

# A Preparation Guide for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony



**Holy Family Roman Catholic Church**

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## Prices for a Wedding at Holy Family

Fees are the offerings given to the parish for the use of the facility and to professionals for the services. A *donation* is an offering given to the priest for the Wedding celebration.

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**Ceremony Fee (for the Church) :** **\$350.00**

Payable directly to Holy Family. The Church or Chapel Fees must be *paid in full 30 days prior to your Wedding Ceremony*. The above fee ONLY covers the use of the Church or Chapel facility. To save the date, we will need a \$100 deposit. Please keep all of your receipts.

**Punctuality Fee:** **\$100.00**

This needs to be paid in exact change (cash) and will be returned after the ceremony if the event started on time. We will hold the deposit for five business days. If not picked up *within five business days*, you will lose your deposit.

**Other Fees / Donations (Not Included with the Ceremony Fee)**

The following are additional and separate from the ceremony fee. Most of them need to be paid in cash on the day of the practice, *(the couple may also leave the donation with the office)*.

**Priest Donation:** **\$150.00**

**(Gift of Gratitude)**

It is customary to offer the Priest a donation for the ceremony.

**Wedding Coordinator Donation:** **\$100.00**

**(Gift of Gratitude)**

The ceremony is under the direction of the Priest and the Wedding Coordinator. The Wedding Coordinator conducts the rehearsal and assists on the Wedding Day.

**Music:** Price varies  
(Not Included)

The front office has a list of musicians that currently play at our parish and are available for your Wedding Ceremony.

**Religious Articles & other wedding day necessities:**

**Flowers and Decorations:** (Not Included)

For your ceremony, your wedding coordinator will provide some floral arrangements for the day of your wedding. However, you may bring a florist as well. Any decorative arrangements in the church CANNOT be moved in order to avoid damages. If you have a florist, please arrange with your florist for the set-up and take down of any flowers or pew bows.

**Unity Candle with holders or stand, Lasso or Arras:** (Not Included)

You will need to provide these items if you are including them in your ceremony.

**Bible and Rosary:** (Not Included)

You will need to provide these items if you are including them in your ceremony.

**Photographer and Video:** (Not Included)

A wedding is a time of sacred worship. Please observe the photography & videotaping guidelines on page 16 and provide a copy to your photographer and videographer.

**Getting Married at Holy Family Church**

As Catholic Christians, we believe that God does more than bless the marriage. God calls a man and a woman to each other in marriage. It is God, therefore, who makes the first move. He shares with us His love and life. It is because of God's unbounded love for us that we learn to share this love with one another. God calls couples to a special love for each other and they share his love in lasting fidelity. We call this special union of love *Marriage*.

We believe that Marriage is much more than a legal contract between a man and a woman. It entails more than rights and obligations; promises and commitment. Marriage is a sacrament. This means that God is made real and visible through marriage. The union of marriage reflects the union of Christ and the People of God, the Church. The love that Christ shares with all of us is thus reflected in and made visible through the union of husband and wife.

Our goal in offering preparation for marriage is to do whatever we can to help the engaged couple realize a wonderful, grace-filled and loving marriage, which will endure no matter what the future brings. This is a tall order! However, it is a very necessary one not only for the couple seeking to celebrate the sacrament of marriage, but also for the church community.

All the guidelines and policies found within this booklet have been carefully developed to better ensure a truly beautiful and grace-filled wedding and even more important, a blessed and happy marriage.

## Documents needed before first appointment:

In order for us to start your marriage file, we will need the couple to obtain certain documents. **The couple will need the following documents BEFORE the first meeting with the priest.**

1. **A current copy of your baptismal certificate.** This means you will need to call the church where you were baptized and request for them to send you an updated baptismal certificate dated in the past *six months*. For churches in Mexico, please visit the website of <http://www.cem.org.mx/> for a list of churches addresses and phone numbers.
2. **First Communion and Confirmation certificate,** you will need copies of them as well. Original copies are fine, if you need a copy, you will need to request it from the church where you originally received these sacraments.
3. We will need to have completed and signed the marriage application.

You will need all the above documents in hand before scheduling an appointment with the parish priest.

Appointment Date:

Clergy: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Convalidations

A convalidation, is for those that are married civilly. We need you to bring a copy of your “License and Certificate of Marriage” (Marriage License). All other steps are needed for the marriage process at Holy Family Catholic Church, unless otherwise stated by the celebrant or pastor.

## Marriage License

Every couple needs to obtain a marriage license and Holy Family needs to have the license at the parish office one month (30 days) prior to your wedding date. This is very important to ensure that your wedding ceremony will not be held up, or that the wedding will not be cancelled due to not having a marriage license in your file. Please know that legally and sacramentally the marriage cannot and will not take place without a marriage license. Again, plan so that all necessary documents are submitted in advance of the wedding. A general rule is to do as much ahead of time as you possibly can. There are always so many things to do on the wedding day without worrying about those things that could have been done in advance. We at Holy Family really want the couple to be able to focus on this important and memorable day!

**You may obtain your marriage license from any of these two locations:**

High Desert Government Center

15900 Smoke Tree Street, Hesperia, CA 92345

{855} 732-2575 / (760) 995-8065

OR

County Recorder's Office

222 W. Hospitality Lane, San Bernardino, CA

924151 (855) 732-2575

## Marriage Preparation Process

Preparation for a lifetime commitment in marriage is so important, therefore, the Diocese of San Bernardino requests that couples complete a marriage preparation program.

The following steps must be taken:

1. A Pre-Cana interview must be scheduled with one of the clergy. At this appointment, the priest or deacon will ask for all the sacramental certificates.
2. Freedom to Marry “Witnesses”
3. Marriage Preparation Class

**A Wedding date will NOT be scheduled without completing these three steps.**

*Note: If one or both have previously been married, these steps do not apply.*

## Marriage Preparation Class

At Holy Family, we do not have any marriage prep in person in English as of right now so; you are able to take the marriage prep class online or at another church. We will need the marriage class certificate once you have completed it.

[www.catholicmarriageprep.com](http://www.catholicmarriageprep.com)

<https://themarriagegroup.com/courses/pre-cana/>

## Setting the date of your Wedding Ceremony:

Marriage is a lifetime commitment and an indispensable vocation. Preparation is essential and preparation including careful discernment takes time. The earliest the couple may receive their wedding date, after having completed all requirements, is no more than eight (8) months prior to desired date. It is suggested that couples plan their wedding far enough ahead so that the date for the church is **FIRST** and then reception hall plans are worked around this date. This is not a problem if plans are made far enough in advance.

## Setting the time of your Wedding Ceremony

Wedding ceremonies generally take place on Saturdays however, Fridays are also available, or any other weekday, Since we cannot have more than one celebration taking place in the church at any one time, couples can choose a time of 11:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. upon availability.

## Place of your Wedding Ceremony

The usual place for the wedding of a Catholic couple is typically the parish church of the bride/groom. This means that the bride or groom would need to be a registered parishioner of Holy Family Church. If you are not registered, and would like to do so, please request a family registration form from the front office.

## Couples registered outside of Holy Family

If a couple has no connection with Holy Family Church and would like to be married here, the couple will need to obtain a letter from their parish church giving Holy Family Church permission to marry them.

### Wedding Coordinator

Holy Family has wedding coordinators to help make your wedding ceremony run smooth. They will conduct the rehearsal and be of assistance to you at your wedding ceremony. The suggested donation fee for the wedding coordinator is \$100.00 and is paid directly to them on the night of the rehearsal.

### Readings

The wedding coordinator will have readings for the day of your ceremony.

### Music for Your Wedding

Music is very important in enhancing the quality and prayerfulness of your wedding ceremony. Appropriate liturgical music needs to be selected. We suggest that you hire a musician off the "Wedding Musicians" list attached. The fees of the musicians vary so please ask each musician prior to hiring them.

### Wedding Celebrant (Liturgy of Marriage)

Every Catholic wedding has a certain form. The simplest way of stating this is to say that every wedding involves two people in marriage before a priest or deacon, two witnesses in a Catholic Church. All of these elements together are essential.

Couples may choose to celebrate their wedding within the context of a Mass (Nuptial Mass) or no mass (Wedding Ceremony). The Nuptial Mass is the more typical, especially when both bride and groom are Catholic. If you are having a Nuptial Mass, only a priest may be chosen. If you are having a wedding ceremony, you may choose a priest or a deacon.

### Outside Priest

If the couple would like to use a priest from outside the parish, they will need to advise Holy Family so that the proper arrangements may be made. If a priest is from a different Diocese or Country, a letter is needed from their church stating that they are in good standing with the Catholic Church and forward that letter to the Diocese of San Bernardino for approval. See the address below:

Diocese of San Bernardino  
1201E. Highland Avenue San  
Bernardino, CA 92404  
(909) 475-5300

*Your wedding will not be booked until we  
receive approval from the Diocese.*

## Sacrament of Penance (Confession)

Catholic couples will very frequently want to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance prior to their wedding day. Please plan and go to Confession the Thursday prior to your wedding date. Holy Family has Confessions on Thursdays at 6:00pm you may also schedule a private Confession with the parish priest, prior to your wedding date. Please call the front office at least two weeks ahead of time to schedule this. There will not be enough time to have Confession on your wedding day nor is the parish priest available on your rehearsal date.

## The Wedding Party

The two requisite witnesses for a Catholic marriage are all that are needed in the wedding party. These are typically the Best Man and the Maid of Honor. Any two specified persons may serve as the witnesses. They will stand with the couple during the exchange of promises and rings. Their signatures are also required on the marriage license. These witnesses are required to be married in the Catholic Church.

In most cases, the couple would like a larger wedding party that includes bridesmaids, groomsmen, a ring bearer and flower girls. While none of these are essential to the form of the wedding, couples may choose to have as large or small a wedding party as they prefer. Couples are only asked to take into account the available space in front of the altar while choosing their wedding party size.

Flower girls are a nice addition to the wedding party, however they are not required. They are also not permitted to actually scatter real or silk flower or flower pedals as they walk down the aisle. They may carry baskets of flowers as long as the flowers remain securely in the baskets.

Ring bearers are also a nice addition to the wedding party however, they too are not required. It is recommended that they only have decorative rings attached to their pillows. The actual rings may be carried by the Best Man, or you may choose sponsors (Godparents) for rings.

## Decorating for your Wedding

It is recommended that all decorations of the church for your wedding be tastefully done. Simple yet elegant is preferred to huge displays. Your flower arrangements *may not* obstruct the altar and certainly not the couple. If, on the day of the wedding, your flower arrangements impede the service, they will be either moved or removed.

Pew bows are allowed but can only be attached with clips. No adhesive of any kind may be used to fasten bows or flowers to the pews including staples or nails. This will cause damage to the pews and repairs can be costly. Swags or streamers attached to the pew bows *are not* permitted as they block the aisle entrance to the pews and can cause injury during communion. Balloons are also not permitted.

## Flower Pedals, Aisle Runners, Rice, Etc....

As already mentioned we cannot permit the scattering or tossing of any material inside or outside the church. The flower girls may not toss flower pedals. Rice, birdseed or other materials *may not* be tossed following the wedding on church grounds. Aisle Runners are also *not* permitted. All of these present serious danger for the wedding party, guests, Priests, Deacons and parishioners. It is very easy to slip, fall and sustain serious injury. Our insurance coverage does not allow for any of the above-mentioned items.

## Photography and Videotaping

- There are some guidelines for those you contract with to record your wedding ceremony in photographs and video.
- It is recommended that many of your photographs be taken prior to the wedding ceremony. The time following the wedding ceremony for photographs is very limited, usually about 10 minutes is what's given. Please plan with your photographer all those photographs that can conveniently be taken prior to the ceremony.
- Both the photographer and videographer need to be set up prior to the wedding ceremony.
- The photographers need to locate themselves in a location from which all photographs during the ceremony will be taken. The photographer is *not allowed to stand on the altar*. We ask that the photographer and videographer to *not move around* during the wedding ceremony. We also ask that the photographer *not* use flash during the wedding ceremony. Any photographs that require a flash needs to be done before or after the ceremony. This includes the entrance procession of the bridesmaids. The photographer is *not* allowed to stand in the aisle and photograph the bride, groom or bridal party as they enter. If such shots are desired, they will need to be staged or re-staged before or after the wedding ceremony. *Absolutely no pictures are allowed to be taken during Communion.* Bride and groom need to focus on the wedding ceremony and not the photographer.
- The first picture that should be taken after the wedding ceremony will need to be with the priest or deacon. The priest or deacon cannot wait for pictures since he is most often called to other duties immediately after the wedding. If the ceremony is delayed, the amount of time after with your photographer inside the church will be shortened. We need to honor the next event in the church.
- It is very important for the couple to make these guidelines clear to any contracted photographers. If photographers do not comply with these guidelines, they will be asked to leave and they will not be allowed to be wedding photographers at Holy Family for future wedding or special events. We know that every couple wants to have a complete set of wedding photos so please be very clear and explain these guidelines to your wedding photographer. If they should have any questions or need clarification, please have them contact the parish front office.
- We also ask the couple to advise their guests and family members to *not* use any flash and to *not* move around to take pictures during the wedding ceremony.

### Guest Book and Reception Lines

Both guest book and reception lines are to be held at the reception and not at the church. Please do not plan on either one of these taking place in the vestibule of the church. Due to time constraints, the bride and groom are asked to return to the sanctuary immediately after the recessional for pictures. The Wedding Coordinator will help with this.

### Unity Candle

Many couples want to include in their wedding ceremony the lighting of the Unity Candle. This is an optional element and does not actually form part of the Catholic Wedding ceremony. If the couple wants to include this, however, they are certainly welcome to do so. [The unity candle and holder will need to be purchased by the bride and groom.](#) The parish does not have these items available.

⇒ Option of how the Unity Candle can effectively be used will be discussed with your Wedding Coordinator. Typically, the mothers of bride and groom light the two pillar candles prior to the ceremony that the couple will use to light the Unity Candle.

### Lasso and Arras

Many couples also want to include in their wedding ceremony the Lasso and Arras. This is an optional element. If the couple wants to include these items, they will need to be purchased by the bride and groom. The parish does not have these items available.

### Flowers to Mary

A bouquet of flowers or a few roses are very often presented to Mary during the ceremony. The usual place for this during the ceremony is following the Prayer after Communion or toward the end of the Wedding Ceremony. If the couple chooses to present flower to Mary, they have the option of the Bride or both the Bride and Groom being a part of this. Please ask your florist about this item.

### Bride's Room

Holy Family has a bride's room located to the right of the main entrance as you enter the church. The Wedding Coordinator can show you this room at your rehearsal. This room may be used as the bride's "waiting room", [not a dressing room](#). Please come already dressed to the wedding. Only the bride and one maid or (of honor) will be allowed in this room. We ask that you treat it with respect and not bring food or drinks into this room. There is no smoking permitted in this room. We also ask that you make sure to leave this room as clean and orderly as you found it. Please assign someone to come and pick up the items left in this room after your wedding ceremony.

### Alcohol/Smoking

No alcoholic beverages are permitted at the church or on church grounds. There is also no smoking permitted in church or any of the rooms associated with the church such as the rooms for the bride and groom, the vestibule or the restrooms. The couple needs to make sure that family members and friends know this. We ask that everyone refrain from smoking at the church altogether.

It is very imperative that neither the couple nor any members of the wedding party arrive for the wedding ceremony intoxicated or under the influence of drugs. Any member of the wedding party who should do so will be asked to leave. If either the bride or groom should arrive intoxicated, the wedding ceremony will be canceled and you will need to reschedule and pay your fees again. This means that your previous fees will not be refunded to you.

## Wedding Rehearsal

In order to ensure a beautiful wedding ceremony, a wedding rehearsal is very important. Your Wedding Coordinator will conduct the rehearsal. The priest or deacon typically does not attend the rehearsal. We leave this to the experienced and capable hands of the Wedding Coordinator.

We ask that all members in the wedding party, including both parents of Bride and Groom, be present for the rehearsal. It is also important that everyone is on time for the rehearsal. This will expedite the rehearsal and ensure that everyone present has a good idea of what is expected of them on the wedding day. The wedding rehearsal typically lasts one hour long so please plan accordingly.

Rehearsals are typically scheduled on Friday evening prior to the wedding ceremony. If these days are not convenient, another day may be arranged depending on the availability of the church and the schedule of the Wedding Coordinator.



### Further Questions and Clarifications

In the course of preparing and planning for a wedding, a number of questions, concerns and issues may arise. Please feel free to inquire of your Marriage Preparation with the parish Secretary or Receptionist. We are here to help you in whatever way we can. Know that our prayers are with you as you embark on this momentous and joy filled journey!

**Parish Front Office Phone Number: (760)244-9180**

**Notes:**

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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