

ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
14711 RANCH ROAD 12
WIMBERLEY, TEXAS 78666
512/847-9181

GUIDELINES FOR MARRIAGE LITURGIES

Welcome to St. Mary Catholic Church. We are happy to assist you in your preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. Your wedding is meant to be a joyful and meaningful celebration, one that you will long remember. We offer these guidelines and instructions to help and support you, not only in getting ready for the celebration of your vows but also for a life-long commitment to God, the Church, and to each other. Share these guidelines with your future spouse and together begin your life journey.

Your initial contact at St. Mary Catholic Church to start your marriage preparation is:
Brenda Rodriguez, Sacrament Coordinator, at (512) 847-9181 ext. 21, email:
brodriguez@smwimberley.org

MARRIAGE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

- ❖ To be married in the Catholic Church one of you must be a baptized Catholic. For couples in which one is not Catholic a dispensation is needed for a mixed marriage. This will be explained to you at your initial interview with the Priest assigned for your marriage preparation. In order to receive this dispensation, the Catholic member of the couple must sign a statement that he/she intends to continue practicing the Catholic faith and to have children baptized and raised Catholic.
- ❖ If one or both of you have been married before and the spouse of any previous marriage is still living, you must have an annulment by the Catholic Church (Civil, Catholic, Protestant). This applies to both Catholics and non-Catholics. In many cases this slows down the marriage preparation process since we cannot schedule a wedding until any needed annulments have been received. If you have been married before, without exception, you must immediately bring that to the attention of the assigned Pastor to determine, not if an annulment is needed, but what sort of annulment is needed.
- ❖ The Catholic Church requires anyone preparing for the sacrament of matrimony to be well disposed and prepared. These guidelines explain how you can prepare yourself and how we will support you in this process.

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, Love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

1 Corinthians 13: 3-8

GENERAL INFORMATION

- ❖ **WEDDING TIMES** – Weddings at St. Mary are celebrated on Saturdays at 11:00 AM or 2:00 PM. No more than TWO weddings are scheduled on a given Saturday.
- ❖ **PUNCTUALITY** – Please make all arrangements for the ceremony so that the wedding can begin promptly. Couples who arrive late or fail to vacate the premises after the 30-minute photo session will forfeit their \$250 deposit.
- ❖ **REHEARSALS** – Rehearsals are normally not required. If the couple would like to schedule, we will make the Friday evening available. (other options may be available through coordination, with the office, priest or deacon).
- ❖ **LENT** – Weddings are discouraged during Lent because of the penitential spirit that characterizes Lent. The art and environment in the church reflect this liturgical season: solemn and bare. No flowers are permitted in the sanctuary during Lent.
- ❖ **COMMUNICATION** – All communication and questions for your marriage preparation and wedding liturgy are to be made by you, the couple getting married.
- ❖ **FEES** – *Parishioners* wishing to be married are asked to make a contribution of \$800. This amount helps defray the cost of church expenses, primarily upkeep and maintenance of the building. *Non-parishioners* are asked to make a \$1500 contribution to the church. A \$250 deposit must be paid when the date of the ceremony is booked. The remainder of the balance must be paid at least thirty (30) days prior to the ceremony. The deposit will be forfeited if the wedding is cancelled less than three (3) months before the ceremony. Failure to follow these guidelines will also result in loss of the \$250 deposit. The \$250 deposit will be returned upon request only after the ceremony, provided all guidelines have been followed.
- ❖ **MUSIC** – Preparation for music at the church needs to be arranged by you directly. If you wish, you may contact one of the following St. Mary parish music ministers:
 - Maren Hofstad (512) 353-1361, marenroe49@yahoo.com
 - Carol Hofstad
 - Krista Aguilar (512) 655-4012, aguilar.krista@gmail.com
 - George Mercado (512) 680-2230, gmercado@yahoo.com

Stipends for the St. Mary music ministers are separate and are paid directly to them. *Guest music ministers* are welcome; however, music selected must be in accordance with liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.

- ❖ **MODESTY** – Because of the dignity of the sacrament of marriage and the reverence with which we observe the liturgy of the Catholic Church, the bride and her attendants are asked to dress accordingly, *with modesty*, and *refrain from wearing plunging necklines and sleeveless or strapless dresses for the wedding as well as for the rehearsal*. A shawl may be used during the marriage liturgy.
- ❖ **PROFESSIONAL WEDDING PLANNERS** - If you hire a professional wedding planner, please make sure that that planner understands that he/she has no role in the rehearsal or the actual wedding. The marriage ceremony is under the guidance of the presiding priest or deacon.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION INFORMATION

NINE MONTHS TO ONE YEAR AHEAD:

- ❖ Contact the parish at least nine months prior to your preferred wedding date for information and guidelines for marriage liturgies at St. Mary Catholic Church. They will obtain basic information from you (i.e., whether you are registered at our parish, bride and groom's names, religion, contact phone numbers, and information on any prior marriages).
 - Catholic's must obtain a recent copy of their baptismal certificate issued within the last six (6) months. They are to ask the church of baptism to include *all notations* on the certificate. Being confirmed is not a requirement but is encouraged. Father will help find adult confirmation classes, if needed. *Non-Catholics* are simply asked to bring information regarding their baptism: name and address of the non-Catholic church *where* she or he was baptized and the *date* of that baptism.
 - If either party were married before, the assistant may request that you meet with Pastor to discuss the previous marriage. The following documents may be needed regarding prior marriages: copies of the marriage license, marriage certificate, final divorce decree and/or Catholic Nullity decree.
- ❖ The Catholic Church requires anyone preparing for the sacrament of matrimony to be well disposed and prepared, because marriage is a permanent state in life. The following are offered to aid in this preparation:
 - An initial meeting with the assigned priest for St. Mary marriage preparation (see above);
 - Attendance of an approved marriage preparation program. The following program is available:
 - **Journey into Marriage:** email: journeyintomarrriage@austin.rr.com *Journey into Marriage* is a two day seminar offered Friday evening and on a Saturday and includes the FOCCUS assessment.
 - **Prepare and Enrich:** Morag Sell, located at St. Mary's, msell@smwimberley.org (512)847-9181. Does not include Natural Family Planning.
 - **Natural Family Planning:** the following organizations are approved to offer education in Natural Family Planning in English and Spanish to Catholic couples in the Diocese of Austin:
 - *Billings Ovulation Method* – www.boma-usa.org
 - *Couple to Couple League* (Sympto-Thermal Method) – www.ccli.org
 - *Creighton FertilityCare System* austinfcc@gmail.com

ONE MONTH AHEAD:

- ❖ A *civil marriage license* must be obtained **30 days prior to the wedding**. The priest or deacon cannot witness a marriage without the marriage license document.
- ❖ Make an appointment with the priest or deacon who will be officiating at your marriage to discuss the liturgy. Bring your selections.

ONE DAY AHEAD:

- ❖ On the day of the rehearsal, please ask everyone to arrive at the church at least 15 minutes ahead. Everyone who is to participate in the liturgy should be present at the rehearsal in order to avoid confusion at the wedding. Food, drinks (other than water), and tobacco products are not allowed in church at any time. **Absolutely no alcohol—including wine, champagne, beer is permitted in the church, or anywhere else on St. Mary grounds before, during, or after the rehearsal and wedding.**
- ❖ The church is the house of God and a place of prayer. Due respect must be shown by all in your wedding party. Everyone involved should also behave appropriately while in the church. Please be attentive in implementing good behavior among those you invited to be a part of your marriage liturgy.
- ❖ At the rehearsal, please give your marriage license to the priest or deacon witnessing your vows if you have not already done so.

WEDDING DAY:

- ❖ Remember that the wedding will begin on time. Please emphasize to members of your wedding party to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the time of the celebration. Failure to arrive on time results in the loss of your \$250 deposit. Only one hour is allowed for the ceremony, in addition to 30 minutes after the ceremony for taking photographs. Arriving late will force the priest or deacon to shorten the ceremony.
- ❖ No food or drinks (other than water) are to be brought into the church.

BUILDING INFORMATION

- ❖ The church provides a bridal room off the vestibule (on the left side when entering the church) for the bride and her attendants. It is the responsibility of the bride to appoint someone to clean the room and the bathroom immediately following the wedding.
- ❖ St. Mary is not responsible for items left in the church or the bridal room.
- ❖ Dressing facilities are not available for the groom and groomsmen.
- ❖ The parish hall may be reserved if it is available ***only after*** the date of the wedding is set with the Sacrament Coordinator, after these Guidelines have been received and acknowledged, and after the deposit is made. This prevents booking conflicts. There is a rental fee and a clean-up fee for the parish hall.

GUIDELINES FOR FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

- ❖ No flowers or arches are to obstruct the space around the altar or tabernacle. Flowers and other decorations should also not block the music minister's view of the altar.
- ❖ For safety reasons, aisle runners are not permitted.
- ❖ Flower petals, rice, birdseed, bubbles, confetti, smoke producing devices, Silly String, or sparklers cannot be used ***inside or outside of the church*** **There are no exceptions.** ***Failure to comply will result in the loss of your \$250 deposit in addition to incurring the cost of any repairs as the result of damage.***
- ❖ No tape or tacks may be used to attach bows or flowers to the pews. They may be attached with ribbon, string, or plastic clips that fit over the pews. Please assign someone to remove any pew bows and any wedding decorations, trash, programs, etc., immediately after the ceremony.

GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

- ❖ All photographers (still and video) must check with the priest or deacon prior to the rehearsal. We want the couple to have a good remembrance of their ceremony; however, the photographers and videographers should be discreet and not distract in any way during the ceremony.
- ❖ Photographers are not to interfere with the liturgy or the exchange of vows by *excessive* movement or flashes.
- ❖ Photographers and videographers are not allowed in the sanctuary at any time during the liturgy and are to remain at a respectful distance so as not to distract the congregation.
- ❖ Video cameras are allowed under the conditions stated above. All video cameras must remain stationary.
- ❖ No extra camera lights may be used during the liturgy. Flash lighting is permitted *only* at special moments, such as vows, rings, communion of the couple, or Hispanic customs (arras, lasso, etc.).
- ❖ You and the photographer are asked to respect the sacredness of the church while giving instructions and taking pictures of the wedding party.
- ❖ Photographs are normally permitted *only after* the ceremony.
- ❖ Any photographs following the wedding should take no longer than thirty (30) minutes. The sacristans will inform the photographer when she or he has exceeded the limit. *It is expected that the photography session will immediately end.* Failure to comply results in loss of the \$250 deposit. It is best that the photographer be given a list *before* the photo session so that she or he will know what photographs need to be taken (parents, grandparents, etc.). This will help assure that they complete their work in the allotted 30-minute timeframe.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ❖ Attached to these guidelines is an acknowledgement stating that the bride and groom have received and read a copy of these guidelines and that they agree to abide by the guidelines. It also serves as a receipt for the fee of using the church. This acknowledgement must be signed and given to the parish assistant, prior to reserving the church.
- ❖ Priests or deacons from other parishes who preside a wedding at St. Mary Church are asked to remain in the church until the wedding party has left.
- ❖ The couple assumes financial responsibility for:
 - Repairs of any damage to the church, church property, or other facilities at St. Mary Church at the rehearsal or before, during, and after the wedding due to negligence or vandalism associated with the wedding; and
 - Replacing any items taken from the church.
- ❖ If your wedding time is Saturday at 2:00 PM, everyone must be out of the church by 3:30 PM to allow for cleaning prior to confessions, which are scheduled to begin at 4:00 PM.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF
GUIDELINES FOR WEDDING LITURGIES
ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH**

I (we) have received and read a copy of the Guidelines for Marriage Liturgies at St. Mary Church. By signature below, I (we) agree to abide by these Guidelines and accept responsibility for damages, as stipulated in the Guidelines, done during---

our rehearsal scheduled for:

(day/date)

and/or wedding scheduled for:

(day/date)

Bride's Signature/Date

Groom's Signature/Date

DEPOSIT

(required when booking the church)

Receipt of \$250 deposit received on _____ by _____

8 Cash 8 Check No. _____

REMAINING BALANCE

[remaining fee required at least thirty (30) days prior to the ceremony]

8 PARISHIONER

Receipt of \$800 received on _____ by _____

8 Cash 8 Check No. _____

Parish ID# _____ Parishioner status verified by _____

8 NON-PARISHIONER

Receipt of \$1500 received on _____ by _____

8 Cash 8 Check No. _____

Name of Couple _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone No. _____

