

**ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

509 West Magnolia Avenue
Fort Worth, Texas 76104
(817) 923-1911

CONGRATULATIONS!

On behalf of the parishioners and staff of St. Mary of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church, I congratulate you on the occasion of your engagement and your forth-coming marriage in the Church. The union of husband and wife in Holy Matrimony is similar to the relationship between Christ and His Church, and it is a godly example to others. Consequently, the way of life you are about to enter is as beautiful as it is important.

We at St. Mary's are committed to assisting you in every way possible as you prepare for this new life as husband and wife. It is our prayer that this time of reflection will bring you closer to each other and closer to God who willed that you should be husband and wife. Further, it is our hopeful expectation that you will live out your married life here at St. Mary's, raising your children here, and serving God with us. Should you have a question or a need, please feel free to contact us at any point in your preparation.

**Yours in the Divine Word,
Fr. Jaison Mangalath, S.V.D.,
Pastor**

MARRIAGE PREPARATION AT ST. MARY'S

Marriage preparation in a Catholic parish is a process designed to bring the engaged couple to a deeper affection and appreciation for each other. Furthermore, its purpose is to give couples an informed understanding of the Church's teaching on marriage, and the rights and duties of husband and wife to each other, to their children, to the Church, and to society. At a first glance, the process may seem complex; in fact, it is simple. It has only one aim—to bring you to the day of your wedding well prepared to enter married life.

These are the steps in the Marriage Preparation Process.

1. You will have an initial interview with the wedding coordinator/priest to begin paperwork and go over Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire. At this meeting you will be given all information required for your wedding. Here is a list of information you will receive along with a brief description of what is required:

a) **Below is list of the marriage preparation courses mandated for completion by the Bishop:**

- **Fully Engaged** – At your initial interview you will be given a Fully Engaged workbook. Fully Engaged is a program for engaged couples to help them learn more about the Sacrament of Marriage. It is a Catholic catechetical premarital inventory designed to help engaged couples solidify the foundation upon which they, together with Christ, will build their Sacrament of Marriage. The Fully Engaged Inventory will be sent to you by email within 24 - 48 hours after the 1st meeting. If you do not receive this email, please call the parish office. Once you have completed this Inventory, call the parish office to schedule your next meeting. **(It is advised that you finish the 1st 4 workbook topics prior to your 2nd meeting)**
- **NFP (Natural Family Planning)** - This course takes a minimum of 3 months and can be done in person or online. As a couple there are many factors to consider when selecting an NFP method. The website below gives brief overviews of each method. It is recommend that you read over them and visit the provided website for more information. <https://fwdioc.org/nfp-methods-instructors>. Once you have decided on a method you can register at this website. <https://fwdioc.org/natural-family-planning> Once your course is completed you will need to bring in the Certificate of Completion and turn it into the office.
- **Pre – Cana (Today, Tomorrow. & Always for Convalidation)** - This is a 1 day or 2 weeknight onsite retreat that includes a series of talks and activities on topics such as: Marriage as a Sacrament, the Vows, Sexuality in the marriage as God planned it to be, Natural Family Planning and more. **This course fills up fast so it is important that you sign up and register as soon as possible.**

You can find more information and online courses and registration for the Pre- Cana Retreat and NFP classes at www.fwdioc.org/marriage-family-life.

b) Sacramental Records (Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation)

- A copy of all sacramental records is required. The **Baptismal** or **Profession of Faith Records**, for Groom and/or Bride, if Catholic, must be issued within last 6 months with notations.
- The sacramental records must be turned in no later than 8 weeks prior to your wedding date.

c) Together For Life-

- This is the booklet that you will use to decide on your readings and prayers for your wedding ceremony. It contains all parts of the mass. It is important you keep up with this book. You will fill out the Selection Form at the end of this book and bring to your final meeting

d) Witness Affidavits

- As a couple, you will receive a total of 4 witness affidavits: 2 for the bride and 2 for the groom. Both the bride and the groom will need to have them filled out and signed by either a family member or person you have known for 10+ years. You will turn these into the office for the Priest to sign preferably by the 2nd meeting or by no later than 8 weeks prior to your wedding date.

e) Marriage License

For couples who have never been married

- For couples who have never been married- A State Marriage license will need to be obtained no more than 90 days prior to the wedding date and turned into the office no later than 6 weeks prior to the wedding date.

For couples who are civilly married

- For couples who are civilly married seeking convalidation- A copy of the original marriage license should be turned into the office no later than 6 weeks prior to wedding date.

- **For those Previously Married:**

For couples who were previously married and marriage has ended in divorce- You will need a proof of Lack of Canonical Form (in case of a previous civil marriage) or a Decree of Nullity (in case of a previous Church marriage). If you do not have this you will need to locate your Divorce Decree and then contact Felipe Plascencia at felipe@stmarysftw.org and he will advise you how to proceed.

***At each step, it is your responsibility to arrange
for your next appointment.***

The Process for Non Parishioners, preparing elsewhere but marrying at St. Mary's is as follows:

- The Marriage Preparation packet from your home church must be complete and received in our office from the Diocese no later than 2 weeks prior to your date of Ceremony.
- If a priest other than Fr. Jaison will be celebrating your wedding Mass, please discuss with the celebrant, the readings and order of your wedding Mass. Then please relay this information to our office.
- If Fr. Jaison will be performing your ceremony, it is your responsibility to pick up the "Together for Life Booklet" and choose the readings and prayers for your wedding ceremony. A meeting with Fr. Jaison and the wedding rehearsal coordinator will need to be scheduled no later than 2 weeks prior to your wedding date. These meetings are to be scheduled on a Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon between the hours of 2pm and 4pm. The chosen readings should be brought to the office, along with your marriage license and any questions you may have.

At any point in the Marriage Preparation, we are always here to help. Please do not hesitate to contact the parish secretary by calling the Parish office at 817-923-1911 or you may email Elizabeth Soriano at elizabeth@stmarysftw.org

What to Expect during the Marriage Preparation:

1. **After the 1st meeting (initial interview)**, please see the parish secretary to set your wedding & rehearsal date and time. You will pay the required deposit at this time. You will also receive information regarding music options here at St. Mary's and it is advised that you contact them as soon as possible so there are no scheduling conflicts and to discuss fees (please refer to the Music Fees Section on Page 8)
2. **At your 2nd meeting** you will either meet with the Priest or Sponsor Couple and will begin to go over the results of your Fully Engaged Inventory. **It is imperative that you complete the first 4 topics in the workbook prior to attending this meeting.** The Fully Engaged preparation will continue until all portions of the inventory are completed and reviewed. This can take up to 4-5 meetings at the most and each meeting will be at least 1 hour long. You will need your workbooks and required topics completed prior to each meeting. It is also recommended that you and your fiancée have scheduled your Pre Cana Retreat and NFP classes by this meeting or the next. **The Fully Engaged Preparation, Pre- Cana Retreat, and NFP Classes are required for you to attend and are mandated by our Bishop.**

- 3. On your 3rd meeting** you will continue with Fully Engaged Inventory material. It is also advised that you bring your required sacramental records and any certificates of completion for Pre Cana and NFP Classes. You will also need to be picking readings and prayers from your “Together for Life” book.
- 4. At your 4th meeting** with the Priest, you will complete the Fully Engaged Preparation and a certificate of completion will be given to you to take with you to the County Clerk of Court/Marriage License office for a discounted license fee.

PLEASE NOTE - You must obtain your marriage license from the State of Texas. You can do this as early as **90 days before your wedding date or at least 8 weeks** before your wedding date. This license must be turned into the parish office no later than 6 weeks prior to your wedding date. If you do not have a marriage license, you cannot be married by the Church. You can contact the County Clerk for Tarrant County at (817) 884-1195 for more information.

Prior to your last meeting all course completion paperwork and sacramental records should be completed and turned in. If you have not already done so, it should be in the parish office no later than 6 weeks prior to the wedding date

- 5. The Final meeting** will need to be scheduled on a Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon between 2pm and 4 pm. This meeting should be scheduled no later than 2 weeks prior to your wedding date. At this meeting you will meet with the rehearsal coordinator and Father Jaison. You will need to have your readings and prayers picked out from the “**Together for Life**” book given to you at the 1st meeting and bring these with you. You will go over these readings with the rehearsal coordinator and the Priest. You will also go over the rehearsal time and how the rehearsal will proceed. All the details of your wedding will be finalized at this meeting.

REHEARSALS –

The date of your rehearsal is most likely the day before your wedding. It is imperative you and your wedding party are on time for rehearsal. Only 1 hour is allotted for your rehearsal. If you are more than 15 minutes late, your rehearsal will be canceled and will not be rescheduled. All of the bridal party and anyone participating in the wedding ceremony (readers, bridal party, ushers, etc.) should attend the rehearsal.

In case of an emergency, you may contact Felipe Plascencia at 682-433-3975.

As a reminder, before receiving the Sacrament of Marriage, you are required to go to **Confession**. Confessions are held on every Wednesday at 6:30PM and on Saturday at 3:00pm or you can schedule a different time with Fr. Jaison during the week. Please do not wait until the last minute. **It is advised you schedule a confession 1-2 weeks prior to your wedding date.**

NOTE: No confessions will be heard on the day of rehearsal.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

A Church wedding is a sacramental act. Your marriage is a sacrament. Through this sacrament the grace of God is bestowed upon the couple to make them husband and wife. The gift of this grace is the central focus of the wedding and everything done in the wedding must reflect this reality. The following are guidelines to help you as you plan your wedding day.

Photography:

Due to our busy liturgical schedule, time for photographs on the day of the wedding is very limited. It is important that you make a thoughtful selection of the photos you want in advance and follow these guidelines carefully.

1. You will have no more than 30 minutes for photos following the wedding—* Please note: The Celebrant (Priest) will take photographs immediately after the Mass with the couple.
2. During the wedding, pictures may be taken from the *rear* of the Church, or from the left side and with *available light* only—that means, ***no flash***.
3. Once the wedding begins (*that is the procession of the wedding party*) the photographer must remain stationary off to the side. Not at any point during the ceremony is the photographer to be in the aisle.

Videography:

1. The wedding may be “videoed” by setting up a stationary camera. No roving cameraman is allowed!
2. Only available light may be used. (NO FLASH!!)

Flowers:

The following displays of **fresh flowers** may be used—(**artificial flowers are never allowed**)

- a. A spray of fresh flowers placed on the floor directly in front of the free-standing altar (Low altar)

- b. Two arrangements of fresh flowers placed on the “retable,” the shelf above the high altar—
- c. Only Bows or fresh flowers placed on the ends of the pews up to the 8th row.
No tape or adhesive may be used to attach the arrangements to the pews.
- d. A bouquet of fresh flowers for you to place on St. Mary’s altar (this is optional).
- e. No runners or Flower arrangements/décor in the aisle as this is a trip hazard.

“Throwing” Rice, Bird Seed, Confetti, Blowing Bubbles or Jumping the Broom is not permitted due to the risk of someone slipping and falling. Please save these for your Reception Hall.

Flower Girls and Ring Bearers

Flower Girls and Ring Bearers are welcome. It is best if they are at least 6 years of age. Children who are younger often become frightened when it comes time for them to process into the Church. Flower girls **may not** throw flower petals in the aisle.

The “Unity” Candle

Unity candles are not used at St. Mary’s and are not permitted in Catholic Weddings. The prime symbol of your unity as a newlywed husband and wife is the marriage vows you have just exchanged. (However, a Unity Candle works beautifully as the centerpiece at your reception!)

The Arras and Lasso/Rosary

These traditions are permitted if desired. Please let us know if you would like these employed into your wedding ceremony

- **Arras** - These should be given to the Acolyte prior to the ceremony
- **Lasso/Rosary** – This should be given to the Acolyte prior to the ceremony. The Sponsors/Padrinos of the Lasso will come up and place it on the couple when instructed. The sponsors/Padrinos should be present at the Wedding Rehearsal.

Fees for Weddings are as follows:

\$675.00 for Parishioners (music is not included) *This fee is for parishioners who have been registered and active 6 months prior to beginning marriage preparation.*

\$850.00 for non Parishioners (music not included) *This fee is for non parishioners or parishioners who have not been active for 6 months prior to beginning marriage preparation*

There is a **\$125.00 non-refundable deposit** required to set a wedding date and all fees must be paid **two weeks prior** to event. No exceptions.

Changing Wedding Date- *If the need to change a wedding date arises, this deposit is transferrable but only 1 date change is permitted.*

Music & Fees

All Music must be approved by our Director of Music. There is a list of music available on our website at <https://www.stmarysftw.org/marriage-preparation>.

Permission is required by the Pastor if you want to bring in outside musicians. There is a fee of \$75.00 and the Directors of Music will need to be present. This fee should be paid in advance and no later than 2 weeks prior to the event.

* Mariachi Bands are NOT allowed during Weddings.

* Pre-recorded music is NOT allowed during Weddings.

Certain music is not appropriate during Mass and you will be asked to save it for your reception.

Contact information for musicians:

English - **Organist - Van Bui**– bvan@stmarysftw.org

Fee: \$200.00 for mass, w/ Prelude \$300.00

Cantor – Cassie Reyes cassie@stmarysftw.org

Fee: \$100 for mass, w/ Prelude \$125.00

Spanish- **Spanish Choir David Garcia** (682) 551-8729 dmsgarcia@att.net

Fee: \$200 for mass

**We would like to thank you for choosing St. Mary of the
Assumption Roman**

Catholic Church for your wedding ceremony.

**We hope your experience has been exceptional and
memorable!**

**We are always excited to hear feedback on how we can
improve your experience, so please don't hesitate to share
this with us by emailing administrator@stmarysftw.org.**