



**SAINT PHILIP
OF JESUS
CATHOLIC**

WEDDING GUIDELINES



**Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
9700 Villita St
Houston, TX 77015**

Congratulations on Your Engagement!



Dear Couple: _____ & _____

Congratulations on your engagement! Your decision to enter into the relationship of married life is a serious one, and it serves as a wonderful sign of hope and strength to the faith community of Saint Philip of Jesus.

Planning your wedding can be one of the most exciting times of your life. We are happy that you have chosen our parish community to be part of your special day!

Your decision has been reached after much discussion and prayerful thought, but it is just the first step in the process of building a successful marriage. The love you have privately shared is now being made public. Your family, friends and parish now prepare to support and encourage you in the celebration of your wedding, as well as in your life-long commitment to each other.

This period of engagement is an important time to deepen your love and prepare for the rest of your life together. In this time your commitment to one another will grow by working together in preparation for the celebration of your wedding and looking closely at the realities of marriage. It is a time for richer dialogue, greater trust and fuller sharing of your deepest and more personal hopes, dreams and values.

To assist you during this exciting time, we present the following guidelines intended to insure a joyful, reverent and prayerful celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony within the context of the Church's prayer. These materials are meant to help you prepare not only for the wedding day, but for *marriage*, a lifetime experience of hope and joy, a faithful promise you have both chosen to offer and receive "in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health," to love and honor each other all the days of your lives!

As your parish family, we will be with you as you embark on this great journey. We look forward to working with you as you prepare to celebrate your wedding day and beyond.

We are here to help you!

Fr. Hai Dang , to_frhai@yahoo.com

Sr. María Cruz Ortiz, stphilipofjesus@gmail.com

Braulio and Elizabeth Chavez, stphilipofjesus@gmail.com

PRELIMINARY PLANNING



Parish registration - The exchange of wedding vows in the Catholic Church (Holy Matrimony) is a sacrament when it occurs between two baptized Christians. All sacraments, including marriage, are celebrated in the presence of a faith community. Also, registration as a member of our St. Philip of Jesus faith community, signifies your commitment to practicing the Catholic faith which includes regular attendance at Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist, receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis, and living other basics of the Catholic faith. For these reasons, we require that at least one member of the engaged couple (or one of their parents) be a registered parishioner for one year or longer before preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony may begin. Children of St. Philip of Jesus parishioners who are members of another parish must provide us with a letter showing that we have that parish's permission to perform their marriage.

Days and times for weddings - Wedding ceremonies may take place at St. Philip of Jesus on Friday or on Saturday. **Friday weddings may be held at 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm. Saturday weddings will be held at 12:00 pm or 2:00 pm.**

Steps in sacramental preparation – The wedding preparation process is designed to help the couple assess your readiness for sacramental marriage. During this time an issue may arise that deserves more time and attention. It is better to address these issues during the preparation period when steps can be taken to resolve differences before the marriage commitment is made.

STEPS IN THE MARRIAGE PREPARATION

9-12 MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING

- ___ Meet with Sr. Maria Cruz or Ana Luisa García for your Marriage Preparation Introductory Session and tentatively schedule your wedding date
- ___ Secure your preferred date by contacting the Secretary of the Parish
- ___ \$ 100 Wedding Donation due at the parish office within the week after securing your date. If the wedding is cancelled only \$5) will be returned.

- ___ \$ 650 Wedding Donation due before the Wedding.
- ___ \$ 100 Prenuptial formation will be due at registration (see next section)
- ___ \$ 25 FOCCUS inventory (to be paid online)

8-10 MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING

- Schedule the mandatory FOCCUS Sessions (4 total) with Sr. Maria Cruz
- Schedule and Register for the mandatory Marriage Retreat with Elizabeth & Braulio Chavez
- Schedule and register for the mandatory Archdiocese marriage formation

6-9 MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING

- ___ Complete paperwork, including turning in newly issued copies of the required documents.
- ___ Meet with the Ceremony Coordinator to plan liturgical music and secure the musicians and singers for your ceremony

3 MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING

- ___ Complete your mandatory sessions with Sr. Maria Cruz (see above)
- ___ Turn in your Prenuptial Retreat Certificate (when completed)
- ___ Complete your Donation

1 MONTH PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING

- ___ Prepare your wedding program if you choose to have one and approve with Fr. Hai Dang

1 WEEK BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

- ___ Participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession)
- ___ Turn in your marriage license to the parish office.
- ___ Ceremony rehearsal

MARRIAGE GUIDELINES

Catholics believe that Christian marriage is a union of life and love between a man and a woman in the community of the people of God, the Church, and is an indissoluble covenant that they enter into in faith before God and his people. In this Sacrament, they become a sacred and living sign to the whole Church of the presence of God's love among us and how He loves us as His own family. As they work their way through the struggles of life, they witness to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit at work in all our lives. Their love is a sacred symbol of the love and union of Christ and the Church, His people, and is a fountain of love to the whole community.



When the Catholic Church teaches that marriage between two baptized persons is a sacrament, it is saying that the couple's relationship expresses in a unique way the unbreakable bond of love between Christ and his people. Like the other six sacraments of the Church, marriage is a sign or symbol which reveals the Lord Jesus and through which his divine life and love are communicated.

All seven sacraments were instituted by Christ and were entrusted to the Church to be celebrated in faith within and for the community of believers. The rituals and prayers by which a sacrament is celebrated serve to express visibly what God is doing invisibly.

In a sacramental marriage, God's love becomes present to the spouses in their total union and also flows through them to their family and community. By their permanent, faithful and exclusive giving to each other, symbolized in sexual intercourse, the couple reveals something of God's unconditional love. Their life becomes sacramental to the extent that the couple cooperates with God's action in their life and sees themselves as living "in Christ" and Christ living and acting in their relationship, attitudes and actions.

Catholic teaching holds that sacraments bring grace to those who receive them with the proper disposition. Grace is a way of describing how God shares the divine life with us and gives us the help we need to live as followers of Christ. In marriage, the grace of this sacrament brings to the spouses the particular help they need to be faithful and to be good parents. It also helps a couple to serve others beyond their immediate family and to show the community that a loving and lasting marriage is both desirable and possible.

Pope Paul VI wrote: "By the Sacrament of Matrimony husband and wife are strengthened and consecrated for the faithful accomplishment of their proper duties, for the carrying out of their proper vocation even to perfection, and the Christian witness which is proper to them before the whole world" (*Humanae Vitae*, n. 25).

REQUIREMENTS FOR A CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

The covenant of marriage requires the most serious considerations and fore-thought of the couple. It must be accompanied by the couple's complete freedom to enter into it, sufficient understanding and maturity to make such a commitment in faith, and the acceptance of the responsibilities that such a covenant carries. This includes the intention to be husband and wife for life, caring for new lives through procreation, and the example and source of love they are to be to the whole Church.

At least one member of the couple must be a member of the Catholic Church in good standing. Both members should have no situations in their lives which could constitute an impediment to marriage according to the laws of the Church.

A Catholic may marry someone who is not a member of the Catholic Church. This requires the permission of the Bishop of the Diocese. This permission requires two promises from the Catholic party:

1. That he/she intends to continue to live his/her faith as a Catholic.
2. That he/she will do everything in his/her power to see to it that all children born of the marriage are baptized and reared in the Catholic Faith.

These two promises are asked in a concern for the gift of faith that God has given the Catholic party, and a concern that the opportunity for faith in Christ and His salvation not be withheld from his or her children. This is a very important issue and one that the couple should discuss seriously with each other.

The couple must have the freedom to marry. This means that if either one has some impediment (obstacle) to that freedom, a resolution to that impediment must be found before the Church may witness the intended marriage. Such impediments include lack of Faith (not practicing the faith or having left the Church by a deliberate act); lack of sufficient maturity; lack of due discretion (rushing into marriage); mental or physical impairments; lack of intent of permanence; lack of intent of fidelity; having a scandalous public notoriety; or having been married previously. The most frequently encountered impediments usually concern maturity, due discretion, or a previous marriage.

Marriage guidelines for the Church AND for the State of Texas discourage marriage for persons under the age of 18. Couples must be at least 18 years of age and six months out of high school before marriage preparation can be sought. The seriousness of such a commitment and the maturity required take time to develop. The final steps into adulthood that occur at graduation time and coming of legal age, including the responsibility for self and one's own life, are not things that can be rushed and are things that are critically

necessary in light of the adjustments that must be made upon entering into marriage. Young couples between 18 and 21, or sometimes even later, may be asked to participate in special counseling to help them make wise and well-informed decisions and commitments. Growth toward establishing a permanent union of life and love takes time and requires a person to be free to make decisions and develop values that will help him or her know what it takes to truly make such a commitment. Lack of such maturity can constitute an impediment or obstacle to the marriage covenant.

A person must be free to marry. This means that they must not be operating under the imposing influence of another, or out of force, fear or coercion. Marriages brought about by family pressures or the pressure of an unexpected pregnancy, or marriages of convenience or economic gain are not acceptable by the Church. Also, marriages in which one or both parties have a diminished mental capacity, either from mental illnesses or the influence of alcohol or drugs, are not acceptable. None of these constitute a valid reason for marriage in the Church because in these situations, the purpose and intent of the covenant is not fulfilled or the freedom of one or both of the parties is seriously diminished.

For those previously married. Freedom to marry also means that neither party has previously entered into marriage. The Catholic Church regards all marriages as permanent. For its own members, the Catholic Church recognizes as valid those marriages which have been entered into before a duly appointed representative of the Catholic Church and two witnesses, according to the rites and laws of the Church. For the new marriage to be valid, will be necessary a nullity certificate of the previous marriage.

THE MARRIAGE PROCESS

The goal of marriage preparation is not centered on planning the wedding ceremony. This may be the main preoccupation of the bride, groom and their families, but the ceremony is only for a day, whereas the marriage is for life! The goal is preparation to live out a life-long covenant of love in Christ. Thus couples should make arrangements to begin marriage preparation **eight to twelve months** prior to the proposed date of the wedding. The further ahead the better, as this allows time for thought, reflection, and discernment prior to all the hustle and bustle that arises in the last month or two ahead of the wedding.

No wedding date will be set until Phase I, as detailed below, has been completed.

The marriage preparation process is divided into three phases:

PHASE I - ASSESSMENT

The couple should meet with Sister Maria Cruz Ortiz, Ana Luisa García or with a designated person, for an initial interview to become acquainted and go over the details of the process.

PHASE II – PREPARATION

St. Philip of Jesus preparation for marriages has 3 parts:

- a) FOCCUS inventory (4 sessions)
- b) Prenuptial retreat and Theology of the Sacrament of Matrimony (3 sessions) and Prenuptial retreat (one weekend)
- c) Archdiocesan retreat (see online)

a) RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT FOCCUS INVENTORY

FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study) is a self-diagnostic inventory designed to help couples to learn more about themselves and their unique relationship. It is not a test no is it meant to be a predictor of success or failure in marriage. It is an instrument to help couples name and work through issues before marriage.

The **FOCCUS** Inventory is offered also on-line. The assessment is taken individually. During the assessment, couples are asked not to communicate with one other or share their responses until they finish and submit their assessment.

At the second meeting, Sr. Maria Cruz will discuss the results of the FOCCUS Inventory with the couple. This assessment is a written set of statements which each reads separately and responds to by agreeing or disagreeing with the statements contained in it and will begin the couple dialogue.

b) THEOLOGY OF THE SACRAMENT

Whether or not the couple's wedding takes place at this parish, couples preparing at St. Philip of Jesus will attend a series of three sessions held once a month on Sunday).

- Theology of the Sacrament of Matrimony
- Marriage and The Domestic Church
- Key Components of a Successful Marriage

c) PRENUPTIAL RETREAT

Covers most of the same topics but conducted in a retreat setting over a weekend, where the couples, together with about 25 other couples, share in a series of talks, activities and exercises with trained married couples and a Priest to explore the many aspects and needs of the marital commitment: Knowing my roots; The art of communication; Our family economy; The true love; Sexuality and marital intimacy; Morality of the marriage; Our children.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

You have chosen to witness your mutual promises of love and fidelity in the Catholic Church, and your faith is an important determining factor in how you will enter into this intimate relationship of marriage. The Church is responsible for discerning your intentions and capacities for making this promise and is required to assemble various documents.

About nine to twelve months before the wedding, the couple will meet with a Priest or Deacon to assemble your file (the “wedding paperwork”), complete the Prenuptial Questionnaire, and be interviewed to determine your freedom and intention to marry.

You will be required to submit the following for your file:



1.

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATES

Newly issued and dated within six months of the date you are to be married.

Catholics should contact their church of baptism and inform them of your date of marriage, and the address of Saint Philip of Jesus Church where they are to send the certificate.

Notations of Confirmation, Marriage and Holy Order must be included, if any, on the back.

- Photocopies of originals cannot be accepted for Catholics.
- Non-Catholic Christians need to supply a record of baptism.



2. CIVIL MARRIAGE LICENSE

Marriage License is required for your marriage to take place at St. Philip of Jesus. It is effective 72 hours after you obtain it and for 90 days thereafter. **Bring the license on the day of the wedding rehearsal and deliver it to the Parish Office.**

Please take care you acquire your license within the proper timeframe for it to be valid on the day of your Wedding. You may contact the Harris County Courthouse for an explanation of the current legal requirements for marriage. **And remember: No license, no wedding, and no exceptions.**

You may reduce the wait time and cost of your marriage license through the Together in Texas program. A Certificate of Completion will be given at least two months before wedding day.

The following are a few locations where you may purchase your marriage license:

- ❖ **Harris County Courthouse;** 201 Caroline, 3rd Floor, Admin. Building; 713-755-6411
- ❖ **North Shepherd:** 7300 N. Shepherd, Houston; 713-697-5193
- ❖ **Chimney Rock:** 6000 Chimney Rock, Houston; 713-660-7902
- ❖ **Baytown:** 701 West Baker Rd., Baytown; 281-422-0253
- ❖ **Pasadena:** 107 East Shaw, Pasadena; 713-473-9048

After your wedding, the Church will record your information in the Sacramental register of the parish and mail the license to the Harris County Clerk's office for you. The clerk will record the information in the public records of the county and return a certified copy to you, usually about 6 weeks after your wedding.

Other documents:

3. **First Communion Certificate (optional)**
4. **Confirmation Certificate**
5. **4 Witnesses affidavit**
6. **Marriage Nullity decree (if applies)**

PARISH WEDDING POLICIES

“The Liturgy is the source and summit of the Christian life, and from it flows the Church’s power and strength because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross”. (Sacrosanctum Concilium, Vatican Council II).

The Wedding liturgy is a sacred rite invoking God’s witness and blessings upon the words and commitment made by the bride and groom. In the midst of all the obvious joy and excitement, your wedding remains a moment of utmost, profound worship celebrated by you and your families and friends. It is an expression of your personal faith within the context of your faith community.

Because the sacredness of the wedding ritual, and out of respect for God and the house of worship which is the church building, a few things need to be explicitly understood and accepted without exception. **You are agreeing to all parish wedding policies as presented in this booklet and on our website by choosing to be married at Saint Philip of Jesus Church.**

Saint Philip of Jesus Church is not a ‘venue’ as are reception halls or restaurants, it is not rented: it is a house of worship and a community of faith to which you belong, and which you are specifically asking to witness your promises. As a result, there are specific policies and requirements that ensure the appropriate conduct of weddings within our parish.

Respect, decorum and dignified behavior will be maintained and observed at all times by you, your wedding party and all your guests in regards to the church property and building, the sanctuary and the entire staff.

Punctuality for your rehearsal and ceremony is of the utmost importance.

No food is permitted in the church building at any time before or during the wedding or at the rehearsal. Chewing gum is also most inappropriate in the church and should be disposed of in the receptacles under the ashtrays at the entrances of the church upon entering.

ALCOHOL consumption during the rehearsal or prior to the ceremony on your wedding day potentially jeopardizes the validity of the marriage, and ***will not be tolerated under any circumstances.*** Because this is a religious ceremony and house of worship, failure to comply with this policy by you, your guests or visitors could result in the forfeiture of

your privilege to celebrate the Sacrament of Matrimony at Saint Philip of Jesus Church at any point during the rehearsal or ceremony.

RICE, BIRDSEED, CONFETTI, FLOWER PETALS, SPARKLERS, BALLOONS, BIRDS, BUTTERFLIES, BUBBLES, ANIMALS, Etc., are not permitted inside or around the church and plaza due to safety, maintenance, and time concerns.

The Knights of Columbus Hall may be rented. Please call the Office for information.

Because there are often other events that follow weddings, all wedding decorations, flower boxes, clothes and hangars, and other items should be removed as quickly as possible after the wedding. **The couple and their wedding party are responsible for making sure that all personal belongings are removed immediately after the ceremony.**

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

For the church, the flowers and decorations should be discreet and complementary to the building's splendid architecture and simplicity. At Saint Philip of Jesus, "less is more" in this regard.

1. The use of flowers and other decorations greatly enhance a wedding by adding beauty to the event and inspiring those present. The environment of the Church must be treated with the reverence and respect due such a sacred place. Parish regulations for decorations are designed to preserve the integrity and character of the Church as a Sacred Place, and to protect the facilities themselves.
2. No decoration should be used that would obstruct a clear view of the Altar, the Ambo (pulpit), the Chair, and worship symbols used in the Sanctuary. Also, the ornaments and appointments of the sanctuary, including Seasonal hangings, banners, and decorations, are part of the liturgical seasonal environment of the church and may not be moved or altered.
3. Prohibited is any activity that would damage the building or its furnishings such as tacks or nails driven into pews, tape and adhesives that would remove paint, varnish or finishes or leave a sticky residue, and clamps that are not properly padded and would scar finishes.
4. Also prohibited is the use of carpets or runners, including down the aisle. Use of such articles presents hazards of tripping or slipping on the slate floor. Additionally, a couple may not use candles or lights of any sort to line the aisle. There will be NO

EXCEPTIONS to this rule.

5. Artificial flowers or plants are not permitted when adorning the Church. The environment of the church should reflect the authenticity of ourselves and the God we worship, and should never be “fake.”
6. The amount of time the florist will have to decorate will be dictated by the schedule of the church on the wedding day. The florist or bride should consult the Liturgical Wedding Coordinator to inquire about the amount of time that can be allowed. Any decorations they erected should be removed immediately after the wedding due to the use of the Church for other celebrations. All flowers and arrangements should be removed, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Liturgical Wedding Coordinator.
7. Florists should be made aware that they are guests of the parish and function under the direction of the Liturgical Wedding Coordinator, the Director of Liturgy and Music, and the Priest or Deacon.
8. **Floral arrangements for Weddings, 2 vases or 2 potted plants. Flowers to offer the Virgin Mary.**

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS



Since a wedding is such a special and once-in-a-lifetime event, the couple and their family and friends may wish to have it recorded in photographs or on tape. Taking pictures and videotaping during the ceremony is not forbidden. However, the Wedding Ceremony is a solemn religious Celebration of the Sacrament and should not be disturbed, interrupted or detracted from by obtrusive equipment and personnel.

† Flash photos may be taken only as the bridal party is processing into and out of the church. Flash may not be used during the wedding liturgy.

† Photographers and videographers may not enter the sanctuary area – the elevated stone area around the altar, ambo and baptismal font during the ceremony.

† Please do not roam about the church once the wedding liturgy has begun.

† Pictures may be taken in the church before and/or after the wedding.

Photographers and Videographers should be made aware that they are guests of the parish and function under the direction of the Liturgical Wedding Coordinator, the Director of Liturgy and Music, and the Priest or Deacon. St. Philip assumes no responsibility for personal items or valuables left unattended or left behind.

WEDDING LITURGY

Deciding whether to have Mass – If you choose to celebrate your wedding liturgy within Mass, the order would be Liturgy of the Word (scripture readings), Marriage Rite, and Liturgy of the Eucharist (consecration and Communion). If you choose to plan a wedding liturgy outside of a Mass, the order would be Liturgy of the Word (scripture readings), Marriage Rite, and Blessing.

It is appropriate and encouraged that a Mass be celebrated when both members of the engaged couple are practicing Catholics. When only one party is catholic, it is recommended that the wedding is celebrated outside of Mass in respect of the other party's faith tradition. The sacrament of Holy Matrimony is not lessened when Mass is not chosen. There are many reasons why you may or may not choose to celebrate your wedding with Mass. Fr. Hai can help you make that decision when you meet with him.

The Catholic wedding – While allowing for certain personal preferences and choices, the wedding liturgy follows certain prescribed norms.

† The congregation actively participates in both spoken and sung parts of the liturgy

† Readers may be family members or close friends with a good reading voice (18 years and up)

† Gift presenters may be family members or close friends.

† Musicians and cantors are usually secured by the couple, but we can assist in finding them

† Music selections are sacred or classical pieces performed well and live (Recordings are never allowed)

Entrance procession – The recommended order of the entrance procession is priest, attendants together, groom accompanied by parents, bride accompanied by parents. In the Catholic Church the bride’s father does not give her away; she is giving herself in marriage to the man she loves and he is giving himself to her.

Choosing scripture readings – You may choose your readings from the booklet “Together for Life”. Liturgy of the Word generally consists of a first reading from the Old Testament, a Psalm, a second reading from the New Testament, and a Gospel from the New Testament. There are several appropriate scripture selections you may choose. Usually the readings are proclaimed by a trained lector(s) of your choosing, and the psalm is sung by the cantor or soloist. The Gospel is read by the priest (or deacon).

Vows – The exchange of wedding vows in the Catholic Church is a liturgical celebration and, therefore, certain formulas must be used according to the Church.

Rings – One or two rings are blessed and given to each other as a sign of your love and fidelity. You will repeat the words of exchange after the priest.

Coins – Represent the material goods that both will share and also symbolize the mutual help that the couple will give to each other during their marriage life.

The Bible and the Rosary – These two elements are important part in the beginning of the new life as a couple. Make sure the Bible is an approved Catholic Edition.

Lazo: It comes from the tradition of uniting with a knotted cord, the shoulders.

Intercessions –If parents, grandparents, other family members or close friends of the bride or groom are deceased, it is appropriate to remember them in these prayers. You might also like to offer prayers for a blessed and happy marriage, for your families, the parish community, and any other needs that are important to you. You may choose to write your own intercessory prayers if you wish, or Fr. Hai Dang will personalize them for you.

Presentation of the bread and wine – If you choose to have a Mass, parents, members of the wedding party, family or friends may bring the bread and wine to the altar.

Eucharistic Prayer – If you choose to have a Mass, you and the congregation will remember Christ’s gift of Himself to us at the Last Supper and His sacrifice on the cross during this prayer.

Lord’s Prayer – This prayer is recited to be inclusive of all faiths present for your ceremony and speaks to the active participation of the congregation.

Nuptial blessing – This is a special prayer for the couple following the Lord’s Prayer, or during the concluding rite.

Sign of peace – The priest (or deacon) will ask the congregation to share a sign of Christ’s peace with one another. You may exchange a sign of affection with each other and your parents.

Communion – If you choose to have a Mass, those who are Catholic may receive Communion at this time.

Bouquet- The flowers are symbol of fertility. A bouquet is presented to the image of the Virgin Mary at the end of the ceremony.

Final blessing – The priest blesses you and the assembly gathered.

Introduction and Recessional – The priest (or deacon) will introduce you to your family and friends as a married couple for the first time. You will leave the church followed by the wedding party, families and guests.

Choosing Music – Because marriage in the Catholic Church is a liturgical celebration, songs played right before or during the wedding ceremony should focus on the religious nature of love, the love that exists between God and the couple being married – and the sacred character of Holy Matrimony. This means that any music which would be appropriate at Mass or other liturgical rites is also appropriate for your wedding. There are many songs available to you from our hymnal.

Only the St. Philip of Jesus Choirs are allowed to sing the Weddings Celebrations.

Preparing a liturgy guide (program) – We do recommend that you have a liturgy guide or program booklet to help your family and friends actively participate in your wedding ceremony. However, this service is not provided by our parish. You must make arrangements with someone to have these designed and printed. You must have Fr. Hai Dang review it before taking it to the printer. You will want your program to be liturgically correct and to reflect what is occurring during your ceremony.

The wedding rehearsal – Each step of your wedding ceremony will be practiced at the wedding rehearsal which typically lasts one hour. All those who have a part in your wedding ceremony should attend the rehearsal to become familiar with their roles. This includes guest musicians, cantor/soloists (music is not played/sung at this rehearsal), lectors and members of the wedding party including flower girl and the ring bearer if applicable. Parents and grandparents attend as well. We ask everyone to arrive promptly. A smooth, well-ordered rehearsal makes for a less stressful wedding ceremony. We ask everyone involved to carefully listen to and follow the instructions. Any questions or problems that arise will be answered/resolved before the rehearsal is completed. **Please, contact the Parish Office to mark your wedding rehearsal.**

AFTER WEDDING CARE

Post wedding meetings. If you worked with a Sponsor Couple during your marriage preparation, they are asked to keep in contact with you. Some sponsors and newlyweds stay in contact for years! At that point, the couple that served as your sponsor in marriage preparation will move into a mentoring role. Also you may want to join the Christian Family Movement or Emmaus group. On the divine - or spiritual side, developing your prayer life and spirituality as a couple is crucial. You know the old saying... "The family that prays together stays together?" That starts with you as a married couple!

Plug-in to adult faith formation classes at St. Philip of Jesus Parish to continue growing in your faith. As a couple, you have the primary and awesome responsibility to pass on your Christian and Catholic faith and value system to your children.. If you are both Christian it goes without saying your couple spirituality should be Christ-centered. As Catholics, we have profound encounters with Jesus in the celebration of the Eucharist so mass attendance is necessary for the nurturing of your marriage. There, Jesus himself

feeds us, restores us, and makes the forgiveness we are called to in marriage possible. Stay connected to the St. Philip of Jesus Parish and the archdiocesan Family Life Office for opportunities for retreats or special events for married couples. Don't wait until you are having marital trouble to seek out enrichment opportunities for your marriage.

Marriage crisis toward restoration plan. It may be hard right now to imagine your marriage hitting the rocks, but at one point or another, every marriage faces some sort of crisis. It is important to create a plan, with the help of your mentors, Fr. Hai or Sister, as to what you will do when this happens. The plan should be thought out carefully and written out. It should include step by step instructions for yourself as to how you will proceed. You will want to have in your plan a statement of your belief in the permanence of marriage, and why you chose your spouse as your life-mate. Your plan should also include the names of your sponsors or the people from the Parish that could help you and their phone numbers. You will also want the names of some trusted Catholic or Christian Counselors who will work with you to keep your marriage together. After you complete your plan, formalize it by signing it and have Fr. Hai or Sister sign it with you as their pledge to be a resource for you if you begin to have difficulties. Add a copy of your wedding picture, or your wedding invitation inside an envelope and seal it. Put this somewhere where you won't forget about it, like your wedding album. Open it at the first sign of trouble. For learn more about the Sacrament of Matrimony, please check: [Catechism of Catholic Church.](#)

CONGRATULATIONS!

&

Date: _____

Fr. Hai Dang

Sr. Maria Cruz Ortiz

SAINT PHILIP OF JESUS CATHOLIC CHURCH
Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
9700 Villita St.
Houston, TX 77015
Phone: 713-672-6141/ Fax 713-672-8675
stphilipofjesus@gmail.com

Updated: July 1, 2020