



HOLY REDEEMER

PARISH

Marriage Celebration Information Guidebook

“It is not helpful to dream of an idyllic and perfect love needing no stimulus to grow. A celestial notion of earthly love forgets that the best is yet to come, that fine wine matures with age. ... It is much healthier to be realistic about our limits, defects and imperfections, and to respond to the call to grow together, to bring love to maturity and to strengthen the union, come what may.” *Pope Francis, The Joy of Love*

Dear Engaged Couples,

Congratulations and best wishes on your engagement. Please be assured that Holy Redeemer Parish keeps both of you in its prayers as you make arrangements to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage. It is our prayer that you open your hearts to the outpouring of God's grace upon you on your wedding day and throughout eternity together as a married couple.

Weddings are a special, joyful time for a couple, their families, and loved ones. It is our pleasure to celebrate with you in our parish. We will do our best to make it a sacred occasion. As Catholics, we believe that marriage is a Sacrament, a visible sign of God's invisible grace and blessing in your lives, and should be celebrated with devotion and reverence.

We look forward to helping you prepare for your wedding and have designed this booklet to guide you so your celebration will be the meaningful occasion you want it to be. I hope that the pamphlet will answer most if not all questions you might have regarding the planning of your ceremony. If you have additional questions, please contact the parish wedding coordinator Linda Hurley or me. Linda's telephone number is (508)-737-5501, or you can contact her by email at SSS3@comcast.net. We will do our best to help you.

Be assured of my best wishes that your preparation for your wedding will be a sacred and happy time in your lives.

Faithfully yours,

(Rev.) John M. Sullivan
Pastor

General Guidelines

1. Catholics who permanently reside within the boundaries of Holy Redeemer Parish possess the right to be married at Holy Redeemer Church. That right also applies to Catholics who have a regular seasonal residence within the parish.
2. Catholics who are neither permanent nor seasonal residents of the parish but wish to be married at Holy Redeemer are welcome to apply to celebrate their wedding here. However, since preference must be given to parishioners, they are cautioned that wedding dates can not be booked for non-residents more than one year before their desired date.

Non-residents who wish to be married at Holy Redeemer are also required to obtain the permission of the priest, who is their proper pastor. This is the pastor of the parish in which the Catholic party resides.

3. Couples need God's grace in preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage. Therefore, we expect all couples will recognize the need to be faithful to the Sacrament of the Eucharist every week as a preparation for their wedding.
4. In preparation for marriage, couples need to notify the parish and ask to set a date no less than six months before their desired wedding date.
5. If either party has previously been married, we can not set a date for a ceremony until it is proved they are free to marry again according to the laws of the Catholic Church.
6. Couples residing in Holy Redeemer Parish will meet with the pastor to complete a pre-marriage investigation. They will also complete a FOCCUS inventory. That inventory will provide the basis for several preparation meetings with the pastor to review their responses to the FOCCUS inventory. In addition, local couples must participate in the Marriage Preparation Program conducted by the Diocese of Fall River. To register for a session, please go to the Office of Faith Formation website <http://www.fallriverfaithformation.org/marriage/schedule-of-programs.html>.
7. Couples who live at a distance from Holy Redeemer Parish should plan to conduct their marriage preparation in their home parish. Most parishes have preparation practices similar to Holy Redeemer, but please contact those responsible for marriage preparation in your home parish as soon as possible. Holy Redeemer Parish must have your complete wedding file before the rehearsal.
8. Individuals preparing for marriage will need to acquire a sacramental record of their Baptism. When contacting the parish of your Baptism, advise them you need a "long-form" certificate as part of your marriage preparation. For Catholics, a copy of their

Baptismal record must have a date no earlier than six months before their planned marriage date. For Catholics, the certificate should include a notation of when and where you received the Sacrament of Confirmation. Your Confirmation record is usually included in the Baptismal Register of the parish where you received Baptism, even if your Confirmation took place in another parish. If your baptismal parish does not have your Confirmation notation, you will need to contact the parish where you were confirmed to send you a certificate of your Confirmation. Baptized Non-Catholics are also required to furnish a copy of your baptismal certificate for the marriage file. Their Baptismal Certificate does not need to be a new copy.

9. Those Baptized at a US Military base chapel obtain a certificate by filling out a request form on the Archdiocese for Military Services, USA, website www.milarch.org. The form can be filled out online or downloaded and sent to:

Archdiocese for Military Services, USA
Office of Sacramental Records
PO Box 4469
Washington, DC 20017-4469

When you receive your certificate, it will include a donation envelope, and please be generous.

Making Arrangements for Your Wedding

Selecting a Date and Time for Your Ceremony:

Most often, weddings are scheduled at Holy Redeemer on Saturdays between 10 AM and 2 PM. Weekday weddings, i.e., Friday afternoons, can also be planned for between 3-5 PM. Unfortunately, it is not possible to schedule a Sunday wedding. When you establish a wedding date and time with the parish office, a \$100 non-refundable deposit should be sent to the parish to confirm the reservation. This deposit applies towards your church offering.

Holy Redeemer is a popular site for weddings. Unfortunately, the church can't celebrate more than one wedding per weekend. In fairness to other couples, we must ensure your commitment to your choice to be married at Holy Redeemer.

Offering to the Church:

The Church does not charge a Catholic to receive a sacrament. However, it is customary to make an offering to the parish. This offering expresses the couple's gratitude to God for the gifts of grace that come through the sacrament. The offering should be proportionate to the couple's ability to pay. Commonly couples make an offering of \$1000-1,200. Checks for the church offering should be made payable to "Holy Redeemer Catholic Church." When prayerfully considering the amount of your offering, please keep in mind the facilities fee you are paying for your reception location. Naturally, any parishioner for whom the offering would constitute a

financial hardship should make that known to the pastor. If you wish to make a separate offering to the celebrant of your wedding, a check should be made out to him personally. In addition, a gratuity of \$30 should be offered to each of the two altar servers. Payments are made to the parish wedding coordinator no later than the time of your rehearsal.

Visiting Priests and Ministers:

Couples are welcome to invite priests who are family members or friends to celebrate their wedding. However, visiting clergy should be reminded of some of the requirements they need to follow to celebrate a wedding at Holy Redeemer.

- They must request in writing delegation from the pastor of Holy Redeemer to perform the wedding ceremony.
- A visiting priest who is not a priest of the Diocese of Fall River must submit a copy of his priestly faculties from his bishop or religious superior and a letter of suitability for ministry. These letters must be sent to the Chancery Office well in advance of the date of the wedding.
- If the guest priest celebrant is not a Massachusetts resident, he must request permission to perform the wedding from the Secretary of the Commonwealth. A letter requesting legal authorization should be sent to:

Secretary of the Commonwealth
Commissions Section Room 1719
One Ashburton Place
Boston, MA 02108

Send a request letter to the Secretary of State well in advance of the wedding date. A copy of the Secretary of State's letter of permission goes to the Pastor of Holy Redeemer before delegation to the priest is given.

- If one member of the marriage couple is a non-Catholic and would like to invite clergy of their denomination to be an ecumenical presence at the wedding, they are welcome. However, non-Catholic clergy are not eligible to join in receiving the consent of the couple or witness the exchange of vows. In addition, only the Catholic clergy are eligible to witness the marriage.
- Visiting clergy must respect the wedding customs and norms of Holy Redeemer Parish and the Diocese of Fall River.

Music:

Appropriate reverential music is an integral part of your wedding ceremony. Our parish Music Director is available to help you select music. You should contact them as soon as possible after setting a date for your wedding with the parish. Call them at the parish office (508)-945-0677. The Music Director is also available to advise couples on the selection of a vocalist or other accompanists. Please remember the sanctuary of Holy Redeemer Church is small and cannot accommodate more than one or two additional musicians. If you select musicians other than

those provided by the parish, they need to be knowledgeable about the role of musicians in the liturgy of the Catholic Church. It would be best to discuss their participation in the liturgy with the Music Director before you commit to hiring outside musicians. Arrangements for the payment of musicians are conducted between the couple and the individual musicians. The parish is not responsible for this service.

Flowers and Decorations:

The sanctuary of Holy Redeemer accommodates two matching arrangements on either side of the Tabernacle against the back wall. Arrangements cannot be placed on or next to the altar. Wedding flowers are considered part of your offering to the church. Therefore, they remain in the church after the wedding. There is no requirement for flowers at a wedding.

Some brides prefer a runner over the center aisle. The center aisle of Holy Redeemer Church is 84 feet long. The church does not provide runners. Typically, your florist provides them. If you use a runner, it must be put into place immediately before the bridal party walks down the aisle. It is the responsibility of the bridal couple to arrange for its removal after the ceremony.

You may decorate the ends of the church pews with flowers or bows provided by your florist. Please remember attaching such decorations with tacks or tape is prohibited. Special devices that will not damage the pews are available from your florist.

Diocese of Fall River insurance regulations prohibits anyone who is not an employee of the parish from leaving the ground to hang any decoration.

Photography and Videotaping:

Still photos and video photographers are allowed during the ceremony. However, photo tripods are not to be set up in the sanctuary. Photographers or videographers are not to enter the sanctuary during the ceremony. They are not to impede the progress of the ceremony under any circumstances. Photographers and videographers should also consult the parish Wedding Coordinator before the ceremony as to any limitations the priest may place on them. The church has a Livestream camera for the use of the bridal party.

Unity Candles:

Some couples include the lighting of a Unity Candle as part of their ceremony. This candle is not required and is not a part of the official Catholic marriage liturgy. However, a couple desiring to include it in their ceremony can place it on the altar. The most appropriate time for the lighting of the candle is immediately after the couple has exchanged their vows. Please advise the parish Marriage Coordinator and the celebrant that you would like the candle to be part of your ceremony.

The couple provides the Unity Candle. The parish does not possess a candle stand. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the couple to provide one if they wish. The candle can also be placed on a simple plate.

Receiving Lines:

Since another parish event may follow immediately after your wedding, couples should not plan to conduct a receiving line at church after their ceremony. Your reception venue is a more conducive place for your receiving line. There you will be less rushed and able to enjoy the company of your guests.

The throwing of rice, confetti, or flower petals is not allowed in or on the church's grounds.

Appropriate and Modesty of Dress:

Since your wedding is being celebrated in church, please remember modesty when choosing wedding gowns and attendant's apparel. Brides and their female attendants should have their shoulders covered while in church. Appropriate modesty is accomplished by covering shoulders with a shawl or shrug. In addition, Grooms and ushers should not wear any apparel that would cause a distraction from the solemnity of the occasion.

Massachusetts Marriage Licenses:

Couples wishing to be married at Holy Redeemer must possess a valid Massachusetts Marriage License, which is obtainable from any Massachusetts city or town clerk's office. It is valid for a marriage taking place in any Massachusetts city or town. The license is valid for sixty days from the date of issue. There is a three-day waiting period between the application for a marriage license and its date of issue.

Use of Very Young Wedding Attendants:

The participation of very young children as ringbearers, flower girls, or junior attendants is strongly discouraged. Children below the age of seven or eight find it very difficult to carry out their responsibilities. Often they are a distraction from the ceremony.

Arranging the Wedding Rehearsal:

Parish Wedding Coordinator Linda Hurley schedules all wedding rehearsals. Her telephone number is 508-737-5501, and her email address is SS3@comcast.net. Please discuss with her any other details of your wedding. Rehearsals are usually conducted the day before the wedding ceremony. However, they can be arranged at a mutually convenient time for the wedding party and the parish Wedding Coordinator. All members of the wedding party, parents of the couple, attendants for the bride and groom, scripture readers, presenters of the gifts, and any other people who will be playing a role in your ceremony should plan to attend the rehearsal. Please be prompt for the rehearsal as another rehearsal or parish event may be scheduled for after your rehearsal.

If you have hired a personal Wedding Coordinator, please remind them they don't need to attend the church wedding rehearsal. If they wish to attend, they are welcome but remind them they are to defer to the parish Wedding Coordinator in all things relating to the church ceremony.

Alcohol Policy:

Alcohol is strictly forbidden from church property either at the rehearsal or wedding ceremony. If the groom or bride appears impaired by any drug or alcoholic beverage on the wedding day, the celebrant of the wedding must assume they cannot consent to their marriage vows, and the wedding ceremony will be canceled.

Special Concerns:

Please alert the parish Wedding Coordinator of any special health, personal, or emotional concerns that might involve any wedding party member. We want to be prepared to address such issues with compassion.

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Wedding Planning Check List

- _____ Reserve date for the marriage ceremony with Holy Redeemer Parish and arrange to meet with the parish priest.
- _____ If you are not a Holy Redeemer parishioner, call your local parish to make an appointment to begin marriage preparation in your home parish.
- _____ Contact Holy Redeemer Director of Music to secure their services.
- _____ Contact Holy Redeemer Wedding Coordinator to plan wedding ceremony.
- _____ Procure certificates of baptism and confirmation for Catholic parties. Must be dated within six months of your wedding date.
- _____ Send Church offering to Holy Redeemer.
- _____ Obtain Massachusetts Marriage License.
- _____ Make final appointment with the Holy Redeemer parish priest to review prayer selections and choice of scripture readings.
- _____ Enroll in the parish you plan to attend after your marriage.
Since you will be a new family after your wedding, you are responsible for registering in your new parish community. As a Christian family, you are living members of the Body of Christ. You are to share your gifts and expend the energy for the Church's growth and its continued sanctification.

Holy Redeemer Parish Wedding Coordinator Checklist

Please forward this completed checklist to Linda Hurley, Holy Redeemer Church Marriage Coordinator, by either mail (57 Highland Avenue Chatham, MA 02633) or email (SSS3@comcast.net) no later than one week before your marriage ceremony.

- Bride's email and mailing address
- Groom's email and mailing address
- Name and contact information for hired service providers
 - Florist
 - Photographer
 - Limousine and Shuttle Company
 - Musicians
 - Wedding Coordinator
- Form listing your selections of Wedding Mass prayers, scripture readings and music selections.

Do you have an out of state priest as you celebrant? Has he submitted the following paperwork?

- Letter of Permission from the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth.
- Letter requesting permission from the pastor of Holy Redeemer Church
- Letter of Suitability for Ministry from his bishop or Religious Superior.

Please bring these items with you to your wedding rehearsal.

- Massachusetts Wedding License
- Ceremony Program if you are distributing one
- Check for donation to the church
- Altar Server stipend
- Inform Parish Wedding Coordinator who will bring rings to the wedding ceremony.