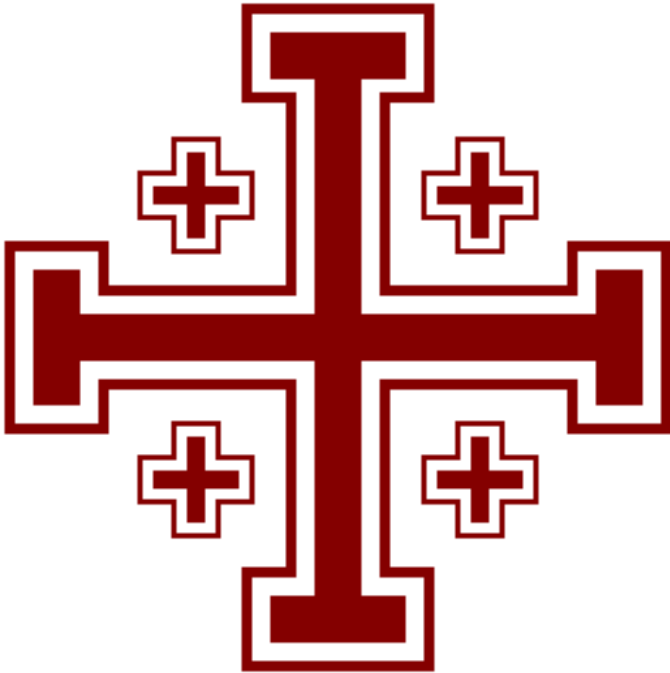


Wedding Guide



The Cathedral *of* Saint Agnes
Rockville Centre, NY

Dear Friends,

Congratulations! The Parish of Saint Agnes Cathedral rejoices in your plans to enter into Marriage. This booklet is designed to guide you in its proper celebration.

We ask that you read through this booklet very carefully. It is important that you follow all that is required of you by the Church and by Saint Agnes Cathedral. This will also help you to avoid any problems in your plans.

At Saint Agnes, we are here to help you in any way possible. Please feel free to inquire with any questions you may have.

May God bless you as you begin to plan your lives together.

*The Priests, Deacons and Staff of
Saint Agnes Cathedral*

Contacts

The following may be contacted by leaving a message at the Parish Office. The office phone number is (516) 766-0205

Very Rev. Michael F. Duffy

Rector

Rev. Alessandro da Luz

Associate Pastor

Rev. Anthony Twum

Associate Pastor

Deacon Andy Ciccaroni

Ms. Ellen Fox

Director of Rehearsals

Scheduling a Wedding at Saint Agnes

In order to help you prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage, we would like to make you aware of some Diocesan requirements and parish policies concerning your marriage at St. Agnes Cathedral.

Out of a desire to accommodate as many parishioners as possible, non-parishioners are able to secure a date only within a year of their wedding date. If you reside outside of the parish boundaries and wish to register as a parishioner, there is a waiting period of one year before you can secure a wedding date. In order to prepare properly for the sacrament, your marriage should be scheduled at least six months in advance of the celebration.

Usually the priest/deacon who first interviews you will officiate at your wedding. Vacation schedules and priest/deacon transfers could make a difference in the policy. If you wish a specific priest/deacon from the parish to witness the wedding ceremony, you should indicate this when you call for an appointment or at your first interview. If you have a priest/deacon relative or friend whom you wish to perform the ceremony, he is most welcome to do so.

If the priest or deacon is not a priest of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, we ask that he have a letter from his diocese or religious community sent to the Rector of St. Agnes attesting to the fact that he is a priest/deacon in good standing. The priest/deacon must also contact the Rector requesting delegation.

Wedding Times

Friday

To be discussed with Priest/Deacon

Saturday

10:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m.

Sunday

3:00 p.m.

Weddings are not scheduled on National Holidays: Independence Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, etc.

On certain days of the Church calendar, it may not be possible to celebrate a wedding, for example, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Easter, All Souls' Day, or Holy Days of Obligation.

Documents Needed to Celebrate Marriage

Baptismal Certificates

Catholics must obtain a recently dated Baptismal Certificate (i.e. dated within six months prior to the wedding day). This may be obtained from the church of your baptism upon request by informing the church of your name, date of birth, and the date of your scheduled wedding. This updated Baptismal Certificate testifies to your freedom to marry.

If one of the parties is a non-Catholic Christian, that person should bring a copy of his/her original Baptismal Certificate and obtain an affidavit signed by two witnesses (parent or close relative) that he/she has never been married before.

Freedom to Marry

Non-Catholics and non-parishioners must obtain an affidavit signed by two witnesses (parent or close relative) that he/she has never been married before.

Inter-religious Marriage

In the case of an inter-religious marriage, proper dispensations must be obtained and the Catholic party must promise to do his/her best to maintain his/her faith and to share that faith with his/her children. The non-Catholic party must be aware of this commitment.

Letter of Permission

A Letter of Permission is required from the pastor of the geographic parish of *anyone who does not live within in the parish boundaries*. This should be presented to the consulting priest/deacon.

Marriage License

A valid New York State Marriage License is necessary. This may be obtained from the office of any Town Clerk in New York State. Marriage licenses are valid from 24 hours after issued to 60 days from the date the license is obtained.

Marriage Preparation

The most important preparation for marriage is living a good Catholic spiritual life: attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days, daily prayer, regular confession, and practicing the virtues, especially chastity.

Pre-Cana and FOCCUS

This is the specific preparation for marriage. Pre-Marital instruction, known as “Pre-Cana,” is required by the diocese. FOCCUS is a self-assessment instrument designed to help couples learn more about themselves and determine their readiness for marriage.

Once Pre-Cana has been completed, a copy of the certificate should be submitted to the parish office or emailed to your consulting priest/deacon.

It is best to complete this requirement as soon as possible, rather than waiting until closer to the wedding date.

The priest/deacon assisting you with your marriage plans will explain each to you and give you information to sign up for the various options.

Sacrament of Confession

In order to enter into the Sacrament of Marriage with the proper disposition, those to be married are to receive the Sacrament of Penance (Confession) shortly prior to their wedding.

Confessions are available at Saint Agnes:

Saturdays from 4:00- 4:45 P.M.

Mondays after 7:30 P.M. Mass

Wednesdays after 7:45 A.M. and 12:10 P.M. Mass

The day before a First Friday or Holy Day of Obligation
from 4:00 – 4:45 P.M.

Unfortunately, the Sacrament of Penance will **not** be available at the wedding rehearsal.

Church Offering

Sacraments are matters of faith. They are neither sold nor bought. However, our parish community has many temporal needs. This offering will help cover the maintenance cost of our church building and the services of our parish organist and cantor.

Parish fees should be dropped off at the Rectory Office one month before the wedding. Please write out two separate checks.

As of this printing, these are the fees for all new weddings:

***If you are a parishioner** or have some spiritual connection to the parish (i.e. received sacraments or attended school at Saint Agnes), the fees are:*

\$700 to St. Agnes Cathedral

\$300 to St. Agnes Music Ministry

If you do not live in the parish boundaries and do not have a spiritual connection to the parish, but have received the necessary permission from your Pastor to marry at St. Agnes, the fees are:

\$1250 to St. Agnes Cathedral

\$300 to St. Agnes Music Ministry

Wedding Banns

The Banns of Marriage announce your upcoming wedding to the local community. Wedding Banns are published in the parish bulletin three consecutive weeks before the wedding.

Rehearsals

Because of the large numbers of weddings at St. Agnes and other pastoral commitments, it is usually not possible for the priest/deacon officiating at your wedding to conduct the rehearsal.

Rehearsals are conducted by our Wedding Rehearsal Coordinator. Please contact the Parish Office to schedule the rehearsal at a mutually convenient time.

The usual evenings for rehearsal are Thursday and Friday. Rehearsals take 30 minutes. They may begin at 6:00, 6:30, 7:00 or 7:30 p.m. Outside wedding planners need not attend the rehearsal.

Please be on time for the rehearsal and bring the following (if you have not already dropped them off at the Rectory):

1. Civil Marriage License
2. Liturgy selection sheet indicating the readings you have selected. The selection sheet should also note the names of any readers and any other options.

Liturgical Preparation

Mass/Ceremony

You will discuss with the priest/deacon whether your wedding will be a Nuptial Mass or a Ceremony without Mass. He will be able to help you make the proper decisions. In making your decision, you will want to take into consideration whether your guests are accustomed to participating in the Catholic Mass.

The Ceremony without Mass contains all of the essential elements of a wedding, but would not include the Liturgy of the Eucharist and Holy Communion. This is a good option for being able to share your faith with your guests in a way that will also be comfortable and familiar for them.

Preparing the Wedding Ceremony

You will receive the *Together for Life* booklet which contains the various options for your wedding ceremony (readings, etc.). Please contact the priest/deacon witnessing your wedding at least *six weeks in advance* to prepare your selections.

Readers

The couple may invite one or two readers to proclaim the scripture readings. They should be baptized Catholics who conduct themselves with dignity, are comfortable reading in a public setting and know how to speak into a microphone. The priest/deacon may give permission for a baptized non-Catholic to read. The priest/deacon may also do the readings himself, if you prefer.

Please give the readers a copy of the reading taken from the *Together for Life* book. A copy of the reading will be in the pulpit for them to read. No loose sheets of paper should be carried up or taken out of readers' pockets upon arriving at the pulpit.

There may be no deviation from the provided text or elaboration or comments by the reader.

A Note on Additional Ceremonies

At Saint Agnes Cathedral, we are obliged to follow the Church's instructions for celebrating weddings, which have developed based on wisdom and experience gained over time.

The only additional ceremonies permitted are the arras (coin ceremony) and lazo (large rosary draped over the couple) or veil. These are included as options in the Church's wedding rite for those who have this as part of their family wedding customs.

Additional ceremonies that are not included in the Church's wedding rite may not be included. While some well-meaning authors mention a "unity candle" in their literature, and it has been used in some places, it cannot be used in weddings at Saint Agnes, since it is not part of the Catholic Church's official wedding rite.

Music

Please contact the Music Office, *at least three months in advance* (weddings@stagnescathedral.org or 764-9578) to make arrangements. Forms for planning the music selections, as well as samples of the options available for your wedding are available online at www.stagnescathedral.org/music-ministry/wedding-music-selections/ or you may request a CD recording of the selections to choose. *All arrangements for musical selections and musicians should be completed one month prior to the wedding.*

At each wedding, there are two musicians: organist and cantor. Additional musicians for the wedding liturgy (brass, strings, choirs) are also available and can be arranged through the Music Department.

Permission for a guest organist or cantor must be obtained from the Music Department. If permission is granted, the music fee must still be provided by the couple.

Please remember that the music must be sacred texts (taken from scripture, inspired by scripture, liturgical in nature). Pieces not included on our selection sheet may not be approved if they are not in our hymnal. Secular songs, even instrumental, may not be used in the liturgy.

The Day of Your Wedding **at St. Agnes Cathedral**

Congratulations! Your wedding day is fast approaching. To help you on this day, here are a few pointers.

Absolutely NO alcoholic beverages are permitted in Church or on Church grounds.

The Bride and Groom are not permitted to consume any alcohol until after the wedding has been completed.

Punctuality

Because of the large number of weddings at St. Agnes, it is important that your wedding begin on time. *Please know that if you are more than fifteen minutes late from the scheduled time of your wedding celebration, the celebrant (priest or deacon) may alter your celebration.* (i.e. Mass will be altered to a Ceremony, scripture readings will be deleted and songs eliminated). *If you are more than thirty minutes late, the cathedral musicians will be dismissed, though they will still be paid for their time.*

The groom, best man and ushers should be at the Cathedral at least one half hour before the scheduled wedding. The bride and her attendants should be at the Cathedral at least fifteen minutes before the ceremony.

Photo/Videographers

We ask the bride and groom to inform their photographer and/or videographer to check with the priest/deacon before the wedding begins to go over Church regulations. There will be no “restaging” of the ceremony once it is over, and photographers **must** stay out of the sanctuary area.

Live-streaming

The parish has a live-stream camera that can make a video of your wedding available to viewers on YouTube via a private link. If desired, please contact the parish office one month in advance to make your request.

Flowers

The Cathedral provide two large arrangements of fresh-cut flowers in the sanctuary, which arrive on Friday (except during the season of Advent and Lent). We encourage couples to use these beautiful seasonal arrangements rather than purchase additional floral arrangements.

Couples may wish to make a donation of \$200 to memorialize the altar flowers in their name, which will be posted in our bulletin.

Pew decorations may be arranged through the florist of your choice. The couple is responsible to make sure that all flowers and decorations are removed from the cathedral immediately following the wedding.

No flowers are permitted during the season of Lent (from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday).

Rice/Rose Petals/Banners/Pets/Wagons

No rice, flower petals, bird seed or confetti is allowed to be thrown inside or outside of the Cathedral. Because of the sacredness of the Sacrament of Marriage, pets, carrying banners and signs, and pulling wagons in the procession are not permitted.

White Runner

At the Cathedral we do not allow runners because they can create a safety hazard. We have had too many incidents where the runner has caused people to fall. So as to cause no one in your family, wedding party or yourselves unnecessary harm, we would request that no runners be used.

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

Due to the solemnity of the Sacrament of Marriage all members of the wedding party and guests should turn off their cell phones, and other electronic devices so as not to distract or take away from the celebration.

Tipping Servers and Sexton

It is customary to offer Altar Servers and Sextons a monetary tip for their service. A tip of \$10.00 to each server and to the sexton on duty is appreciated. We thank you for your generosity.

Check List

- Baptismal Certificate
 - Groom
 - Bride
- Letter of Permission (required for those who live outside parish boundaries)
- Pre Cana Certificate
- Dispensation for Mixed/Inter-religious Marriage
- Other Dispensations/Defect of Form/Annulment
- Fee To Church and Music
- Marriage License
- Liturgy Preparation Sheet
- Music Selection
- Rehearsal Date
- Confession

May God bless you and keep you on
your Wedding Day and every day of
your life together



Cordially in Christ,

The Priests, Deacons, Staff, and Parishioners of
St. Agnes Cathedral

Revised February 2022