

# Liturgy Is Important In Marriage Ceremony

Marriage, by its very nature, is a most serious and sacred commitment. It is an intimate partnership requiring the total gift of oneself. Spouses are called on to draw closer to God and to each other in a living community of love. Christ enhanced the dignity of marriage by making the Christian marriage relationship a sacrament, a living sign of his love for the Church.

Following is the segment on Celebration of Marriage as outlined in the sacramental guidelines of the Diocese of Rochester in 1981:

— In planning for the celebration of the Rite of Marriage, all who are involved should keep in mind that this is a liturgical and sacramental event. It is, therefore, a celebration of the faith community in which all are called to "full conscious and active participation," and to which all the principles of good liturgy apply.

**A.** Weddings should be planned in accord with their spiritual significance, and especially with good financial judgment consonant with the gospel.

**B.** The ordinary place for the celebration of Marriage is the parish church of the bride.

— When Catholics of different rites marry, the ceremony takes place in the parish church of the groom.

— When a Catholic and a person from another Christian communion marry, the ceremony would ordinarily take place in the parish church of the Catholic partner. However, for pastoral reasons, the ceremony may take place in the church of the non-Catholic

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partner, provided a dispensation is granted by the Pastoral Center.

— Weddings may also take place in the interfaith chapel of campus parishes.

— If a wedding is desired in a place other than a sacred building, permission from the Pastoral Center is required.

**C.** The couple should be involved in the selection of the various options the Rite offers: processional, scripture readings, vows formula, nuptial blessing and other prayers, and music.

Scriptural readings are not to be replaced by readings from other texts.

If vows are especially written by the couple, the formula must be consistent with the ends of marriage.

**D.** Music should have a value and appropriateness in keeping with the dignity of this sacrament. The three criteria presented in "Music in Catholic Worship" should be used in the selection of music at weddings.

Is it good music?  
Is it appropriate for the part of the liturgy for which it is used?

Can the congregation participate in it fully and prayerfully?

All three criteria should be applied together. If the music does not fit all criteria, it should not be used.

**E.** The diversity of

liturgical ministers should be evident in the wedding ceremony. They should perform that and only that function which is appropriate to them (lectors, ushers, musicians, eucharistic ministers, presiders, servers.)

— The officiating priest deacon must have faculties from the bishop, or delegation from the bishop or the priest in whose parish the marriage is taking place.

— The two witnesses are present, not only for the civil purposes, but for the support of the couple in this commitment of faith. The witnesses should be of legal age, and be willing to help the couple in their new life together.

— Liturgical ministers may be selected from among the relatives and friends of the couple.

All liturgical ministers should have sufficient preparation and rehearsal.

**F.** When a Catholic and a baptized person of another Christian communion marry, various pastoral considerations may call for the celebration of Marriage without the Eucharist.

**G.** In planning the time for their wedding, a couple should be sensitive to the demands of the parish schedule. Likewise, priest deacons should make reasonable attempts to accommodate the schedule of the couple.

# Continued Renewal Strengthens Marriage

Frank and Sue Staropoli

Climbing divorce rates, continual stresses from social and economic forces of change, and alternative lifestyles have raised questions in many circles about the viability of the family in the future of this society. Some have predicted the death of the family. But as Michael Novak, theological essayist, has written, "Choosing family life today is an act of courage and intelligence...marriage and family still express our highest moral ideals."

We salute you for your courage and intelligence, and most of all for your desire to make a commitment to each other, to God and to the Church in an age where such promises are seen as unnecessary, passe. We know the love you have for each other - so vibrant and alive now - is a cherished possession. We also know, as you must, that after the honeymoon that love will need to be constantly nourished and reaffirmed because it will be tested.

Your husband or wife and the faith you share must be number one. Build your lives around that relationship, and don't allow anything to take precedence - not jobs, or education, or friends, or even in-laws. Celebrate and renew

that bond of love often. Work to keep it fresh and alive, because when you don't it doesn't stay fresh - it withers, slowly but surely.

Finally, know that the Church is always ready to support you, and to accept your support. There are programs in many parishes throughout the diocese to help you discover how to live the sacrament you will celebrate soon. We want to be a source of inspiration, hope, encouragement, and healing

for you when you need it. We also want you to share with us the freshness and excitement of your marriage. You can be inspirational for so many couples who may have lost some of the glow you radiate.

So keep in touch for our sake and yours. Become involved from the beginning in your parish. Learn about programs offered by the Family Life Office at (716) 436-5450.

## Wedding Countdown

Two months ahead of the wedding order wedding cake; address invitations and announcements; begin making transportation and accommodation arrangements for out of town guests; make a gift record and begin writing thank-you notes as gifts arrive.

One month ahead of the wedding mail invitations; check with caterer, florist, photographer, musicians, hotel/club manager; buy wedding rings; schedule wedding rehearsal; finalize honeymoon plans; buy bridesmaids' and other special gifts.

Two weeks before the wedding arrange for final fitting and delivery of all wedding attire; confirm final guest count with caterer, hotel/club manager; have final consultation with florist, photographer, musicians; send wedding announcements to newspaper; have blood tests and apply for marriage license if you have not done so; arrange reception seating; pack for honeymoon; keep writing thank-you notes; relax whenever possible.

# What does it take to fall in love with a wedding ring?



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Wedding Season

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