



Preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage



WHEN IT COMES TO LIFE, THE CRITICAL THING

IS WHETHER YOU CAN TAKE THINGS FOR

GRANTED OR TAKE THEM WITH GRATITUDE.

— G. K. Chesterton

PHOTO BY KATIE RUPHER

How to Use this Book

Congratulations on getting engaged and starting the process of preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage! St. Francis Xavier Parish is excited to serve you and assist you at every step of the journey. Please thoroughly look over each page and the note any questions you might have. An overall checklist has been provided for you on the following page. Throughout the book you will see a broken down version of this checklist that have been provided on with the correlating steps.

We are praying for you and encourage you to do the same as we begin this preparation.

Checklist

- _____ Contact Parish Office to book the wedding and pay church fee (if applicable, see page 9).
- _____ Attend Engaged Encounter/God's Plan for a Joy Filled Marriage
- _____ Attend Natural Family Planning classes
- _____ Watch *Beloved* series and answer questions
- _____ First session with Parish Priest (Better Together)
- _____ Second session with Parish Priest
- _____ Third session with Parish Priest
- _____ Fourth session with Parish Priest (Finish Pre-Nuptial form and discuss details of wedding day plans).
- _____ Meet with the Liturgist to plan music
- _____ Payment of Parish Personnel fees (organist, servers, cantor) can be made at this time, or night of rehearsal.
- _____ Finalize wedding day plans one month before the wedding.

STEP 1

Initial Meeting with the Priest

Contact Parish of Baptism immediately and ask for a Baptismal Certificate **"with Notations"**

Start watching the *Beloved: Mystery + Meaning of Marriage* series on formed.org

Code: **V3CZ6Q**

*Begin filling out worksheets (see pg. 18)

Sign up for NFP classes in Manhattan or Salina (see pg. 6)

If you have been married before please let the priest know as soon as possible, as this could delay the marriage preparation process

Sign up for Engaged Encounter as soon as possible:

www.salinacee.com (see pg. 7)

There are many different cultural rituals that are practiced at the time of a wedding (reception, cake, throwing bouquet, first dance, etc). But at the center of all these rituals is the sacrament itself, the exchange of consent or promises between the bride and groom. The ritual promise to be faithful to one another even as God is faithful to us is on a different or importance than all the other rituals which take place on the wedding day. These promises you make to one another affect your relationship with God and your promises affect the whole community of Christian believers (the Church) which includes our local parish.

The priest will introduce you to the sacramental preparation for marriage and request from you some general biographical information. There will also be a few basic questions to assure there is nothing preventing you from getting married in the Catholic Church, such as a previous unresolved marriage, etc.



Better Together Inventory

STEP 2

Everyone dreams of having a dynamic marriage. Great communication is essential to having a great marriage. The Better Together Inventory is a questionnaire designed to spark incredible conversations between engaged couples.

- Better Together Inventory; Dynamic Catholic

marriageprep.dynamiccatholic.com

We hope this tool is the first step in a beautiful journey filled with a lifetime of great conversations.

- Take this inventory separately upon priest's request



STEP 3

Creighton Model Fertility Care System

NFP: Natural Family Planning ■

Sign up for NFP classes in Manhattan or Salina □

This natural approach of family planning can be used to both achieve and avoid pregnancy. This approach helps to preserve the health of a woman from harmful contraceptive drugs, devices or surgical procedures. It also promotes a shared responsibility in planning for children between husband and wife which in turn strengthens marriages. This system has a method of effectiveness of 99.5 percent when used properly. This manner of planning a family also conforms to the teachings of the Catholic Church and views children as gifts from God. In the marriage preparation process, the couple is responsible for making an appointment for one free introductory session.

Lori Harlan, FCP ■
lharlan@gmail.com
785-539-9694
Manhattan, KS

Maria Rapp, FCP ■
(785) 827-7779
back2000@aol.com
Salina, KS

There are Creighton Model FertilityCare Practitioners throughout the Salina Diocese. See contact information listed on the left.



Retreat Options

STEP 4

Engaged Encounter: This is a weekend retreat experience with other engaged couples. It is led by trained married couples and one priest. These weekends are sponsored by the Catholic Church and in our area they are conducted in Victoria, Kansas. The goal of this weekend is to build a foundation of communication for your future marital relationship.

- Engaged Encounters are in Victoria, KS
- 3 day retreat (Fri evening - Sun afternoon)
- Feb. 9-11, 2018
March 9-11, 2018
April 13-15, 2018
June 8-10, 2018

Sign up for Engaged Encounter as soon as possible:

www.salinacee.com

God's Plan for a Joy Filled Marriage Retreat: This one day retreat offers engaged couples a compelling vision of God's glorious plan for marriage, love, family and human sexuality. The God's Plans for a Joy Filled Marriage retreat includes personal testimony, video instruction, written materials and the opportunity for couples to privately reflect on the teachings being presented. All materials are based on John Paul II's revolutionary Theology of the Body. The retreat is led by trained lay people.

- 1 day retreat
- Feb. 24, 2018
April 28, 2018
(Concordia)

STEP 5

Planning of Wedding Ceremony

See Appendix for a list of recommended readings, songs, etc (pg. 13?) ■

The planning of the actual liturgy or ceremony is the final step and usually requires two sessions with the priest who will be actually presiding at the wedding. A workbook will be given to you which allows you to select the scripture readings, prayers, blessings, etc for the ceremony. A separate worksheet will also be completed which deals with the actual movements or actions associated with the ceremony. The planning stage is not done until the end of the marriage preparation process to assure there is less pressure during the time of discernment as a couple seriously contemplates the decision to enter into the sacrament of marriage. Some couples through this preparation process have decided to delay their marriage or at least wait until there is more certainty surrounding this important and significant decision.



Frequently Asked Questions

FAQ

What is the time for weddings?

2:00pm. The Church will be available to decorate Saturday morning by 10:30am, if there is not a funeral scheduled for that morning.

- A helpful guide to specifics here at St. Francis Xavier Parish

What about the marriage license?

It is the responsibility of the engaged couple to obtain a marriage license. Such a license is required by law before any priest, minister or judge. The couple may obtain it from the courthouse in the county in which they are residing.

Please bring the license the night of the rehearsal. We will secure all the necessary signatures on the license at the rehearsal. After the ceremony, the priest will sign the license; he will give you the copy for your records and mail the original to the courthouse.

- Bring the marriage license to the rehearsal dinner

Is there a charge or fee for the use of the church?

For members of St. Francis Xavier's Parish, there is no cost; but you make an offering as a way of expressing your thanks and appreciation. If you are **not** a member of the parish, there is a fee of \$250.00 for the use of the church.

FAQ

3 months out

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

How do we reserve the Knights of Columbus Hall?

Randy Testa ■
785-238-7020
or 785-556-1000
(Mon-Fri 9-5).

All questions concerning the rental or use of the Knights of Columbus Hall are to be directed to Randy Testa.

How much do we pay the musicians and the priest?

Anita Hernandez ■
785-210-5149

Please note that if music is requested that is totally unfamiliar, the organist's fee may be increased ■

The offering most couples give a priest in our area ranges between \$60-\$100 ■

You may have your own musicians or use the parish musician, Anita Hernandez. Either way, we ask that you contact Mrs. Hernandez to help coordinate the music and familiarize your musicians with our equipment. You will work out the fee with them (Mrs. Hernandez does not charge if you do not use her). The stipend for other musicians (i.e. the vocalist) is negotiated with them. Our local parish does not have a standard for the offering you give the priest.

What about videotaping the ceremony?

Families are permitted to video tape the wedding ceremony so long as the equipment remains stationary; in other words, no roaming the video around the sanctuary area or the aisles -- the focus should be on you entering the sacrament of matrimony. The priest can help you with this at the rehearsal or beforehand.

Frequently Asked Questions (cont.)

FAQ

Throughout the process

May we throw rice?

Nothing is allowed to be thrown upon leaving the Church. This is for insurance reasons and to make sure the Church is presnetable for evening Confessions and Mass. Many couples now participate in the tradition of the blowing of bubbles, or the use of bells, balloons, etc.

- The tossing of any materials on church premises is not permitted.

Where may we place the guest book?

The reception is a good time for your guests to sign the guest book and to present their gifts. This will allow for less congestion and rush in the small gathering area of our church before the wedding.

Will there be any decorations already in the church at the time of the wedding?

Before planning your decorations, you will need to contact Ellie Dillon. Please note that Christmas and Easter flowers and other decorations are seen to be part of the liturgical structure of the Church at these times. As we are sure you will want to plan your celebration within the context of the liturgical season, Mrs. Dillon will be glad to work with you in your planning.

- Ellie Dillon
785-238-7762



Veely

TRUE LOVE MAKES YOU MORE

OF WHO YOU ARE, NOT LESS.

— Mandy Hale

PHOTOGRAPH BY THE KITCHENESS

Appendix A



Music Suggestions

Below is a list of musical selections to help you plan your music for your wedding day. Please keep in mind that St. Francis Xavier only allows sacred and religious music during the Mass/Service. Secular music (From This Moment, Keeper of the Stars, I Cross My Heart, etc.) during the Mass/Service is not permitted. The use of congregational songs during the Presentation of gifts and Communion is strongly encouraged.

Prelude:

- I. From This Moment
2. In This Very Room (can also be used during Mass/Service)
3. I Cross My Heart
4. It's Your Love
5. He Has Chosen You For Me
6. The Prayer (Can be used during the Mass/Service)
7. The Rose
8. Wedding Song
9. Sunrise Sunset
10. Grow Old Along With Me
11. Wherever You Go - David Hass (Can be used during Mass/Service)

Entrance Procession (Alternative to Attendant & Brides March)

A hymn may also be used instead of the traditional bride maids and brides march for the processional. A secular “pop” song is not permissible. The so-called “traditional wedding marches” by Wagner and Mendelssohn are not to be used. Both are “theater” pieces which have nothing to do with the Sacred Liturgy. The “Bridal Chorus” from Wagner’s opera, *Lohengrin*, actually accompanies the couple to the bedroom, not the altar! Mendelssohn’s incidental music to Shakespeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* accompanies a farcical wedding (the play is a comedy). More importantly, they have been used to accompany “weddings” in countless movies, TV shows and game shows. The majority of images these pieces conjure in the minds of the congregation may have a lot to do with sentimentality but very little to do with worship.

Entrance Procession: The entrance may be a traditional procession consisting of an attendant and brides procession or it may be as simple as a congregational hymn

Attendant Procession:

1. Canon in D Major - J. Pachelbel
2. Air - G.F. Handel
3. Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring - J.S. Bach
4. Largo - G.F. Handel
5. La Grace - G.P. Teleman
6. Sheep May Safely Graze - J.S. Bach
7. Bist Du Bei Mir - G.H. Stölzel

Brides Procession:

1. Trumpet Voluntary - J. Clarke
2. Trumpet Tune - Purcell/Clarke
3. Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - J.S. Bach
4. Canon in D - J. Pachelbel
5. Voluntary to Ode to Joy

Gathering/Opening Hymn: (after the Instrumental Processions)

1. All Creatures of Our God and King
2. All People That in Earth Do Dwell
3. For the Beauty of the Earth
4. Hear Us Now, Our God and Father
5. Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee
6. Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
7. O Come All Ye Faithful (Christmas Season)
8. O God Beyond All Praising
9. Praise the Lord, Ye Heavens

Glory to God: (from Mass settings)

1. Pope Paul VI
2. Heritage Mass
3. Mass of the Resurrection

Responsorial Psalm:

(Psalm Response must be an actual Psalm and not a regular song) Psalm can be read, but preferably sung.

1. Psalm 33: The Earth is Full of the Goodness of the Lord
2. Psalm 34: Taste and See
3. Psalm 103: The Lord Is Kind and Merciful
4. Psalm 128: Blest Are Those
5. Psalm 128: Blessed Are Those Who Fear the Lord
6. Psalm 145: I Will Praise Your Name
7. Psalm 145: The Hand of the Lord Feeds Us

Acclamation after the receptions of Consent & after Rings:

1. Alleluia
2. Old Irish Blessing
3. May God Bless You (From Nuptial Blessing)
4. May God Bless You (Grieken)
5. Praise God From Whom All Blessing Flow

Presentation of Gifts:

1. How Beautiful
2. Like a Seal on Your Heart
3. Prayer of St. Francis
4. Peace Prayer
5. When Love Is Found
6. Wherever You Go
7. Where There Is Love
8. The Lord is My Light
9. The Servant Song
10. Servant Song
11. Tis the Gift to Be Simple
12. Where Charity and Love Prevail

Communion:

1. Blest Are They
2. Gift of Finest Wheat
3. How Great Thou Art
4. Lord, You Have Come
5. Shepherd Me, O God
6. Taste and See
7. Ubia Caritas
8. Panis Angelicus

Flowers to Mary

1. Ave Maria (Traditional)
2. Hail Mary Gentle Woman
3. On This Day O Beautiful Mother

Recessional

1. Voluntary on Ode to Joy - L. Beethoven
2. The Heavens Are Telling The Glory of God (Psalm XIX) - B. Marcello
3. Trumpet Voluntary - Clarke/Purcell
4. Prelude - M.A. Charpentier
5. Horn Pipe - G.F. Handel
6. Rondeau - J.J. Mouret
7. Ode to Joy - L. Beethoven
8. Rigaudon - A. Campra
9. War March of the Priests - F. Mendelssohn
10. Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - J.S. Bach



Beloved Reflection Questions

Episode 1 Reflection Questions:

Why Does Marriage Matter?
(29min)

1. What occupation is the narrator at the beginning of the episode? _____
2. What language is used in the subtitle section of the episode? _____
3. What word does the speaker define according to today's popular music? _____
4. What is the European City that possesses the "lock bridge"? _____
5. According to the (photographer) narrator what are we made for? _____
6. Whose words of advice saved Greg & Julie Alexander's marriage? _____
7. Name at least one of the benefits of marriage mentioned in the episode? _____
8. How many ways does the bible tell the story of creation? _____
9. Where is the bride running at the end of the episode (i.e. environment)? _____

1. Whose relationship is the photographer talking about at the start of this episode? _____
2. What occupation is the man talking about the “plan” for marriage? _____
3. The bible is what kind of story? _____
4. Who are the three people of the “Love Relationship?” _____
5. “Man only finds himself when he makes of himself a sincere _____?” – Pope John Paul II
6. What does Annie describe spending time shopping for? _____
7. Adam & Eve were naked and not what? _____
8. God is the bridegroom and _____ is the bride.
9. According to Tim Gray, who is one of the greatest story-tellers ever? _____
10. What happens at the well in the Old Testament? _____

■ Episode 2 Reflection Questions:

Entering the Story of Marriage



Episode 3 Reflection
Questions:

Love Revealed
(32min)

1. “The essence of love is to lay down your _____ for the _____.”
2. What are the 4 aspects of marriage reviewed in the episode? _____
3. Where in Israel did Bryan McAdam propose to his wife? _____
4. “_____ is a constant challenge thrown to us by God.” – St. Pope JP II
5. Another image used for marriage is a couple training for what? _____
6. Sacramental _____ is God’s assistance to us in the challenges of living marriage.



1. "A human being truly finds himself when he makes of himself a sincere _____." – JPII

2. The color black typically represents _____.

3. Young love is like a babbling brook, and mature love is like what? _____

4. For Luis Soto, who is the one person he has hurt the most in his life? _____

5. What does Matt Fradd say is proof that God invented sex? _____

6. What are the two ends or purposes of sex? _____

7. According to the episode, what is one thing that hinders true love? _____

8. Love is all about giving...while lust is all about _____?

■ Episode 4 Reflection Questions:

Total Gift of Self
(45min)



Episode 5 Reflection
Questions:

A Sacramental Bond
(30min)

- 1. According to the episode, how long have you been preparing for marriage? _____
2. What or who is the “sacramental sign” of marriage?

3. What food recipe caused tension in Theresa and her husband’s marriage? _____
4. What national tragedy does one couple talk about in their community? _____
5. What hobby is used as an image of shaping the two into one? _____



1. How many couples are sitting around the table at the beginning? _____
2. Jason asked God, “Am I right? Or is she right?” and God answered? _____
3. What’s the title of Part 3 of this episode? _____
4. What is the title of Part 4 of this episode? _____
5. What is the “special need” of Curtis & Michael Ann’s baby? _____
6. And the title of the 5th part? _____

■ Episode 6 Reflection Questions:

Real Challenges, Real Love
(45min)



Capacity-Consent Form

St. Anselm once wrote a simple yet profound phrase, “**Faith seeking Understanding.**” We start with the Faith, with the Catholic Faith and it is obscure. Perhaps we know that marriage is a sacrament, but we are not sure what a sacrament is. Perhaps we know that marriage is a bond that can only be broken by death, but we are not sure how it really comes about. Perhaps we know that marriage is the foundation of our society and of our church and so if we get it wrong...well St. Thomas Aquinas wrote that a small error in the beginning leads to a large error in the end. So, lets go back to the beginning and see where Marriage came from and why it is so important.

Marriage begins before the Fall of Man in the very first chapters of Genesis. Genesis 2:24, “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.” The two become one flesh...they are united in a bond that runs so deep that it sunders them from their parents and unites them as one flesh. Even outside of our Judeo-Christian understanding marriage has been seen as something essential. You can read ancient literature like *The Odyssey*, *The Aeneid* and so many others and see marriage held up as something sacred; solid families were the foundation of every society and solid families were founded upon a man and a woman who were committed to each other and their family. Pope St. John Paul II wrote in *Familiaris consortio*, “*The family has vital and organic links with society, since it is its foundation and nourishes it continually through its role of service to life: it is from the family that citizens come to birth and it is within the family that they find the first school of the social virtues that are the animating principle of the existence and development of society*”

itself (42).” And a simple quote from Mother Theresa to ponder: *“I think the world today is upside down. Everybody seems to be in such a terrible rush, anxious for greater development and greater riches and so on. There is much suffering because there is so very little love in homes and in family life. We have no time for our children, we have no time for each other; there is no time to enjoy each other. In the home begins the disruption of the peace of the world.”*

In order for someone to enter into a valid marriage they have to fulfill three requirements: (1) Capacity (they need to be able to marry (see below), (2) Consent (next week), (3) follow the Form of the Church (the week after).

■ 3 Requirements:

Capacity
Consent
Form of the Church

The following is an explanation of (1) Capacity taken from the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1625-1628) (commentary in **BOLD** is mine):

Capacity

1625 The parties to a marriage covenant are a baptized man and woman (**so it can not be between two men or two women and if one party is not Catholic a special dispensation is needed (disparity of cult)**), free to contract marriage (**they cannot be in a current marriage or have a previous marriage, or under a perpetual vow (religious and priests)**), must be over the age of 16 (men) and 14 (women), able to consummate, **did not kill their previous spouse in order to marry this new person (impediment of crime), or be related (must be at least 2nd cousins or more)**, also need to be physically capable (**mental and physical ability to provide for a family**)) who freely express their consent; “to be free” means:

- not being under constraint (**physical threats, pregnancy, drugs and alcohol, emotional and physical abuse, grave fear or anything that would force someone to do something against their will**)
- not impeded by any natural or ecclesiastical law (**mostly listed above**).

If the capacity is not present at the time of consent, then the marriage is not valid and no bond is possible. The Code of Canon law also says that “those who suffer from a grave defect of discretion of judgment concerning the essential matrimonial rights and duties mutually to be handed over and accepted” are incapable of marriage. Most decrees of nullity are based upon this. “It was a mistake.” “I had no clue what I was doing.” “I was drunk or drugged.” People who are incapable of understanding or willing the rights and obligations of marriage at the time of consent are incapable of consent.

Consent

What do the parties consent to?

Canon 1096 – For matrimonial consent to exist, the contracting parties must be at least not ignorant that marriage is a permanent partnership between a man and a woman ordered to the procreation of offspring by means of some sexual cooperation. §2. This ignorance is not presumed after puberty. **(the parties consent to a (1) perpetual (for life (not eternal)), (2) monogamous (faithful/exclusive) relationship that is (3) open to children.)**

So, if someone comes to their wedding day intending to remain with their spouse until [the language of condition]...(they gain/lose a certain amount of weight, they fail to make me “happy,” they no longer provide for

my needs, they get pregnant, we fall “out of love”, etc), then that is not valid consent. If someone enters into marriage absolutely against any kids ever in the marriage, that is not valid consent. The couple must at least be open to children at some point in their marriage. They do not have to be open right off the bat but there should be grave reasons to not be open. If one spouse was unfaithful to the other before, during or fairly close to after the moment of consent, it is highly doubtful that they intended fidelity or exclusivity and therefore it is not valid consent.

Now, lets say that you didn't actively think about all these things when you were married. **It was valid.** As long as you were not actively thinking about holding any of these back either in thought or in deed, then they are all presumed to be present until proven otherwise. This is presumed in Catholic marriages for the vows have these three objects worked into them. As always, pray for healthy and holy marriages!

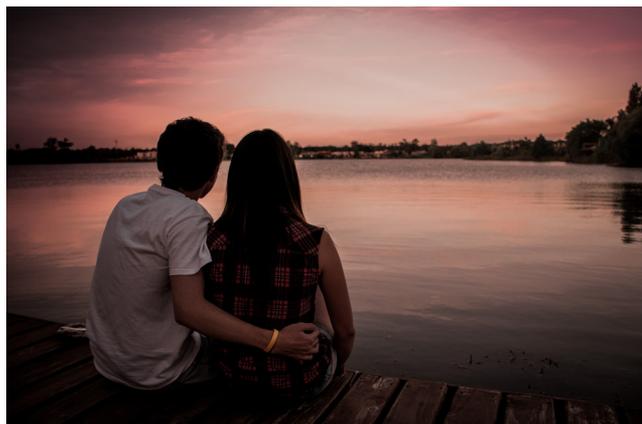
What is Canonical Form?

The man and woman who are capable of marriage (explained above) must stand before a valid representative of the Church and two valid witnesses and exchange valid consent (spoken of last week). It is highly discouraged for Catholics to make up their own vows for the very reason that the vows need to include the three things necessary: Perpetual, exclusive and open to life (Canon III19).

This Form must be followed by every Catholic party hoping to marry. If this Form was not followed then one of the necessary components for marriage was

Form of the Church

missing and the marriage bond did not form (Canon III7). This is a very common case sent to the Marriage Tribunal and is called a Defective Form case. Now, if someone wanted to vary from this Form then they need special permission or what the Church calls a Dispensation from Form. Lets say you were marrying a Lutheran and wanted to get married in their church before their minister. It is possible but, the Catholic party needs the Dispensation from Form or it is not a valid marriage. Or if you wanted to get married outside the Church building (required by Canon III8) you would need special permission which is very rarely granted. It makes no sense to celebrate a sacrament outside of or away from the very source and summit of all our sacraments – the Eucharist.



Marriage is no laughing matter...it is a sacrament and therefore the Church takes it very seriously. This seems off putting to many of those outside the Catholic Church because today most people see marriage as a joke or as something transitory. It is not sacred to them or this nation and that is a major problem! May we continue to pray for holy marriages and the conversion of our nation!

