

Important Notes

The Church is air-conditioned and comfortably seats about 300 people. There are 16 pews on each side to the center aisle. Runners are not permitted in our Church.

Note: For safety and insurance purposes, rice, confetti, balloons, bubbles, bells, rose petals, etc., may not be thrown or used either in the Church or on the Church grounds. A clean-up fee (amount specified on card) will be charged if any of these items are used.

Offerings

The offering for the use of the Parish Church is to be forwarded to the Wedding Coordinator with the *Marriage Registration Form*.

The Church offering is used to cover the cost of the upkeep of our Churches, for maintenance personnel, heat, air conditioning, electricity and lights. The Church fee is displayed on the card placed on the pocket of the wedding folder.

An honorarium may be offered to the priest, deacon and sacristan at your discretion.

If there is an altar server assisting at your wedding Mass, we ask that you give the altar server a small monetary donation at the time of the wedding.

All music fees must be paid to least three weeks before the wedding date. These fees include the organist, vocalist and any other musicians requested.

For more information please contact our wedding coordinator.
732-449-5765 x134 weddings.stcatharine@gmail.com

The Parish Family of St. Catharine - St. Margaret Wedding Guidelines



“Love is patient, love is kind.”

Corinthians 13:4

Congratulations on your engagement!



MARRIAGE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Church sees marriage in one's own parish as the most proper arrangement. The bride, groom or their parents must be registered parishioners for at least one year before a request for marriage form can be submitted. Also, the Pastor should be notified approximately one year in advance of your requested wedding date.

If there has been a previous marriage, you **MUST** let us know when you first contact us, as the paperwork will be different and may be extensive.

Since the wedding celebration takes place within our faith community, we ask that you observe our local liturgical customs and practices. Our Pastor serves as the liturgist for the ceremony or Mass. Couples, their families and any visiting priest are expected to abide by all of our guidelines, policies and customs **without exception**.

Weddings can take place on Friday and on Saturday only.

Please call our **Wedding Coordinator at 732 449-5765, Ext. 134** or email **weddings.stcatharine@gmail.com** as the first step in arranging your wedding.

Photographers & Videographers

They should meet with the sacristan in the sacristy 30 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony to review guidelines for photography during the ceremony.

To protect the integrity of the ceremony and respect the Church, photographers and videographers may **NOT** use any extra lighting, floodlights or flashes while in the Church building.

Photographers are **not** allowed in the sanctuary or in any area in the Church that may block the view of the congregation, including the choir loft.

Flowers and Decorations

Flowers are the couple's responsibility with final approval by the Head Sacristan. If you plan to use bows on the pews, be aware that tape, adhesives and/or tacks are **not** permitted. Clamps, ribbons or rubber bands are a good substitute.

Only real flowers are to be used – arrangements should be of an appropriate size (not too large or tall) and not a hazard to the celebrant or the wedding party, please ensure movement around the altar table. The flower arrangements and candelabras that have been placed by the parish at great expense may **not** be moved.

The names of other brides marrying on the same day as you can be provided if you wish to share costs and, the flowers are left on the altar for the weekend.

If weddings are planned during the liturgical seasons of Advent or Lent, we ask that flowers must be limited due the somber tone of these seasons. During Easter or Christmas, flowers are not necessary because the Church is decorated with large seasonal displays.

The Ceremony

Eucharistic Liturgy (Nuptial Mass)

We strongly encourage that all marriages where both the bride and groom are practicing Catholics take place during a Nuptial Mass. The couple will plan this liturgy with the priest/deacon who is delegated to witness the wedding.

Non- Eucharistic Liturgy (Ceremony)

A marriage between a Catholic and a baptized person who is not a Catholic takes place during a Wedding Ceremony outside of Mass. However, if suitable and with the permission of the Bishop, the rite for celebrating marriage within Mass may be used. According to General Church law, Communion is not given to the Non-Catholic. (Rite of Marriage Introduction #8)

† A marriage between a Catholic and non-baptized person may only take place in a Non-Eucharistic liturgy (ceremony).

Delegation

If a relative or family friend will marry you, they must seek delegation from the pastor in writing for your file once your wedding has been approved. A letter from their Bishop or Superior is also required stating they are in good standing.

From This Day Forward



Before a wedding date can be confirmed please complete the following steps that can also be found on your "To do before I do" sheet.

- Return the enclosed **Request for Marriage Form** completed in full.
- Send in your deposit with your request form to tentatively reserve your date.
- Complete FOCCUS.
 - † This requirement includes two meetings with the counselor from Catholic Charities (Diocese of Trenton).

Until we have received confirmation of the above requirements your request for a date remains tentative.

The next steps are as follows: (also found on "To do before I do")

- Attend a Pre-Cana Session or an Engaged Encounter Weekend.
- Provide the necessary sacramental certificates for both the bride and groom from the Churches where these sacraments were received (please see documentation check sheet)
- Meet with a Parish priest/deacon for a pre-nuptial interview.
- Contact parish's Director of Music to arrange the musical selections for your ceremony or mass.



What is FOCCUS?

Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study

FOCCUS is a self-diagnostic instrument designed to help couples learn more about themselves and their unique relationship. It can be completed in 45 to 60 minutes and is given during regular business hours.

Your FOCCUS questionnaire is scanned and the results, which are confidential, are forward to Catholic Charities in Red Bank. A member of the Catholic Charities marriage preparation team will contact you to discuss the results. In most cases two appointments will suffice, however, if additional sessions are warranted, the counselor will discuss it with you.

There is a cost for two sessions payable to Catholic Charities. If this fee is a problem, a sliding scale, can be applied.

The purpose of FOCCUS is to facilitate open and honest communication between a couple preparing for marriage. It underscores the serious of the lifelong commitment you are about to make.

Please contact the wedding coordinator to set-up the FOCCUS appointment.

Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter?

To better prepare you for marriage, **Diocesan Office of Family Life** provides you the option of choosing a form of instruction best suited to your needs. This policy applies, **without exception**, to all couples preparing for marriage. The Diocesan telephone number to call is **(609) 406-7400, Ext, 5556**.

Pre-Cana should be arranged as soon as possible, but no later than six months before the wedding date. To obtain a list of churches that offer pre-cana sessions, call the Diocesan telephone number at **609-406-7400, ext. 5556** or visit **www.dioceseoftrenton.org/precana**.

The Pastor suggests an Engaged Encounter because it gives you a better chance to communicate with each other.

† Be sure to keep the ***Marriage in the Lord*** book you receive at your Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter because it is helpful in preparing you for your wedding.

The Rehearsal

The Wedding Coordinator sets the date and time of the rehearsal. The usual times for a rehearsal are: Thursdays or Fridays preceding the wedding day at 5:00 PM or at 6:00 PM.

All members of the wedding party are asked to be present and on time for the rehearsal. It is suggested that **ONLY members of the wedding party** attend the rehearsal.

The purpose of a rehearsal is to go over the ceremony thereby eliminating any potential problems or confusion. Family and friends can join after the rehearsal. No music will be allowed.

To be married in the State of New Jersey, a **license must be obtained** in the municipality where the woman resides, or in the municipality where the man resides if the woman is a non-resident of the state. If both reside out of state, they must make an application at the Spring Lake Municipal Office. There is a 3 day waiting period before the license can be issued. Both participants must apply, accompanied by two witnesses over the age of 18. The license is valid for 30 days after issued. **The license must be brought to the rehearsal.**

Please see the bottom of the documentation checklist for other necessary items to bring to the rehearsal.

Music

Our Parish Music Ministry Team offers a wonderful program of organists, cantors and instrumentalists that are qualified musicians and are familiar with and follow the guidelines of the Catholic Church for weddings.

We offer Wedding Music CDs to assist you in planning the music for your wedding. These CDs include organ, flute, and trumpet presentations, as well as a number of cantors who demonstrate appropriate musical selections for our Wedding Masses and ceremonies.

It is very important for our wedding couples to learn and observe the various musical options available to them through our music department. The Wedding Coordinator will provide you with the Director of Music's contact information several months before your wedding date.