



Wedding PLANNING GUIDE

St. Joseph the Worker Parish
St. Vincent Pallotti Church ~ St. Aloysius Church
901 Hopkins Rd., Ste A, Haddon Twp, NJ
Office (856) 858-1313 / www.stjosephtheworker.net

Dear Couple,

We are delighted you have chosen St. Joseph the Worker Parish to celebrate your Wedding Day!



As one of the Church's seven Sacraments, Matrimony not only expresses a couple's desire to be married in the Eyes of God, but in the eyes of the community as well. Your desire to be married in God's House is a testament to your faith and commitment to your future marriage vows.

The instructions in this booklet, along with the assistance of the Priest or Deacon you have selected to marry you, will help you in the planning of your Marriage Mass, or Ceremony.

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding day!
We are looking forward to being of service to you!

In Christ,

Fr. Mark

Fr. Mark Matthias
Pastor, SJW

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*What God has joined together,
let no one separate... (Mark 10:9)*





What to know about getting married in the Catholic Church...



The first thing to know about getting married in the Church is that there is a six-month waiting period. The Church wants a couple to wait this long so they have time to think about, and prepare, for the commitment of marriage. If a couple wishes to be married before the six-month waiting period, permission from the Bishop must be obtained.

Ideally, a couple should contact the Pastor of the Church where they would like to get married **12 months** prior to their wedding date. This way, they have a better chance of reserving the date on that Parish's calendar.

***Please note:** Because of the regularly scheduled Saturday services at St. Joseph the Worker parish, weddings at St. Aloysius church must begin no later than **1pm**. Also, because of the regularly scheduled Saturday services at St. Vincent Pallotti church, weddings must begin no later than **2pm**. Other days of the week are available, however, certain liturgical restrictions may apply for getting married on a Sunday.*

Proof of receiving all of your Sacraments of Initiation is required...

The next step for planning a marriage in the Catholic Church is for the Bride and Groom to make an appointment to meet with the Priest or Deacon who will prepare them to receive the *Sacrament of Matrimony*. Before you meet with the Priest or Deacon, the Bride and Groom must obtain documents verifying *where* and



when they received their Sacraments of Initiation (*Baptism, First Holy Communion, Confirmation*). They can obtain this documentation from the parish where they received each Sacrament. These documents must be dated within *one year* prior to their wedding date. Also, these documents must be stamped with the parish's official seal for authentication.


Please note: *An original copy of your Baptism, First Holy Communion or Confirmation certificate is not sufficient. A newly dated copy is required so the Church where you are getting married knows your Sacraments are still on record at the Church where you received them. If a Catholic has not received the Sacraments of First Holy Communion or Confirmation, they can attend classes to receive these Sacraments before they get married. The Church strongly encourages Catholics to have all their Sacraments of Initiation before receiving the Sacrament of Matrimony.*

Interfaith marriages

If the Bride or Groom is a non-Catholic Christian, proof of Baptism from their own church must be provided. Please note, the Catholic Church recognizes the Baptisms of those individuals who were baptized with the *Trinitarian Formula* (*"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit..." Matthew 28:19*). Otherwise, a person may need to be "conditionally baptized" in the Catholic Church to ensure they were properly baptized.

Please note: *When it comes to the celebration of the Marriage Mass or Ceremony, non-Catholic clergy are welcome to be at the celebration. However, they are not*





permitted to participate in the reciting of the Marriage Vows or the Liturgy of the Eucharist. They may participate in the Liturgy of the Word by reciting a reading from the Old Testament or New Testament. However, the proclamation of the Gospel is reserved for the Priest or Deacon celebrating the Wedding Mass or Ceremony.

Affidavits of Freedom to Marry

In order for the Church to offer the *Sacrament of Matrimony* to a couple, they must disclose any previous marriage or marriages, within or outside, the Catholic Church. Therefore, every couple must provide signed *Affidavits of Freedom to Marry* to the Priest or Deacon who is preparing them for marriage.

The *Affidavits of Freedom to Marry* requires that both the Bride and Groom have two witnesses who are willing to verify their freedom to enter into marriage. The affidavits may be filled-out by parents, siblings, relatives, or friends who can attest the Bride or Groom has never been married, or if they have been married, what the details of that marriage, or marriages, consisted of.

The *Affidavits of Freedom to Marry* forms will be emailed to you by the Priest or Deacon who prepares you for marriage.

Please note: *No wedding date can be confirmed in the Parish's calendar until the church has received the signed affidavits.*

A Decree of Nullity (an “Annulment”) may be required

In the case of a Catholic who is civilly divorced—or had a marriage ceremony outside of the Catholic Church that was not approved by the Bishop—a *Decree of Nullity*, or *Declaration of Nullity - Lack of Canonical Form*, may be required.



In the case of a non-Catholic who was previously married to another non-Catholic, a *Decree of Nullity* may be required. We can assist you in beginning this process with the Diocesan Tribunal, but please be aware this process can take a few weeks, or up to two years to complete depending on the circumstances of the marriage(s). There is also a chance the *Decree of Nullity* may not be issued at all. Until the *Decree of Nullity* is granted, a wedding date cannot be set in the Parish calendar.

The Prenuptial Investigation

When you meet with the Priest or Deacon you have chosen to marry you, they will conduct a *Prenuptial Investigation*. This investigation will consist of a series of questions to learn more about the history of your relationship. This investigation will also include some paperwork for you to fill-out.



Couples wishing to get married from a different Parish, or from a different Diocese

If St. Joseph the Worker is not your home-parish, you will need a “Letter of Permission” from your Pastor acknowledging he is aware you are getting married at a different parish. This lets your current parish know you are receiving a Sacrament at a different parish and that your Sacrament will be recorded at that parish.

If neither the Bride nor the Groom resides in the Diocese of Camden, then a *Visum* will be required from your home-parish in the Diocese you currently reside. This *Visum* ensures all the paperwork for your marriage will be properly gathered by either the Bride or the Groom’s home-parish and then sent to the Diocese of Camden.





Marriage Preparation Session(s) (pre-Cana)

The Church requires every engaged couple to attend a marriage preparation course called, *pre-Cana* which is a reference to the wedding feast that Jesus and his mother Mary attended in the town of Cana (John 2:1-12).

Couples must complete their pre-Cana training within six-months of their marriage date. A copy of their *pre-Cana Certificate* must be presented to the Priest or Deacon preparing them for marriage.

The Diocese of Camden offers several options for a couple to acquire their pre-Cana certification. Please speak with the Priest or Deacon preparing you for more information on these options, which include online courses. Please note, it is very important that you register as early as possible since sessions are limited and fill-up quickly!

Your wedding day...

As a reminder, a wedding ceremony or Mass at St. Aloysius must begin no later than 1pm, and at St. Vincent Pallotti, no later than 2pm on the weekends...



A Nuptial Mass? Or a wedding ceremony?

Couples will be given information to plan their wedding liturgy (readings and prayers) for a wedding ceremony, or a Nuptial Mass. The Priest or Deacon you have selected to marry you will help you with this process.

***Please note:** the Church prefers that a Nuptial Mass be the choice of the couple. However, the Church also understands*



that sometimes a wedding ceremony is a better option for those who feel their guests would feel uncomfortable being part of the celebration of the Mass.

We invite family members or friends to participate in your wedding by doing the 1st and 2nd Readings, reciting the intentions, or bringing forward the gifts of bread and wine during Mass.

Photography

Photography is permitted during and after the wedding. Photographers should respect our sacred spaces and not enter the sanctuary during the wedding ceremony or Mass. They should also identify themselves to the presiding minister in case they have any additional parameters for them to follow.

***Please note,** If your wedding is on the weekend, due to the likelihood of there being other church services, photographers will have no more than 30 minutes to take pictures after the wedding.*

Music for your Celebration

Our parish has professional musicians to provide music for your wedding ceremony or Mass. Please contact the musicians assigned at the church you plan to have your wedding (see chart below). These same musicians will help you plan the hymns you wish to be sung on your wedding day.

**St. Vincent Pallotti,
Haddon Twp.**

Chris D. - (856) 979-2677

**St. Aloysius,
Oaklyn**

Steve K. - (856) 896-5332





Musician's fees

The fee for the organist is **\$250.00**. The fee for the vocalist is also **\$250.00**. You will pay these fees directly to the organist and vocalist.



If you choose to hire your own musicians, they must be familiar with the liturgy of the Mass and the hymns that are acceptable to be played during Mass.

Please note, if you decide to provide your own musicians you will be responsible for paying a “bench fee” of \$250.00. This fee goes to the organist at the church who relies on weddings as part of their regular income.

Offering for the Church

The offering for the use of the Church is **\$350.00** for parishioners who have been registered with SJW for at least one year. The church offering for non-parishioners is **\$500.00**. A \$100.00 non-refundable deposit must be given to the parish when your wedding date is reserved to demonstrate your commitment to using the church. The rest of the offering can be given to the Priest or Deacon at the wedding rehearsal.

Please note, the church offering does not include the fees for the musicians, cantors, photographers or flowers. Also, if there is a financial hardship to provide the offering to the church, please speak with Fr. Mark. Thank you!

If you wish to make a personal offering to the Priest or Deacon who prepared you for the sacrament of Matrimony or administered the Sacrament at the Mass or ceremony, you may do so privately.



Offering to the Sacristan and Altar Server(s)

The parish will provide a sacristan and altar server(s) for your wedding. If you have a friend or family member who wishes to serve during your wedding ceremony or Mass, please let us know. It is customary to give the sacristan and altar server(s) a small offering for their service.

Flowers and decorations

It is the responsibility of the Bride and Groom to supply flowers in the church for their wedding day. However, due to safety concerns, aisle runners are not permitted. In addition, sprinkling flower pedals, confetti or any other material on the floor is also prohibited due to a slipping risk.

The wedding rehearsal

The Rehearsal is traditionally scheduled **the evening before the marriage**. All those involved in the wedding (with the exception of musicians) must attend the rehearsal.

In addition to being prompt and dressed properly, please ask your wedding party to be respectful and aware of the sacredness of the place of the rehearsal. It is a holy place where God is present.

What to bring to your wedding rehearsal

- ◆ Programs you created to be distributed (if applicable)
- ◆ The offering to the church
- ◆ The offering for the sacristan and altar server
- ◆ Fees for the organist and vocalist
- ◆ Marriage license, if not previously submitted



Obtaining a Marriage License in the State of NJ

New Jersey State Law mandates that there is a **72-hour waiting period** before a Marriage License can be issued. The waiting period begins when the application is filed with the Local Registrar.



The marriage license application is valid for **six months** from the date accepted, unless the Registrar has given prior approval to extend the validity of the application to a maximum of one year. Only one marriage license may be granted from a marriage application

Where to apply:

Apply for the marriage license in the New Jersey municipality where either party resides. The license is valid throughout the State of New Jersey. If neither applicant is a New Jersey resident, submit the application in the municipality where the marriage ceremony will be performed. In this case, the license is only valid in the issuing municipality.

Typical documents required when applying for a marriage license include:

- ◆ Proof of identity by presenting your driver's license, passport or state/federal I.D.
- ◆ Proof of residency by one applicant if a NJ resident
- ◆ Social Security number
- ◆ A witness, 18 years of age or older

Please note: *Because the Church acts as the witness of the marriage for the State, the Church cannot marry a*



couple without the Marriage License. Therefore, we request that the license be obtained at least seven (7) days before the date of the marriage and be presented to the Priest or Deacon marrying you at the time of the Wedding Rehearsal to ensure all is in order.

After you are married, the Priest or Deacon will sign your wedding license and give you a copy of it. However, you must obtain a ***certified copy*** of your wedding license from the municipality or borough where you were married (please see below). You will need a *certified copy* of your wedding license to change your legal documents to your legal married name.

St. Vincent Pallotti Church

Haddon Twp. Municipal Clerk
135 Haddon Avenue
Haddon Township, NJ 0810
(856) 854-1176

St. Aloysius Church

Oaklyn Municipal Clerk
500 White Horse Pike
Oaklyn NJ 08107
(856) 858-2457

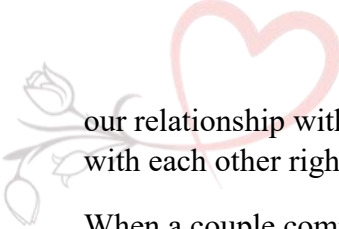
For more information on obtaining a marriage license visit the New Jersey Department of Health at <https://www.nj.gov/health/vital/registration-vital/marriage-licenses/>

Spiritual Preparation for a life-long commitment

The engagement period is a very important time between a couple planning to spend their life together. It is a time where the spiritual growth shared between the couple will greatly assist them in the challenges they will face in their marriage. As such, their weekly participation at Sunday Mass will strengthen their marriage with untold blessings.

By making Jesus the “cornerstone” of your relationship, you will be able to benefit from his teachings of how to foster healthy, loving, and enduring relationships. As the saying goes, “If we get





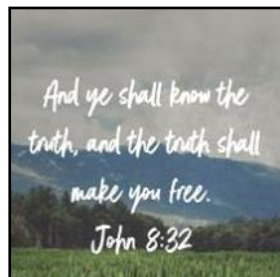
our relationship with Christ right, we will get our relationship with each other right!”

When a couple commits to living their lives according to the wisdom and authority of Christ, this commitment will ultimately be recognized by those around them—and *more importantly*—by their children. Please consider the many spiritual benefits of reserving time in your weekly schedule to join your Catholic family at the celebration of the Holy Mass...

Spiritual growth requires honesty and sacrifice...

Honesty:

As part of your spiritual preparation to receive the *Sacrament of Matrimony*, the Church encourages the couple to be up front and honest with each other about any behavior and/or information that may affect your relationship if it were disclosed after you were married.



The Church also encourages a couple to always demonstrate healthy communication skills with one another. This can be achieved by taking time to pray with each other before you begin to discuss an issue. By separating our emotions from our words and fostering open, honest and loving interpersonal skills, a couple can avoid many misunderstandings, regrets, emotional barriers, and hard feelings in their relationship.

Sacrifice:

The Church recognizes it is common behavior in today's American culture for unmarried couples to engage in sexual relations before being lawfully married in the eyes of God. As a



reminder, chastity between unmarried couples is still required by God, and for good reason. (*Please see, Offenses against Chastity, paragraphs 2351 to 2354 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.*)

A relationship centered on the physical pleasure between a couple can quite often skew their understanding of why they love each other. Are they in this relationship because of how their partner makes them feel physically, or because of how they make them feel mentally, emotionally, and spiritually?

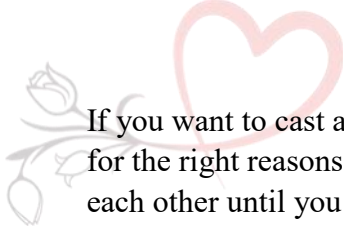
Long after the physical attraction begins to fade due to age or health, what remains is *who* that person is in the inside. The more you get to know who this person is in their heart, mind, and soul, the more confident you will be entering a life long commitment with them.

As a reminder, the Catholic Church does not believe in divorce due to what our Lord says in Chapter 10 of Mark's record of the Gospel. Jesus said:

"Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate... Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery" (verses 9, 11-12).

Divorce is often quite traumatizing for children who assume their parents will always be together with them as a family. Divorce can also cause emotional stress among relatives who view the couple as being part of their family. Also, divorce can create a financial hardship for both parents as they try to make ends meet on their own. These are only some of the reasons why Jesus makes it clear that marriage is an indissoluble union (CCC 1644-1645).





If you want to cast aside any doubt that a person truly loves you for the right reasons, then agree not to be sexually intimate with each other until you are lawfully married in the Eyes of God.

If your fiancé is not willing to make this commitment, then this may be a signal they care more about their physical relationship with you, rather than who you are as a Christian, especially if you are trying to live according to the wisdom and will of God in every area of your life.

Receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) before your Marriage Day...

If a couple has tried to live according to God's Wisdom and Authority in their lives but have failed to do so, the Church recommends that you receive the *Sacrament of Reconciliation* (Confession) in order to be in a State of Grace when you receive the *Sacrament of Holy Matrimony*.



*What God has joined together, no
human being must separate.*

Mark 10:9

