

Photography/Videography

It is good to remember that what we celebrate is far more important than the photographs we take. The photographer should in no way hinder, interrupt or distract from the Sacred Rites. Photographers are asked to remain out of the Sanctuary area until after the ceremony. We request that the photographer meet with the wedding host or clergy no less than 20 minutes before the ceremony. Flash pictures may be taken until the start of the First Scripture Reading; flash photography may resume after the Final Blessing. Simple motion pictures or video taping is acceptable as long as there is no excessive movement that would distract the people, or impede the Communion Procession, with no use of additional lighting to the church during the ceremony, and no excessive wires or equipment.

Parish Fees*

- √ **Parish Expenses: \$100.00**
- √ **Presider: \$75.00**
- √ **Cantor: \$125.00**
- √ **Organist: \$175.00 and up**

Note: All fees are due at the initial consultation with the pastor.

* If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please contact the Pastor.

The Sacrament of Marriage

Wedding Guidelines



*The Faith Communities of
St. Mary, Dover - St. Robert Bellarmine*

The Environment of the Worship Space

Flowers/Plants

Although flowers are optional, if you do decide upon having them, the following suggestions may be helpful:

- A. Potted green plants work exceptionally well to enhance the warm inviting colors of the Church.
- B. Potted blooming plants or cut flower arrangements also work well in the church. What you bring as a gift to God and His Church remains in the church.

Placement

- A. No flowers may be placed on the altar table.
- B. Good locations for flowers are in front of the ambo and/or altar, and to the side of the altar/ambo.

Church Environment

The parish has an environment team who prepares the Church for our liturgies. If this team has an arrangement of plants or flowers and other environmental settings, you are welcome to add to them. **You may not move, remove, or change the existing décor in any way.**

Your cooperation is appreciated.

Bows

Decorative bows for the ends of the pews may be used. However, they may not be nailed or tacked or taped onto the pews. Do not use of any other method that would damage the finish of the wooden pews. Please do not attach anything directly to the altar, lectern/ambo, or anything else which is a permanent fixture in the church.

Aisle Runner

Aisle Runners are not allowed due to the safety hazard. Our Catholic Mutual insurance will not cover the liability. Thank you for understanding.

Welcome!

Congratulations to both of you! Your engagement is a special and unique time for you, your families and friends, and for your entire parish community. This is a time of new beginnings, of love, of promises and of hope. We, the faith communities of St. Mary's and St. Robert Bellarmine, along with the entire Catholic Church, are blessed and encouraged by your willingness to make this permanent commitment of life and love to each other at the altar of God.

Your wedding celebration will be a grace-filled and special moment in your lives. The Church invites you to celebrate your wedding in the context of Christian Prayer. Indeed, so important is marriage in Christian Life that it has been instituted by Christ as a Sacrament: Christian marriage makes Christ, in his love, sacramentally present. The love you share makes manifest Christ's love to all of us.

Great care is taken to see that the prayer for this special moment is reverent, graceful, beautiful and open to the movement of God's Spirit among us. As much care should be taken in planning and preparing for the liturgy as is taken for planning all the other aspects of your wedding. Our celebration of the sacraments, is always rooted in listening to the Sacred Scriptures so we can be nourished and strengthened by God's Word. We always celebrate the Sacraments as a community. We gather our brothers and sisters in faith and ask for their prayerful support. These celebrations are incomplete unless they are filled with song and participation, with prayerful gestures, and with silence in which we hear the voice of God in our hearts.

In this spirit, the parish communities of St. Mary's and St. Robert Bellarmine provide the following guidelines. These guidelines insure that care and attention are given to the most important aspects of your marriage preparation.

May God bless you during this special time of reflection and preparation.



How Do We Begin?

Couples who are interested in celebrating their wedding at St. Mary's or St. Robert Bellarmine must contact the Pastor one year prior to the wedding date. The Pastor will then set up a time to meet with each individual couple. **No date** will be placed on the parish calendar until after the couple has met with the Pastor. It is the Pastor, along with the couple, who will determine if the wedding will take place at St. Mary's or St. Robert's. The Pastor will then enter the wedding date into the parish calendar. If either person has been previously married, it is important to contact the Pastor earlier than one year. During the initial interview, the Pastor will then set up times to meet with the couple to help facilitate the preparation process. In order to guarantee your wedding date all church fees must be paid in full.

FOCCUS: In accordance with the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's marriage guidelines, each couple will be given a pre-nuptial questionnaire. This is not a test, but rather an attempt to help you, as a couple, come to a deeper awareness of your strengths and weaknesses. This aid will be administered during one of two sessions with a trained FOCCUS couple.

Archdiocesan Enrichment Program for the Engaged: This program provides the opportunity for engaged couples to explore what a committed sacramental relationship will require of them. **This program is offered as a day long Saturday event or as a Friday/Saturday overnight event.** You will be given a brochure containing the dates, schedule and registration form for these programs. Online information and registration: www.archmil.org/Resources/EngagedMinistry.htm

Baptismal Certificates: Both of you must provide an updated copy of your baptismal certificate. Each Catholic must obtain a recently issued copy of his/her baptismal certificate. **This copy, by Church law, must be dated within six months of your wedding date.** This can be done by phoning or writing the church where you were baptized and asking them to send the baptismal certificate directly to St. Robert Bellarmine Parish. Other baptized Christians, who are not Catholic, must present a record of their baptism also.

Your Wedding Day!

Wedding Hosts: We will attempt to help you in any way possible on the day of your wedding. The Church and dressing rooms are made available to you 1 hour before your scheduled wedding time and 1/2 hour after the wedding is finished. Let us know at the rehearsal if you have any other concerns.

Wedding Attire: The bride and the groom are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage. Please be respectful of the sacredness of the time and place in your choice of attire. Keep in mind that you will be processing, bowing and kneeling –especially when considering the neckline of the bridal gown. Immodest clothing will not be allowed. Please, no strapless gowns.

Dressing Rooms: Rooms will be provided for your convenience. **Please do NOT leave any valuables unattended at any time.**

Clean-Up: Please make arrangements ahead of time as to who from your party will be removing all boxes, papers, orders of worship and other things that you brought into the church.

Please be sure that things are left the way you found them.

Rose Petals/Rice/Confetti/Birdseed: **These items are not allowed.** Please do not use...inside or outside of Church! These can be very dangerous to walk upon and cause a great mess in the Church and/ or sidewalks.

Alcohol: **There is NO alcohol permitted on the premises.** We reserve the right to refuse any member of the wedding party, under the influence, participation in the wedding ceremony.

Cell Phones: Please be respectful and leave your cell phones turned off for the duration of the wedding ceremony.

√ **Gift Bearers:** If your marriage takes place within Mass, two (2) people (max. 4) are sufficient to bring forward the gifts of bread and wine. They should also be a part of your wedding rehearsal. Also consider a gift for the poor.

√ **Eucharistic Ministers and Altar Servers:** If your marriage takes place within Mass, members of your wedding party, family and/or friends who are Eucharistic ministers in their home parishes, may be invited to serve in that capacity here at your wedding, provided they attend the wedding rehearsal so that they, too, are familiar with the worship space and logistics. The Acolyte (Altar Server) should attend the rehearsal as well.

√ **Ushers (Ministers of Hospitality):** In addition to seating the guests, handing out and picking up orders of worship, and attending to other physical details, ushers help to offer a warm, welcoming atmosphere for the celebration by extending a smile and greeting of some sort to those entering the Church. This simple gesture helps ease the stranger coming to our church for the first time. Attendants, along with both of you and your families, may also take part in greeting your guests as Ministers of Hospitality. Ushers are expected to be at your wedding rehearsal.

The Wedding Rehearsal

√ Your wedding rehearsal usually takes place the night before your wedding.

√ The following are needed at your rehearsal:

- your marriage license
- your general intercessions
- your Unity Candle
- your programs/orders of worship

√ Your rehearsal will begin promptly at the assigned time, and will last approximately 1 hour. In consideration to all concerned, *please be on time.*

√ **Marriage License:** You must obtain a **MARRIAGE LICENSE from the County Court house where the wedding is to take place.** St. Mary and St. Robert are in Racine County. Each of you needs to provide a birth certificate. You must apply for the license between thirty (30) and eight (8) working days before your marriage. The license expires after thirty days. Call the County Court House for further details.

√ **Other Documents:** The Priest will let you know if any special circumstances related to your marriage require additional documentation.

How do we prepare our wedding liturgy?

The Priest, in your discussions with him, will provide you with a booklet which explains the various parts of the wedding liturgy.

Approximately 2 months prior to your wedding date, you are asked to contact the Director of Liturgy and Music to arrange a time to discuss the details of your wedding liturgy and music. Lynda Trani may be reached at 878 3476 X105.

The following are some helpful questions/answers to get you started. Again, the Priest and the Director of Liturgy and Music will guide you in your planning.

I. What planning for the wedding liturgy do we need to do?

√ **Readings:** Please select the readings from Sacred Scripture from the *Together for Life* booklet. Non-scriptural passages are never used in place of Sacred Scripture. You are encouraged to be creative and to select readings so that a common thread or idea connects the Liturgy of the Word. If you have difficulty finding readings that reflect the message you want to convey, you should talk to the Priest or Director of Liturgy and Music for further suggestions. When three readings are used, the First Reading should be from

the Old Testament, the Second Reading from the New Testament Epistles, and the last Reading is a Gospel from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Your readings will serve as a foundation from which your music is selected. The Psalm should be a response to the First Reading from the Old Testament, and there are many musical settings to choose from.

√ **General Intercessions:** You are encouraged to write your own general intercessions. In doing so, you may refer to the format and options given in your book. Petitions should be included for the church, world, poor and the bride and groom. When completed, a copy of the written petitions should be given to the Priest at your wedding rehearsal for approval.

√ **Orders of Worship:** The Director of Liturgy and Music will show you examples of simple programs to aid your guests in participation at your ceremony. Include the response to the Psalm that is provided for you.

√ **Exchange of Marriage Vows:** You may choose your wedding vows from a couple of formulas. You are strongly encouraged to memorize them.

II. Who are the Ministers for this celebration?

√ **You, the couple!** In the Roman Catholic tradition, you, the bride and groom, administer the sacrament of marriage to one another. For all of us who are your guests, you become a sign of God's fidelity and love present among us.

√ **Priest Celebrant:** Ordinarily, the parish priest will officiate at weddings celebrated here at St. Mary's and St. Robert's. You may have a special priest or deacon friend or relative whom you want to invite to concelebrate with the parish priest or even to officiate at your wedding. In this case, you must obtain permission from the pastor. He will help to facilitate the processes involved.

√ **Music and Music Ministers:** The Director of Liturgy and Music conducts the consultation and planning session with the engaged couple. Couples being married at St. Mary's or St. Robert's are required to use the parish musicians, or parish approved musicians. The musicians must include an organist and Cantor. This is not an option to be accepted or rejected.

All music chosen must be in accordance with the archdiocese. Also, at the time of the consulting session, all the liturgical services the parish offers to you are explained.

The Church has always insisted that liturgical music possess artistic and liturgical integrity. The Parish Director of Liturgy and Music is charged with the right and responsibility of judging the authenticity and quality of any suggested music. The music is chosen for the pastoral effectiveness of the music for the assembled congregation; i.e. its relevance and clarity of expression and the congregation's ability to participate. The music must be suited to the liturgical actions and intent of the service, and recognized as a distinct and definite act of worship. Music for the wedding must follow Church, archdiocesan and parish guidelines.

III. Members of your family and friends should become involved in the liturgical celebration. Here are a few suggestions:

√ **Lector (Reader):** The Lector proclaims the readings from Sacred Scripture and reads the General Intercessions. It is suggested that you have at least two (2) people chosen to serve in this ministry. In choosing whom you want to read, be sensitive to the following:

- Do the persons have experience as a Lector?
- Do they look comfortable reading in front of a group?
- Do they have the necessary gifts for proclaiming God's Word?
- Do they proclaim slowly, effectively and reverently with good posture, eye contact, projection, good diction, etc.

The Lector's presence at your wedding rehearsal is required. This will allow time to practice and to become aware of logistics.