

## MARRIAGE INFORMATION

**St. Bridget Parish, River Falls, Wisconsin**

Revised: May, 2011

### **Congratulations to those who are planning to be married:**

As you are planning your Wedding Day, you have made or will be making, plans with regard to innumerable details: attendants, the wedding dress, the reception, the flowers, and pictures. In an effort to help you with as many of the details as possible, surrounding our involvement in your wedding, we present the following pages of information that we will discuss with you.

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### **A. Materials Supplied by the Priest OR Church representative:**

There are three sections for the Sacrament of Marriage Preparation

- 1) The couple takes a pre-marital inventory called FOCCUS. This inventory will affirm various issues already discussed by the couple; identify those areas the couple still needs to address; and finally, the FOCCUS will identify those areas a couple may not have addressed. After taking the FOCCUS the couple will discuss the results with a trained married couple of the parish.
- 2) The second phase in Marriage Preparation is attending "marriage preparation course." This course might be a weekend or a day at a church or other program approved by the pastor. Currently, we host a Pre Marriage program day here at St. Bridget Catholic Church. There are additional marriage preparation programs in the Twin Cities area and another in Hudson. The priest, deacon or parish office can assist in providing brochures or information about these marriage preparation sessions.
- 3) The last phase of Marriage Preparation is planning the Wedding Liturgy. We ask that you purchase or borrow from others the book **Celebrating Marriage** by Paul Covino. The price at the time of this writing is \$10 if purchased from the church office. It is, also, available at St. Patrick's Guild (located at Randolph and Snelling) in St. Paul, Minnesota. The priest/deacon or Keith Brux can provide you a suggested but not exclusive list of music appropriate for a church celebration.

### **B. Necessary Documents (Father or Deacon will take care of these.)**

1. Baptismal Certificate (for Catholic and Protestant spouses) should be issued within past 6 months of a Catholic. If the baptism took place here at St. Bridget's, no certificate is necessary. Once you are married, the name of the spouse is placed on the Catholic's Baptismal Record.

2. A form which states that you are free to marry; that no one is forcing you to get married. The deacon will help you with this document.
3. Proof of Marriage Preparation Instructions.

**C. The Time**

1. According to the Church's State-wide Common Policy for Marriages, a minimum of **six months**' preparation is required from your first contact with the church until your marriage day.
2. Before you make any other definite wedding plans, it would be prudent to make sure that the date and time you desire for your wedding are available at the church.
3. Weddings can be celebrated on any day of the week except Sunday and Holy Days (unless they are during the Sunday Mass or Holy Day Mass times). Evening weddings are permitted, but be sure that the time is set well in advance.
4. We prefer to schedule only **one** wedding per Saturday. However, if a second wedding is scheduled, the first one to reserve has priority in regards to time.

**D. The Ceremony**

1. You should be aware that the Bride and Groom are the actual ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage to each other.
2.
  - a. The deacon or priest is the representative of the Church (and State) at weddings at St. Bridget's.
  - b. At marriages involving a Catholic and a Protestant, the Protestant party may have a valid reason for wanting to have his/her minister take part with the priest in the wedding ceremony here at St. Bridget's. They are welcome to share in the ceremony.
  - c. At times, for valid reasons, in mixed marriages, the couple may desire that the wedding should take place in the church of the non-Catholic party. In this case, the Protestant minister is the official witness of the marriage vows. The priest or deacon takes part in the ceremony in a manner to be decided with the Protestant clergyman.
3.
  - a. If the ceremony involves two Catholics, the ceremony ordinarily takes place at a Nuptial Mass.
  - b. At a Mixed Marriage (A Catholic and a non-Catholic) the ceremony may take place either at Mass or as a Scripture Word service. Out of respect to the non-Catholic party, a wedding with Scripture Word service is preferred. A deacon will usually perform marriages outside of Mass.
4. Requests for "outdoor weddings" or "destination weddings" can be discussed with the pastor.

5. As part of the marriage preparations before the rehearsal, the deacon or priest will consider with you a variety of possibilities within the ceremony.
  - a. wedding procession format
  - b. choice of readings
  - c. expression of vows
  - d. exchange of rings
  - e. offertory procession
  - f. Mass servers (if Mass)
  - g. sign of peace
  - h. Communion, Eucharistic Ministers (If Mass is celebrated)
  - i. reception line
  - j. signing of marriage certificates
  - k. wedding candle ceremony
  - l. wedding booklets
  
6. **All details** of the ceremony are to be worked out with the celebrant at least 3 weeks before the wedding.

#### **E. The Music**

1. Your choice of music should add to, not detract from the beauty of your marriage celebration.
2. Appropriate music for the Sacrament of Marriage should be:
  - a. Musical – it is pleasing to the ear.
  - b. Liturgical – it should fit the Rite and affirm the sacramental relationship or covenant you are participating in.
  - c. Pastoral – it is in good judgment with and for the community. It is not lyrically offensive and is in keeping with beliefs of all Christians.
3. Please discuss your choice of music with a representative from the church: the priest, deacons, or accompanist.
4. We have a selection of acceptable and suggested music will prove helpful in planning your ceremony.

#### **F. Ushering Duties at Weddings:**

To be an usher at a wedding is a great ministry of hospitality. Your primary role is to welcome the guests and to seat them or direct them to seating so that they may feel welcome at this celebration. The following is a list of duties that can help the couple with the celebration of their wedding at St. Bridget Church.

### BEFORE THE CEREMONY

--Arrive at least 30 minutes before the ceremony begins unless directed earlier by someone involved in the wedding planning.

--No paper or plastic aisle runners are allowed at St. Bridget Church due to safety hazards.

--There may be "programs" to be passed out.

--As guests arrive please seat them as soon as possible. This will avoid crowding at the last minute. Once the ceremony begins do not seat anyone down the main aisle, use the side aisles.

### DURING THE CEREMONY

--During the wedding ceremony you may be seated with the congregation. Stay alert in case someone needs assistance.

--Phone is located in the church kitchen. Dial 99 for an outside line then 911.

Or use a cell phone. The church address is 211 E. Division St. River Falls.

### AFTER CEREMONY

--After the Final Blessing, please come forward and allow the people to leave row by row unless the bride and groom or others are to do this task.

--Please help put away:

--wedding candle stand to the sacristy

--pick up left over programs

--remove candle stands on pews (if used)

--pick up all trash from flower boxes and place in dumpster outside St. Bridget School (larger size dumpsters—trash or recycle ones)

--The bride and her attendants may want to use the multi-purpose room for preparing themselves before the wedding. Make sure this is picked up and trash disposed of in the dumpster.

--Take any personal items found (wallets, purses, etc.) to the reception. They can be claimed there.

## G. Flowers

1. Any flowers you want to put in the sanctuary areas are to be real. Silk flowers, even those that look real are contrary to liturgical norms.
2. After the wedding ceremony you are most welcome to leave your flowers in the Church for decoration purpose

## H. Photography & Video Taping at Weddings

Pictures recalling your wedding day will undoubtedly be important to you. The Church hopes you will remember that it is equally important to maintain an attitude of respect and recollection in the Church as God's House. The Church is the sacred place for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage, not a studio.

If you are having posed pictures in the Church, we have these requests:

1. Photographers or others are not allowed to change the light settings or move the altar area furniture.

2. All posed pictures taken in Church are to be finished one half hour before the ceremony. *Please check the day before your wedding to find out any other scheduled liturgical events.*
3. Flash photography OR flood lighting of any type are not permitted during the ceremony. This will be announced before the ceremony begins. Flash pictures are permitted during processional and recessional.
4. Photographers and or video operators must check procedures with the priest or deacon before the ceremony. Video operators are NOT permitted to wander about during the ceremony
5. Video Taping by the Church is offered for a \$100 fee. St. Bridget Church offers the service of videotaping weddings by one of the videographers here at the parish. This is the same system used for recording Masses for cable access. Contact Deacon Larry or Fr. Harris for details.
6. Weddings provide the wonderful opportunity for group family photos. These are acceptable and most welcome along with other dignified poses. Inappropriate behavior such as pictures involving sunglasses, exposing of garters, or persons lifting others off the floor, are not allowed in sacred space.
7. No food or beverage consumption is allowed in Church. Food and drink may be consumed in the parish hall. Church kitchen is available for snack preparation if needed.

**NEXT SCHEDULED LITURGICAL EVENT EACH SATURDAY IS AT 4:00 PM**  
**ALL PICTURES MUST BE COMPLETED BY THIS TIME. THANK YOU.**

I. **Fees**

1. Just as you will be dealing with other professional persons whose abilities deserve payment (e.g., the florist, the dressmaker, the photographer), so the musicians involved are contributing their talents to make your day memorable. You should arrange that fee with your musicians.
2. The servers at the Wedding Mass (usually 2) should be compensated with at least \$10.00 apiece.
3. The priest, deacon or minister, officiating at the wedding has gone to a great deal of effort and care to make your wedding day beautiful. A free-will offering is customary but not obligatory. Currently, any monetary gifts are given to the poor for food or housing.
4. **To avoid later confusion and embarrassment, we urge you to take care of these details prior to the wedding.**

## J. Etiquette

1. We believe Marriage is a Sacrament, a very holy and sacred day for both of you. Prepare yourselves well to share this special profession of faith with your family and invited guests:
  - a. Do things in good taste; Christ is present in the wedding liturgy. Let this be a time of prayer.
  - b. A party the night before may be fine, but not if you're going to be sick on your wedding day.
  - c. Don't keep your guests waiting for the reception to start while the wedding party is running all over town.
  - d. Try to pay attention to as many guests as possible at the reception.

## K. General Information:

1. **No alcohol** is permitted in the church building or on the grounds, e.g., parking lot, picnic table (Pine Island).
2. We ask particularly that you request your guests **NOT TO THROW RICE, CONFETTI, OR OTHER OBJECTS** after the wedding because of liability issues. "Bubble Blowing" or ringing of "bells" is permitted.
3. If you put up decorations in the church, no tape or wire is to be used on pews. We allow "fun tak", "plastic tack," or elastic bands—the last works the best.
4. If the married couple will reside in the parish they should register in the parish when beginning the marriage preparations. Please be sure to provide us with your new address when the marriage takes place.
5. All parish buildings are **SMOKE FREE**. Please see that your wedding party and guests are aware of and abide by this policy.

## L. Penance:

Couples to be married should especially prepare themselves for this new state of life by receiving the Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) shortly before their marriage.

## LICENSE

**Where to apply:** County Clerk's Office, Court House, County Seat  
 Ellsworth 715-273-3531 Hudson 715-386-4609

If you live in Wisconsin, please obtain your license in the county of residence. Once you are married your license is filed in the county of the ceremony. St. Bridget Church is in St. Croix County and will be filed in Hudson.

## Witnesses

Two adult witnesses (18 years of age or older) are required in addition to the person officiating. Witnesses do not have to be in the wedding party.

**Honeymoon travel?** If you are planning to travel on a honeymoon shortly your wedding and one of you is planning on changing your last name; you will need to travel under your current legal name. E.G. plane tickets with the common new last name with an old driver's license or passport with your current last name, you may be denied boarding. Please check with the marriage license people for details.