



# ST. HENRY CLUSTER

*We're all in this together.*



## WEDDING OVERVIEW

God bless you on your engagement! It is wonderful that you wish to promise lifelong love to one another as husband and wife in the Lord. Yours will be a union which is modeled after and symbolizes God's ever faithful love for His people. Because you have made such an important decision to proclaim your love in the Sacrament of Christian marriage, our parishes of the St. Henry Cluster are honored to help you prepare for marriage. The following information is meant to provide an overview to celebrate the sacrament of marriage.

### SETTING A DATE

A date may be reserved by calling the parish office. This date is set, provided all parties are free to marry according to church regulations and all necessary preparations are completed. If the requirements for marriage are not complete, the parish is not bound to this date.

A minimum of six-month preparation period is required by the Archdiocese. This will provide adequate time for preparation and requirements to be completed. Pregnancy creates a sensitive situation and accommodations may be considered.

Only one wedding will be scheduled in the cluster each weekend.

### THINGS TO CONSIDER

#### **INTERFAITH MARRIAGE**

When a Catholic marries someone from a different religious tradition, the couple will be asked to take extra time to deal with religious differences. Each person needs to understand the other's faith traditions. Some background about the Catholic faith will be given, not for the purpose of conversion, but to make sure the non-Catholic party understands the Catholic Church's sacramental traditions. Special arrangements may be made to have a Protestant Minister or Jewish Rabbi take part in the ceremony. The pastor must obtain special permission from the Archdiocese. The couple may also want to contact the Minister or Rabbi for some preparation.

Permission for a Catholic to be married in a non-Catholic church may be granted only for a serious reason.

#### **COHABITATION**

The Catholic Church assumes that couples do not live together before marriage. The commitment of the sacrament of marriage is a promise to be faithful in body and spirit until death. There is concern that the divorce rate is higher for those couples that cohabit before marriage than those that do not.

## **REGULATIONS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI**

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### **M-1 FORM**

Official form used to obtain and document biographical and religious information to help clergy form an understanding of the couple's readiness for marriage in terms of spiritual and personal concerns in conjunction with church rules. This is the basis of the permanent marriage record.

### **MEYERS BRIGGS**

A self-report questionnaire given at the Wedding Preparation Interview. The test attempts to assign four categories: introversion or extraversion, sensing or intuition, thinking or feeling, judging or perceiving. This process encourages self-reflection and hopefully you'll have a better idea of who you and your future spouse are.

### **FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study)**

A resource that designates a married couple from St. Henry Cluster to serve as a mentor and to provide an opportunity to discuss important areas of your relationship. A completion and reflection of an inventory of areas such as communication, spiritual values, finances, family relationships, etc. will be given and reviewed.

### **PRE-CANA (Genesis Retreat)**

A one-day program that gathers local couples to reflect on the meaning of marriage. Please see instruction sheet to register.

### **BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE WITH NOTATIONS**

This document needs to be dated and submitted within six months of the wedding. You may obtain this from the church in which you were baptized. If you are not Catholic, any baptismal certificate from your church is acceptable.

## **SPECIAL PROCEDURES AT ST. HENRY CLUSTER**

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### **WEDDING PREPARATION INTERVIEW**

A meeting you will schedule with the cluster office to obtain information and guidelines to begin your wedding preparation. Please schedule this approximately 1 year prior to your wedding.

### **MARRIAGE CEREMONY**

Within the confines of solid liturgical principles and traditions, we encourage you to create a sacramental experience that is both personal and properly Christian.

- **Participants**

You may designate servers, lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, and/or gift bearers for the offertory. All participants must be Catholic and experienced in the role they are partaking in. Lectors should be competent and practice in the church in order to get use to the acoustics of the church. Generally, a small monetary gesture is made for participants designated by the church.

- **Devotion to Mary**

Couples may bring a flower to the Holy Family Shrine or Blessed Virgin statue at the end of Mass.

## **TIME OF WEDDING CEREMONY**

Weddings on Saturday are typically scheduled for 1:30pm. All decoration, equipment, materials and people must be out of church by 3:15pm.

Weddings may be scheduled on a Friday provided it does not interfere with other scheduled services for the parish and with the permission of the pastor.

## **WEDDING REHEARSAL**

This is usually scheduled the night prior to the wedding. Rehearsals can start at 6:00pm or 6:30pm. Please inform the cluster office the preferred time.

## **CHURCH FACILITIES**

The church basements/parish halls are not automatically reserved when scheduling a wedding date. It is the couple's responsibility to reserve this space for rehearsal dinners and/or day of wedding preparations. It is suggested that you do this early in your preparation. St. Aloysius has no facilities for this.

## **FLOWERS**

The Liturgical Commission of the American Bishops say this about decorations in church: "Flowers, plants and trees—genuine, of course, are particularly apt for the decoration of liturgical space, since they are of nature, always discreet in their message, never cheap or tawdry or ill-made." Accordingly, all flowers in the sanctuary must be live: i.e., flowers beside the altar, Holy Family Shrine, Blessed Virgin statue. Couples may use artificial flowers in the nave: i.e., bouquets for the wedding party and the arch which some couples have at the entrance of the church. If an arch is used it must be placed in the rear of church so it does not impede the vision of those attending the service. People sitting in the pews must have an unobstructed view of the altar. If you attach anything to the pews do not use tape or anything that will scratch the wood. Nothing should be attached to the light fixture which hangs over the altar at St Henry church.

## **PROGRAMS/BANNERS**

Some couples choose to have a program for the wedding ceremony. Banners with a Christian theme are optionable. Neither of these are provide by the church.

## **CANDLES AND CANDELABRAS**

Candelabras are permitted in the sanctuary at designated places. If you have a candelabra, it must have a solid plastic mat or something similar under it so wax does not drip on the carpet. No candles are to be attached to the pews or placed in the center aisle since they obstruct the congregation's view and violate fire code.

## **MUSIC AND ORGANISTS**

The church does not automatically provide an organist/musician. It is the couples responsibly to make these arrangements. There is a list of music which is appropriate for weddings. No secular music is permitted since this is a religious celebration. In addition, we have some policies which we ask you to give to your organist and soloist. Please submit all musicians and music to the cluster's Director of Music. Please go to the cluster website for more information.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO**

You are welcome to take pictures and videos before Mass starting after 11:00am. Photos must be finished in the church one-half hour before the service to allow time for final arrangements for the service. Flash photography is allowed when the couple enters and leaves the church, but should not be used during the service. Pictures or videos can be taken from the choir loft or the side transepts. When in the side transepts please remain out of view. Photographers and videographers are not to move around the church during the service. All equipment, materials and people must be out of church by 3:15pm.

Live Stream is available at St. Henry and St. Wendelin, but is not automatically provided.

## **AISLE RUNNER**

The church does not provide this, but you are welcome to bring one in. Please keep in mind that it could be a tripping hazard.

## **DONATION TO THE CHURCH**

The St. Henry Cluster asks a suggested donation of one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150.00) to cover church expenses. This can be paid any time prior to the wedding. Actual costs for providing services for your wedding are higher than the requested donation. This does not cover the priest, deacon, servers or ministers that are provided by the parish. Please consider compensating these volunteers.

## **BANNS**

Announcements of upcoming weddings will be placed in the bulletin a few weeks prior to the wedding. We announce all weddings within the St. Henry Cluster. If you prefer that this not be done, please inform the office. If you wish to have banns in another parish, please call that parish office.

## **MARRIAGE LICENSE FROM THE STATE**

A civil marriage license may be obtained from any county of residence courthouse in Ohio. It is valid for a period of 60 days before the wedding. Please submit this to the cluster office a minimum of 1 week before the wedding. The office will submit the certificate to the courthouse after the ceremony.

## **BLESSING FOR THE ENGAGEMENT**

We would be happy to ask God's blessing on your engagement and your rings. Please ask a priest or deacon at your convenience.

## **A CONCLUDING NOTE**

These guidelines for marriage preparation are given to you as practical assistance in preparing for your marriage in the Catholic Church. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Our hope for you is that you will keep before you at all times the most important aspect of the wedding—the blessing of the Lord Jesus. Weddings for Christians are not extravaganzas, but a time of prayer. We call upon Jesus to seal the couple's promise and bless their marriage.

*Congratulations on your upcoming marriage!*