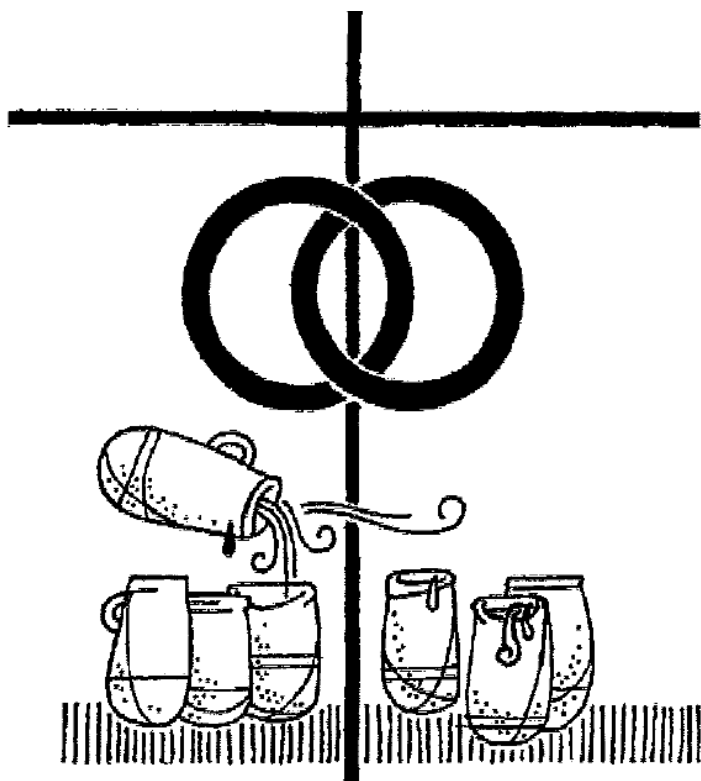


# **Guidelines for the Celebration of Marriage**



**San Martín de Porres  
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God who is love and who created man and woman for love has called them to love. By creating man and woman he called them to an intimate communion of life and of love in marriage: "So that they are no longer two, but one flesh" (*Matthew 19:6*). God said to them in blessing "Be fruitful and multiply" (*Genesis 1:28*). (Compendium of the Catechism, 337)

The sacrament of Matrimony establishes a perpetual and exclusive *bond* between the spouses. God himself seals the consent of the spouses. Therefore, a marriage which is ratified and consummated between baptized persons can never be dissolved. Furthermore, this sacrament bestows upon the spouses the grace necessary to attain holiness in their married life and to accept responsibly the gift of children and provide for their education. (Compendium, 346)

**I. Requirements before the Celebration of Marriage:**

- 1. Documentation:** Each person must present the following original or certified documentation
- a. Recently issued Baptismal Certificate (6 months or less)
  - b. Confirmation Certificate.
  - c. Certificate of First Holy Communion
  - d. Prenuptial Inquiry
  - e. Affidavits of Free Status (if person(s) is not known in the community)
  - f. If previously married outside the church with another person, in addition to sacramental records:
    - 2 Affidavits of non-validation
    - Certificate of Marriage
    - Divorce annulment or dissolution decree
  - g. License
    - The Marriage License must be brought to the priest three (3) weeks prior to the ceremony.
    - If the couple is already married civilly, bring certificate to priest

## **2. Wedding Location:**

Since Matrimony establishes spouses in a public state of life in the Church, its liturgical celebration is public, taking place in the presence of a priest... and other witnesses. (Compendium, 343)

The Weddings must take place in the parish of residence of either party. If neither of them resides within the geographical area of this parish, they must provide a letter of permission from one of their pastors.

## **3. Date of Wedding**

- a. The Diocese of Tucson requires couples to initiate arrangements for their wedding at least four (4) months prior to the planned date.

If deemed appropriate, the pastor may require more time for preparation. Please contact the parish at least six (6) months in advance.

- b. Wedding Masses are ordinarily scheduled Fridays at 6:00 pm, Saturdays at 12:00 noon and 2:00 pm.

Marriage celebrations may also take place during the Vigil Mass Saturdays at 5:00 pm or Sunday Masses at 8:00 am, 12:00 pm or 12:00 (Spanish)

All schedules must be approved by the pastor.

- c. Rehearsals must be scheduled when the wedding date is finalized.  
To schedule a rehearsal, please contact the parish office at (520) 625-1154.

All members of the wedding party will be expected for rehearsal.

#### **4. Clergy**

- a. The parish priest or a priest or deacon delegated by him will preside over the wedding ceremony.
- b. If the couple invites another priest or deacons to preside, he must be approved by the pastor prior to scheduling. He must contact the parish in writing informing of his disposition.

In cases when the family invites another priest, the family must make arrangements for traveling expenses, hospitality and stole fees for the invited clergy. If he is not from the Diocese of Tucson, he must be approved by the Bishop of Tucson through the Chancery office prior to scheduling.

#### **5. Preparation and Instruction prior to their Marriage**

- a. Attend Engage Encounter or Marriage Preparation Classes (approved by the Diocese of Tucson)

- b. Take the FOCCUS Inventory and review the results with the priest or deacon (donation payable to FOCCUS, Inc.).
- c. Attend an approved course of Natural Family Planning (NFP).
- d. Other requirements the priest may deem appropriate.

## **6. Proper Attire**

- a. In regards to attire, all members of Christ's faithful are welcomed to dress modestly inside the Church.
  - Members of the Wedding Party and Guests are asked to be garbed in reverence, propriety and decency as befitting the House of God.
  - In order to keep a respectful atmosphere in the church those NOT dressed in a modest fashion might not be admitted inside the building or escorted outside.
- b. The following standards not only call for the covering of intimate areas of the body, but also obscuring their shape, by wearing non form-fitting clothing.

For men and women: shirts or dresses without sleeves are not permitted. The back, chest and torso must be fully covered.
- c. Men may wear a tie or a jacket depending on the weather or degree of the celebration. They are encouraged to wear a belt and casual or dress shoes. Laymen do not wear hats inside a church.

Men may NOT wear shorts, tank tops, sandals or pants that hang below the waist or too loose.

- d. The Bride, bridesmaids and all women guests are invited to wear conservative and modest full dresses, skirts, pants or caprice with shirts that fully cover the shoulder areas.
- Women's skirts must reach to the knees or below. Women may wear mantillas, veils or hats if they choose
  - Women may NOT wear shorts, spaghetti straps or strapless.

If you must ask, don't wear it!

## **II. The Celebration of Marriage**

### **7. Wedding Mass or Outside of Mass**

- a. It is preferred that all weddings take place within Mass.
- b. For convalidations and/or co-habiting couples the pastor may recommend a simpler ceremony outside of Mass.
- Convalidations are ceremonies for couples who have contracted civil marriage through the court or a justice of the peace outside the Church.
  - Cohabiting couples are those who "live together" without any legal or religious bond, or in so called "common-law" union.

- c. Only those Rites and Ceremonies approved by the Roman Catholic Church are to be used.
  - The couple may not write their own vows or change the words of consent in any shape or form.
  - The couple should seek the priest's guidance on those options approved by the Rite of Marriage in the Catholic Church.
  - The Unity Candle is not allowed.
  - Besides the exchange of rings, the couple may bring those items mentioned below (n.10).
- d. The couple may choose the readings from the approved Lectionary (except for Sunday Masses).

## **8. The Witnesses and guests**

- a. 2 Witnesses are required (18 years or age or older).
- b. Witnesses can be the couple's godparents, a Best Man and a Maid of Honor, or any two persons of their choice.
- c. The number of Bridesmaids and Ushers should be kept to a reasonable level.

## **9. Preparation:**

- a. Music: The couple is responsible for music arrangements. All musicians must be approved by the parish prior to the wedding. For any questions about music, please contact the parish office at 520-625-1154.
- b. Photography and/or Videotaping: The couple is responsible to contact a photographer or



video professional. If they have not been previously approved, they must contact the priest or sacristan prior to the ceremony for instructions. After the ceremony, the church may be made available for posing pictures.

- c. Altar Servers: Only Altar Servers from San Martin de Porres
- d. are permitted to serve the altar during the Wedding Mass. Only the pastor may authorize a server from another parish if they fulfill the requirements for serving at the altar.
- e. Flowers. Only natural flowers are permitted in the Sanctuary. There is no limit on the number of arrangements. The church may change the location if deemed appropriate. All flowers placed on the Sanctuary must remain there as an offering (They cannot be removed after the ceremony).
- f. Decorations for Seats. Flowers or ribbons may be affixed to the seats. But no tape or wire should be used. Decorations must not obstruct access to the aisles.
- g. At any time, it is not allowed to throw rice, flower petals, bubbles (or anything else). Aisle Runners or added carpeting and arches are not permitted.

## **10. Procession:**

- a. **Option 1:** The Priest, accompanied by servers, may greet the Bride and Groom at the door of the church. The priest may bless them, their families and guests then lead in procession to the altar.

The Order of Procession

- Servers carrying Cross, Candles, and incense (depending on the number of servers available)
- Priest / deacon
- Parents (in couples)
- Godparents (if present), witnesses or Best Man & Maid of Honor (if no Godparents)
- Bridesmaids and Ushers (optional)
  - a. Flower Children (optional)
  - b. Bouquet for Virgin Mary (Optional)
  - c. 20 Decades Rosary, Large White Veil or Lazo (optional)
  - d. Bible (optional)
  - e. Arras/coins (optional)
  - f. Rings
- Bride and Groom

**b. Option 2:** The Bride and Groom Process to the Altar in the same order as above (without priest or servers). Once they take their places, the priest enters the Sanctuary from the sacristy and greets them at the place prepared for them.

- If option 2 is selected, the groom may “wait” for the bride at the first row of seats accompanied by his godfather or Best Man. If so, the bride may be accompanied by her godparents, parents or one person of her choice.

## **11. Seating:**

- a. The Bride and Groom will be seated in a designated place. Their seats and kneelers may be decorated.
  - The Godparents, witnesses or Best Man & Maid of Honor may seat beside them.
- b. The first row of seats on both sides will be reserved for the parents of the bride and groom and their respective families and friends.
- c. The second row of seats will be reserved for bridesmaids and ushers.
- d. Flower children may sit with their caretakers.

## **12. The Exchange of Vows**

- a. The couple will exchange vows in front of the Main Altar (either facing the sanctuary or the congregation).
- b. Ring, Arras/coins and Bible will be exchanged or presented after the exchange of vows.
- c. After this, the couple present the offerings and they will kneel before the Main Altar.

## **13. The Nuptial Blessing**

- a. After the "Our Father" the couple will kneel before the Main Altar. The Rosary or Lazo will be blessed and placed on them. If instead of rosary or lazo, the couple chooses to use a veil, this one is placed over both of their shoulders (if the bride is already

wearing a veil, and it is long enough, that veil will be pulled to cover the groom's shoulders). The priest will then impart the Nuptial Blessing.

- b. After the Sign of Peace the Rosary, Veil or Lazo will be removed.

#### **14. Holy Communion:**

The Church recommends that all Catholics receive Holy Communion during the ceremony. There is no better gift for the couple, than to receive Communion in their wedding.

- a. However, no one should receive communion if they are in grave sin without prior going to confession.
  - In order to receive Communion worthily, the bride and groom, the witnesses, bridesmaids and ushers and all the Catholic guests are expected to seek the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) prior to the ceremony.
  - Those who are not Catholic cannot receive Holy Communion or go to Confession.
  - Review schedule for confessions in the church, or make an appointment with a priest.
- b. The spouses receive communion under both kinds from the priest. It is preferred that they kneel when receiving Communion.

### **III. Donations and Fees**

- 1) Use of Church and Stole Fee\*\*
  - a) Wedding/Convalidation Mass for stewardship member \$350
  - b) Wedding Mass/Convalidation for non stewardship member \$500
  - c) Marriage/Convalidation during a Sunday Mass \$250
    - A non-refundable deposit of \$100 is required to save the date.
    - Donations may be given in installments and must be paid in full 30 days prior to event.
    - The pastor may request another amount if he deems it necessary.
  
- 2) Hall and Kitchen Rental for Wedding Party
  - a) Hall Rental donation for wedding parties is \$50 /hour (4 hours minimum rental, refer to hall rental application.
  - b) The kitchen may be rented separate if a caterer or licensed persons will be using it. Kitchen equipment is not available without renting the kitchen.
  - c) See Hall Rental Agreement for More Information
  
- 3) Liability Insurance (When alcohol is served)