Wings
Sunrise, Sunset
Love Theme from Ice Castles
Through the Eyes of Love
All I Ask of You, and any selection from Phantom of the Opera
Any selection from current musicals or pop radio

TO BE FILLED OUT BY THE COUPLE BEFORE MEETING WITH DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

refer to www.catholicweddinghelp.com or Together for Life (from Pre-Cana) for more details.

LITURGICAL OUTLINE FOR MARRIAGE WITH NUPTIAL MASS

Marriage of _____ & _____

Weekday and Date: _____ Time: _____

Home Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

INTRODUCTORY RITE

Prelude

Wedding Processional _____ composer: _____

Gathering Hymn (optional) _____ Hymnal # _____

Opening Prayer

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Old Testament Reading: _____ (the reader is chosen by the couple)

Responsorial Psalm, in consultation with the Director of Music

New Testament Reading: _____ (the reader is chosen by the couple)

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel Reading: _____

Homily: Father _____

RITE OF MARRIAGE

Exhortation

Exchange of Vows & Exchange of Rings _____ (the reader is chosen by the couple)

(In ceremony only, a vocal selection may be sung here)

General Intercessions: "Lord, hear our Prayer"

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

*Preparation of the Gifts: _____ composer: _____

*Eucharistic Prayer

*(Holy, Holy, Holy - Christ has died - the Great Amen)

Lord's Prayer (spoken)

Nuptial Blessing

*Breaking of the Bread: Lamb of God

*Communion: _____ composer: _____

CONCLUDING RITE

Solemn Blessing and Dismissal

Wedding Recessional: _____ composer: _____

Optional: Flowers to the Blessed Mother (Ave Maria)

Lighting of the Unity Candle (short instrumental)

*-denotes parts that are omitted if the Wedding Ceremony occurs outside of the context of Mass

AFFIDAVIT OF FREEDOM TO MARRY

I, _____, give witness for (Bride/Groom) _____
who will be married to (Bride/Groom) _____.

Your Full Name: (Please print all information)

Name: _____

Full Address: _____

Phone Numbers: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

What is your relationship to the person whose name appears above?

How long have you known this person? _____

How well? _____

To the best of your knowledge, is this person entering this marriage freely? **Yes No**

To your knowledge, does this person intend to enter a lifelong union? **Yes No**

To your knowledge, does this person intend to be faithful for life to his/her partner in
this marriage? **Yes No**

To your knowledge does this person intend to have children with his/her partner in this
marriage? **Yes No**

If you have answered **"No"** to any of the above please explain.

Has this person ever gone through any type of marriage ceremony with someone other
than his/her intended spouse? **Yes No**

How many times? _____ With whom? _____

Does/do this/these marriage(s) still exist?

Is this person related to the other party to this intended marriage? **Yes No**

If Yes, in what way?

Do you know of any reason why this person should not be married? **Yes No**

If Yes, please explain.

Signature _____ Date _____

COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO:

St. Malachy's – The Actors' Chapel
239 West 49th Street
New York, NY 10019
Attn: Parish Office

Public Notary Signature and Seal Area

AGREEMENT

(to be returned to St. Malachy's – The Actors' Chapel)

We, the undersigned, understand and accept all the terms and conditions explained in these Guidelines for Marriage Celebrations.

Wedding Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Time: ____ : ____ AM/PM

Bride's Signature: _____

Groom's Signature: _____

Today's Date: ____ / ____ / ____

DEPOSIT

Enclosed is our payment of \$ _____

in the form of CASH / CHECK

Groom: _____ Bride: _____

St. Malachy's Church - Wedding Ceremony Planner

Nuptial Mass

Ceremony only

BRIDE- Arrive in Limo Yes No
Change in Rectory Yes No

of Best Men _____ # of Maids/Matrons of Honor _____

of Groomsmen _____ # of Bridesmaids _____

Ring Bearer Yes No how many _____ Flower girl Yes No how many _____

READINGS

1st Reading _____ read by _____

2nd Reading _____ read by _____

Vows "I do" Recite to each other

Intercessions _____ read by _____

Offertory Gifts Yes No

if yes, how many _____ if yes, who _____

Flowers to the Blessed Virgin Mary Yes No

Unity candle Yes No

Photos in church after service Yes No

Additional notes: