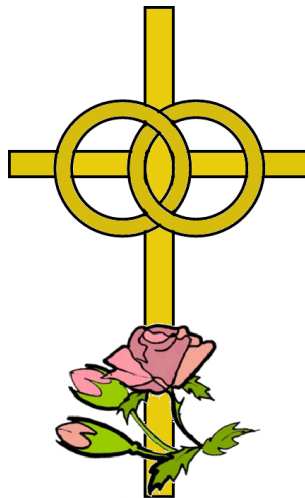




*A man shall leave his father and mother and  
be joined to his wife, and the two shall become  
one flesh... Therefore what God has joined  
together, no human being must separate.*

Mark 10:7-9

# **PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE: YOUR WEDDING CEREMONY... THE REST OF YOUR LIFE**



**Our Lady of Guadalupe Church  
La Habra, California**

Revised 9/13/2022

*Holy Father, who formed man in your own image, male and female you created them, so that as husband and wife, united in body and heart, they might fulfill their calling in the world... Graciously stretch out your right hand over these your servants, we pray, and pour into their hearts the power of the Holy Spirit. Grant, O Lord, that as they enter upon this sacramental union, they may share with one another the gifts of your love and, by being for each other a sign of your presence, become one heart and one mind.*

Nuptial Blessing, *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* 207



# Preparing for Marriage: Your Wedding Ceremony ... the Rest of Your Life

Revised September 13, 2022

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church  
900 West La Habra Boulevard  
La Habra, CA 90631-5398  
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*Congratulations on your upcoming Marriage! God has already been present and active in your relationship - when you met one another for the first time, when you started dating and getting to know one another, when you got engaged and started to prepare for Marriage. We, the parish community of Our Lady of Guadalupe, are committed to being an instrument of God's help and grace in your lives as you prepare for Catholic Christian Marriage.*

*This pamphlet provides some essential information about wedding ceremonies here at OLG. We look forward to celebrating your wedding with you and praying for God to pour his grace upon you as you become husband and wife and form a new family.*

**Please note:** Many brides and grooms are blessed to have family, friends and/or professional wedding coordinators helping them plan their wedding day (e.g., arranging for reception sites, caterers, florists, photographers, limousine companies, etc.). However, in terms of everything having to do with your wedding ceremony here at OLG, you, the bride and groom, must deal directly with the parish, including meeting with the officiating priest or deacon, church wedding coordinator and church musicians. In addition, although professional wedding coordinators are always welcome in our church to worship and may attend weddings as guests, they are to have absolutely no role anywhere on the parish property either in the planning of the wedding or the wedding ceremony itself.

## **Preliminary Preparations**

### **Confirmation and First Communion**

Adult Catholics seeking Marriage in the Catholic Church normally should have already received all three Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion. (In the Diocese of Orange – and in most dioceses in the United States – it is expected that parents have their children baptized as infants, receive First Communion in second grade, and be confirmed in tenth grade.) The official *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* provides that “Catholics who have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation are to receive it to complete their Christian Initiation before they are admitted to Marriage if this can be done without grave inconvenience” (*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, Prenotanda 18; see also Code of Canon Law can. 1065 §1). A Catholic party who has not received all three Sacraments of Initiation is less likely to be sufficiently knowledgeable or formed in the faith to be able either to live the faith him- or herself or properly to raise his or her children in the faith.

Catholic adults who have not completed their Sacraments of Initiation are therefore strongly advised to do so as soon as possible (and not wait until the possibility of Marriage in the Catholic Church is on the horizon). Please note that for adults, preparation for Confirmation and/or First Communion (including classes and spiritual formation) normally requires at least a year prior to their celebration during the Easter Season. See the parish website or call the Parish Office for more information about adult Sacraments of Initiation.

If you are a baptized Catholic for whom it would be a “grave inconvenience” to complete your Sacraments of Initiation before your wedding day, please discuss with your officiating priest or deacon the possibility of delaying completion of your Sacraments of Initiation until after your wedding.

### **Previous Marriages**

If you were previously married in any form (whether or not in a Catholic Church), it is likely that we will have to complete some documents regarding your previous marriage and submit them to the Marriage Tribunal of the Diocese. We will not be able to schedule your wedding until those documents have been processed and the Marriage Tribunal has given permission for you to enter into Marriage. This processing time will vary depending upon the particular circumstances of

your previous marriage. It would be advisable for you to talk with a priest or deacon and get this process started as soon as possible – preferably even before you register for Marriage.

### **First Steps toward Entering Into Marriage: Registration and Wedding Orientation Meeting**

Your first step toward entering into Marriage here at OLG is to complete a “Registration for Marriage” form and submit it to the Parish Office. The “Registration for Marriage” form is available both in the Parish Office and on the “Marriage” webpage of the parish website.

You then will be scheduled to attend a wedding orientation meeting, at which general information will be provided about wedding ceremonies, Marriage preparation and necessary documentation. The wedding orientation meeting also will include time for questions.

### **Starting to Gather Necessary Documents**

There are certain documents that you will be required to gather or complete and then submit to your officiating priest or deacon, and the sooner you do so, the sooner you will be able to take this off of your wedding "to-do" list. The necessary documents include the following:

**1. Baptismal Certificate.** For each Catholic party (bride or groom), an original (i.e., not a photocopy) of his or her baptismal certificate, newly issued by the church of baptism within the last six months. (A non-Catholic Christian bride or groom also is requested to submit a baptismal certificate if possible.) Baptized brides and grooms should bring their baptismal certificates to their first meeting with their officiating priest or deacon. A Catholic party experiencing difficulty obtaining a baptismal certificate should discuss this with his or her officiating priest or deacon as soon as possible. For several reasons, the baptismal certificate for each Catholic party is one of the most important documents that must be submitted for Catholic Christian Marriage, so alternatives will be considered only if obtaining a baptismal certificate would be virtually impossible, not merely inconvenient.

**2. First Communion and Confirmation Certificates.** For each Catholic party, copies of his or her First Communion and Confirmation certificates (as applicable). Catholic brides and grooms should bring copies of their First Communion and Confirmation certificates to their first meeting with their officiating priest or deacon.

**3. Testimony of Witness.** The bride and groom will need two persons each to sign a completed “Testimony of Witness” form in the presence of a priest, deacon or notary public (for a total of four forms – two for the bride and two for the groom). In signing this form, the witnessing person attests that the bride or groom has never been married before (whether civilly or in a church ceremony), or if there are previous marriages, provides basic information about each previous marriage. The witnessing person also attests that, to the best of his or her knowledge, the bride or groom has the intention to enter into a valid Catholic Christian Marriage (with proper consent, etc.). The best persons to complete “Testimony of Witness” forms are parents or older siblings. Life-long friends also can complete these forms. Persons who have not known the groom or bride for most of his or her life cannot serve as witnesses for purposes of these forms. Please note that the “witnesses” completing the “Testimony of Witness” forms can be – and usually are – different from the two persons who will serve as the official witnesses to the Marriage (best man, maid of honor, padrinos de velación, etc.). (Requirements for these two official witnesses at the wedding ceremony are discussed below.)

In addition to the above documents, you each will complete a “Prenuptial Investigation” form with your officiating priest or deacon. This form covers some basic information about the bride and groom and the essential requirements for Catholic Christian Marriage. This form will be discussed at your first appointment with your officiating priest or deacon.

### **First Appointment with Your Officiating Priest or Deacon**

After the wedding orientation meeting, you should contact the Parish Office to make an appointment with the priest or deacon whom you would like to officiate at your wedding. (As discussed below, a deacon can officiate at your wedding only if it will be Matrimony without Mass. If your wedding will be Matrimony within Mass, your officiant must be a priest.) At the first appointment with your priest or deacon, he will officially schedule your wedding and discuss with you the Marriage preparation process.

Please note that your wedding will be scheduled no earlier than six months from the date of your first appointment with the priest or deacon (proper preparation for Catholic Christian Marriage requires at least that amount of time). Therefore, it is advisable that you begin making your arrangements with the church as soon as you get engaged

to marry (complete the "Registration for Marriage" form, schedule the wedding orientation meeting, etc.).

Please also note that if the priest or deacon you choose to officiate at your wedding is unable to do so for some reason (for example, if he is transferred to another parish before your wedding), another authorized priest or deacon will be assigned to officiate at your wedding. Although we promise that an authorized priest or deacon will be provided to officiate at your wedding, we cannot promise that a particular priest or deacon will be available to do so.

If you would like a visiting priest or deacon to officiate at your wedding (for example, because he is a member of your family or a close family friend), please note that this must be discussed with and approved by the pastor.

Sometime after your first appointment with your officiating priest or deacon, the church wedding coordinator assigned to your wedding will contact you to assist you in planning your wedding.

### **Donation for Your Wedding**

Because Our Lady of Guadalupe is a parish community, not a vendor, and because sacraments are not “for sale,” we do not speak of “charging for weddings” or “fees for wedding.” But there is a required donation for weddings to help cover the cost of the service provided, including the cost of the officiating priest or deacon and wedding coordinator. This does not include the cost of music for the wedding ceremony – please see below for information about those costs.

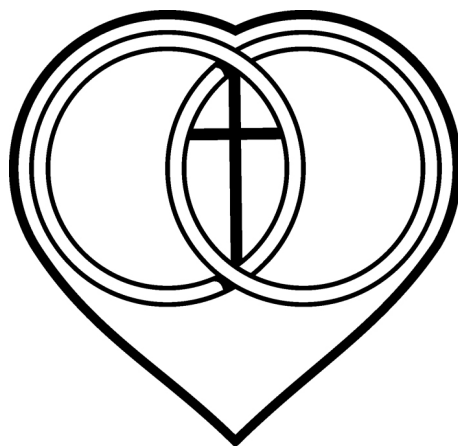
#### ***Regular donation for wedding: \$1,000.00***

- \$500 nonrefundable deposit due within two weeks of scheduling the wedding – the date will not be reserved unless the deposit is paid – with the remainder due no later than one month before the wedding. In addition, date will not be reserved until completion of any required canonical process (e.g., annulment) regarding any previous marriage (civil or religious), or if there are any other impediments to a valid Marriage in the Catholic Church.
- Donation amount includes officiating priest or deacon and church wedding coordinator.



***Discounted donation for wedding of a son or daughter of a practicing Catholic parishioner: \$600.00***

- Available if the father and/or mother of the bride or groom –
  1. Has been registered as a parishioner of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, La Habra, for at least one year at the time of the scheduling of the wedding (NOT the date of the wedding) AND
  2. Has regularly attended Sunday Mass at OLG (Sunday Mass obligation does not apply in the case of infirmity or other just cause) AND
  3. In a spirit of Christian stewardship, has contributed regularly to the life of the parish community from his or her time, talent and/or treasure.
- \$100 nonrefundable deposit due within two weeks of scheduling the wedding – the date will not be reserved unless the deposit is paid – with the remainder due no later than one month before the wedding. In addition, date will not be reserved until completion of any required canonical process (e.g., annulment) regarding any previous marriage (civil or religious), or if there are any other impediments to a valid Marriage in the Catholic Church.
- Donation amount includes officiating priest or deacon and church wedding coordinator.



***Discounted donation for wedding of a practicing Catholic parishioner: \$500.00***

- Available if the groom and/or bride –
  1. Has been registered as a parishioner of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, La Habra, for at least one year at the time of the scheduling of the wedding (NOT the date of the wedding) AND
  2. Has regularly attended Sunday Mass at OLG (Sunday Mass obligation does not apply in the case of infirmity or other just cause) AND
  3. In a spirit of Christian stewardship, has contributed regularly to the life of the parish community from his or her time, talent and/or treasure.
- \$100 nonrefundable deposit due within two weeks of scheduling the wedding – the date will not be reserved unless the deposit is paid – with the remainder due no later than one month before the wedding. In addition, date will not be reserved until completion of any required canonical process (e.g., annulment) regarding any previous marriage (civil or religious), or if there are any other impediments to a valid Marriage in the Catholic Church.
- Donation amount includes officiating priest or deacon and church wedding coordinator.

***Donation for simple wedding: \$200.00***

- A “simple wedding” consists of “The Order of Celebrating Matrimony without Mass” or “The Order of Celebrating Matrimony between a Catholic and a Catechumen or a Non-Christian” (see below for description of these forms of wedding ceremonies), but without Mass, music, a processional or recessional.
- Donation to be paid in full before Marriage preparation begins.
- There is no church wedding coordinator for a “simple wedding” ceremony.

***Fee for Marriage preparation for wedding to take place in another church: \$200***

- To be paid in full before Marriage preparation begins.

**Marriage Preparation**

Since you desire to enter into Catholic Christian Marriage, we presume that you believe that we need God's help and grace in every part of our lives, including in our Marriages and family lives. It is also our Catholic Christian belief that for God's grace to be most efficacious - including God's grace given to us in Marriage - we need to be prepared to receive God's grace and act upon it (we sometimes call this "cooperating with God's grace"). This is what Marriage preparation is all about - preparing to receive God's grace in Marriage and make the most of it.

All couples married here at OLG are prepared for marriage using the "Witness to Love" process. "Witness to Love," as it describes itself on its website, "is a virtues-based, Catechumenate model of marriage renewal and preparation that integrates modern principles of psychology and the virtues to help couples facilitate an authentic dialogue about their relationship." The "Witness to Love" process consists of a series of meetings with a mentor couple, our parish "Witness to Love" team members, and the priest or deacon who will be officiating at the wedding, as well as a weekend retreat with other couples preparing for marriage. A parish "Witness to Love" team member contacts couples soon after their first meeting with their priest or deacon to begin this process and to answer any questions they may have.

We highly recommend that you obtain training in Natural Family Planning ("NFP"), a method of managing your sexual relations as husband and wife so as to affect the number and timing of children. In the Questions Before the Consent at your wedding ceremony, you will state that you are "prepared to accept children lovingly from God and to bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church" (*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* 60). This is required for the validity of your Marriage in the Catholic Church, so an intent to use artificial birth control during your married life could undermine the validity of your Marriage. NFP is Catholic-approved and Catholic sponsored. See the parish website or contact the Parish Office for more information about NFP training.

Catholic brides and grooms are encouraged to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) a week or so before their wedding to prepare spiritually to enter into Marriage. Plan ahead, go to Confession at one of the regularly-scheduled times here at OLG or another parish, and encourage your family and friends to do the same. Do not wait until the last minute and then expect that a priest will be available to hear your Confession only hours before your wedding.

As you plan and prepare for your wedding, please consider the wise counsel of Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (On Love in the Family) 212:

Short-term preparations for marriage tend to be concentrated on invitations, clothes, the party and any number of other details that tend to drain not only the budget but energy and joy as well. The spouses come to the wedding ceremony exhausted and harried, rather than focused and ready for the great step that they are about to take. The same kind of preoccupation with a big celebration also affects certain de facto unions; because of the expenses involved, the couple, instead of being concerned above all with their love and solemnizing it in the presence of others, never get married. Here let me say a word to fiancés. Have the courage to be different. Don't let yourselves get swallowed up by a society of consumption and empty appearances. What is important is the love you share, strengthened and sanctified by grace. You are capable of opting for a more modest and simple celebration in which love takes precedence over everything else.

### **Planning Your Wedding Liturgy**

#### **Working with Your Officiating Priest or Deacon and Church Wedding Coordinator to Plan the Liturgy**

As part of your Marriage preparation, you will work with your officiating priest or deacon and church wedding coordinator to plan your wedding liturgy (including selection of Scripture readings, form of Marriage promises and other elements of the wedding liturgy). Your officiating priest or deacon will provide you with the booklet, *Together for Life* (*Juntos para toda la Vida* in Spanish) which contains the various options for wedding liturgies, and the wedding liturgy selections

form on which to indicate your selections. (You will discuss musical selections for your wedding with our parish musicians, as discussed below.)

Both bride and groom should read through wedding liturgy planning materials and be part of the decision-making process: This is not just the bride's wedding or the groom's wedding – it takes two to make a Marriage!!! Planning the wedding liturgy is excellent spiritual preparation for Marriage, with both the bride and groom reading through the various options for Scripture readings, form of Marriage promises, Nuptial Blessing and other elements of the wedding liturgy, discussing them together, praying over them together, and then making mutual decisions about their selections. Planning the wedding liturgy together also is a good way for the bride and groom to practice those communication skills that will be essential to making important decisions together in married life.

### **Form of Wedding Ceremony**

The decision about the form of your wedding ceremony, including whether it will be within Mass or without Mass, depends on whether both of you are baptized Catholics or just one of you, as well as other considerations. (See the boxes on the following pages for more information about the different forms of wedding liturgies.)

***If both bride and groom are baptized Catholics***, the wedding liturgy may and should be the “Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass” (although the “Order of Celebrating Matrimony without Mass” also may be used). Through “Eucharistic Communion of both spouses and of others present ... their charity is nurtured and they are raised up to communion with the Lord and with their neighbor” (*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, Prenotanda 35).

***For Marriage between a Catholic and a baptized member of another Christian denomination***, the wedding liturgy normally will be the “Order of Celebrating Matrimony without Mass.” The “Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass” ***normally is not*** used in this situation because “the day that should reflect the unity of the couple can be ritually compromised when only one is able to receive the Eucharist.” However, with the permission of the Bishop of Orange, the “Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass” also may be used for marriage between a Catholic and a baptized Christian of another Christian denomination if “there is a genuine desire motivated by sincere faith on the part of the interfaith couple to solemnize their union within the con-

text of the Eucharist” (Pastoral Guidelines for the Order of Celebrating Matrimony, Second Typical Edition, Diocese of Orange).

**Please note:** Neither a Mass nor Holy Communion is required for a Marriage to be a valid Catholic Marriage. A Catholic Marriage entered into within a celebration of Matrimony without Mass (and without Holy Communion) is as valid and Catholic as a Marriage entered into in a celebration of Matrimony within Mass.

***For Marriage between a Catholic and person who has not been baptized (including catechumens),*** the wedding liturgy normally will be the “Order of Celebrating Matrimony between a Catholic and a Catechumen or a Non-Christian.”

### **The Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass**

Always officiated by a priest.

Includes –

- The Introductory Rites, including the procession (normally down the center aisle with accompanying music) of the priest and other ministers, the wedding party, and the bride and groom (accompanied by their parents, if they so choose).
- The Liturgy of the Word, in which the bride, groom and assembly hear God’s Word about the ways God pours his grace upon married couples and helps them in their married lives.
- The exchange of Consent (Marriage promises) by the bride and groom, in which they are united in Marriage as husband and wife.
- The Blessing and Giving of Rings and the optional Blessing and Giving of *Arras*.
- The Liturgy of the Eucharist, in which the Nuptial Blessing is imparted upon the bride and groom (with the optional Blessing and Placing of the *Lazo* or the Veil), followed by Holy Communion.
- The Conclusion of the Celebration, including a solemn blessing of the bride and groom and departure from the church of the bride and groom and wedding party (normally down the center aisle with accompanying music).

## Language of Your Wedding Liturgy

Your wedding liturgy may be in English, Spanish or bilingual English and Spanish. The predominant language of your wedding liturgy should be your preferred language as a couple (the language that the two of you speak in conversation with one another when no one else is around). Your preferred language as a couple ***must be*** used for the Questions before the Consent, Consent, Blessing and Giving of Rings and Optional Blessing and Giving of *Arras*.

## Witnesses to the Marriage

A valid Marriage in the Catholic Church requires two witnesses (Code of Canon Law, can. 1108 §1). These two witnesses are sometimes known as the "best man," "maid of honor," "matron of honor," "padrinos de velación" or by other names in different cultures. (As noted above, these two witnesses to the Marriage can be - and usually are -

### **The Order of Celebrating Matrimony without Mass**

May be officiated by a priest or deacon.

Includes –

- The Introductory Rites, including the procession (normally down the center aisle with accompanying music) of the priest or deacon and other ministers, the wedding party, and the bride and groom (accompanied by their parents, if they so choose).
- The Liturgy of the Word, in which the bride, groom and assembly hear God's Word about the ways God pours his grace upon married couples and helps them in their married lives.
- The exchange of Consent (Marriage promises) by the bride and groom, in which they are united in Marriage as husband and wife.
- The Blessing and Giving of Rings and the optional Blessing and Giving of *Arras*.
- The Nuptial Blessing imparted upon the bride and groom (with the optional Blessing and Placing of the *Lazo* or the Veil).
- The Conclusion of the Celebration, including the departure from the church of the bride and groom and wedding party (normally down the center aisle with accompanying music).

different from the “witnesses” for the "Testimony of Witness" forms completed earlier in the Marriage preparation process.)

There are only two official witnesses to the Marriage: these same two witnesses walk just before the bride and groom in the opening procession, stand on either side of the bride and groom as they exchange their Marriage promises, remain close by the bride and groom throughout the wedding ceremony, sign the marriage license after the wedding ceremony (when applicable), and are recorded in the parish Marriage records as the official witnesses to the particular Marriage.

### **Processional**

The wedding liturgy begins with the procession from the vestibule up the center aisle, in the following order:

1. Officiating priest or deacon

### **The Order of Celebrating Matrimony between a Catholic and a Catechumen or a Non-Christian**

May be officiated by a priest or deacon.

Includes –

- The Rite of Reception, including the procession (normally down the center aisle with accompanying music) of the priest or deacon and other ministers, the wedding party, and the bride and groom (accompanied by their parents, if they so choose).
- The Liturgy of the Word, in which the bride, groom and assembly hear God’s Word about the ways God pours his grace upon married couples and helps them in their married lives.
- The exchange of Consent (Marriage promises) by the bride and groom, in which they are united in Marriage as husband and wife.
- The Blessing and Giving of Rings and the optional Blessing and Giving of *Arras*.
- The Nuptial Blessing imparted upon the bride and groom (with the optional Blessing and Placing of the *Lazo* or the Veil).
- The Conclusion of the Celebration, including the departure from the church of the bride and groom and wedding party (normally down the center aisle with accompanying music).



2. Attendants – up to eight couples or processing individually – who proceed into the front pews reserved for them. These attendants may include bridesmaids, groomsmen, godparents (*padrinos*), ring bearers, flower girls, parents of the bride and groom (if they do not accompany the bride and groom in the procession), etc. Ring bearers and/or flower girls should be of sufficient age to conduct themselves properly in the church. Flower petals may not be dropped or thrown on the floor of the church. The two official witnesses to the Marriage are not included in this number – they process just before the bride and groom.
3. The two official witnesses to the Marriage, who proceed to their places in the center of the sanctuary.
4. The bride and groom, who can process in one of two ways:
  - a. The bride and groom accompanying one another, proceeding to their places in the center of the sanctuary, or
  - b. First the groom (who can be accompanied by his parent(s)) and then the bride (who can be accompanied by her parent(s)) (the bride and groom meeting in the center aisle just before they proceed together to the center of the sanctuary, while the parents, if they accompany the bride and groom, proceed into the front pews reserved for them).

All other wedding guests must be seated in the church prior to the scheduled starting time of the wedding. Guests of honor may be seated prior to the opening procession with special accompanying music. To allow for a more orderly seating of the guests and for the wedding ceremony to start on time, the guest book should not be placed at the church but rather should be made available at the wedding reception.

### **Liturgy of the Word**

As discussed above, you are encouraged to discern and select the Scripture readings that will be proclaimed at your wedding liturgy during your Marriage preparation. You also may choose one or two readers for the Scripture readings. The text for these will be provided in a binder placed on the ambo on your wedding day but also can be found (for preparation and practice) in “Readings and Prayers for Matrimony” on the “Marriage” webpage of the parish website.

During the Liturgy of the Word on your wedding day, you and your two official witnesses will be seated in chairs on the west side of the sanctuary.

### **Exchange of Consent**

You may choose from several options for the exchange of Consent, in English or Spanish. Whichever option you choose, it is recommended that each of you speak the words of Consent to one another with the help of your officiating priest or deacon (with the priest or deacon giving you the words of Consent one phrase at a time so that you can repeat after him). If you are reasonably good at memorization, you can also say the words of Consent to one another from memory (with the officiating priest or deacon ready to give you prompts if necessary).

There is the option of having the officiating priest or deacon obtain your Consent in the form of a question, to which your response is "I do." This is not recommended, however – your consent to one another is much more powerful if you are speaking those words yourself, not just saying "I do" in response to the priest or deacon.

### **Blessing and Giving of Rings and Optional Blessing and Giving of *Arras***

Following the exchange of Consent is the Blessing and Giving of Rings to one another. Following the Blessing and Giving of Rings, there is an optional Blessing and Giving of *Arras* (coins), if you so desire.

### **Use of Microphone**

If you so desire, you may be miked with a handheld microphone held by an altar server or your officiating priest or deacon for the Questions before the Consent, the Consent, the Blessing and Giving of Rings, and the optional Blessing and Giving of the *Arras*. The volume on the handheld microphone is set high enough that you will be heard over the sound system of the church as long as you "speak up" so as to project your voice. Although it is laudible and an expression of hospitality to want your family and friends to be able to hear you during this part of your wedding liturgy, it is essential only that you be heard by your two official witnesses, by your officiating priest or deacon, and especially by one another. Someone who has not had experience with microphones may find it intimidating to hear his or her voice coming over the sound system (which often causes a person to speak more and more quietly, defeating the purpose of having the microphone in the

first place). In this case it would be well advised not to use a microphone at all. The microphone will not be held "in your face," even if this is the only way for your voice to be heard over the microphone. (This obviously is a very important point in the liturgy that should be prayerful and dignified, not looking like you are being interviewed.) If you choose to be miked during this part of your wedding liturgy, the wedding coordinator will practice this with you at your rehearsal.

### **Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful)**

You may choose one of two forms of the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful). You also may choose a reader for the Universal Prayer. The text for the Universal Prayer will be provided in a binder placed on the ambo on your wedding day but also can be found (for preparation and practice) in "Readings and Prayers for Matrimony" on the "Marriage" webpage of the parish website. Because the Universal Prayer is done in a specific liturgical manner – with invocations and responses of the assembly – it is recommended that you choose a reader for this who is an experienced lector in a Catholic Church. If there is no one among your family and friends with that qualification, it is recommended that you have your officiating priest or deacon lead the Universal Prayer himself.



## **Presentation of Gifts**

If your wedding is Matrimony within Mass, you may choose two persons to bring forward the gifts of bread and wine at the Presentation of Gifts. A few other persons may accompany the two bringing forward the gifts (if, for example, a particular family/group will bring forward the gifts). The two persons carrying the bread and wine should be old enough and mature enough to carry these items easily.

## **Nuptial Blessing and Optional Blessing and Placing of the *Lazo* or the Veil**

The Nuptial Blessing (after the Lord's Prayer) is "the venerable prayer by which the blessing of God is invoked upon the bride and bridegroom" (*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, Prenotanda 35). You may choose from several options for this Nuptial Blessing (except in the case of Matrimony between a Catholic and a Catechumen or a Non-Christian, in which there is only one option for the Nuptial Blessing). Although each of the options for the Nuptial Blessing is an authentic expression of Catholic theology and spirituality of Marriage, each expresses unique ideas and concepts. As discussed above, it is recommended that you select the Nuptial Blessing that will be used at your wedding liturgy as part of your Marriage preparation – discussing and sharing with one another the different ideas and concepts in the Nuptial Blessings that are meaningful to you and then deciding together on the particular Nuptial Blessing for your wedding liturgy.

There is an option of having a Blessing and Placing of the *Lazo* or the Veil before the Nuptial Blessing, if you so desire. You may choose two family members or friends to place the *lazo* or veil over your shoulders. The *lazo* or veil is placed just before the Lord's Prayer in Matrimony within Mass and just before the Nuptial Blessing in other wedding liturgies. The *lazo* or veil is removed following the Nuptial Blessing.

## **Sign of Peace**

In a celebration of Matrimony within Mass, the Sign of Peace follows the Nuptial Blessing. At this time, "the bride and bridegroom and all present offer one another a sign that expresses peace and charity" (*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* 75). In our celebration of the Eucharist, a reverent, prayerful exchange of a sign of peace is part of

our immediate preparation to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. In Matrimony within Mass, the bride and groom first exchange a sign of peace with one another with a nuptial kiss, after which they exchange a sign of peace with their witnesses and officiating priest in the sanctuary.

If you like, you may then proceed down to your parents' pews to exchange a sign of peace with them, returning immediately to your places in the sanctuary to prepare for Holy Communion. Please note that this a time for a reverential, prayerful exchange of a sign of peace, not a time to receive congratulations and well wishes from your wedding party, family and friends (there will be plenty of time for that later during the wedding reception). Therefore, if you do not think that you or your wedding party, family and friends will be able to avoid the temptation to have this time disintegrate into mere greetings and conversation, it is highly recommended that you remain at your places in the sanctuary and prepare prayerfully to receive Holy Communion.

### **Optional Veneration at the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

If you wish *and if it is approved in advance by your officiating priest or deacon*, before the Blessing at the End of the Celebration, you may take a bouquet of flowers to the shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary and pray briefly there. It is recommended that you pray the Hail Mary quietly together at the shrine and then return to your place in the sanctuary. During this time, music will sing and/or play the Schubert "Ave Maria" (which is the Latin version of the Hail Mary). You should request this optional veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary *only if you* have an *authentic devotion* to Mary as the Mother of God and our Mother in the Faith. (That your parents, grandparents or other relatives want you to do this is *not* a legitimate reason to include this optional devotional practice in *your* wedding ceremony.) If you request this optional devotional practice for your wedding ceremony, your officiating priest or deacon will discuss this with you and examine the depth of your devotion to Mary, and if such devotion is found wanting, this devotional practice will not be permitted.

### **Solemn Blessing at the Conclusion of the Celebration**

For a celebration of Matrimony within Mass, you may choose from several forms of the Solemn Blessing at the Conclusion of the Celebration.

### **Departure from the Church of the Bride and Groom and Wedding Party (Recessional)**

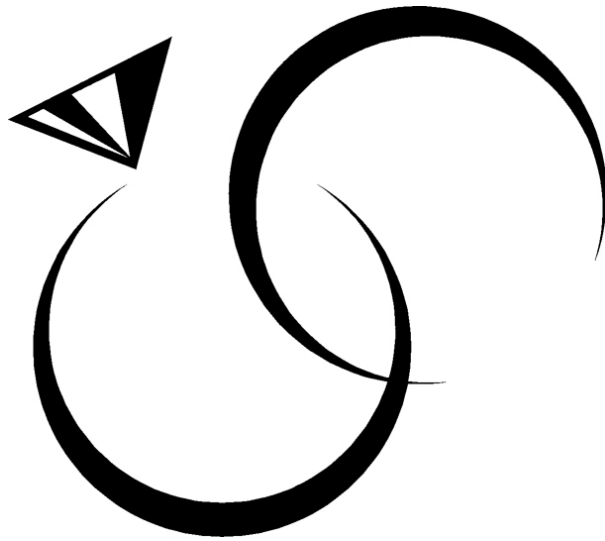
Following the final blessing and dismissal, the following process out of the church down the center aisle, in this order:

1. The bride and groom
2. The two official witnesses to the Marriage
3. The other attendants

Use of rice, confetti, flower petals, birdseed or the like is prohibited both inside and outside the church.

### **Music for Your Wedding**

Since sacred music, especially sung music, is an important part of the prayer of the Church, live music and singing of Christian hymns and songs are encouraged. If you desire music for your wedding, parish



musicians (instrumentalist(s), cantor/soloist, choir, etc.) are available. Following are our parish musicians available for weddings:

<b>Musician(s):</b>	<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Fee:</b>
Charles Welling (principal organist/ pianist)	WellingWeddings@gmail.com	\$250.00
Connie Salazar (cantor/ soloist – cantors at the 10 am Mass most Sundays)	(562) 691-0533 X108	\$250.00
Lalo Guzman (cantor/ soloist and guitarist – cantors at the 8 am and 1:30 pm Masses most Sundays)	(562) 505-0771	\$250.00
Lorraine Welling (cantor/ soloist – cantors at the 5:30 pm Mass most Sat- urdays)	WellingWeddings@gmail.com	\$250.00
Trio Tepeyac (singers/ guitarists) – Lalo Guz- man, Director	(562) 505-0771	\$350.00
Gloria Dei Choir (sings at the 10 am Mass most Sundays) (organist not included)	WellingWeddings@gmail.com	\$600.00

You are responsible for contacting and scheduling the parish musician(s) of your choice from the list above for your wedding. You are highly encouraged to contact your desired musicians at your earliest convenience to ensure their availability for your wedding. Musicians other than the parish's designated musicians generally are not allowed to be involved in music at weddings, although there are rare exceptions (e.g., when a close family member or friend is a trained musician who works as a music minister in another Catholic parish). Please discuss this possibility with your parish musician(s). Mariachis or other musicians may perform only outside of the church after the wedding. Considering the great expense of such music, though, it is recommended to have these musicians perform at the reception instead, where they may be better enjoyed by everyone.

Because tax and labor laws require that musicians for weddings be paid through the parish payroll, the total fees for the musician(s) should be paid to the parish in the Parish Office, which, in turn, will pay the musicians as part of regular payroll.

Your parish musician(s) will discuss with you the various options for sacred music for your wedding and help you make your musical selections. Music “during the Rite of Marriage should be appropriate and should express the faith of the Church” (*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, Prenotanda 30). “Secular music, even though it may emphasize the love of the spouses for one another, is not appropriate for the Sacred Liturgy” (*Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship* 220). Music during wedding liturgies therefore must be sacred in nature. Recorded music also is not allowed during wedding liturgies because “recorded music lacks the authenticity provided by a living liturgical assembly gathered for the Sacred Liturgy” (*Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship* 93). Recorded music, popular songs and other types of secular music are best done at the wedding reception.

### **Marriage License**

California state law and the Church’s Code of Canon Law require a marriage license for each Marriage at Our Lady of Guadalupe (California Family Code §421; Code of Canon Law can. 1071 §1(2)). The priest or deacon who officiates at your wedding at Our Lady of Guadalupe also will “solemnize” your Marriage for civil purposes according to California state law (California Family Code §400(a). (This is unlike some countries where couples normally enter into a civil marriage in a wedding ceremony officiated by a government official separately from their Catholic wedding ceremony, e.g., Mexico.)

A marriage license is valid for 90 days, so you may obtain your marriage license anytime within 90 days of your wedding date. For more information about obtaining a marriage license from the Orange County Clerk-Recorder or Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, visit the following websites:

*Orange County Clerk-Recorder:*

[ocrecorder.com](http://ocrecorder.com)



*Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk:*

[lavote.net](http://lavote.net)





When you apply for your marriage license, if you are asked if you want a civil wedding ceremony as well, indicate “no,” that you just want the marriage license (your wedding ceremony will occur at Our Lady of Guadalupe).

Please bring your marriage license to the Parish Office at least one month prior to your wedding date. (If you are already civilly married, please provide a copy of your civil marriage certificate to your officiating priest or deacon at your first appointment with him.)

If there is some reason that you think that you should enter into a civil marriage prior to your wedding ceremony at Our Lady of Guadalupe, please discuss this beforehand with your officiating priest or deacon. There are times when entering into a civil marriage is opportune for civil legal purposes. Catholics should understand, however, that this is not a valid marriage for them – it is a legal arrangement only, not an authentic Marriage. Therefore, Catholics civilly married in this manner should not act as husband and wife until they are actually married in the Catholic Church (including refraining from sexual relations), nor should they characterize themselves as being married.

### **Rehearsal**

Wedding rehearsals usually occur sometime during the week before the wedding. Parish staff will contact you to schedule your wedding rehearsal. It is essential that as many participants in the wedding as possible attend the rehearsal – the more participants who attend the rehearsal, the smoother and better the wedding will be. Please note that because our church calendar is often full of events, including multiple wedding rehearsals on one evening, it is essential that everyone in your wedding party be on time for your wedding rehearsal. Anyone who is late for the rehearsal may miss important parts of the rehearsal or miss the rehearsal altogether.

### **Importance of Beginning at the Scheduled Starting Time**

Because our church calendar is often packed with back-to-back services, it is imperative that you and all of your attendants be at the church 30 minutes before the scheduled starting time and be ready to begin precisely at the scheduled starting time. If any essential participants in the wedding are late and the starting time has to be delayed, the officiating priest or deacon may, in his sole discretion, delete different parts of the wedding (so as to complete the wedding on time) or, if es-

sential participants are substantially late, cancel the wedding altogether (with no refund).

### **No Use of Alcohol, Marijuana or Illegal Drugs on the Day of the Wedding**

Holy Matrimony should be celebrated joyfully, and alcohol consumed in moderation can add to that celebration at the wedding reception (as it did at the wedding feast of Cana at which Jesus turned water into wine). However, neither the bride nor groom nor any other participants in the wedding liturgy may use alcohol, marijuana or illegal drugs on the day of the wedding prior to the wedding liturgy. If the officiating priest or deacon finds evidence of alcohol, marijuana or illegal drug use on the part of the bride or groom on the wedding day prior to the wedding liturgy, the officiating priest or deacon may cancel the wedding, in his sole discretion. If the officiating priest or deacon or church wedding coordinator finds evidence of alcohol, marijuana or illegal drug use on the part of any of the participants in the wedding liturgy on the wedding day prior to the wedding liturgy, they may be excluded from participation in the wedding liturgy, in the sole discretion of the officiating priest or deacon or church wedding coordinator.

### **Photography and Videography**

Our church is sacred space, consecrated for celebration of the sacraments, worship and prayer. It is not a “venue” for “events.” Photographers and videographers hired for weddings in the church are required to conduct themselves accordingly, in a reverential and respectful manner. Following are the requirements for photographers and videographers at a wedding:

- The bride and groom and their attendants are required to be at the church 30 minutes before the scheduled starting time and ready to begin precisely at the scheduled starting time. This must be taken into account when scheduling any photographs to be taken prior to the wedding ceremony (whether at home, at the church or elsewhere). Pre-ceremony, posed photographs, if any, should be kept to a minimum so that the bride and groom and their attendants can focus on being punctual.
- Photographers and videographers should arrive at the church at least 30 minutes before the wedding ceremony and report immediately to the church coordinator for direction and supervision.

- Photographers and videographers are ***ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED*** from entering into the sanctuary area (the raised area bordered by marble steps around the altar) during the wedding ceremony. Photographers and videographers also are ***ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED*** from going up into the choir loft at the back of the church at any time. Rule of thumb: If you have to step up to go somewhere, you are ***NOT*** supposed to be there!
- Photographers and videographers are never to position themselves in such a way (1) that the pathway of any wedding participant would be blocked in any way (including during the processional and recessional) or (2) that the view of anyone attending the wedding would be blocked in any way. In particular, during the wedding ceremony, photographers and videographers are not to go into the area between the front pews of the nave (the main body of the church) and the first step of the sanctuary (except to cross from one side of the church to the other). In addition, photographers and videographers are ***NEVER*** to stop the flow and forward movement of the processional or recessional to set up or pose a photo or “scene.” (*Please note:* The first kiss of the bride and groom as husband and wife occurs well before the recessional. Therefore, a photographer wishing to capture that first kiss needs to be alert and ready during the ceremony. The photographer also can ask the officiating priest or deacon when that first kiss can be expected during the ceremony so that the photographer can be prepared and ready to take that photo when the time comes. In any event, not only are photographers ***ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED*** from stopping a bride and groom during the recessional and asking them to kiss for a posed photo, but a photographer who would do so would have missed the real thing anyway!)
- Photographers and videographers should make themselves as inconspicuous as possible ***AT ALL TIMES***. This means minimizing movement during the wedding so as not to distract those in attendance from the prayer and worship.
- Posed, post-ceremony photographs may be taken in the church but must be completed 15 minutes after the completion of the ceremony or 1-1/2 hours after the scheduled starting time of the ceremony, whichever comes first. Posed photographs may be taken anytime outside of the church.

It is expected that photographers and videographers will adhere to all of the foregoing requirements in a professional manner. Any pho-

tographer or videographer failing to do so may have to leave church grounds immediately, in the sole discretion of the pastor, the presiding priest or deacon or the church coordinator. For this reason, a bride and groom are advised to consider the professionalism of the photographer and/or videographer when retaining these services. The photographer and/or videographer also should be directed to this pamphlet on the “Marriage” webpage of the parish website so that he or she is well advised and well informed of these requirements.

## **Flowers**

Most would agree that our church is one of the most beautiful in the Los Angeles metropolitan area, especially the huge stained-glass windows that provide vibrant color and light throughout the church. In addition, the parish’s Environment Committee makes sure that the church is always decorated beautifully and appropriately for the season, including plants, flowers, banners and other decorative elements. Indeed, our church is so large, ornate and well decorated that any additional flowers purchased for a wedding almost are lost and might not even be noticed by some guests. For this reason, it is recommended that brides and grooms spend moderately on additional flowers for weddings in the church.

Following are the requirements for flower arrangements for weddings in the church:

- Because the setup time for a wedding is only the 30 minutes prior to the service, floral arrangements for the church should be planned and designed so that they easily can be placed by the florist in 15 minutes or less. (This allows another 15 minutes for the florist to deliver and coordinate bouquets, boutonnieres, corsages, etc.)
- The florist should arrive at the church at least 30 minutes before the wedding and report immediately to the church coordinator for direction and supervision.
- Only two flower arrangements may be placed in the sanctuary, on pillars provided by the parish and placed on either side of the altar. Each pillar is 40 inches tall and has a top surface area that is circular with a diameter of 10 inches. (The church coordinator will show the florist exactly where these arrangements may be placed.) Because the ministers must be able to move around the sanctuary without obstacles, each flower arrangement in the sanctuary must be no larger than 40 inches high and 30 inches wide.



- Flower arrangements to be placed upon the pews must be simple, easily placed, and easily removed within 10 minutes after the wedding. Pew decorations must **HANG** from the pew ends – **NO** tape or tacks. There are to be **NO** ribbon swags or aisle runners.
- Because the center aisle must be clear for the processional and recessional, and because of fire safety regulations, no free-standing flower arrangements are to be placed in the aisles.
- **NO** candles may be used in any flower arrangements, and **NO** candelabra may be used.
- The flowers, plants and other decorative elements placed by the parish Environment Committee are **NOT** to be touched or moved in any manner.
- It is expected that florists will adhere to all of the foregoing requirements in a professional manner. A florist failing to do so may have to leave church grounds immediately, in the sole discretion of the pastor, the presiding priest or deacon or the church coordinator. For this reason, brides and grooms are advised to consider the professionalism of the florist when retaining these services. The florist also should be directed to this pamphlet on the “Marriage” webpage of the parish website so that he or she is well advised and well informed of these requirements.

Sometimes a bride and groom desire to donate the wedding flowers to the church, to be placed somewhere in the church or outside at one of the Marian shrines. This is laudable and appreciated. The church coordinator will receive such donations of flowers and place them appropriately according to the existing decorations in the church and the particular season.



## *Prayer for an Engaged Couple*

*Lord God, wellspring of all love,  
N. and N. have met each other  
through your providential plan.  
Mercifully grant as they seek your grace  
in preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage,  
that, sustained by heavenly blessing,  
they may grow in mutual respect  
and may love each other with true charity.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony 234*

