

## **MARRIAGE PREPARATION DIRECTIONS**

God's blessings on your upcoming Marriage.

Important information for Weddings:

### **For All couples living in other Dioceses outside the St. John's Archdiocese**

Before you set a date and book reception sites-make sure you have met your Parish priest in your Parish (domicile-where they are living-if a couple is living in Alberta for example they are no longer living in the Archdiocese of St. John's) to discuss your upcoming marriage to determine if you are free to marry in the Roman Catholic Church.

-The couple must have completed your pre-nuptial interview there and submitted all necessary documentation - baptism, confirmation and other required certificates, including proof of the marriage preparation course.

-The couple must obtain a testimonial letter from their Diocese (in their domicile) which is sent home to our Archdiocese and the Archdiocese then will issue a nihil obstat permission for the Priest to marry the couple here.

-Important: The couple must make sure they have completed a marriage preparation course prescribed by the Diocese and a copy of the certificate, giving proof of completion of that course by both is sent to the Pastor.

(Read the following directions that also apply to all couples.)

### **For Couples Living in the Archdiocese of St. John's**

-All couples planning a marriage must complete the Marriage Preparation Program sponsored by the Archdiocese of St. John's or another Roman Catholic Archdiocese. For the dates of these programs call your Parish or Archdiocesan Offices.

-You must meet with the Parish Priest to determine if you are free to marry in the Roman Catholic Church. Any impediments to the marriage should be discussed before you book a Church or reception venues. Go to the Parish for the completion of a pre-nuptial interview as soon as possible.

-Submit all documentation -Baptism and Confirmation certificates, and this must be done if possible several months before the wedding.

-Issues about your wedding or preliminary discussion of your Mass or Ceremony would take place at this meeting. Please ensure that you do not print your Marriage ceremony or Mass programs unless you have had your readings and music and other aspects of the ceremony or Mass approved by the Pastor, even if he is not the officiant.

-All aspects of the Ceremony or Mass including readings and Hymns must be approved before you do your programs. Even if they are done, unsuitable music or other aspects not approved by the Pastor will not be included in the Wedding. Assistance in choosing the Scripture Readings and Hymns is available. We can provide with a guide book.

**Scripture Readings:** We will give you a guide booklet to assist you with planning the Wedding Mass or Ceremony. All readings are to be taken from Holy Scripture-If there are two readings, outside the Easter Season, the First Reading will be from the Old Testament and the Second Reading will be from the New Testament and this reading is not a Gospel reading. A Sung Psalm will separate these readings. The Priest will usually choose a Gospel Reading. All parts of the ceremony or Mass are to be consistent with current Liturgy rules of the Church. You can choose intercessions from the planning guide and you can personalize some of these as well. You will need to choose a reader for the readings and intercessions.

**The Marriage Ceremony-** The Marriage Rite is completed as in the Roman Catholic Marriage Rite Book. No unity candles or sand ceremonies or the like are permitted to be in the Catholic ceremony. The rings are the main symbol of the ceremony. As a suggestion, these types of rituals could be used at

the reception- for example at grace.

**MUSIC:** The wedding is being celebrated in the Roman Catholic Church. Only approved Church hymns and music are to be used in the wedding ceremony or. Each Parish has an approved Hymn book for these choices. As well, appropriate classical instrumental music is permitted. There are all kinds of popular and country music related to weddings that are best played at the reception and are not appropriate for the Church. Please check with the Parish music leader or call the Parish office for the contact information of our music leaders in the Parish to book them for wedding music and for advice or ideas. Church music is not a performance, and as much as possible congregational participation and singing should be the rule. The Pastor or his designate will approve all music, and if music selections are not approved, these songs will not to be used at the ceremony or Mass. If you are living away from the Parish, you can fax the choices to the parish or email the Parish Rehearsals: Rehearsals must be set up by appointment-It is coordinated by an appointed volunteer of the Parish or by the Priest who is officiating. Call the Parish Office or email to reserve your rehearsal time. There are often evening Masses, so book ahead.

**Fees:** Marriage Preparation Course- To be paid at the site of the course-usually 150.00 Church Stipend-200.00 ; Musician-To be negotiated and paid to the musician. These fees should be paid to the Parish Secretary at least two weeks before the wedding.

**Other ISSUES:** Since marriage is a sacrament and a held in a sacred place, the Church, all aspects of the wedding must reflect that fact. There are no signs to be carried in procession indicating “Here Come the Bride” or anything else. That would be better suited at the reception. No pets are permitted in Marriage processions. Children will not be permitted to be carried up in procession in a cart or any other vehicle. No rice or flower petals are permitted to be thrown in the Church or at the entrance. Any indication of alcohol-drug consumption/inebriation by the bridal party prior to the ceremony may result in the cancellation of the ceremony at the Church. If there is confusion about any of these aspects, or any other questions about music choices or the permitted procedures in the Church, please ask the Pastor. Do not spring issues on us at the rehearsal. All should be quite clearly planned before that event. All wedding programs must be given to the pastor for approval before they are printed for distribution in the Church. A wedding license must be obtained and brought to the Parish Office for completion before the wedding. It can be obtained one month before the wedding at Service Canada locations.