

2019-2020

**Preparation guide for the
Sacrament of Marriage
at St. Mary Catholic Church**

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www.saintmarysindy.org

Dear Parishioners and Guests seeking to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage

The community of St. Mary extends its best wishes to you as you prepare to enter into the sacrament of marriage. We have assembled this booklet to help you understand the process of our marriage preparation program. Most active Catholics are aware that the Church requires a period of reflection and discernment for those who wish to marry in the Church. This is a reasonable expectation since each of the sacraments is preceded by a period of instruction and prayer.

By calling a Catholic Parish to begin your marriage preparation and wedding planning, it is presumed that you are regularly participating in Sunday Eucharist, contributing financially, and participating in the life of the parish.

It is our sincere wish to help you understand how Christ wants to bless your love and enrich it. In choosing to enter Christian marriage you are also choosing to share your life and love with the Church, God's people. The community of St. Mary will be richer because of the witness of your love and sacrifice.

We take our responsibility for helping you to prepare for Christian marriage very seriously. You can expect to be supported – but also challenged – in the days ahead. Our prayers are with you.

Sincerely,

Fr. Carlton, the staff, and Sponsor Couples
of Saint Mary Catholic Church.

Stages of Preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage

Remote Preparation

Actually you have been preparing for marriage long before now. Since you were young you have been observing how your parents and other married people live their lives together. You bring these observations with you to your own marriage. You also bring the experience of your early instruction in the sacraments at your Catholic grade school, CCD program, or Sunday school to your understanding of Christian marriage. If you have gone to the weddings of friends you have probably heard sermons on the sacrament of marriage. All these experiences have helped to form your vision of what it means to be married.

Proximate Preparation

Becoming engaged, you have said “yes” to the offer of mutual and reciprocal love from a special person. Now your reflection on marriage becomes focused. “How will we live *our* marriage? What do we bring that is unique to *our* marriage?” St. Mary’s marriage preparation helps you use your time as an engaged couple to reflect on these and related questions.

Immediate Preparation

“How we will publicly celebrate the beginning of our new life together with Christ as husband and wife?” The last phase of preparation for the sacrament of marriage includes planning your wedding ceremony: a ceremony that will express the special love you have for each other *in the context of our Catholic worship tradition*. The priest who witnesses your marriage will assist you. You will also receive a planning booklet that outlines the service and presents you with a wealth of prayers and readings from the Roman Catholic Wedding Ritual. On the eve of your wedding, our wedding coordinator will rehearse the ceremony with you.

Freedom to Marry

To be free to marry, you must have never been married before or if you have been previously married, you must have been divorced civilly/legally and received Ecclesiastical permission (an annulment or other process) to marry in the Church. If there has been a previous marriage bond (s), the divorced party must present his/her application for that marriage, the wedding license, the divorce decree, and if necessary, Ecclesiastical permission (annulment or other permission). Discuss these issues with the priest who is doing marriage preparation with you immediately. **Before a wedding can be scheduled at Saint Mary Parish these documents must be provided.**

To contract marriage in the Catholic Church, one must be a Catholic who practices faith in the Church.

Documentation Required

The Catholic Party must provide sacramental records (baptism and confirmation). Simply call the parish where you were baptized and request a “recent baptismal certificate with **notations.**” The certificate notes any sacraments that you have received.

All Christians seeking marriage are requested to give us a copy of their baptism records as well.

Please complete the questions at the end of this booklet. These help us to know you a little better. The questions can be found on page 20.

Steps in St. Mary Catholic Church's
Marriage Preparation Program

Contact the parish no later than ten months before the proposed date.

After the appropriate documents are submitted (reservation contract, deposit & initial fee, baptism certificates, and answers to questions, the pastor will arrange an initial appointment to meet and get to know you better. He will also explain the marriage preparation process.

In the case of a mixed-faith marriage, permission can be granted to a Catholic for the wedding to be celebrated in the church.

It is permissible to have another priest other than Fr. Carlton to celebrate your wedding and do your marriage preparation. Please confirm this with Paola.



Marriage Preparation Program: Registered members of Saint Mary must participate in the wedding preparation program of this parish or an approved program of another parish. This consists of: 1. An initial meeting with the pastor. 2. Meeting two or three times with a Sponsor Couple. These will be based upon the summary of PREPARE, a marriage preparation tool. 3. Participating in the TOBIT retreat at Fatima Retreat Center in Indianapolis. Brochures with scheduled weekends is available in the parish office. 4. A final meeting with the Pastor. 5. Meeting with the parish wedding coordinator and Music coordinator.

Couples seeking to marry at St. Mary Parish from other parishes, must complete the wedding preparation of your own parish. That priest should send us a letter stating that he is completing marriage preparation with you. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to complete the marriage preparation requirements: setting up meetings, providing needed documentation, taking the pre-marital inventory, attending the Tobit Retreat, etc. **Couples that do not complete these requirements three months before the wedding, may have no other choice than to change the date of the wedding.**

Our focus at St. Mary is to prepare you for life together, to have a happy life as a married couple. "PREPARE" is a series of statements to help you know better areas of agreement and disagreement, to know the strengths & weaknesses in your relationship.

Participating in the process frequently helps couples talk about areas of marriage they may never have considered.

“If I am marrying someone who has never been baptized or belongs to a different faith does my future spouse have to do anything?”

Your fiancée participates fully with you in the marriage preparation process. A non-baptized person or person of another faith does not have to become Catholic in order to marry a Catholic. However the Catholic person must state that s/he intends to continue practicing the Catholic faith after s/he is married and promise to do all that s/he can to see that the children are baptized and raised Catholic.

My fiancée is not Catholic and his/her family are very uncomfortable with our rituals. What can be done to help them be a part of the ceremony?”

There is a special wedding rite designed for celebrating mixed-faith marriages. If you are an interdenominational couple, you will receive special material to help you plan the wedding.

The celebration of a mixed-faith marriage occurs within a service of scriptural readings rather than the Mass. It is a special rite, which celebrates what we share in common. All Christians and many people who are not affiliated with a church share great love and respect for the Bible as God’s Word, therefore the ceremony takes place “on familiar ground.” You will be encouraged to invite non-Catholic members of the wedding to take active roles in the ceremony. The intention is to help all who gather to feel welcome and take part in the wedding. The Church also wishes to protect the sign integrity of the Eucharist.

Coming to table together to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord is a sign of unity. If only one half of the assembly can come to Communion then the Eucharist actually becomes an experience of disunity.

“Who should call the parish to make wedding arrangements?” Only the bride and the groom should call and/or be in contact with the parish concerning marriage arrangements.

How do we plan our wedding at St. Mary’s? The parish will assign a parish wedding coordinator for your wedding about 4 months before the wedding date. Even though you may have your own “wedding coordinator,” it is essential that you have a wedding coordinator from the parish who knows the church and facilities. Our parish wedding coordinators will be happy to assist you in planning your ceremony. He/She will also guide you through the wedding rehearsal and coordinate the order of the rite for your wedding. You may call the parish office to obtain the name of your wedding coordinator.

Will the pastor of St. Mary preside at our wedding ceremony if we are not members of the parish? The pastor is available to preside at the weddings of all registered and active members of the parish. Because of parish commitments, the pastor can be available for only a few non-parishioner weddings. You must coordinate your wedding date with his calendar.

The pastor of St. Mary does reserve the right to find another priest for your wedding in the event that he has scheduled your wedding and needs to be away. Couples should plan on asking the priest from their own parish to preside at your wedding and complete marriage preparation.

Visiting priests: It is our understanding that the priest presiding at the wedding would follow the norms of St. Mary Parish and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis for liturgy/weddings. The parish wedding coordinator is to conduct the entire rehearsal.

“What kind of rules does St. Mary Parish have about dates and times for weddings?” St. Mary is available for Friday evening or Saturday morning and afternoon weddings. In scheduling your wedding, be mindful that you have use of the church **1½ hours before your wedding and ½ hour after your wedding**. For example, for a 2:30 wedding, you may have use of the church from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. The church will be open for *florists* to arrive **no earlier than 2 hours before the wedding** for preparation.

Furniture, sacred objects, and seasonal decorations may not be removed or moved for weddings.

If you wish to use candelabra from a florist please be sure that the florist places protective plastic under the candles to catch the candle drippings.

Ministers of Hospitality (Ushers): We recommend weddings to have two ushers to assist people in finding their seats who are not members of the wedding party.

Children and weddings: Often children are invited to be in wedding processions. This is acceptable, but be aware of the unpredictability of children.

The Unity Candle is not a required part of the wedding rite, but is a popular tradition. If used, it should be placed on the special table in the sanctuary. Neither the Unity Candle nor flowers can be placed on the altar.

Flowers may be placed on the floor, on short tables or short pedestals in the sanctuary in front of the ambo. Flowers or decoration should not block the vision of the bride and groom, lectors, and ministers during the wedding.

You are responsible to clean up after your ceremony all special decorations including flowers, markers, programs, and rented candelabra. You will be charged a clean-up fee if the Church is left in disorder. This includes straightening up the waiting room, putting all waste in trash cans, and removing personal items.



PLANNING THE LITURGY. You will plan the logistics of your ceremony with the ***Parish Wedding Coordinator*** who is assigned to your wedding. Suggested prayers and readings are found in the booklet given to you, "Together for Life." The bride and groom should spend some time reflecting on this booklet together. Before meeting with the wedding the coordinator, please bring the complete SELECTION FORM in the back of this booklet with you.

Rehearsals usually last less than an hour. Good planning with the Parish wedding coordinator and arriving on time are two necessities that will enable the rehearsal to be completed in good time. Generally, it is not necessary for the priest to be present for the rehearsal.

"What about decorations for our wedding?" Because it is a house for God's people our church is arranged and decorated in such a way as to enhance our worship and mark the sacred seasons. Couples who desire to celebrate their wedding here must respect the integrity of our worship space. With that in mind the following rules apply: Normally, the church building will be used for other services on the week-ends. Therefore, you may decorate the church 1½ hours before the wedding.

Because of time restraints, we ask that the bride and groom not release their guests “pew by pew.”

Throwing rice and birdseed is not permitted since it is impossible to clean up and poses a hazard.

Helium-filled balloons may not be used for decorating the sanctuary or within the church. You may use them to decorate outside.

Aisle runners are not allowed as they do not stick to the floor and are a “trip hazard.”

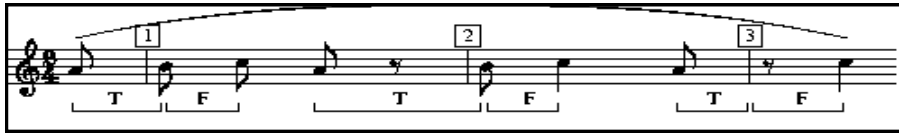
St Mary does not have an area to dress for the wedding.

We ask you not to bring food/snacks to the Church on your wedding day. It is acceptable to bring water.

Is Saint Mary Church Air Conditioned? Yes.

CHURCH PARKING: Parking in the Mass Avenue area is at a premium. There is an additional public, pay lot north of the Church on Vermont St. St. Mary offers limited parking for your wedding, on a “first come, first served” basis. It is available for your use during your wedding rehearsal and wedding ceremony. St. Mary has Masses and other activities on weekends; so, your guests **should not assume that they may leave their cars here at other times**. Additional use, outside of the rehearsal and wedding ceremony are only by special arrangement with our Facilities Coordinator, Francisco Ruiz (317-627-9349). **Unauthorized cars may be towed at the owner’s expense.**

Please do not use Needlers Fresh Market or other parking lots for your wedding. Your guest’s cars may be towed. Wedding guests also may not leave their cars on our lot as we have other activities and Masses on weekends.



Music is a very important component of the wedding ceremony. Since the wedding is a sacred ceremony only religious music may be used either when it is in a simple celebration or within the context of the Mass. Other types of contemporary or current styles of music are not appropriate or allowed within the context of the wedding Mass or Service. **ALL MUSIC CHOICES MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE PARISH OFFICE FOR APPROVAL 3 MONTHS PRIOR.**

You may choose one of the other musicians listed below. All musicians' fees are negotiated individually. The fee includes meeting with the engaged couple to plan the music, helping them contract other musicians (singers and/or instrumentalists) for the ceremony, corresponding via e-mail and phone with them about the music for the ceremony, rehearsing with any other musicians for the ceremony and playing the piano and/or organ at the wedding service.

If you have questions, you may contact the Parish Office (317-637-3983) prior to your wedding.

Music Contact information for Weddings

First Name	Last Name	Telephone Number	Email Address	Instrument(s)
Susan	Raccoli	317-910-1903 c 317-251-9160 h	SRaccoli@sbcglobal.net	Piano/Organ
Patty	Brown	317-340-6891	pbrown3000@sbcglobal.net pbrown@stjudeindy.org	Piano/Organ/ Cantor
Anne	Lustig	317-417-4446	Anne.lustig@gmail.com	Piano/Cantor
Sarah	Budd	937-304-9354	Sarahbudd12@gmail.com	Flute
Fiona	Becker	317-373-3631 Cell 317-951-8818 Work	fionasol@gmail.com	Cantor
Helen	Small	317-371-2728	hsmall@indy.rr.com	Cantor

“What kind of music should we plan and when does it occur in the ceremony?”

Some parts of the ceremony should be sung, such as: the Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation, and Eucharistic Acclamations (in a wedding Mass). Music selections used in the wedding ceremony should be hymns or psalms, which help people to reflect on the love of Christ and the covenant love of married people.

Singing in which people can participate, especially the Responsorial Psalm, Eucharistic Acclamations, and Communion Processional Song is expected in a wedding within the Mass. Popular music/love songs may not be used in the ceremony.

In order for the congregation to be able to sing, they must have the words! To use these hymnals, hospitality people are needed at the doors to distribute them to the guests as they arrive and to collect and reshel after the wedding. ***We ask that you include in your wedding liturgy aid (program) a line that invites the guests to return the hymnal to the back of the church.*** To print music in a program, you must have copyright permissions.

The wedding Mass or ceremony includes the communal praying of **The Lord’s Prayer**. This **should not be replaced** by the singing of the Our Father by a soloist. It is the one prayer that all Christians can say together. It is the community’s prayer.

We do not approve of the use of R. Wagner’s **Bridal Chorus** nor Mendelssohn’s **Wedding March** since the music’s original context portray a mockery of marriage and fidelity. Their use is inappropriate for the liturgical celebration of sacramental love.

An outline for the Order of a wedding Mass/ceremony

The Marriage Ceremony

Of Bride and Groom

On Saturday, Month day, year, at time

Saint Mary Catholic Church

Indianapolis, Indiana

Presider.....name of priest/deacon

Parents of the Bride
Parents of the Groom
Maid/Matron of Honor
Best Man
Bridesmaids/Brides' attendants
Flower Girl
Groomsmen/Grooms Attendants
Ring Bearer
Ministers of Hospitality
Organist/Pianist
Cantor

PRELUDE MUSIC

Procession of Mothers/Grandmothers
Wedding Procession

PROCESSIONAL MUSIC

Gathering Hymn
Opening Rites
Collect Prayer

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading
Responsorial Psalm
Second Reading
Gospel Acclamation
Gospel
Homily

Continue next page



RITE OF MARRIAGE

Consent and Exchange of Vows

Blessing and Exchange of Rings

[Lighting of Unity Candle]

General Intercessions:

Response: "Lord, hear our prayer."

*LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

*Offertory Procession

* Gift bearers

*Holy Acclamation

*Memorial Acclamation

*Doxology

Lord's Prayer

Nuptial Blessing

Sign of Peace

*Communion Processional

[Veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary/St. Joseph]

CONCLUDING RITES

Prayer after Communion

Final Blessing

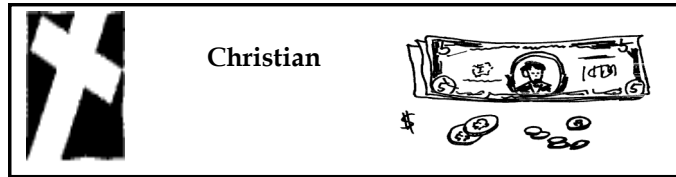
Presentation of the Newly Married Couple

RECESSIONAL

*These parts are for weddings celebrated in the context of the Eucharist (Mass).

[Not required]

As you leave church, kindly return your hymnal to the shelves at the exits. Thank you.



STEWARDSHIP for your marriage celebration

“Marriage preparation fee is \$175.00, the cost of the PREPARE inventory/materials. The cost of the Tobit Retreat is a separate fee. Preparation fee to be married in another parish is \$250.

The charge to use the church is as follows: \$2,000 and a refundable deposit of \$200. This includes time for rehearsal, decoration, planning with coordinator, wedding, pictures, etc.

The parish reserves the right to use the deposit for clean-up/damages if the church is left abnormally disorganized, if rice or birdseed is thrown, if there are damages or if something is broken, like a microphone or the piano, because of careless actions.

All financial compensation is due when the wedding becomes an officially scheduled date on the parish calendar. Because we have had many couples cancel their wedding date with us without notifying us, we cannot reserve a date without receiving your financial compensation. This indicates to us that you are, indeed, making a commitment to be married at Saint Mary Church.

It is customary to offer a stipend (stipend -a monetary gift) as a sign of gratitude to the **priest or minister** who witnesses your marriage. This gift goes directly to the priest/minister, while the fee for church goes to the parish funds for the upkeep of the church. The suggested offering is \$150-\$250.

“May we videotape and take photographs during the ceremony?” Certainly. This is a special day and you will want to have reminders of it. Most professional photographers and videographers know the etiquette of taking pictures during church ceremonies. Paola can give you a copy of our parish guidelines. Also, your photographer/videographer needs a copy of these policies.

In general the guidelines are these: Since this is a sacred ceremony, no flash photography is permitted after the entrance procession or during the wedding.

Once the procession is complete, all pictures and taping must be shot from the sides.

All pictures in the church must be concluded by 4 PM.

NO ALCOHOL is allowed on the premises. This includes the parking lot as well as inside the building. Church law does not permit a wedding if the bride or groom are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Members of the wedding party who are drinking or under the influence will not be permitted to participate in the ceremony.

We hope that these guidelines are helpful to you in making plans for your wedding and the beginning of your new life together. We offer you the loving companionship of the Church expressed through St. Mary Community. We want to be as helpful as possible to you. If you have any questions please contact us.



Marriage Preparation Checklist

1. ___ **We** have read and understand the contents of this marriage preparation brochure.
2. ___ **We** have completed and returned the contract form accompanying this booklet to St. Mary's.
3. ___ **We** have contacted the priest/minister who will witness our marriage and asked him send a letter to the parish.*
4. ___ **Our** wedding date and time have officially been entered on the parish calendar. We have received a signed agreement. (If we have not mailed a signed copy back to you in two weeks, please call the parish office).
5. ___ **We** have obtained the necessary documents (baptism and other documents).
6. ___ **We** have contacted the assigned parish wedding coordinator.
7. ___ **We** have completed our Tobit Retreat.
8. ___ **We** have met with our Sponsor Couple & completed the PREPARE Inventory.
9. ___ **We** have met with the priest to conclude our marriage preparation.
10. ___ **We** have met with the Parish Wedding Coordinator to prepare our ceremony.
11. ___ **We** have obtained our wedding license from the clerk's office of the City County Building and given the license to the wedding coordinator.
12. ___ **We** have paid all necessary fees to the parish, and musicians and offered our stipend to the priest.

*For those couples who will be married somewhere other than Saint Mary Church.

Please write your reflections on these questions at the time you submit your marriage contract and schedule your wedding. These will also be used for your first interview with the Priest/Pastoral Minister.

1. Something about yourselves, your families, etc.
2. How did you meet?
3. How did you come to the decision that this was the person that you wanted to marry?
4. How did you come to the decision that you wanted to marry in the Church?
5. (Cohabiting Couples: How did you come to the decision to cohabit?)
6. If there is a divorce involved, please note this. Please indicate that you have the legal and ecclesial documentation necessary to contract marriage. (Please include these documents).
7. Three strengths of your relationship. Three working areas.
8. How has God been a part of your lives/relationship? How do you invite God to be a part of your lives?