

St. Thomas More Catholic Church  
Wedding Guidelines

Dear Son and Daughter of God,

Blessings to you as you begin your preparation for your life together as a married couple. We rejoice with you that you have decided to celebrate your life in union with Christ.

In your preparations through the Church of St. Thomas More you will receive a few more “tools for growth” in your relationship with each other, with God and with God’s People. In your journey with us toward your wedding day, hopefully you will achieve a more complete understanding of the holy Sacrament of Matrimony.

This booklet has been prepared to answer many of the questions and concerns you will have as you plan your wedding. Perhaps this instrument will raise a few questions as well. Please, do not hesitate to ask us.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Frank Coady, pastor  
St. Thomas More Parish Community

*Through matrimony you will be helped to live as one, as fully one, as the Lord and Father are one; to love one another in a special way, as the Lord loves you.*



## PREPARATION FOR THE MARRIAGE

For weddings taking place in a **Catholic Church in the Diocese of Salina**, (as well as the three other Dioceses in the State of Kansas) the couple must contact the pastor at least six (6) months prior to the intended wedding date.

The six-month period prior to the wedding is needed in order to take full advantage of the excellent marriage preparation the Catholic Community is able to offer couples approaching marriage. These opportunities, as well as the planning of the wedding day, will be discussed in several meetings with the pastor or pastoral team.

Please note:

- The date of the intended wedding must be cleared with the pastor's schedule – only then should arrangements for a reception hall, etc., be made.

- Saturday weddings may be scheduled **NO LATER** than 2:00 p.m. Earlier times are negotiable.
- Evening weddings can be scheduled for Friday.
- Any of the following services **must be paid one month prior to your wedding.** Separate checks are needed for each. You will be provided with a detailed list of amounts from Kelley Smith.

Pastor/Deacon (officiant fee)	\$100-\$150
Church Fee – Non-members *	\$250
Candelabra (optional)†	\$50 (see page 8)
STM Wedding Steward	\$75
Musicians	See page 10
Servers	\$20 each

\* Parents or the couple must be members of St. Thomas More one full year prior to the wedding, and plan to remain members, for the fee to be waived.

† The use of our Candelabra may be paid together with the Church fee.

The program of pre-marital preparation includes the following:

1. An initial meeting with the pastor. During which he will complete with you the necessary paper work in preparation for the wedding.
2. The administration of the professional premarital inventory, FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study), which is an instrument designed to identify key areas for discussion in the pre-marital and marital relationship. This instrument focuses upon areas of interpersonal communications, personality match, financial

issues, problem solving, etc. This phase of marriage preparation will involve two to three sessions.

3. As a couple, you will need to sign up for an Engaged Encounter weekend through the Salina Diocese or the Marriage Preparation Retreat through St. Isidore's Catholic Student Center. Attending a God's Plan for a Joy Filled Marriage weekend is strongly encouraged, but not required. Information may be obtained from the pastor or the parish office.
4. You will also be required to take a class on Natural Family Planning. NFP is a holistic approach to family planning. Both husband and wife understand their fertility, emotions, and family planning intention (whether to have a baby or not).
5. Scripture readings options and music selections are available on the parish website. (<http://stmmanhattan.com/sacraments/matrimony>)
6. A marriage license from the State of Kansas is required for all marriages in Kansas; this license is obtained from the Clerk of the District Court at the Courthouse. You may apply one year in advance or as little as 4 business days (there is a 3 day waiting period). The marriage license is valid for six (6) months after you pick it up. Once it is obtained from the Courthouse, please read all the instructions, then bring both copies and the self-addressed envelope to the Pastor/Officiant.

## PREPARATION FOR THE WEDDING

### THE CEREMONY

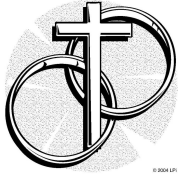


The marriage covenant has been raised to the dignity of a sacrament by Jesus Christ. Thus, the Christian marriage ceremony is primarily Praise and Thanksgiving to God and, secondarily, a social event.

- A Nuptial Mass is the usual form for the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony between two Catholics.
- A marriage between a Catholic and a baptized Christian is usually celebrated outside Mass and within the context of the Scripture Service. A Deacon may officiate at a ceremony outside Mass.
- A marriage between a Catholic and a non-baptized person is ALWAYS celebrated outside Mass and within the context of the Scripture Service. A Deacon may officiate here also.



The Sanctuary is considered sacred space and we ask that you act and dress appropriately (no hats or inappropriate shorts/tops) for your rehearsal time, during pictures, etc. Please no food or drink in the Sanctuary or Gathering Area.



### THE REVISED *ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY*

(2016) encourages a liturgical procession similar to what is used at Sunday Mass as well as at all other sacramental celebrations. Included in that procession

may be cross-bearer, altar servers, lectors, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, priest/deacon, the wedding party, and finally the bride and groom, who are the celebrants of the sacrament. The bride and groom may enter with or without their parents. This is the ideal, and all are encouraged to consider this.

Fathers do not “give away” their daughters in a Catholic wedding. That is a carry-over from a previous time when women were considered property (handed over to a new owner). Likewise, a bride hiding from the groom comes from a time of arranged marriages, when the new owner might back out if he saw her and found her less than he imagined. The best scenario is for the couple to be available in the Gathering Space to greet and welcome their guests.



The *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, like all Catholic Liturgy, presumes the active participation of the assembly. The entrance procession is ideally accompanied by the Opening Song of the Liturgy. If instrumental music is preferred by the couple, then the Opening Song is sung by all once the procession is completed and all are in their places.

The Gloria is either recited or sung at all weddings with Mass. After the Vows, the assembly has a spoken response: “Thanks be to God.” After the Giving of Rings, the assembly *may* sing a hymn of praise. In all of this, the assembly are more than passive observers; they are praying with and for the bride and groom.

**WEDDING STEWARD:** The Wedding Steward works to safeguard the respectful use of the church and to assist the couples on their wedding day. She will be present at the rehearsal as well as on the day of the wedding. This service is required by St. Thomas More to provide a helpful presence and to ensure that your wedding day goes smoothly.

**SERVERS:** You may ask family members or friends with Mass serving experience to be the Altar Servers for your wedding. Typically, they are grade school or high school age. St. Thomas More can provide them for you. We ask that you give a stipend of \$20 to each of them for their time.

**FLOWER GIRL/RING BEARER:** If you choose to have a flower girl and/or ring bearer, we suggest that these children be no younger than five-years old. Younger children may be uncooperative and detract from the sacredness of the ceremony. Flower petals distributed down the aisle must be silk only. You must have a person designated to pick them up after the ceremony



**PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY:** Your wedding is special and you will want to record some aspects with pictures. Because of the solemnity of the wedding, any photos and videotaping taken during the wedding ceremony should be taken only with the prior agreement of the Priest/Officiant. No photos or filming which would detract from the sacredness of the event should be taken. The majority of the pictures

should be taken before the wedding. Any pictures to be taken after the wedding must be discussed with the Pastor and finished by 3:00 p.m. – confessions begin at 3:30 p.m. Permission will depend on what other events have previously been scheduled for the Church.

**DECORATING GUIDELINES:** It is Art and Environment's goal to enhance the worship space according to the Liturgical Year. Certain colors/décor are used for certain times of the Church year. Keeping this in mind, the following criteria have been set:



- Please visit with a church representative about any and all decorations.
- Please feel free to *add to* what is already in the church with flowers, plants, etc. You will need to work around our arrangement for the weekend.

Art and Environment recommends the use of fresh flowers. According to *The Ministry of Liturgical Environment*, "Flowers are symbolic of our joy in Christ and expressive of our thanksgiving for the gifts of creation. Their presence in the liturgical environment announces a spirit of celebration and the beauty of nature. The Church maintains their use and cautions against anything artificial or inappropriate within divine worship."

- All decorations are to be removed after your wedding, leaving the church ready for Mass. (We invite you to leave any fresh flowers on the altar area for use for the weekend Masses. Please let the wedding steward know.)

- Please refrain from hanging anything from or on the back wall and/or sidewalls. This space is not only reserved for what indicates the Liturgical season, but is very difficult to work with and requires special equipment.
- Pew bows are permitted and can be attached with plastic fish line, by using Velcro attached to ribbons, or by using the florist plastic hangers for that purpose. **NO TAPE, TACKS, OR WIRE PLEASE!**
- Two candelabras with oil-filled candles are available for rental. The fee is \$50.00 for the set. The candelabras may be decorated. **WAX CANDLES OF ANY KIND MAY NOT BE USED IN THE SANCTUARY UNLESS CLEARED THROUGH THE CHURCH OFFICE.**
- Due to insurance liabilities no isle runners can be used at STM. Along those same lines, tulle/ribbon or any other material may NOT be used to block off entrance to the pews and/or doors.



**MUSIC:** One session of your preparation will be a meeting with the parish music liturgist three months prior to the wedding. This applies whether you are using your own musicians or musicians from the church. The appropriateness of the music, and directions for the organ, microphone, etc will be reviewed.

Please call Kelley Smith at the parish office (776-5151) or email: [musicmin@stmmanhattan.com](mailto:musicmin@stmmanhattan.com) to schedule an appointment.

In this meeting all music options will be discussed with you. Kelley will help you locate Mass music, solo music, and musicians if you need them. A liturgy planning sheet is available at the end of this

book. The more prepared you are with your ideas the easier it will be to make decisions. Reading and music suggestions are available on our website. Further meetings may be scheduled to finalize your plans.

Final selections need to be in place 6 weeks prior to the wedding in order for musicians to be well prepared.

Here are some general guidelines to help you begin planning your wedding ceremony:

- A wedding is a liturgical celebration. In the Catholic Church, it is an act of worship where the bride and groom, along with family and friends, come together to celebrate a sacrament, to offer thanks and praise, and to ask God's blessing on their life together as husband and wife.
- The selection of music should reflect the Christian concept of marriage, heighten the readings chosen, and, above all, set the appropriate tone for this joyous celebration. Therefore, live music (non-recorded) is preferred as it helps with the flow and enhances the liturgy.
- Because we are in a liturgical setting, music composed for entertainment, including music from Broadway shows, operas and movies, have no place in the wedding liturgy for they do not help the assembly to pray. This also includes the Bridal Chorus from Wagner's Lohengrin (Here Comes the Bride), and the Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream. If you would like to have a piece of music included in your wedding that is not of a religious context, please check with the music liturgist or pastor as to the appropriate place (prelude or postlude) to include it in your ceremony or consider using it as a theme piece at your reception.

### Church Musician Fees

<b>Matrimony without Mass</b>	<b>\$100 - \$125</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-service music, opening song, responsorial psalm, gospel acclamation, hymn of praise, recessional &amp; postlude music.</li> <li>- Accompaniment for soloists (vocal or instrumental).</li> <li>- Rehearsal time</li> </ul>	
<b>Matrimony with Mass</b>	<b>\$125 - \$150</b>
(dependant on number of songs to be prepared)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-service music, opening song, responsorial psalm, gospel acclamation, hymn of praise, Mass parts, and two hymns. recessional &amp; postlude music,</li> <li>- Accompaniment for soloists (vocal or instrumental)</li> <li>- Rehearsal time</li> </ul>	

### Cantor Fees

\$50	(no solos) without Mass
\$75	(no solos) with Mass
\$100	with solos (2-4) without Mass
\$110	with solos (2-4) with Mass
\$125	with 4+ solos and Mass

STM will provide the music for your musicians @ \$1 per copy, if we have it. If it has to be purchased, there will be a \$5 fee assessed.



## POST CEREMONY

We allow the 3 B's:

BUBBLES    BALLOONS    BELLS

Because of safety concerns, liability issues, and clean-up required, the following items are NOT to be thrown on the church grounds:

Rice	Confetti
Birdseed	Silly String
Wheat	Sparklers
Flower petals *	or similar material

\* This does not include the petals that a flower girl may distribute.

CLEAN-UP!!! – We ask that you please pick up the rooms/space used. Thank You!

## RECEPTIONS

Receptions can be held at St. Thomas More. Please contact Amanda at the parish office (776-5151) or email: [parishsec@stmmanhattan.com](mailto:parishsec@stmmanhattan.com) for details about renting the Utopia Room.



*Best Wishes to you both on your wedding day and may God richly bless your life together.*

(Revised 2/3/2017)