

# ST. BARBARA PARISH WEDDING GUIDELINES

PREPARING TO CELEBRATE THE  
SACRAMENT OF HOLY  
MATRIMONY



2018-19

# Congratulations on your engagement

Planning your wedding can be one of the most exciting times of your life. We are happy that you have chosen St. Barbara Parish to be part of your special day. We want to help you plan a wedding liturgy that is both spiritual and sacramental. We as Catholics believe that marriage is a lifelong commitment and that it is a sacrament when it occurs between two baptized Christians.

Since planning a wedding can also be one of the most stressful times of your life, we have prepared this booklet to help guide you through the process. By answering common questions about getting married at our parish, this booklet sets forth guidelines that we trust you will follow.

## WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU

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Fr. Michael Sikon, Pastor  
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Bob Vareha, Music Director  
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Emily Christofano, Wedding Coordinator  
Dawn Borger, Pastoral Associate & Floral Coordinator

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## 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 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 tenants of the Catholic faith.

**DAYS AND TIMES FOR WEDDINGS** – Wedding liturgies may take place at St. Barbara’s Parish any day of the week with the exception of Sunday. Friday and Saturday weddings are the most common. Saturday weddings may be held anytime from 2:00-3:00pm in the afternoon. Friday weddings may be held late afternoon or in the evening. Although weddings may be celebrated at St. Barbara’s during Advent and Lent, we prefer other times of the year for this celebration because of the prayerful and penitential nature of these seasons.

**STEPS IN SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION** – The wedding preparation process is designed to help you assess your readiness for sacramental marriage. Church law requires that engaged couples entering into marriage participate in a Sacramental Preparation program. This should be completed 3-6 months prior to your wedding day.

There are two options offered at St. Barbara:

1. Sponsor Couple Program
2. Diocese of Greensburg Catholic Engaged Encounter.  
*If you live out of town, you have the option of attending Marriage Preparation in the diocese where you reside. You simply need to provide us with verification of completion*

# STEPS IN THE MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROCESS

## **12 MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING**

\_\_\_ Contact Mary Ann Kent to tentatively schedule wedding date.

## **10-12 MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING**

\_\_\_ Schedule a Marriage Preparation introductory meeting with Fr. Michael.

\_\_\_ Decide on an option for marriage preparation.

Sponsor Couple

Engaged Encounter

\_\_\_ Father will schedule the taking and review of the FOCCUS Communication Inventory.

## **1-3 MONTHS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING**

\_\_\_ Schedule a meeting with Father to discuss details of the marriage liturgy.

\_\_\_ Bring the completed Liturgy Planning Sheet from “Together for Life” booklet.

\_\_\_ Turn in copies of your baptismal records to Father in the parish office.

\_\_\_ Contact Bob Vareha to discuss plans for your liturgy and music.

\_\_\_ Contact Dawn Borger to discuss floral options for church.

## **2 WEEKS BEFORE YOUR WEDDING**

\_\_\_ Turn in your marriage license to the parish office for processing.

## **WEDDING REHEARSAL**

\_\_\_ Priest, organist, server and cantor fees are due to Emily Christofano, Wedding Coordinator.

## PLANNING THE WEDDING LITURGY

**GUIDELINES** – Your wedding liturgy will be primarily planned by you with assistance from the Priest, Wedding Coordinator, and Music Director. Your information packet contains a booklet titled “Together for Life,” which includes guidelines for planning Catholic wedding liturgies. When you meet with the priest who will officiate at your wedding, he will review your plans for the wedding liturgy and make any modifications that may be needed.

**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.
- Gift bearers may be family members or friends.
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must be those who exercise this ministry in their home parish
- Musicians and cantors are usually provided by the Church; any non-parish musicians, cantors or soloists may be engaged but this will require collaboration with pastor and Music Director.
- Choice of music must be sacred or classical pieces. It is only permitted to be live.
- Church decorations remain in place.

**ENTRANCE PROCESSION** – The priest and other ministers (cross bearer, altar servers) go to the door of the church to greet and welcome the wedding party. The priest and ministers then lead the procession into the church, followed by mothers and then the wedding party.

**CHOOSING SCRIPTURE READINGS** – 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 reading from the New Testament. There are several appropriate scripture selections you may choose from in the booklet “Together for Life”. Ordinarily, the proclaimed reading of Scripture is entrusted to someone who performs this ministry in their church. The Gospel is read by the priest.

**VOWS** – Several beautiful ways of exchanging vows can be found in the “Together for Life” booklet.

**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. It makes sense to ask Catholics to do this; they understand the significance and will be more comfortable with the action.

**CHOOSING MUSIC** – Because marriage in the Catholic Church is a liturgical celebration, songs played right before or during the wedding liturgy 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. You have literally hundreds of songs to choose from in our hymnal and from many other sources as well. The St. Barbara website also has music recordings for you to hear and help in your selection of music. The direct link is:

[www.stbarbara.org/sacraments/marriage/Pages/Music.aspx](http://www.stbarbara.org/sacraments/marriage/Pages/Music.aspx)

The **wedding marches** written by Wagner and Mendelssohn are considered popular music because they originated in operas and were played either during bedroom scenes or in scenes which mocked the religious nature of marriage. Therefore, the Church does not consider them appropriate for a Catholic wedding.

We encourage couples to prepare a program for their wedding liturgy. A program should include the order of the service, music selections, and any other information which will aid in the participation of the assembly. Copyrighted material may not be used without written permission from the publisher or copyright holder. Acknowledgment of the permission to copy and the copyright owner’s name must appear in the program. Bob Vareha will provide guidance for selecting your music and listing it in the program.

## AT THE WEDDING REHEARSAL & LITURGY

**RESPECT FOR GOD'S HOUSE** – Please respect the church as the sacred place that it is. We ask everyone to behave in a manner appropriate to being in church. Please refrain from chewing gum, using profane or inappropriate language, letting children run around in the church, etc. In order to keep the church clean for your wedding and the services following your liturgy, food, drink and chewing gum are prohibited in the worship space.

**THE WEDDING REHEARSAL** – FIRST AND FOREMOST everyone needs to arrive before the appointed rehearsal time. We ask everyone involved to carefully listen to and follow the instructions of the Wedding Coordinator. Any questions or problems that arise will be answered/resolved before the rehearsal is completed. Each step of your wedding liturgy will be practiced at the wedding rehearsal, which is held on the Friday evening before your Saturday wedding or the Thursday evening before your Friday wedding. Rehearsal typically lasts one hour. All those who have a part in your wedding liturgy should attend the rehearsal to become familiar with their roles. This includes lectors and members of the wedding party, including flower girl(s) 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 liturgy.

**DRESSING AREA** – The bride and her attendants will use a downstairs room which will be supplied with a steamer and full length mirror.

**FLOWERS** – We ask couples to keep their flowers and decorations tasteful and simple to keep the focus on the sacrament. When planning for flowers and decorations, please keep in mind the nature of the liturgical season in which your wedding liturgy will be held. For instance, during the weeks after Christmas and Easter the church will be prepared for these seasons.



During other seasons you may choose to decorate with floral arrangements at the ambo (the stand from which the scriptures are proclaimed) and/or on either side of the altar. *Artificial flowers are not permitted in the church.* Florists are asked to work with Dawn Berger when planning flower arrangements. Flowers may be delivered on your wedding day one hour before the liturgy begins.

For reasons of safety and maintenance we kindly ask that the following items not be used:

- Aisle runners
- Rice
- Birdseed
- Sparklers
- Poppers
- Flower petals
- Balloons
- Wagons

The above list is not exhaustive and any extraordinary item needs to be discussed with Fr. Michael and the wedding coordinator in the preparation phase of your wedding. Items that were not discussed may not be allowed on the day of your wedding.

**PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOTAPING** – Please remember that a Catholic wedding is a sacred liturgy. Photographers and videographers must be mindful of this sacredness. To assist them and you, information is provided on the next page which you can share with your photographer.



## PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO TAPING

A Catholic wedding is a liturgical celebration. Care must be taken to see that the Mass and marriage rite are not disrupted by the taking of pictures or video. Care must be taken to see that the focus of the congregation is on the altar and not on you. The parish Wedding Coordinator will assist you on the day of the wedding. You may contact her earlier if you have questions. We ask for and appreciate your cooperation with our requests. Thank you!

- Flash photos may only be taken as the bridal party is processing into and out of the church.
- Photographers and videographers may not enter the sanctuary area (the elevated area around the altar and ambo) .
- Please try to keep roaming around the church to a minimum once the Mass or liturgy has begun.
- Videotaping may be done from a stationary camera behind the baptismal font, preferably unmanned, and/or from the back of the church.
- Posed pictures may be taken in the church before and/or after the wedding. Pictures taken in the church following Saturday afternoon weddings must conclude by 4 p.m. to accommodate other regular weekend church services.

## STIPENDS FOR MARRIAGE LITURGY

*Any time the parish provides a spiritual service for its members, it is customary to make an offering to the church. It is an expression of our faith and gratitude.*

| <b>MARRIAGE LITURGY STIPENDS</b>         | <b>AMOUNT</b>  |
|--|----------------|
| Clergy<br>Fr. Michael Sikon              | \$250.         |
| Wedding Coordinator<br>Emily Christofano | \$150.         |
| Organist<br>(Bob Vareha)                 | \$150.         |
| Cantor<br>(Cash)                         | \$75.          |
| Altar Servers (2)<br>(Cash)              | 2 @ \$20./each |

***These fees are due at the Rehearsal***  
***Check should be made payable to the (name) in parenthesis***

## Prayer for Engaged Couple

**L**oving Father, I pray for the person who is thinking of me and waiting for me, and who has placed in me complete trust for the future; I pray for this person who will walk along the path of life with me; help us to be worthy of one another and to be an encouragement and example to one another. Help us to prepare for marriage, for its grandeur and for its responsibilities, so that the love which fills us body and spirit may rule our lives for evermore. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### *An important Reminder...*

Once you are married, please remember to register at St. Barbara as a couple. If you were listed under your parents name, please call the parish secretary to register as a new household. If you are moving to another parish, please remove your name from St. Barbara Registry and contact your new parish to register.

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