



# St. Mary Cathedral Marriage Preparation Guide



St. Mary Cathedral Parish  
606 N Ohio Ave.  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
(989) 732-5448



ST. MARY CATHEDRAL  
Gaylord, Michigan

Congratulations on your engagement!

Truly, this is an exciting time for you and your fiancée. The vocation to marriage is beautiful and life changing. According to the Catholic Church, it is the call by which a man and a woman enter into a lifelong covenant for their own wellbeing and for the procreation and upbringing of children. By its nature it should be **rooted in charity** and be **open to life**. *“The vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator. Marriage is not a purely human institution despite the many variations it may have undergone through the centuries in different cultures, social structures and spiritual attitudes” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1603).*

We look forward to meeting you and assisting you as you prepare for your wedding. Since the vocation to marriage is of such importance, we invite you to read through the Marriage Guidelines listed below. These will guide you through this wonderful journey of preparation and help to ensure a successful lifelong partnership in Christ. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

May Our Lady of Mount Carmel intercede for you and take you and your fiancée by the hand during this precious time of preparation.

Sincerely yours in Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Matthew Wigton  
Rector

## How to choose a wedding date and time at the Cathedral?

<http://www.catholicweddinghelp.com/wedding-planning/04-setting-date.htm>

**Time:** The time for weddings on Saturdays are: 9:00am, 11:00am, or 1:00pm.

The time for weekday weddings are the same as for Saturdays.

*Note:* Weddings may also take place during the Sunday Masses.

Your wedding date **MUST** be at least **6 months** from the time you contact the parish office with your request. If you do not hear from the parish staff within three business days after you submit the online form, please contact the parish office at (989) 732-5448.

First, fill out the Marriage Registration form at:

<https://www.stmarycathedral.org/marriage>

After we receive your contact information and the date of inquiry, the Cathedral Staff will contact you about confirming the date. **PLEASE DO NOT** schedule your reception until you have heard back from the parish office and please note that the date is not confirmed until a donation has been received: \$400.00 for parishioners and \$1,000.00 for non-parishioners. This donation covers the sacramental stipend, the use of the facilities, the Cathedral organist stipend and cost of clean-up. A separate donation for the priest is optional. If finances are an issue, please do not hesitate to explain your situation to the priest in one of your meetings.

At least one of the spouses has to be Catholic and non-parishioners with little to no connections to the parish are required to bring their own priest to celebrate the marriage. All visiting clergy from other Dioceses need to provide a Letter of Good Standing to the Diocese of Gaylord prior to the Wedding.

## The Marriage Preparation Process

### **Marriage Preparation Outside the Diocese of Gaylord**

Those who are living in another diocese will be prepared in the parish where they reside. You must contact the parish where you attend and start your marriage preparation. This will include filling out a Pre-Marriage Inventory File, FOCCUS, Baptismal Certificates with notifications, and Marriage Preparation Attestation (with any notes). You must complete the requirements of your local diocese. The priest, deacon, or layperson who is helping you in this process will mail your Marriage File to the Tribunal of your local diocese. They will certify it and mail it to the Tribunal of the Diocese of Gaylord. Then the Tribunal of Gaylord will also certify it and deliver it to the Cathedral. Please allow extra time for this process. The Marriage File must be at St. Mary Cathedral **ONE MONTH** before the wedding.

### **Marriage Preparation outside of the Cathedral but within the Diocese of Gaylord**

If you are being prepared at another parish please have the priest, deacon or layperson, mail the Marriage File with the Pre-Marriage Inventory File, FOCCUS, Baptismal Certificates with notifications, and Marriage Preparation Attestation (with any notes) to the Cathedral at least **ONE MONTH** before the wedding is to take place. This will allow sufficient time for us to review the file and to make sure everything is in order.

### **Marriage Preparation at the Cathedral**

Once we receive your online Marriage Registration form, we will email you the Pre-Marriage Inventory File and *FOCCUS Couple Inventory*. The FOCCUS must be completed by both the bride and the groom separately. Following the completion of the FOCCUS, you will be contacted by one of the Cathedral priests in order to set up an initial meeting. Please remember to leave at least 6 months before your wedding for your marriage preparation and the needed paper work. There are a total of 10 meetings with the priest and this includes the rehearsal. There is a Natural Family Planning course and 3 meetings with a mentor couple.

### **Initial Meeting**

The first meeting with the priest provides an opportunity for him to get to know you and vice versa. It is also to verify the completion of Pre-Marriage Inquiry, to discuss the marriage preparation process and answer any questions you might have.

The Cathedral Office is located in the Diocese of Gaylord Pastoral Center  
611 West North Street Gaylord, MI 49735

### **The 2nd Meeting**

The second meeting is to go over the results of your FOCCUS Couple Inventory with the priest. The FOCCUS Inventory is a great tool for understanding where both you and your spouse stand regarding some important marital topics. It also helps facilitate discussion in order to work through your differences with good communication. The topics are mainly: Communication, Problem Solving, Family Origin, Finances, Readiness, Intimacy, Parenting, Religion, Spirituality, Values, Friends and Interests.

### **The 3rd-8th Meetings**

The next six meetings are to go over the *Beloved Series 1&2*. There are 12 videos (roughly 20 minutes each), so each meeting you will go over two of the videos. They are to be watched at home and then discussed in the meeting. The *Beloved Series* can be found on [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org). There is also an app for your phone/tablet called *Formed*.

### **Attend a Natural Family Planning Course**

- The priest will explain this in your initial meeting or when you go over *FOCCUS*.
- Every engaged couple is required to attend a course on Natural Family Planning (NFP).
- Couples will be instructed on the *Creighton Model* of Natural Family Planning. [www.creightonmodel.com](http://www.creightonmodel.com)
- The course is conducted by certified NFP instructors.

### **Meet with your mentor couple**

Each couple will be paired with a mentor couple from the parish. The hope is to have a couple that you can turn to in good times and in bad during the course of your marriage. This is your opportunity to ask your mentor couple any question you desire. The following are some possible topics of discussion: communication issues, financial issues, intimacy issues, merging households, moving in together (cohabiting already - how marriage will be different than your current living arrangement), spirituality, living your faith, conflict and resolutions, etc...

You will be required to meet with your mentor couple a minimum of 3 times, twice before your wedding and once a few months after your wedding.

### **The Ninth Meeting**

This meeting is to plan your wedding by selecting the Readings, the form of consent you would like to use and any other options that may be available.

All readings for weddings can be found at <https://www.foryourmarriage.org/readings/>

You will need to pick

- 1) Old Testament (1st Reading)
- 2) Psalm
- 3) New Testament (2nd Reading)
- 4) Gospel

### **The Final Meeting**

The rehearsal will be the day before the wedding at 5pm. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered to the Bride, Groom and wedding party.

Going to Confession is a wonderful way to open your heart and mind to the Lord's merciful presence. As a powerful means of God's grace, this Sacrament reconciles us with God, who in turn unites us with each other in ways impossible for us on our own. Couples who discover the grace of this Sacrament naturally become more humble and loving toward one another.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available at the Cathedral at additional times:

Wednesday at 5:30pm

Fridays at 12:00pm

Saturdays at 3:30pm

(If reasons warrant it, The Diocese of Gaylord offers Marriage Preparation classes twice a year in the format of a weekend. Information can be found on Diocese of Gaylord website. <http://www.dioceseofgaylord.org/matrimony-preparation-146/>)

## **Important Contact Information**

Parish Office: (989) 732-5448 | [parishoffice@stmarycathedral.org](mailto:parishoffice@stmarycathedral.org)

Wayne Wyrembelski, Director of Music: (989) 705-3580 | [waynej@stmarycathedral.org](mailto:waynej@stmarycathedral.org)

Tribunal: (989) 705-3501

Diocese of Gaylord: (989) 732-5147