

Mass or Ceremony

Decision, decisions, decisions. Marriage preparation is a time for many decisions. One of the most important decisions that needs to be made is whether you will celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage in the context of a Eucharistic Celebration (Mass) or as a Nuptial Ceremony. In some cases, the decision is easy and in others it is not so easy. Since it is the very first statement that you will make as a couple, here are some thoughts that should be taken into consideration when making this major decision.

If both parties and the majority of their families and friends are practicing Catholics,

then the choice should be marriage within the Eucharistic Celebration. This way you will have the opportunity to celebrate both the unity of man and woman in the Sacrament of Marriage, as well as the celebration of our oneness in the Body of Christ.

If both parties are Catholic and the families and friends are not,

then the choice is a little more difficult. Consideration should be given to the families and how they will feel if they are unable to partake in Holy Communion. Would you invite them to your home and then not let them eat at your table? This could cause some stress and hard feelings. However, if you decide to have a mass, then you need to approach the families and tell them that they will be unable to receive Communion because of the Church's teachings.

If one party and their family is Catholic and the other party and their family comes from another religious tradition,

then the choice should be the Nuptial Ceremony. The reason for this is that, when two people come together as one in the Sacrament of Marriage, there is also the uniting of the families. And under no circumstances do you want to alienate one family with a decision that will exclude them from full participation in the liturgy.

If one party is Catholic and the other party has never been baptized,

then the choice has to be the Nuptial Ceremony. Church law mandates that if one party is not baptized, then the Liturgy of the Eucharist cannot be celebrated. Therefore, a Nuptial Ceremony is the only choice.

The best advice that we can give you is you be sensitive to the needs of all. Exclude no one and have a great celebration of a new creation - you as ONE!