



MARRIAGE
AT THE
CHURCH OF SAINT BENEDICT
BRONX, NY

WEDDING PREPARATION
GUIDELINES

Wedding Preparation Guidelines

Congratulations! We rejoice with you as you prepare for your marriage. These guidelines are to help you in properly preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage. Although we will try to accommodate personal tastes, it is helpful to remember the Sacrament belongs to the entire Church and not to individual persons.

Your spiritual development as a couple is the most important aspect of your marriage preparation. As you enter the Church, come before the altar, and exchange your vows, you will receive a new sacramental identity, which will be centered on a relationship built on faith in God and faith in each other.

The priests of the parish are here to help you to prepare for this profound experience of God's love that will be showered upon you on your wedding day and every day of your married life. Since sacraments are essential to the life of the Church, adequate marriage preparation is necessary to the reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

In the weeks and months ahead, as you plan for the reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony, we suggest that you spend some time each day in prayer. Beginning a common life of prayer together, even if only a few minutes each day, is something that will only strengthen and deepen your relationship in the years to come.

We strongly encourage that couples preparing to be married in the Church attend Mass each Sunday. Your presence is important not only for one another but also for this parish community. We recommend that you make frequent use of the Sacrament of Penance, particularly prior to your wedding. This sacrament affords you the opportunity to experience the forgiveness and love of the Lord.

One or both of the parties must be a faithful, registered member of the Parish of St. Benedict. If the bride is not a member of St. Benedict's Parish, then she must receive a Letter of Permission from her parish to be married here.

- 1. Banns of Marriage**

For three weeks prior to your wedding, your names will be published in our bulletin informing God's people of the impending marriage. Banns need to be published in the other person's parish as well.

- 2. Bridal Carpet (runner)**

Due to safety issues, the material of the runner, and the beauty of the Church's floor, the "Bridal Carpet" (runner) is **not allowed**. Please inform the florist or limousine company not to charge you for it.

- 3. Bridal Dress and Bridesmaids Gowns**

Out of respect for the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and the holiness of the Sacrament, we require the gowns worn by the bridal party to be appropriate for Church. Therefore, while in Church the ladies' shoulders are to be covered, either by the dress or a "church shawl."

- 4. Church Decorum**

If any member of the wedding party arrives at the Church intoxicated or even appears to the priest to be intoxicated, the Church ceremony will be cancelled and a small ceremony with the bride, groom, witnesses and the priest will be conducted in the rectory. Since this decision is left entirely to the priest's discretion, please advise your entire wedding party not to have any alcoholic beverages at all before the wedding.

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5. Civil License

You must have a civil license to marry in the State of New York. A license may be obtained at any City/Town Hall within the State of New York. You need to bring your birth certificate, a picture ID and the fee. The license is valid for 60 days with a 24-hour waiting period. **It is your responsibility to obtain the license**; no ceremony can take place without a license.

6. Church Documents

You are responsible to obtain the following Church documents:

- a. A letter of permission from the bride's parish, if the bride is not from St. Benedict's Parish.
- b. An updated Baptismal certificate. This certificate must be secured not more than **six months** prior to the wedding and can be obtained by calling or writing the parish of your baptism.
- c. Catholics should also obtain First Communion and Confirmation certificates.
- d. If there has been a previous marriage, a death certificate or a "Declaration of Nullity" must be obtained.
- e. A civil license obtained from any city hall no later than 60 days with a 24-hour waiting period.

7. Flowers

All floral arrangements must be discussed with the priest. There is no "official" florist for the parish. Floral arrangements and other appointments must work around the furnishings of the Church. Church furnishings and liturgical decorations are not to be removed or touched. There is to be NO archways, runner, or throwing of birdseeds, candy, confetti, flower petals, rice, etc. of any kind in or outside of the Church.

8. Late Fee/Cleaning Fee

A \$500.00 refundable deposit check will be collected, along with the signing of the Wedding Deposit Contract, at least two months prior to your wedding date. Nothing is thrown down on the steps or grounds (e.g. birdseeds, candy, confetti, flower petals, rice, etc.) Due to the amount of Church services at St. Benedict's Church, couples to be married must be on time. Any lateness for whatever reason, will cause the deposit check not to be returned. The Pastor has sole discretion in this matter. The Pastor, after consulting the Priest who performed the ceremony, determines if the deposit check is to be returned. **Please note:** Balloons cannot be released because of their threat to birds and fish in Long Island Sound, by the Order of the DEP.

9. Limousine Drivers

Please note: The uncorking of champagne or wine is inappropriate and will not be allowed in front of the Church. Please advise the drivers beforehand.

10. Music

Music is an integral part of the celebration of Marriage. Please contact the Music Director at 718-828-3403. **Please note:** only sacred music (music written for the sole purpose of use in Church and the Glory of God) is to be sung or played. Neither Broadway tunes or pop music are permitted in Church.

11. Pre-Cana Preparation

Every couple must attend Pre-Cana. The priest will discuss Pre-Cana and its schedule with you. To register, visit website: www.flrl.org

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12. Priest Visitors

If you have a priest relative or friend, he is most cordially welcome to witness the ceremony. Please inform the parish priest.

13. Rehearsal

Please arrange the date and time with the priest. It is imperative that rehearsals begin on time since other couples may have their rehearsal that night as well. Couples should come prepared, bringing along the readers, gift-bearers, ushers, and anyone else involved in the marriage ceremony. The marriage license should also be brought to the rehearsal, as well as the Church fees.

14. Video/Photographer

Photographers are only allowed to use flash at the beginning and ending of the ceremony – for the rest, natural/low light settings are sufficient. In addition, no videographer or photographer is allowed in the sanctuary. The video/photographer must speak with the priest prior to the ceremony.

15. Wedding Fees

The offering to the Church for your wedding is \$550.00. The fees for the organist, singer, priest and Church are included. The fees are to be paid on the night of the rehearsal.