

THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

*Preparation and Planning
For Saint Clare Parish*

*Campuses in
Greenleaf – Askeaton – Wrightstown*

Offices in Greenleaf

Revised June 2018

SAINT CLARE PARISH CONTACTS

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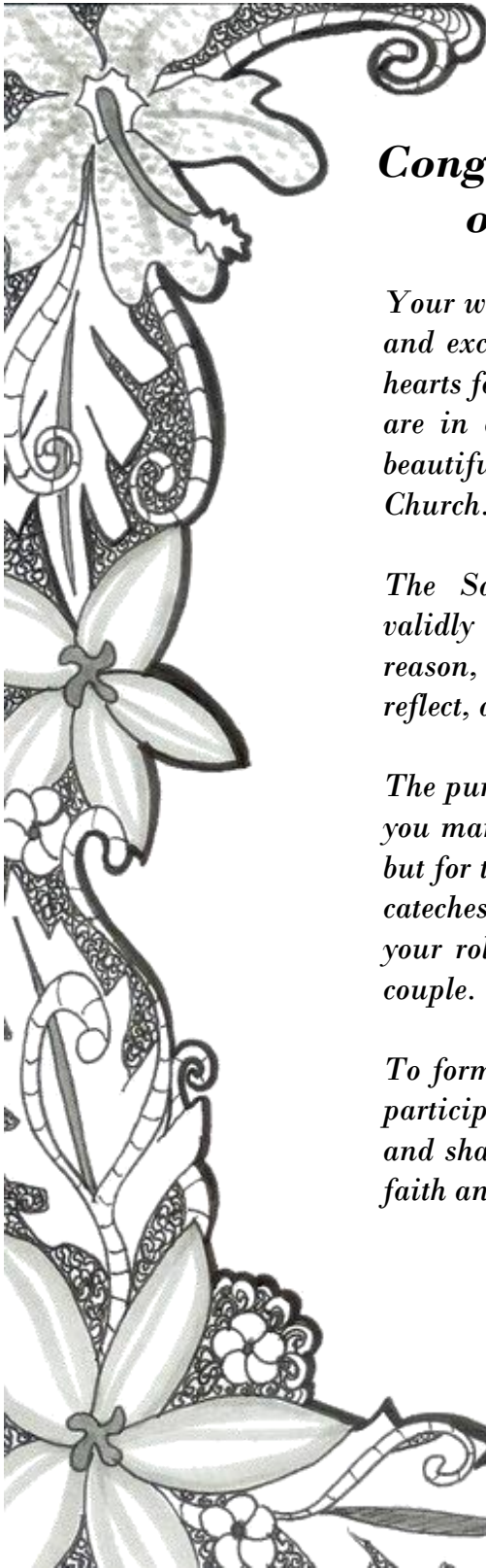
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Congratulations and Blessings on your Engagement!!

Your wedding day will be a most holy, glorious, and exciting day that will be cherished in your hearts for the rest of your lives. Rest assured you are in our prayers as you journey toward the beautiful vocation of marriage in the Catholic Church.

The Sacramental bond of matrimony, once validly received, can never be broken. For this reason, it is only prudent to take time to pray, reflect, and prepare.

The purpose of Marriage Preparation is to help you marry well (not only on your wedding day, but for the rest of your lives) and also to provide catechesis and insights to the faith as well as your role in the Catholic Church as a married couple.

To form you for marriage, you will be asked to participate in times of discussion, reflection, and sharing as you continue to grow together in faith and in the bond of real and lasting love.



SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

Preparation Checklist

(See the following pages for more details)

I. PRIEST/PARISH -- *See page 9*

- An initial meeting with the priest
- Pre-Nuptial Investigation Form (A-Form)
- Review Parish Policies
- Review Diocesan Policies

- Affidavit Concerning the Freedom to Marry (B-Form) for each party (if necessary)
- Discuss wedding liturgy details
- Certified copy of Baptismal Certificate for each party

- Proof/Certificate of having completed the diocesan preparation
- Proof/Certificate of having completed the FOCCUS preparation
- A second meeting with the priest after the diocesan prep has concluded

II. CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY -- *See page 11*

- FOCCUS Pre-Marriage Inventory
- Meet with FOCCUS Couple to discuss FOCCUS inventory (usually 2 or 3 meetings)

- Register for Part I and Part II of “A Marriage in the Lord” – *See pages 14-16 for details*
- Attend Part I of “A Marriage in the Lord”
- Attend Part II of “A Marriage in the Lord”

- Register for Natural Family Planning (NFP) Counseling (Optional) – *See pages 17-18*
- Attend NFP Counseling (Optional)

Other Canonical Forms (If needed)

In the case of a Mixed Marriage

- Dispensation / Rescript / Nihil obstat

In the Case of a Second Marriage

- Annulment (Completed before setting a wedding date)
- Civil Decree of Divorce

III. STATE OF WISCONSIN – *See page 13*

- Contact the county in which you live (or the county in which the marriage will take place, if you live outside the State) to obtain a Civil Marriage License

- Apply for your Civil Marriage License no more than 30 days, but no less than 6 days before your marriage date and bring the license to the rehearsal.

How Do We Get Started?

It is recommended to begin this process at least 6-8 months in advance of the wedding date.

A wedding date can only tentatively be scheduled until the couple's freedom to marry has been determined.

I. *With the* PRIEST/PARISH

___ An initial meeting with the priest or deacon

- Schedule a meeting with a priest or deacon. They will ask you a couple of basic questions to determine your freedom to marry & the documentation you will need to provide.

- If you are Catholic and not a registered member of the parish, you may be asked either to:

___ Join and register with St Clare Parish as an active member.

--OR--

___ Provide a brief letter from the pastor of the church you belong to, stating you are an active member of a parish. This letter can be obtained by contacting that pastor.

___ Already a member of St Clare Parish

___ Pre-Nuptial Investigation Form (A-Form) (Helps determine “freedom to marry”)

At your initial interview, the priest or deacon will assist the Bride and Groom in filling out the Pre-Nuptial Investigation Form. This form must be filled out in person, as it is more of a face-to-face interview and conversation, rather than strictly a form.

___ Review Parish Policies

___ Review Diocesan Policies

___ Affidavit Concerning the Freedom to Marry (B-Form) for each party

The priest or deacon helping you prepare for marriage may ask a friend or relative of yours to complete an “Affidavit Concerning the Freedom to Marry.” This is done in cases when an added surety is needed that a party is, indeed, free to be married.

___ Discuss wedding liturgy details

Arrange a meeting with the priest or deacon to discuss what the Catholic Church expects of those planning a wedding liturgy. The basis of the marriage ritual is found in the Roman Catholic Church’s “Order of Celebrating Matrimony (2016).”

___ Certified copy of Baptismal Certificate

The church/parish where you were baptized will supply a certified copy of your baptismal certificate. If you were also confirmed at this church, also check to make sure they have a confirmation notation on the back of your baptismal certificate. Ask that parish send the certificate directly to our parish sometime during the 6 months prior to your wedding.

*St Clare Parish Office
Attn.: Fr. Brian Wideman
2218 Day Street
Greenleaf, WI 54126*

Even if one partner is not Catholic, you must both submit proof of your baptism to St Clare Parish. If the non-Catholic party is not baptized, please let the priest or deacon know this. He will request a dispensation from the diocese if that party decides not to be baptized at this time.

*** Neither your original baptismal certificate nor a copy issued more than six (6) months prior to your wedding will fulfill this requirement.*

If you were born and baptized outside of North America because your family was stationed overseas with the military, the military can assist you in obtaining proof of your baptism.

Please contact:

The Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA
Phone: (202)719-3605
Fax: (202)269-1002
Website: <http://milarch.org/contact.html>

___ Proof/Certificate of having completed the diocesan preparation

___ Proof/Certificate of having completed the FOCCUS preparation

___ A second meeting with the priest after the diocesan and FOCCUS preparation has concluded

This is a time to reexamine where you were before the preparation and what you have learned through the course of the preparation. Also, it is a good time to identify areas where you can grow together as a couple.

II. *With the* CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

a. FOCCUS Pre-Marriage Inventory

(“Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study”)

___ Contact the FOCCUS Couple to arrange taking the Pre-Marriage Inventory

The FOCCUS evaluation is a series of questions that you and your future spouse answer separately. The results of your individually completed evaluations serve as one indication of how compatible you are with one another. Completing the evaluation and discussing your results may also pinpoint aspects of a marriage and family about which you as a couple desire further discussions before you actually enter into marriage.

Additionally, as you work through FOCCUS, you will be able to practice fundamental communication and conflict resolution skills, which will serve you well as you continue your journey through life together.

The FOCCUS Couple will score your evaluation for you and to help you understand the results. Your confidentiality will be respected at all times.

A trained FOCCUS couple from St Clare Parish will be assigned to you by:

Deacon Ken Kabat

(920) 532-4700 / kenandbetty@thekabats.com

___ Do the FOCCUS Pre-Marriage Inventory with the FOCCUS Couple

Go to focusinc.com if you'd like more details about the FOCCUS program

The FOCCUS© Pre-Marriage Inventory is a 156-item marriage preparation tool, which includes additional, optional items for interfaith couples, cohabiting couples and couples in which one or both partners are remarrying. The Inventory was developed in 1986, updated with cohabiting couple items in 1997, and revised in 2000 with new research-based items in areas related to spirituality and religion.

___ Meet with FOCCUS Couple to discuss FOCCUS inventory (1 or 2 meetings)

b. A Marriage in the Lord: Marriage Preparation Program – *See pages 14-16*

There are two options for completing this: (1) a weekend retreat or, (2) a two-part program where one session in an all-day event and the other is a two-hour meeting. The aim of the program is help you prepare spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and interpersonally for a lifelong commitment of married life.

___ Register for Part I and Part II of “A Marriage in the Lord”

___ Attend Part I & II of “A Marriage in the Lord” or the Weekend Retreat

c. Natural Family Planning (NFP) Counseling (*Optional*) – See pages 17-21 for details

___ Register for NFP Counseling

___ Attend NFP Counseling

The basis of NFP is that couples abstain during the fertile days to avoid getting pregnant or time intercourse with the fertile signs to achieve pregnancy. The practice of the periodic abstinence involved strengthens the couple’s love, respect, communication, physical well-being and moral well-being.

For links to scientific research and studies on the effectiveness of NFP methods, visit marriageinthelord.com.

d. Other Canonical Forms (*If needed*)

The priest or deacon may ask you to fill out an additional question form and return it. This will be discussed at your initial meeting.

If you were married before, even if not in the Catholic Church, additional documentation is (or may be) required. This will be discussed at your initial meeting.

In the case of a Mixed Marriage (i.e., Catholic/Non-Catholic; Catholic/Non-Baptized)

___ Dispensation / Rescript / Nihil obstat

In the Case of a Second Marriage

___ Annulment (Completed before setting a wedding date)

___ Civil Decree of Divorce

WHAT IS “CANONICAL FORM”?

All Roman Catholics are bound to “canonical form.” Simply put, this means, in order to be considered valid, your marriage consent must:

1. be received by a priest or deacon of the Church
2. in the presence of at least two (2) witnesses
3. in a sacred place of worship (i.e., a Catholic church building).

For a mixed marriage to be performed in another church outside the communion of the Catholic Church, a dispensation from Canonical Form is required from the Bishop. For a dispensation to be granted, the marriage must take place in a church.

CAN I MARRY A NON-CHRISTIAN? Yes, however, several dispensations from the Bishop are/may be required and you are expected to complete the marriage formation program together, just as any other couple.

III. *With the* STATE OF WISCONSIN

___ Contact the **County Clerk** of the county in which you live (or the county in which the marriage will take place, if you live outside the State) to obtain a **Civil Marriage License**

If neither of you is a resident of Brown County, please contact the county clerk of the county in which you reside for information on obtaining a marriage license.

*SANDY JUNO
BROWN COUNTY CLERK
Northern Building, Room 120
305 E. Walnut St.
Green Bay, WI 54301
Phone (920) 448-4016 Fax (920) 448-4498*

www.co.brown.wi.us
<Departments>
<County Clerk>

*Open Weekdays
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(Many licenses take up to
30 minutes to process)*

___ Apply for your Civil Marriage License **no earlier than 1 month, but no later than 1 full week** before your marriage date. (Per the Brown County Clerk’s Office)

___ Bring your marriage license to the wedding rehearsal so the priest or deacon can make sure it is in good order for the next day.

IMPORTANT:

By state law, the wedding cannot place without a valid marriage license.

“A marriage contract is only valid once a license has been issued and mutual declarations have been made by the bride and groom before an authorized officiant, in the physical presence of at least 2 competent adult witnesses, and has been filed with the Register of Deeds in the county where the marriage ceremony took place. The certificate must also be completed and signed by all parties and received by the appropriate County Register of Deeds within 3 days after the date of the marriage.”

*From Wisconsin Department of Health Services
Division of Public Health
Chapters 69 and 765, Wis. F-05152C (Rev. 06/14)*

OPTION 1:
2 Sessions

A MARRIAGE IN THE LORD

A two-part marriage preparation program

Sessions can be taken in any order (for example, Part II before Part I)

Part I is a one-day program (Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.) at locations throughout the Diocese of Green Bay. By attending you will:

- Explore the relationship skills to nurture a lifelong commitment.
- Hear presentations from experienced married couples who lead discussion on living the Sacrament of Marriage.

Pre-registration is required.

Cost: \$110 Includes continental breakfast, lunch and resource materials
Payment must be made in advance -- no payments will be accepted on the day of the event.

Part II is a two-hour session, held on a separate day, at locations throughout the Diocese. By attending you will learn:

- The Church's teachings about the Sacrament of Marriage and responsible parenthood including a healthy option for a lifetime of love called "Natural Family Planning."
- Sessions are led by committed Catholic married couples who will share scientific and medical research, personal stories, prayer and locally available resources.

Pre-registration is required.

No fee for Part II. Resource materials are provided.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

Please contact the Green Bay Diocese's Office of Family & Married Life office immediately at (920) 272-8291 if you are not able to attend your scheduled marriage prep class.

NOTE: Couples who re-schedule their date after registering will be charged a \$10.00 service fee.

How to Register for “A Marriage in the Lord” **OPTION 1**

To register, visit the Green Bay Diocese website

- www.gbdioc.org

- go to “Upcoming Events”
*(scroll down on the left
side of the webpage)*



- Choose: “Marriage Prep”

- Choose: “**Seminar Classes**” > “More Information”

Special Notes

Registration: The number of registrants per session may be limited (register early!)

Registration Deadline: 4 DAYS PRIOR TO THE EVENT (register early!)

Questions about programs, online registration or cancellations

Phone: (920) 272-8291

Questions about financial assistance for any of the programs

Phone: (920) 272-8315

NOTE: Couples who re-schedule their date after registering will be charged a \$10.00 service fee.

**OPTION 2:
Weekend
Retreat**

A MARRIAGE IN THE LORD

A weekend retreat covering both Parts 1 & 2 while enjoying some relaxing time with your future spouse.

Pre-registration is required.

Cost: \$200 per couple Includes all meals, accommodations, and materials.

At present, the weekend retreats are held either at Camp Tekakwitha by Shawano Lake, or at the Green Lake Conference Center.

To register, visit the Green Bay Diocese website

- www.gbdioc.org

- go to “Upcoming Events”
(scroll down on the left side of the webpage)



- Choose: “Marriage Prep”

- Choose: “**Weekend Retreat**” > “More Information”

Visit: ournaturalfamily.com

Love Naturally

God has a plan for your marriage

Discover Natural Family Planning

Office of Family and Married Life
 920-272-8291
 Toll free 1-877-500-3580 ext. 8291
familyandmarriedlife@gbdioc.org

WHAT IS NFP?

Near the time of a woman's ovulation, a type of mucus is secreted by the cervix. This is the primary sign of fertility that indicates when a woman is potentially fertile. In addition to cervical mucus, temperature, cervical changes and other secondary signs can be monitored.

The basis of NFP is that couples abstain during the fertile days to avoid getting pregnant or time intercourse with the fertile signs to achieve pregnancy. The practice of the periodic abstinence involved strengthens the couple's love, respect, communication, physical well-being and moral well-being.

For links to scientific research and studies on the effectiveness of NFP methods, visit Marriageinthelord.com.

ISN'T NFP JUST THE RHYTHM METHOD?

Calendar rhythm dates back more than 50 years and is the oldest form of NFP. Formal instruction was non-existent, and inaccurate second-hand information was about all that was available. No wonder it had such a bad reputation! Rhythm is now considered obsolete since much more is known about human fertility. Modern NFP methods bear no resemblance to calendar rhythm.

CAN YOU USE NFP WITH IRREGULAR CYCLES?

The need for regular cycles is one of the old "rhythm" myths. NFP doesn't require regular cycles. In fact, it can be used without any cycle at all, for instance while breastfeeding. The method can be used at any stage of reproductive life including pre-menopause, just before a woman becomes naturally infertile.

NFP METHODS

Various methods are available throughout the diocese. Couples may prefer one method or another. All methods are highly effective and have their own emphases and advantages. More information at www.ournaturalfamily.com.

BILLINGS OVULATION METHOD

BOM is a simple yet scientific method tracking the woman's natural and unique signs of fertility and infertility each day. Based on the primary observation of sensation, four simple rules are applied within the woman's cycle. Read more at www.thebillingsovulationmethod.org.

COUPLE TO COUPLE LEAGUE SYMPTO-THERMAL METHOD

CCL teaches couples to observe these signs: cervical mucus, basal body temperature, changes of the cervix, and other secondary signs of fertility. CCL places special emphasis on church teaching, the impact of breastfeeding on fertility, the role of both spouses in NFP, and offers resources such as an app, family conferences and the Family Foundations Magazine. Read more about CCL at www.ccli.org.

CREIGHTON MODEL FERTILITYCARE SYSTEM

CrMS provides for seamless referral to physicians trained in NaProTechnology for help with infertility and other medical issues if necessary. The method is based on a woman's recognition of the changes in her cervical mucus throughout the cycle. Read more about CrMS at www.creightonmodel.com.

FAMILY OF THE AMERICAS OVULATION METHOD

FAF provides pictorial images for women to choose from to make charting easy and standardized. This method is based on a woman's recognition of the changes in her cervical mucus throughout the cycle. Read more about FAF at www.familyplanning.net.

NORTHWEST FAMILY SERVICES SYMPTO-THERMAL METHOD

NWFS teaches couples to observe the cervical mucus and basal body temperature to identify the beginning and end of the fertile phase of the cycle. Secondary signs are also taught. In our diocese, the method is taught by a staff person at A Woman's Place at St. Mary's Hospital. Read more about NWFS at www.nwfs.org.

SAINT CLARE PARISH

POLICIES & GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS

DECIDING TO HAVE YOUR WEDDING AT ST CLARE PARISH

To be married at St Clare Parish, both parties will need to go through the marriage preparation program as determined by the Green Bay Diocese, and will need to meet the requirements for freedom to marry as established by the Code of Canon Law.

You need not be a member of St Clare Parish to have your wedding at one of our three campuses, but the pastor of your parish (wherever that is) must be in contact with the pastor of St Clare Parish. Under Canon Law, all sacraments celebrated within a parish's geographical territory are the responsibility of the pastor appointed to that area.

The Diocese of Green Bay requires you to receive permission to be married outside the parish in which you are a registered member. This is because your spiritual welfare is the responsibility of the pastor wherein you live. You may seek this permission by contacting the pastor of the parish to which you belong (geographically). There are normally no issues with this.

The Church encourages you to become registered and active members of the parish you regularly attend. If you are not currently active in your parish, the beginning of your new life as husband and wife is an ideal time to begin sharing with your parish family. This means actively sharing your God given gifts of time and talents, as well as supporting your parish financially. Parishes everywhere offer many ministries in which you are invited to participate. As needs differ by community, please contact the parish office for specific time and talent needs.

SCHEDULING A TIME FOR YOUR WEDDING

Typically, weddings are scheduled for late in the week—Friday or Saturday. Though rarely done, a wedding may also be scheduled for a Sunday during the regular Sunday Mass time when the entire congregation is present.

The wedding should be scheduled so that it is completed—and photography finished—by 1 hour before the start of Mass.

To schedule a day and time, please call the Parish Office as soon as possible and, ideally, before booking a reception hall. When you call, the secretary may ask you some questions to determine if a date can be tentatively held for you (see **Page 9**).

The wedding date, location and time are given final approval by the pastor. And this cannot be done until your first meeting with him as a couple. That first meeting is when you and your fiancé’s “freedom to marry” is established.

CELEBRANT

The celebrant at your wedding is generally the pastor or one of the deacons of St Clare Parish. If, however, you have another priest or deacon in mind, you are welcome to invite him to preside. In this case, you must still schedule your wedding and rehearsal through the parish office at St Clare Parish. And that priest or deacon must be in contact with the pastor at St Clare Parish (see **Page 19**; and “**Visiting Priest**” policy sheet).

In interfaith marriages, the partner who is not Catholic is welcome to invite the pastor of his or her church to participate in the wedding ceremony along with the pastor of St Clare Parish. However, the pastor or deacons of St Clare Parish must be the main celebrant in this situation.

ATTENDANTS

Please remember that you must have at least two (2) attendants. The attendants who will sign your marriage license must be at least eighteen (18) years of age to act as legal witnesses to your marriage. At least one witness of the marriage license must be a baptized, confirmed, practicing Catholic.

All attendants should be adults willing to participate respectfully in the sacrament of your marriage. While all your attendants need not be Catholic, you should make sure that they are comfortable participating as fully as possible in the Roman Catholic Rite of Matrimony.

It is fine to include “junior attendants,” but select them carefully. Children under a certain age might find it too stressful and may not be able to fulfill the duties of being junior attendants. We want them to enjoy the day as much as the couple.

A SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING ATTIRE

Please remember to keep modesty in mind when selecting the attire for your wedding party. The sacredness of the church and the solemnity of the sacrament should be a priority when making these decisions. If need be, consider obtaining a cover up of some sort (e.g. wrap, shawl, bolero, etc.) for dresses you might feel are too revealing for the service. The cover up can be removed for the reception or dance. This allows for flexibility, style and comfort while still respecting the sacred space and reverence for the Rite of Matrimony.

READERS AND READINGS

Your wedding will include Scripture readings, just as a Sunday Mass does and the friends or family members you choose will proclaim the **Old and New Testament Scripture** readings, as well as the Prayers of the Faithful (Petitions).

You may have one or more people proclaim these readings. Please make sure the people you select to proclaim the readings at your wedding are comfortable with the job of speaking clearly in front of a church full of people. We want them to enjoy the day, too!

The celebrant (pastor or deacon) will proclaim the **Gospel** reading.

You may also have a friend or family member lead your guests in offering the **Prayers of the Faithful (Petitions)**. If you do not wish to choose someone to lead this prayer, the celebrant will lead it.

To assist you in selecting readings for your wedding, you will receive a book entitled **“Together for Life”**. You will receive this book during your initial meeting with the pastor or deacon to begin the preparation of the liturgical celebration. This book contains several suggestions for appropriate Scripture readings. You are also free to choose readings not suggested in the **“Together for Life”** book, as long as such readings are taken from the Scriptures.

The **“Together for Life”** book also contains a number of options for the various prayers and blessings which will be used during the Rite of Matrimony.

GIFT BEARERS

When celebrating your wedding within a Mass, you will need to choose two or three family members or friends to carry the gifts of bread and wine to the altar.

If the people you choose to do this are Catholic, please make sure that they have made their First Communion. If they are not Catholic, please make sure that they are eligible to receive communion in their own churches.

This is an excellent opportunity to involve godparents, godchildren, parents, grandparents, or even yourselves in the celebration of the Eucharist at your wedding.

If you are not celebrating your wedding with a Mass, you will not need gift bearers.

MUSIC/MUSICIANS

The St Clare Coordinator of Music and Liturgy meets with all of the engaged couples getting married at St Clare to help them select musicians and music choices for the Order of Matrimony. Contact should be made as soon as possible after you have booked your wedding.

We suggest that St Clare music ministers serve as your primary musicians for your wedding. There are several instrumentalists and cantors from the parish available to minister at your wedding. A list is available from the Coordinator of Music and Liturgy. You may inquire about fees and availability when contacting your musician.

It is acceptable to use outside musicians that are not from St Clare. However, they must meet with the Coordinator of Music and Liturgy before any further planning. Of priority is the musicians' knowledge of and respect for the musical needs of the Roman Catholic liturgy.

It is important not to contract with any musicians prior to your wedding planning and before discussing this issue with the Coordinator of Music and Liturgy. Keep in mind that all music and musicians chosen for your wedding must be approved according to the standards set forth in “**Sing to the Lord**”, a document issued by the U.S. Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy. “**Sing to the Lord**” stresses the point that music and music ministers at any Roman Catholic liturgical celebration are always a means of drawing the assembled believers into joyful prayer and are never to be used as “entertainment” or presented as a “performance”.

We must also ask that you do not arrange with your musicians to have the **Lord’s Prayer** sung as a solo during its proper place in the Mass or wedding liturgy. Because the **Lord’s Prayer** is regarded as a “prayer of the community,” it is vital to have all those assembled participating in this prayer. The chant version of the Lord’s Prayer is fine to use.

For mixed marriages, praying the **Lord’s Prayer** together is an excellent way to foster a spirit of unity among all of your guests. For this reason, it is best to keep the **Lord’s Prayer** as a spoken prayer rather than a sung prayer in this instance. A musical setting of this prayer does, however, make a beautiful addition to your wedding celebration as a prelude or post-communion reflection piece.

Below is a guide to choosing music for your wedding. It is taken from the booklet “**Your Wedding In The Catholic Church**:

The Church has set forth guidelines regarding the music in any liturgy, not just weddings, so the music you choose for your wedding should be evaluated in the same three areas:

Liturgical: *Is the music appropriate to the liturgy and celebration? Songs which are appropriate for the reception or dance, or songs that originate from movie soundtracks, etc., are seldom appropriate for the liturgy.*

Pastoral: *Does the music allow for the assembly’s participation when appropriate?*

Musical: *Is the music of quality and will it be done by competent musicians? Is it easily singable by the assembly?*

In addition to these guidelines please consider that the focus of your wedding liturgy is the triangle of love between God and you as a couple. The music and lyrics chosen for your wedding should reflect this beautiful truth. There is an abundance of contemporary and traditional sacred wedding music that is available for use during your wedding in the Catholic Church. The Coordinator of Music and Liturgy can help you in selecting music and determining what songs are appropriate for use during the various parts of your ceremony.

ANSWERS TO OTHER QUESTIONS **YOU MAY HAVE**

RECONCILIATION: As with the reception of any sacrament, it is desirable to prepare yourself to enter into marriage by first receiving the sacrament of reconciliation. The parish reconciliation schedule is available on the parish website, or you may ask the pastor to arrange a time.

WEDDING REHEARSAL: You may arrange a time for your wedding rehearsal by contacting the pastor. Please allow one (1) hour for your wedding rehearsal. Everyone taking part in your wedding liturgy should be present at the rehearsal. This includes the wedding party, readers, ushers, gift bearers, etc. The musicians are not required to be present at your rehearsal. The usual time for rehearsal is somewhere between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. the evening before the wedding.

Please ask everyone to arrive fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled time so that your rehearsal can begin (and end!) on time.

FLOWERS: You are welcome to bring additional plants or flowers into the church for your wedding. We ask, however, that you please not move or remove any of the plants, flowers or other decorations, including the furniture, currently in place in the church or gathering space during the **Christmas** and **Easter** seasons. No plants, flowers, or candles may be placed on the altar. Stands, tables and pedestals are available if you need them.

AISLE RUNNERS, PEW BOWS, ETC: An aisle runner is permissible. And you may place flowers, ribbons or bows on the ends of the pews. However, we ask that you check with the Parish Office first as to the method of attaching them to the pews.

CANDLES: With the exception of the unity candle or a memorial candle in honor of deceased relatives or friends of the bridal couple, all candles used must be contained in globes. If you bring candles into the church and they drip on the church floor or furnishings, please be aware that you are responsible for cleaning up the wax.

UNITY CANDLE: The parish provides a table for your unity candle, should you choose to use one as part of your ceremony. Your baptismal candles could be used as the side candles with which to light your unity candle. The unity candle itself, the candle holder(s) and the side candles are your responsibility, if you choose to use them.

SAND CEREMONIES: The Diocese of Green Bay has stated that “sand ceremonies”, in which containers of sand are poured together to blend in a central container, is not appropriate for the Catholic ritual and shall not be permitted.

DRESSING ROOMS: St Clare Parish has some rooms available for your use on the day of your wedding—depending on which church building you choose. You may bring your dresses, etc. to the rehearsal and leave them overnight in the Bride’s Room, if you wish. While the buildings are locked at night, St Clare Parish will not be held responsible for dresses, etc.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO: To minimize distractions during the ceremony and to facilitate freedom of movement for the wedding party, please designate only one (1) photographer and only one (1) videographer for your ceremony. Formal photo and video professionals should connect up with the celebrant before the ceremony. *Guests with cameras must remain in the pew and not obstruct the service in any way.*

RICE, ETC.: Rice, confetti, bird seed, balloons or birds may not be tossed, thrown or released after the ceremony, either in the church or anywhere on the parish grounds.

RECEPTION LINE: Time permitting, you may have a reception line at the church. Consider, however, that the reception line is generally better suited to take place at the reception. If you choose to have a reception line at the church, please be considerate of the fact that musicians for the parish Mass Saturday afternoon will start arriving around 3:00pm to practice.

CLEAN UP: Please arrange to have someone (other than someone in your wedding party) remove boxes, bags, papers, programs, etc. from the church building after the wedding. If you bring it with you, please take it away. Thank you for your help in tidying up!

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO: Please remind your guests and wedding party that Saint Clare Parish has a “**NO ALCOHOL / NO SMOKING**” policy. The use of alcohol is forbidden on church property, which includes the parking lot. If alcohol is provided after leaving the parish grounds, we hope that your guests will use it in moderation as they celebrate this joyous occasion. Please remember to appoint designated drivers so everyone makes it home safely from your reception.

GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING COMMUNION

FOR CATHOLICS: As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should not be conscious of grave sin and normally should have fasted for one (1) hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession, except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case, the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible (Code of Canon Law, canon 916). A frequent reception of the Sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

FOR OUR FELLOW CHRISTIANS: Members of the Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and the Polish National Catholic Church are urged to respect the discipline of their own churches. According to Roman Catholic discipline, the Code of Canon Law does not object to the reception of communion by Christians of these Churches (Code of Canon Law, canon 844, par. 3).

FOR THOSE NOT RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION: Any person who is not receiving Holy Communion is welcome to come forward for a blessing. Crossing your arms in front of your chest indicates that you wish to receive a blessing.

RECEPTION OF COMMUNION

For those couples whose wedding celebration will be within a Mass, please print the following in your wedding program:

Receiving the Body and Blood of Christ is a sign of one's unity with God through his or her ongoing commitment to the Catholic faith. And so, while all are strongly encouraged to participate in this liturgy today, the reception of Communion is meant only for those already initiated into the Roman Catholic faith. If you are unable to receive Communion, you are invited to unite yourself in prayerful thanks to God who gives us the promise of eternal life.

STIPENDS & FEES

Fees are subject to change in future fiscal years according to diocesan guidelines.

CELEBRANT: There is not a set stipend for the celebrant; however a monetary token of appreciation is welcome if you wish to offer it.

CHURCH: Fees for the use of the church facilities are as follows:

\$75.00 for use of the church (fee set by the diocese)

If paying by check for the above fees, please make out a separate check for the Diocese fee. All checks are to be made out to St Clare Parish.

MUSICIANS: You may inquire about fees when contacting your musician. Each musician will set their own fee.

While these costs represent only a small portion of usual wedding expenses, we do hope that they will not prevent you from marrying in the Catholic Church. Under special circumstances, these fees are negotiable. Please see the pastor if this is an issue.

One final word ~

Our thoughts and prayers and those of your parish community will be with you on your wedding day. Pray for each other and with each other as you near the day of your wedding. This is a wonderful time to invite God into the life you are about to share. Put yourselves at peace with God by receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation as part of your marriage preparation.

One of your weekly dates should be church; attending Mass together regularly and becoming involved in a ministry that enables you to channel your love to others and share the goodness of the gifts that God has bestowed upon you.

Know that we want to help you live a happy and blessed Catholic life after you are married. Remain connected to your parish. Spend time together as a couple. Look for ways to support other newly married couples. Be grateful to God always for the gift that you are to each other.