

Welcome

We are pleased that you have chosen one of The Cluster Parishes to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage. We want to help you in every way possible and hope that this guide will help make your wedding choices and decisions a little easier. Do not allow yourselves to become so overwhelmed by details that you fail to take time to emphasize the real meaning and seriousness of this event. If you have any questions after reading the guide, please call the Director of Adult Formation at 757-484-7335 for assistance.

The Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage

A Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant between a man and a woman in the presence of God. As such, marriage is a Sacrament of the Church. The ceremony is to be attested to by at least two witnesses besides the priest or deacon. It is to conform to the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Canons of the Roman Catholic Church, and the local traditions of the Cluster Parishes.

Christian Marriage

Eligibility: To be married in the Catholic Church, at least one of either the bride or groom should be a practicing Catholic. We believe in the indissolubility of marriage—that it is a life-long commitment. If either of the parties has been married before, there will be an investigation into whether or not the previously married party is free to marry in the Catholic Church. Since this process can take up to a year, and sometimes longer, it is essential that this matter be resolved prior to setting the date of the marriage ceremony.

The First Step: The couple should make an appointment with the Director of Adult Formation to discuss their marriage plans and the pre-marriage preparation that is required by the Diocese of Richmond, the Pre-Marital Class schedule, and other pertinent matters before a marriage date can be set. The bride and groom are responsible for arranging their pre-marital classes directly with The Diocese of Richmond.

The Wedding Liturgy: The seating configurations and liturgical arrangements in the churches, which we have for our regular worship, are the same for weddings. The priest is in charge of the entire service, including the appropriateness of all arrangements. When a priest from another parish is officiating, all the traditions and policies of the parish are still to be followed.

Time of Weddings: Weddings are normally scheduled on Saturdays not earlier than 11:00 A.M. and not later than 1:00 P.M. There are no Sunday weddings. Marriages are never celebrated on the eve of Palm Sunday nor during Holy Week. If a wedding is scheduled during Lent, only very sparse flowers will be permitted in keeping with the season. Weddings may take place on Fridays. Please talk with the Director of Adult Formation first before setting the time of your wedding. The church is normally opened one hour-and-a-half prior to a wedding. Opening the church earlier will require special arrangements with the Wedding Coordinator and payment of additional fees of \$25.00 to the church and \$25.00 to the Wedding Coordinator. The church may not be opened earlier than two and-a-half hours prior to a wedding. Because there is not a space for dressing at St. Paul, all members of the bridal party should arrive ready for the wedding.

Clergy: Normally, the Pastor or Parochial Vicar officiates at the wedding. If you desire a guest priest to be the presider or concelebrant, approval from the Pastor must be obtained before any plans are formulated. A formal invitation and written delegation by the Pastor is required by the Church and must be extended to the guest priest before he may be a presider at your wedding. The Commonwealth of Virginia requires, in writing, that a visiting priest be certified by the Circuit Court in order to celebrate your wedding. If the visiting priest is not certified, either the Pastor or Parochial Vicar will assist in the celebration and sign the State license. Visiting clergy are expected to follow the wedding liturgy guidelines.

Ecumenical Participation: When a Catholic marries someone who is not Catholic, the pastor of the party who is not Catholic is encouraged to participate in the ceremony. Please talk this over with the priest.

License: The civil marriage license is obtained from the Clerk of the Circuit Court in the city in which you live. The license is good for 60 days. **Please bring the marriage license to the Director of Adult Formation at least two weeks prior to your wedding date** so that we may complete the forms prior to your wedding day.

Wedding Fees

Use of Church	\$250.00
Organist Fee	\$175.00
Cantor Fee	\$ 75.00
Soloist (cantor may do solos; if not, this is at your expense)	
Wedding Coordinator Fee	\$175.00
Altar Server (If Mass)	\$ 25.00
Extraordinary Minister(s) of Holy Communion (If supplied by church)	\$ 25.00
Suggested Stipend to Priest	\$100.00

The fee for use of the church is to be paid at the time the wedding date is scheduled. If the wedding is cancelled, a refund of the Use of Church fee will be made. All fees to musicians, Wedding Coordinator, Altar Server, etc. will not be refunded, as those individuals may have turned down other opportunities for employment for that date on your behalf.

If using a priest from another parish, payment is made directly to him.

All wedding fees and costs shall be brought to the Director of Adult Formation at least six weeks prior to the wedding date according to the above fee schedule. This includes all fees for the church, Organist, Cantor, Wedding Coordinator, lay Eucharistic minister, Altar Server, etc. Once your musicians, etc. have been selected, the Director of Adult Formation will give instruction on how to make checks payable. If these fees are not paid in full, the church will not be opened for the rehearsal of the wedding or for the wedding ceremony.

Wedding Coordinator: The Wedding Coordinator consults with the couple as needed in reference to the church wedding guidelines, assists with the wedding rehearsal, is responsible for opening and closing church facilities, directing the wedding party, and ensures that all guidelines are followed regarding placement of flowers and other decorations. The Wedding Coordinator also ensures that proper care is taken of the church and its furnishings.

Cantor: We recommend use of a Cluster cantor who is familiar with the liturgy. Contact the organist/music director for the name of the cantor. Make check payable directly to the cantor and deliver to the Director of Adult Formation.

Guest Cantor: If you wish to have one, the question of a guest cantor will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the music director. A guest cantor will be at your expense.

All Other Fees: All checks should be delivered to the Director of Adult Formation for distribution at least six weeks prior to your wedding date.

Practical Considerations

Invitations: On your wedding invitations, the addresses of our Cluster churches are as follows:

Church of the Holy Angels
34 Afton Parkway
Portsmouth, VA 23702

Church of the Resurrection
3501 Cedar Lane
Portsmouth, VA 23703

St. Mary Catholic Church
536 Homestead Road
Chesapeake, VA 23321

St. Paul Catholic Church
522 High Street
(Corner of High & Washington Streets)
Portsmouth, VA 23704

Seating: Guests entering the church are to be escorted to their seats by one of the ushers. In an effort to reinforce the sense of community at the Liturgy of Marriage, the ushers should welcome guests graciously and begin seating them toward the front of the church. Ushers should instruct guests to turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices. You've paid for a photographer to photograph your wedding. Encourage guests to be guests and allow the photographer to take care of the photographs.

Rehearsal: There is no extra charge for the rehearsal. Since marriage is a sacrament, Church liturgical norms take precedence over any other customs. All participants in the wedding, including lectors and offertory gift bearers, should plan to attend the rehearsal. Rehearsals usually take one hour. It is also helpful to have some copies of the wedding program. The Wedding Coordinator and the couple determine the rehearsal time. Please make sure rehearsal time is communicated to the Director of Adult Formation to be added to the Cluster Calendar and reserve the church for you.

Wedding Planners: Wedding planners and/or “mistresses of ceremonies” have a role to play, which may be useful to the couple in regard to festivities outside of the liturgy of the wedding ceremony. However, **they have no role in planning or conducting either the rehearsal or the Marriage Rite.**

Music

The couple meets with the music director to select appropriate music and to arrange for soloists and/or instrumental music. The Music Director will play at all weddings. The music director should be contacted as **soon as your wedding date has been set.** The Music Director will play for the service for thirty (30) minutes prior to and until guests have left the church after the ceremony. **Guest organists/pianists are not allowed. Note: If after meeting with the Music Director and going over music, the couple changes their mind and do not use the Music Director, they are still responsible for the fee of \$175.00.**

Secular Music: Secular music is inappropriate for the Liturgy of Marriage and therefore not allowed. The wedding reception is an ideal place for secular music.

RECORDED MUSIC: Recorded music is never played before, during, or after the wedding ceremony.

ACCEPTABLE LITURGICAL MUSIC: The music director will assist in the selection of music. See Appendix for suggestions of appropriate music.

GUEST MUSICIANS: Please obtain approval from the music director before scheduling guest musicians to participate in your wedding. The guest musician must follow the parish wedding policies and procedures.

CANTOR/GUEST CANTOR: At the celebration of a marriage, whether it is a Mass or a wedding ceremony without the Eucharist, it is the policy of the Cluster Parishes to use one of the church’s cantors to help guests participate more fully in the service music. In addition, the cantor may be able to sing pre-wedding music while your guests are being seated. The music director can help you pick the cantor who is best suited to the musical needs of your wedding celebration. In some cases, a cantor or singer from outside the parish, who is familiar with the Roman Catholic liturgy and music, could be used with the approval of the music director.

Flowers

You are permitted to have one (1) floral arrangement to be placed on the floor in front of the center altar (not to extend above the top of the altar). If you are placing a memorial at any of the side altars, the priest or guest priest should approve it, since it would be an addition to your wedding ceremony. The memorial should be small in size and in a water-tight container to prevent water stains on the altars.

If your florist is arranging flowers in the church, they should be in place no later than one (1) hour before the wedding. Please advise the Wedding Coordinator of the time the florist will be in the church so it can be opened.

Attendant's arrangements should be placed outside the Sanctuary. Please consult the Wedding Coordinator for the best location.

PEW MARKERS: Pew markers may be used on the center aisle pews only. **(Nails, tacks, or tape may not be used to secure markers to the pews.)** In addition, holders used on the back of the pew markers should be such that they do not scratch the pews. Pew Markers should not contain decorations (i.e. glitter, confetti) and should not extend to the floor.

AISLE RUNNERS: An aisle runner may not be used because of safety considerations and insurance liability.

FLOWER PETALS: The dropping of flower petals is not allowed.

Photography

Instructions regarding policies and procedures at the parish should be given to your photographer(s) at the time you contract for these services. Even if the photographer has taken pictures at the parish before, you should advise him/her of these policies. Failure to do this could cost you unnecessary money if you contract for a photographic commitment against our policy.

When scheduling photography, remember that your wedding party will be arriving early. It is important for you to plan your schedule so that your wedding can begin on time. Even a ten (10) minute delay in the start of your wedding will interfere with our Reconciliation and Mass schedules. **On Saturdays, if your wedding begins so late as to affect our Mass schedule, your photo session will be shortened.**

PHOTOGRAPHER'S EQUIPMENT: All camera equipment should be in place no later than one (1) hour prior to the start of your wedding. No cameras should be placed in front of the pews. Absolute quiet is to be maintained during the ceremony. If not, the photographer will be asked to leave. Only the video camera and one (1) photographer are allowed in the choir loft (St. Paul/St. Mary). He/she will be asked to leave the loft if quiet is not maintained during the ceremony. No flash pictures and no intrusive lighting are allowed during the ceremony. Photographer(s) should not be in the center aisle during the ceremony. Please see the Wedding Coordinator for the best locations for the photographer to work.

PHOTOGRAPHS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING: Schedule no later than 1-1/2 hours before your wedding. Notify the Wedding Coordinator two (2) weeks prior to your wedding of the time you plan to be in the church and/or the Father Walsh Center or Social Halls for pictures, so facilities will be open.

PHOTOGRAPHS AFTER THE WEDDING: One (1) hour will be allotted for photographs after the wedding. On Saturdays, you **must have your pictures taken by no later than 2:45 p.m.** You and your guests are welcome to remain and pray, but please note that at St. Paul and Resurrection, Reconciliation has to be prepared for. Reconciliation at St. Paul begins at 3pm, so out of respect for those seeking the Sacrament and the priest in preparing, we do ask for silence after 2:45 p.m., if your wedding is at St. Paul.

NOTE: Included in the Appendix is a copy of “Guide for Wedding Photographers” for you to give to your photographer.

Other Items

REVERENT ATTITUDE: The Sacrament of Marriage should be planned in a reverent and sacred manner. At the rehearsal, the Wedding Coordinator will tell your wedding party where to gather while awaiting the beginning of the ceremony. When your wedding party and guests enter the church, please have your ushers encourage them to maintain a reverent attitude and atmosphere. It is recommended that ring bearers/flower girls be at least 4-5 years old and of sufficient maturity to perform these roles in the context of a Sacramental liturgy. No signs should be carried during the liturgy. No pets are allowed. Service animals are permitted. **Food and beverages are not allowed anywhere in the Church. Smoking is not allowed on the premises of the Church.**

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: No alcoholic beverages or smoking are allowed in or around the church (or the Father Walsh Center and any of the Social Halls). Other beverages and/or food are also forbidden.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS: The church is not responsible for items left behind. It is recommended that you appoint someone to be in charge of removing personal belongings, flowers, etc. from the church following the ceremony.

OTHER: The following items in the church may not be moved or relocated: Altar of Sacrifice, piano, furniture, floral arrangements, candelabra, candles, statuary, altar cloths, etc.

Rice, bird seed, glitter or confetti may not be used or thrown in or around the church at any time.

Sword Arches are permitted outside of the Church.

Pre-recorded music is not allowed.

APPENDIX

Social Halls Available for Receptions

Sample Wedding Program

Suggested Appropriate Music

Wedding Arrangements Check List

Contacts and Responsibilities

Guide for Wedding Photographers

Social Halls Available for Receptions

Church of the Holy Angels – Social Hall

Four Hour Rental -The rental period is for four hours. You are also given one additional hour to setup/decorate and an additional thirty minutes to cleanup afterwards.

Insurance - The renter will pay the current diocesan rate to cover additional required insurance underwritten through the Diocese of Richmond.

For more pricing information, please call the Office Manager, Church of the Holy Angels, 757-484-7335 or email at holyangels@clusterparishes.com.

Church of the Resurrection - Caroluzza Hall

The social hall at Resurrection is available for wedding receptions. For information and quote, please call the Office Manager, Church of the Resurrection at 757-484-7338 or email at resurrection@clusterparishes.com.

St. Mary Catholic Church – Social Hall

The rental period is for four hours. You are also given one additional hour to setup/decorate and an additional thirty minutes to cleanup afterwards.

Insurance - The renter will pay the current diocesan rate to cover additional required insurance underwritten through the Diocese of Richmond.

For more pricing information, please call the Office Manager, St. Mary Catholic Church at 757-484-7335 or email at saintmary@clusterparishes.com.

Sample Wedding Program

Email a copy of your **Wedding Program** to the **Pastoral Musician** for approval **prior to printing** and **at least three weeks prior to the liturgy**.

Prelude

Seating of the mothers

Entrance Procession

Gloria

Opening Prayer

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Alleluia

Gospel

Homily

Exchange of Vows

Blessing of the Rings

Prayers of the couple or Prayers of the Faithful

Presentation of Gifts

Lord's Prayer

Nuptial Blessing

Sign of Peace

Communion

Communion Meditation

Prayer after Communion

Final Blessing

Recessional

You will be given a booklet *"Together for Life"* which will give you details of all the above parts of the Mass. The booklet also gives details for a wedding without a Mass (page 10).

Suggested Music

PRELUDE:

Air from Water Music by Handel
Meditation (from Thais) by Maisonette
Sheep May Safely Graze by Bach
Aeries by Bach
Serenade by Schubert
Reverie (Traumerei) by Schuman
Air on G String by Bach
Prelude in C Major by Bach
Clair de Lune by Debussy

PROCESSIONAL:

Air from Water Music by Handel
Trumpet Tune by Purcell
Trumpet Voluntary by Purcell
Canon in D by Pachelbel
Rondeau in D by Mouret
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring by Bach

VOCAL – SOLO MUSIC

Bist Du Bei Mir by Bach
Entreat Me Not to Leave You (Song of Ruth) by Bach
Hold Thou My Hand by Biggs
My Heart Ever Faithful by Bach
O Perfect Love by Barnby
Panis Angelicus by Franck
Ave Maria by either Schubert or Gounod
Beethoven Prayer (Bitten) by Beethoven

RECESSIONAL:

Trumpet Tune by Purcell
Trumpet Voluntary by Purcell
Allegro Maestoso by Handel
Ode to Joy by Beethoven
Rondeau in G by John Bull

The above selections are appropriate for use at your wedding. If you have other music you would like to consider, it can be discussed at your planning session with the music director.

Following are the times when music can be played or sung at your wedding: before the wedding begins, seating of the parents and grandparents, wedding processional, communion (if celebrated), and the recessional.

Wedding Checklist

- 1. Initial conference with Director of Adult Formation:
 - Arrange and schedule pre-marital counseling sessions.
 - Discuss date of your wedding.
- 2. Reserve the date and time of the rehearsal and wedding.
- 3. Obtain **new** baptismal certificates with notations and with parish seal no sooner than 6 months prior to wedding preparation. Obtain Confirmation certificates.
- 4. Get Affidavits of Freedom to Marry filled out by two family members, witnessed by a priest, deacon, or notary, each and return to Director of Adult Formation.
- 5. Schedule Pre-Nuptial Investigations with deacon once certificates and affidavits have been obtained.
- 6. Sign up for Un-Veiled Diocesan Program and bring copy of certificate to Director of Adult Formation upon completion.
- 7. Confer with music director **as soon as the wedding date has been reserved**
- 8. Complete Prepare-Enrich assessments online.
- 9. Schedule meeting with Director of Adult Formation after Prepare-Enrich & Un-Veiled have been completed to begin review.
- 10. Send checks to Director of Adult Formation **six weeks prior** to the wedding.
- 11. Clear parish policies with photographer, videographer, and florist.
- 12. Bring wedding license to the Director of Adult Formation **at least two weeks prior** to rehearsal.
- 13. Arrange for delivery of flowers one hour prior to the service.
- 14. Meet with Wedding Coordinator at Rehearsal and ensure all parties know where flowers should be placed, Wedding Party should gather prior to the Liturgy, etc.

Contacts

Priest

Rev. Anthony Wm. Morris, Pastor
pastor@clusterparishes.com
757-484-7335

Pastoral Musicians

Church of the Holy Angels

Mr. Keith Nesbitt
757-484-7335 (W)
holyangelsmusic@clusterparishes.com

St. Mary Catholic Church

Ms. Jennifer Glymph
757-484-7335 (W)
jhglymph@hotmail.com

Church of the Resurrection

Ms. Jennifer Glymph
757-484-7335 (W)
jhglymph@hotmail.com

St. Paul Catholic Church

Mr. Nick Nespoli
757-484-1315 (H) or 757-484-9550 (w)
nick.nespoli@cpschools.com

Director of Adult Formation

Rev. Mr. Kevin Morrison
757-484-7335
kmorrison@clusterparishes.com

Wedding Coordinator

Rev. Mr. Mark Harriman
757-977-4398
Mahk58@yahoo.com

Guide for Wedding Photographers & Videographers

The Cluster Parishes want to cooperate with you in providing a photographic record of the marriage of this couple. We do ask that you and your staff remain keenly aware that this marriage ceremony is a sacrament of the Church and should be approached with reverence.

The following policies must be strictly observed:

1. One flash photograph may be taken of the bride and her escort as they enter the church and one of the bride and groom as they leave they church.
2. No other flash photographs may be taken during or before the service in the church.
3. Photographers may use the organ loft (not applicable at Holy Angels or Resurrection) to take pictures during the wedding ceremony but must follow the organist's directions as to placement of cameras, etc.
4. Photographers and videographers must speak with Wedding Coordinator regarding where they should be during the liturgy. They must not be in the center aisle.
5. Special lighting cannot be used during the service.
6. You will be allotted up to 45 minutes for photographs after the wedding. The priest will remain available for photographs for the first five minutes. On Saturdays, you **must have all pictures completed no later than 2:45 P.M., so as not to impact Reconciliation and Mass schedules.**
7. Photography before the wedding must be completed so that the liturgy may begin on time.
8. The church is an appropriate environment for taking "formal" photographs after the service. No humorous, romantic, or stylized (e.g., groups sitting on altar steps) should be taken in respect for the reverence of the sacred space.
9. Decorum must be observed at all times while photographs are being taken. This is not only good manners but also shows respect for sacred space.