

## CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Our Lady of the Annunciation Parish - Queensbury, NY

### **Congratulations!**

You stand on the brink of a sacred, exciting, lifelong adventure together. We know that this is a very happy and busy time for you and we share your hope that everything about your wedding day will be beautiful and joyous.

When we think of weddings, we automatically think of the bride and the groom and their love for one another. There is much more involved in your love and your marriage, however, than just the two of you. There are your family and friends who have helped bring you to this point and who will continue to support and encourage you as you begin your new life together. And, most importantly, there is God who is the source of your love and whose love for you is reflected in your love for one another. That is why your decision to share your lives, and to grow together in Christian love calls for a special celebration in and with the faith community, the parish.

Everything about the wedding ceremony witnesses to all those present your understanding that you are entering a sacred and holy union - a sacrament.

Therefore, everything about the service, including the music, calls for careful planning that will contribute to this understanding. If it does not, then it is unsuitable for your wedding celebration because it is unworthy of the occasion. Everyone present at your wedding will be led by the dignity and beauty of the liturgy to a deeper understanding of Christian marriage and, consequently, to a greater commitment to it. In a sense, your wedding is your gift to your family and friends. It is your invitation for them to enter into and share your faith, your love, your prayer. We know that you are anxious to make it the best possible gift.

But, this is only one day.

### **■ Marriage preparation is preparation for life.**

Therefore we ask couples to contact the parish at least 8 months in advance of the proposed wedding date.

Through a series of discussions the couple will explore the many facets of married life – interests and activities, finances, children, personality, communication, family of origin issues, in-laws, faith and marriage as a sacrament.

The meetings are held once a month and are normally one hour long.

Father gives handouts for you to further discuss the issues after each meeting.

About 3 weeks before the actual ceremony, the couple meets and plans the liturgy. The rehearsal is about choreography ... when to stand, where to walk, etc. The church provides a book which contains all of the readings and the ceremony. A form is given to the couple to fill out and Father uses this for the rehearsal.

- **To plan the music, the couple needs to make an appointment with the Church's organist / music director.**

*Faith grows when it is well expressed in celebration. Good celebrations foster and nourish faith. Poor celebrations weaken and destroy faith. (Music in Catholic Worship, #6)*

Because you have chosen to invite Christ to make your love a sacrament, the music you choose for your wedding must express this unique and distinct encounter. Just as you would not expect to pronounce your wedding vows in street language, so you would not expect to hear “everyday” love songs within a ceremony celebrating sacramental married love. Certainly “your song” will have a place later in the day’s festivities; but during the wedding liturgy itself the emphasis should be God’s love for you, your love for God, the love of the community for you, your love for them and how these support and confirm your love for each other.

- **Finally, the couple will need to contact the church at which they were baptized and have a current baptismal record sent to OLA.**

Again, Congratulations!

Remember, Jesus said, “Love God, Love your neighbor, and Love yourself.” Don’t spend all of your time planning the wedding day ... get on with life, and continue to grow in your love for each other and the Lord!