

Celebrating your Marriage



Planning and Preparing

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CONGRATULATIONS:

Together you have decided to begin a great journey of love. St. Mary Parish rejoices with you, your families and friends on your decision to be married. The contents of this pamphlet have been designed to help you prepare for the celebration of your wedding. Please feel free to call on us at any time if you have any questions. After you are married and settled in your new home, we urge you to seek out the parish where you live. Introduce yourselves to the staff of the parish, register as parishioners there, and most importantly, be active in your parish. Our prayers and best wishes are with you on this journey!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Father Corey Piccinino". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Rev. Corey V. Piccinino
and the Parish Staff

PREPARATION

Many people will be involved with your preparation for this happy occasion. Each will have something important to offer. All are motivated by a single desire, that you will be happy together for the rest of your lives.

Marriage Preparation Workshop: In addition to meeting with one of the priests, all engaged couples are required by diocesan law to attend a marriage preparation workshop – sometimes called **Pre-Cana**. If possible, this should be done at least six months before the wedding. Schedules are available at the rectory or on-line at www.bridgeportdiocese.com/familylife. Also, Encounter Weekends are available sponsored by our Diocese and, occasionally, pre-marriage workshops are available on a parish basis. These programs are worthwhile in your preparation for the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Call and make a second appointment with a priest of the parish after you have been to a Marriage Preparation Workshop to further discuss your forthcoming marriage. Please bring to this meeting a copy of your **Baptismal**, **First Communion** and **Confirmation certificates** if these sacraments were not received at St. Mary Church. For non-Catholics, only a baptismal certificate is necessary. Any Baptismal certificate should be a new one dated at the bottom, ***no older than six months***, with a notation of freedom to marry. If your address changes during the time of your engagement, please notify the parish office so that you will receive all updated information.

License: Before applying for your marriage license, you must call the Town Hall in Bethel for an appointment and bring a photo ID when you apply. The license must be obtained in Bethel and should be left at the Rectory as soon as you receive it. The license lasts for *only 65 days*; however you must be sure to have the license by the night of your rehearsal. **This is most important** -- so be sure to leave yourself enough time. The phone number at the Bethel Town Hall for marriage license appointments is 794-8506.

Reconciliation: We encourage all Catholics in the bridal party to receive Holy Communion at the Nuptial Mass. Although the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available on the night of your rehearsal, we encourage all to receive the Sacrament **before** this time.

THE WEDDING CELEBRATION

In preparing for your wedding celebration, we would encourage you to realize the importance of the spiritual preparation for it. It is very important that you do not let the

material preparation for your wedding overshadow the spiritual in order that you are able to begin your new life of marriage in the proper way. Spend some time in planning your ceremony, picking out the readings and music, choosing the prayers, etc. We priests are more than willing to help.

Liturgy/Readings: Since the celebration of marriage is an event for the whole church, and especially for the parish community, the liturgical celebration will express the faith of the Catholic Church and the local customs of the parish. In preparing for your wedding liturgy, you will work with the priest to choose readings and prayers that are appropriate for the wedding liturgy. The choice of prayers, readings, exchange of consent, exchange of rings, nuptial blessing and the homily all express this same faith. Usually one of the parish priests is available to preside at your wedding. Visiting priests and deacons are also welcome. Please ask them to contact us.

Music: Any music chosen for the wedding should express the faith of the church in the mystery that is being celebrated. It should be appropriate for a liturgical celebration. Our Music Director and organist, Mr. Michael Ferrari, will be present and will assist you in choosing music which will enhance your wedding liturgy. Please call him as soon as you have a secure date and time for your wedding with the parish.

The fee for the organist is \$300 and the fee for the singer is \$250 (this includes a meeting and the ceremony). We ask that the fee for the organist and the singer be sent directly to them two weeks before the ceremony. Please contact Michael for the list of cantors and at which masses the cantors can be heard. Also, a trumpet player is available if you should like to have one for the ceremony. If you wish to engage additional musicians, please contact Mr. Ferrari as soon as possible to make these arrangements. The fee for other instrumentalists is \$200. The request for family members or friends to provide music, however well intentioned, can create problems – especially if the person is not professionally trained. Again, please consult Mr. Ferrari before any such requests are made.

Michael Ferrari, Music Director/Organist
(860) 424-7608

Flowers: Flowers are taken care of by you and the florist of your choice. Ordinarily, two bouquets are placed in the Sanctuary. If there is another wedding on the same day, you may wish to share the cost of flowers for the Church. Our aisle is 60 feet long. Any flowers placed in the Sanctuary for a wedding ceremony **should remain** there for the weekend. Please advise your florist that **NO** flowers are to be placed on the altar. Flowers should be placed on the white pedestals and the pedestals should not be moved to the sides of the altar, but left in each corner of the Sanctuary. At certain times of the year, the church is specially decorated and no more flowers would be needed, i.e. Christmas and Easter. We do request that no flowers or petals be strewn in the aisle as it is difficult to clean up.

Confetti and Rice, etc.: Please advise the bridal party that confetti, rice, birdseed, etc., are not allowed at the Church. We are aware of controlling the rest of the guests, but you can make this known to the bridal party and to your families.

Photography/Videography: You are welcome to have a professional photographer and professional videographer at your wedding. We ask that you inform your photographer/videographer of the following:

- a. Please do not enter the sanctuary area for picture or videos.
- b. As the bridal party comes down the aisle, please do not stand in the aisle or in front of the first pews.
- c. Please do not hold up the bride as she leaves the limousine as this frequently makes her late in beginning the procession.
- d. No bright lights from video cameras and as little movement as possible.
- e. Please have your photographer/videographer **contact the priest celebrating the wedding before the actual ceremony begins.**

Rehearsal: Please be on time for your rehearsal and remember to wear proper dress for Church.

Alcohol: The consuming of champagne or other alcoholic beverages inside our outside of the church is not appropriate and not permitted.

Offerings: The sacraments will never be refused. However, it is customary to make a donation to help with the upkeep of the Church. We suggest an offering of \$400 to the parish, with the check made out to St. Mary Church. (Fees for the organist and soloist are previously mentioned above.) Most couples make an additional offering to the individual priest/deacon celebrating your wedding – you may give it to him directly at the rehearsal or the day of the wedding.

Wedding Time: We ask that the celebration start on time, as much as possible. Being late is not only rude to your guests and others involved with your celebration, but can cause problems with the services scheduled after your wedding. This is particularly important if your ceremony is at 3:00pm on Saturday as we have 4:00pm Confessions and a 5:30pm Mass that evening.

ENJOY

This is a great day for you and we promise to do all we can to make it special!

Nuptial Mass – Order for the Program

- Prelude
- Processional
- First Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- Second Reading
- Gospel
- Exchange of Vows
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Prayer of the Faithful
- Preparation of the Gifts
- Eucharistic Acclamations
- Lord's Prayer
- Communion Hymn
- Final Blessing
- Recessional

Wedding Ceremony – Order for the Program

- Prelude
- First Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- Second Reading
- Gospel
- Exchange of Vows
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Hymn
- Prayer of the Faithful
- Final Blessing
- Recessional

Notes