A Catholic wedding is a service of public worship and follows the liturgy of the Church. The Rite of Marriage celebrates with noble simplicity the joining of two persons in the Sacrament of Marriage. The details of liturgy are arranged to reflect the sacramental character of the marriage. The marriage of two Catholics takes place within Mass. For a Catholic marrying a non-Catholic, the ceremony follows the same service but does not include the consecration and distribution of the Eucharist. The book, Together For Life, is provided by St. Thomas More to help plan your liturgy within or outside of Mass. If your marriage ceremony will take place within Mass, altar servers or Eucharistic ministers from either family are encouraged to participate in your celebration. Please let the Coordinator of Office Services know if friends or family members are performing these ministries.

The wedding ceremony and the rehearsal are normally conducted by a priest or deacon of St. Thomas More Church. It is permissible and invited, should a couple wish, to have a priest or deacon who is a relative or a special friend officiate at their wedding. A letter granting permission for this honor is written by the Pastor of St. Thomas More to the guest presider. Ministers of other churches are also invited to participate and assist in the liturgy. The couple is asked to contact the Pastor of St. Thomas More with these or other special requests before meeting with the priest who will continue their preparation for marriage.

**Whom do I Contact?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Area of Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Bartnik</td>
<td>(919) 942-6225</td>
<td>Scheduling of weddings and marriage preparation, process for annulment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator of Office Services</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jbartnik@stmchapelhill.org">jbartnik@stmchapelhill.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon Bob Troy</td>
<td>(919) 942-6235</td>
<td>Planning your liturgy using the Together For Life book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator of Liturgy</td>
<td><a href="mailto:btroy@stmchapelhill.org">btroy@stmchapelhill.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Franco</td>
<td>(919) 942-6233</td>
<td>Assistance with selection of and approval for service music and performers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Music</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sfranco@stmchapelhill.org">sfranco@stmchapelhill.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**What Are the Costs for a Wedding?**

An offering of $300 is standard from those who are not members of St. Thomas More Church. The purpose of this offering is to cover costs of utilities and maintenance related to the use of the church and should be received by the Coordinator of Office Services one month prior to your wedding. There is no contribution to the Church for registered members of St. Thomas More (please note that being registered means active and contributing for a period of at least three months in advance of beginning preparation).

Additional fees, paid by separate checks to each individual, must also be received by the Coordinator of Office Services one month prior to your wedding and include:

- Director of Music: $200
- Cantor: $200

Other musician fees (i.e., soloist, trumpet) to be arranged with the Music Director.

Clergy (suggested honorarium, not required): $200

If your wedding takes place within Mass, altar servers will each receive $20 in cash.

**What is the Ceremony like at St. Thomas More?**

A Catholic wedding is a service of public worship and follows the liturgy of the Church. The Rite of Marriage celebrates with noble simplicity the joining of two persons in the Sacrament of Marriage. The details of liturgy are arranged to reflect the sacramental character of the marriage. The marriage of two Catholics takes place within Mass. For a Catholic marrying a non-Catholic, the ceremony follows the same service but does not include the consecration and distribution of the Eucharist. The book, Together For Life, is provided by St. Thomas More to help plan your liturgy within or outside of Mass. If your marriage ceremony will take place within Mass, altar servers or Eucharistic ministers from either family are encouraged to participate in your celebration. Please let the Coordinator of Office Services know if friends or family members are performing these ministries.

**Who Officiates?**

The wedding ceremony and the rehearsal are normally conducted by a priest or deacon of St. Thomas More Church. It is permissible and invited, should a couple wish, to have a priest or deacon who is a relative or a special friend officiate at their wedding. A letter granting permission for this honor is written by the Pastor of St. Thomas More to the guest presider. Ministers of other churches are also invited to participate and assist in the liturgy. The couple is asked to contact the Pastor of St. Thomas More with these or other special requests before meeting with the priest who will continue their preparation for marriage.
The Rehearsal

Rehearsals are scheduled for 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., following daily liturgy that is celebrated at 5:15 p.m. in the church. A priest or deacon of St. Thomas More or the guest presider will direct the rehearsal with assistance from members of the St. Thomas More Wedding Committee. Professional wedding directors are not used at St. Thomas More. Should you have a guest presider, he is asked to contact the Pastor of St. Thomas More in advance to receive delegation to preside at the ceremony.

The Wedding Committee

Composed of volunteers from St. Thomas More Parish, this committee will assist you and the presider (guest or St. Thomas More associate) at both the rehearsal and the wedding. They will contact you a week or so prior to the wedding to answer questions you might have. You are also welcome to call the Coordinator of Office Services to find out who has been assigned to coordinate your wedding, or with any questions or other concerns about your wedding.

What About Music?

Music at a wedding follows the standards for music in public worship. Some music appropriate for a reception is not suitable for public worship. A St. Thomas More cantor must be used to ensure the musical standards of a Catholic wedding are followed. While other musicians and instruments (other than organ) may be used, the use of these elements must be discussed with and approved by our Director of Music. The couple should make an appointment with the Director of Music to discuss the music program of the wedding no less than eight weeks before the wedding date.

Photographs and Videos

The photographer is asked to speak with the presider prior to the liturgy to see what photos will be permitted. Usually the discreet taking of candid photographs, without the use of a flash, and videotaping is permitted during the ceremony; however, this may in no way interfere with or interrupt the ceremony. The ceremony may not be re-enacted for photographs. A limited number of photographs may be taken following the ceremony but should not take longer than 20 minutes, as other liturgies usually follow. This time limit should not be a problem with proper planning done by the photographer.

May We Dress at the Church?

The bride and bridesmaids may dress in a room in the parish center. A room is not set aside for the groom and groomsmen. No food or beverages, most especially alcoholic beverages, are allowed in any area of the church or school.

Flowers and Decorations

Artificial arrangements are not permitted in the church. Flower arrangements could be placed on each flower stand, provided by the church, located in front of the two columns in the sanctuary, or at the foot of each of the sets of sanctuary candles. It is important to notify your florist if he/she should need to move the flower stands to avoid lifting them by their marble tops as they are not attached.

Seasonal arrangements (Advent, Christmas, Easter, etc.) that are already placed in the church may not be removed or changed in any way. Please call the Director of Liturgy to discuss details of seasonal arrangements.

You may contact the Coordinator of Office Services about other weddings that may be scheduled on the same day and determine with other couples if coordinating flowers is possible. "Reserved" markers, supplied by the church, may be used; however, no other flowers or decorations are used on the pews or in the church except those bouquets carried by the wedding party. White aisle runners or the dropping of petals are not permitted because it is not safe with our stone floor. The lighting of the Unity Candle is not an official part of the Catholic rite and is not encouraged.

Receiving Lines, Guest Books, Rice, etc.

All flowers, except carried bouquets, are to be left in the church and not removed to a reception site. A guest book may be set up in the Narthex near the front entrance of the church, but may not be placed near the doors entering the worship space. Because of other weddings and weekend liturgies at St. Thomas More each Saturday, we are unable to accommodate receiving lines and suggest planning one at your reception site. It is not permitted to throw flower petals, rice, bird seed, or any substitute, anywhere on church grounds. Blowing bubbles outside of the church is permissible.

The Marriage License

The marriage license may be obtained from any county in North Carolina, and may be applied for up to 60 days in advance of the wedding date. You may call the Orange County Register of Deeds Office at (919) 967-9251, extension 1-2675 for more information on this process. You should give your marriage license to the Parish Coordinator of Office Services at least one week in advance of your wedding.