

PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE & FOR YOUR WEDDING CHURCH OF THE DIVINE CHILD

(Revised Jan. 2021)

A Message from the Pastoral Staff

Congratulations on your recent engagement! In the coming months, you will be preparing for your marriage and wedding. We at Divine Child want to assist you in preparing for both the wedding and for married life. Our prime concern is to help you marry well and be "together for life" with God's active presence.

If you wish to speak with a priest regarding your wedding, or wish to check a potential date, please contact Alicia Reyes at 313-277-3110 ext. 301.

The date and time that you inquire about is tentative, pending the priest's approval, along with completion of the Pre-marriage File (A-Form) to ensure freedom to marry as well as the acceptance of the terms listed in the marriage preparation agreement.

There are two distinct preparations which you will be undertaking: (1) for marriage; and (2) for the wedding day. The engaged couple agrees to willingly participate in the process of marriage preparation different from the details of the wedding day. The wedding date is contingent upon the couple's successful completion of the marriage preparation.

This newsletter includes the guidelines and policies of Divine Child Parish for weddings. You are responsible for knowing these policies, so please read over this document thoroughly. It is our hope that through these policies, your wedding day at Divine Child will be a special time of prayer to be warmly remembered, and your marriage filled with God's life and love.

- Divine Child Pastoral Staff

Prerequisites for Marriage at the Church of the Divine Child

Parish Membership

Registered, practicing members of the Church of the Divine Child are given priority to schedule a wedding at Divine Child Parish. Couples must be attending Sunday Mass regularly for **at least six months** before a wedding may be scheduled.

Freedom to Enter the Sacrament of Marriage

- 1) Both parties entering the marriage must establish that they have never been married or that previous Catholic marriages have been annulled by the Catholic Church.
- 2) The couple must agree not to live together until after the wedding.
- 3) The couple must meet the requirements of the Law of the Catholic Church as it pertains to marriage.



Preparing for Marriage

As prescribed by the Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Detroit, a couple must begin their preparations for marriage with the church **at least six months** prior to the proposed date of the marriage. During these six months prior to the proposed date, a couple **must complete the following requirements:**

The couple must complete all the required forms, including the **“PRE-MARRIAGE FORM” (A-FORM)**, which will be completed with the priest. In instances where one of the parties is not Catholic, it may be necessary for the priest to obtain a dispensation from the Archbishop’s office. The priest will explain this process to you.

Provide the priest with an original copy of your **BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE** that has been issued within six months of the wedding. This certificate is readily available upon request from the parish of your Baptism. **Please do not bring the original certificate or an old copy of the original;** it will not fulfill the requirement.

Couples are required to take an online Premarital Personal and Relationship Evaluation (**PREPARE**). You will be registered by Alicia Reyes and receive an email with a link to complete your evaluations. The bride and groom should each complete the evaluation in private with no discussion between them; it takes approximately 30-40 minutes to complete.

Couples must contact the marriage counselor Jason Newberry to schedule a **COUNSELING SESSION** immediately after completing the PREPARE in order to review the results of the evaluation. Those contemplating marriage who do not indicate a sufficient level of compatibility or maturity may be required to attend additional counseling sessions with the counselor or priest.

Couples must attend a **MARRIAGE PREP SEMINAR**, one recommended by the Archdiocese of Detroit. Information is included in your marriage packet. Cost averages approximately \$75-150 and is paid to the facilitator of the seminar.

Couples must attend our **NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING (NFP)** instruction. Information is included in your packet. **Please try to register for the instruction six months or more prior to the wedding date.** Cost is \$125.

Couples will be provided the book, **TOGETHER FOR LIFE**, which contains the options for the wedding ceremony readings. Complete the form provided in the book with your choices for the liturgy, which will then be discussed with the priest at your final pre-wedding appointment.

The couple may schedule a date and time for their **WEDDING REHEARSAL** by calling Alicia Reyes at the Rectory Office. It is imperative that everyone be **on time** for the rehearsal. Please allow an hour for the rehearsal. *The priest typically is not present at the rehearsal.*

The **MARRIAGE LICENSE** must be brought to the Rectory Office at least one week prior to your wedding. Please keep in mind that the marriage license is only valid for 30 days and takes at least 3 days to process. When bringing in the license, please bring in any outstanding paperwork, required fees, and organist stipend (see page 7).

The Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage, like every sacrament is a sacred event in the life of the Church. The entire Church celebrates with you. The Catechism of the Church describes Marriage in this way:

1659. St. Paul said: “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church.... This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church” (Eph 5:25, 32).

1660. The marriage covenant, by which a man and a woman form with each other an intimate communion of life and love, has been endowed with its own special laws of the Creator. By its very nature it is ordered to the good of the couple, as well as to the generation and education of children. Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of a sacrament (cf. CIC, can. 1055 § 1; cf. GS 48 § 1).

1661. The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on their way to eternal life (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1799).

1662. Marriage is based on the consent of the contracting parties, that is, on their will to give themselves, each to the other, mutually and definitively, in order to live a covenant of faithful and fruitful love.

1663. Since marriage establishes the couple in a public state of life in the Church, it is fitting that its celebration be public, in a framework of a liturgical celebration, before the priest (or a witness authorized by the Church), the witnesses, and the assembly of the faithful.

Your marriage is sanctified before God and before the whole Church as well as your family and friends who come to join you for this celebration.

The context of your marriage presumes a faith in God, and in the sacredness of this sacramental action. While your wedding involves you and your family, that is only part of the picture. Your wedding is a celebration of the faith of the parish community and the Church. Because of this, there is a specific liturgy for marriage that clarifies the sacredness of this event and its place in the life of the Church.

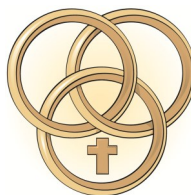
The Celebration of Marriage

Again the Catechism instructs us:

1621. In the Latin Rite the celebration of marriage between two Catholic faithful normally takes place during Holy Mass, because of the connection of all the sacraments with the Pascal mystery of Christ. [120] In the Eucharist the memorial of the New Covenant is realized, the New Covenant in which Christ has united himself for ever to the Church, his beloved bride for whom he gave himself up. [121] It is therefore fitting that the spouses should seal their consent to give themselves to each other through the offering of their own lives by uniting it to the offering of Christ for his Church made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and by receiving the Eucharist so that, communicating in the same Body and the same Blood of Christ, they may form but “one body” in Christ. [122]

1622. “Inasmuch as it is a sacramental action of sanctification, the liturgical celebration of marriage...must be, per se, valid, worthy, and fruitful.” [123] **It is therefore appropriate for the bride and groom to prepare themselves for the celebration of their marriage by receiving the sacrament of penance.**

1623. In the Latin Church, it is ordinarily understood that the spouses, as ministers of Christ’s grace, mutually confer upon each other the Sacrament of Matrimony by expressing their consent before the Church.



1624. The various liturgies abound in prayers of blessing and epiclesis asking God’s grace and blessing on the new couple, especially the bride. In the epiclesis of this sacrament the spouses receive the Holy Spirit as the communion of love of Christ and the Church. [124] The Holy Spirit is the seal of their covenant, the ever-available source of their love and strength to renew their fidelity.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUNDAY EUCHARIST

Again, the Catechism of the Catholic Church is a helpful reminder of the role the Eucharist plays in the life of the Catholic Christian:

2177. **The Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life.** "Sunday is the day on which the paschal mystery is celebrated in light of the apostolic tradition and is to be observed as the foremost holy day of obligation in the universal Church." [110]

2180. The precept of the Church specifies the law of the Lord more precisely: **"On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass."** [117]

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER AND CONFESSION

In the belief of the Catholic Church, when two baptized Christians marry, it is the awesome undertaking of a sacramental vocation. *We encourage couples to pray together individually for God's loving and guiding presence in their relationship.* With any need in praying or knowing the faith of the Church, just ask the priest.

We highly encourage all Catholics to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) before receiving the Sacrament of Marriage. If you have not gone to confession for a long time, the priest will assist you in making your confession. Please refrain from requesting a confession at the rehearsal or on the wedding day (when the priest is busy with preparations for the ceremony).

**CONFESSIONS ARE REGULARLY
HEARD AT DIVINE CHILD ON
SATURDAYS FROM 2:30 TO 4:00 PM
AND AFTER 4:30 PM MASS UNTIL
ALL ARE HEARD.**

Pictures & Videos

You are responsible for sharing this information with your photographer and videographer!

Your wedding is a memorable event in your life and the life of your family; therefore, photographs and videos are permitted.

Photographs may be taken:

- * Before the wedding, as the wedding party enters the church, after the wedding ceremony, and when the wedding party has left the main aisle of the church.
- * During the exchange of wedding vows and the exchange of rings (NO FLASH - MUST BE IN BACK OF CHURCH).
- * After the ceremony, pictures of the wedding party may be taken by the photographer for no more than one hour.

Respect for the sacredness of the church must always be maintained.

Only pictures allowed in the Church are:

<i>Bride alone & Groom alone</i>	<i>Bride & Groom</i>
<i>Bride w/ parents</i>	<i>Groom w/ groomsmen</i>
<i>Bride/Groom w/ parents</i>	<i>Groom w/ parents</i>
<i>Bride/groom w/ wedding party</i>	<i>Bride w/ bridesmaids</i>

ALL OTHER PICTURES MUST BE TAKEN OUTSIDE OF THE CHURCH (weather permitting) OR AT THE RECEPTION HALL.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES TO BE OBSERVED:

- **Couple is asked to inform their guests not to take flash pictures after the ceremony while the photographer is taking formal pictures.**
- No spotlights are allowed.
- Photographers and videographers are not allowed to rearrange/move any of the furniture in any part of the church.
- The church is not a photographic studio. Backdrops, special lighting equipment, and other equipment are not to be set up in any part of the church.
- Photographers and videographers are not allowed to take pictures from the Sanctuary, from the Choir Loft, or from the Sacristy (except for the license signing).
- Photographers and videographers must sign the appropriate form indicating that they will be in compliance with Divine Child's policy.

VIDEOTAPING

Two to three camera positions are allowed and designated for videotaping at fixed locations in the church. Cameras may not be moved around during the ceremony. Artificial lights and portable sound systems are not permitted. It is not permitted to tap into the electronic outlets or sound system of the church. Wireless microphones may be used with the priest's permission only.

MUSIC



The Music

Music is an important element of any liturgical celebration and enhances the celebration of your wedding. As an integral part of the wedding liturgy, music has the power to create a festive mood appropriate for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. Whether a Nuptial Mass or the Wedding Rite Outside of Mass, liturgical music is always required, including during the Psalm.

Planning the Music

The couple is required to contact Divine Child's Director of Music Ministry, Mr. Matt Simpson, who will assist you in planning appropriate liturgical music for the celebration of your wedding. **Please contact Mr. Simpson at least two months before the wedding ceremony to discuss your music choices for the ceremony.** Please discuss all liturgical music, guest musicians and/or soloists with Mr. Simpson. **Guest musicians or soloists are only allowed in the Choir Loft and not in the Sanctuary.**

Since the music supports the liturgy, **only sacred/liturgical hymns or instruments are permitted during the wedding Mass.** Secular music may be played at the wedding reception.

Musician

The Divine Child Director of Music Ministry is the organist that will play for your wedding at Divine Child. ANY exception to this policy must be discussed with Mr. Simpson. As stated above, arrangements for your music must be made well in advance.

Cantor (Singer)

Mr. Simpson may assign a cantor (singer) for your wedding ceremony.



Stipends (Fees)

The wedding fee for the organist is \$150, which is in accordance with the guidelines set by the American Organist's Guild. It covers the time and expertise of the musician. Please submit a separate check for \$150 payable to "Matthew Simpson" (see page 7).

The fee for the cantor (*singer*) is \$100, if one is assigned. Please check with Mr. Simpson as to who the cantor will be, and submit a separate check made out directly to them for this amount (see page 7).

If an additional rehearsal before the wedding date with the organist present is requested, this will result in an additional fee of \$50 per rehearsal.

FLOWERS, CANDLES AND DECORATIONS

Flowers

Flowers add beauty to a wedding, and Divine Child welcomes **two** flower arrangements for the back altar, which customarily are left for others in the parish to enjoy through the weekend. Your florist should bring flowers **no earlier than an hour before the ceremony**. Flowers to be placed anywhere else in the Sanctuary or in the church must be approved beforehand.

Pew flowers or bows are welcomed; however, they **may NOT be taped or glued** to the pews. Please use ribbon, an elastic band or a clip to secure anything to the pews. It is your responsibility to remove pew flowers or bows from the pews immediately after the ceremony. Real or silk flower petals **may NOT be dropped** down the center aisle by the flower girls.

Unity Candle

The *Unity Candle* is not part of the Catholic Rite of Marriage; therefore, it is not permitted.

Aisle Runners

Aisle runners are **NOT** permitted at Divine Child because of the liability involved with people tripping.

Other Decorations

The priest preparing you for marriage must approve any other decorations. Remember, you want to keep the focus on the marriage liturgy without distraction. **Glitter is NOT permitted.**

Rice, Confetti, Glitter, etc.

The throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, glitter, the use of balloons or bubbles, or spraying of foamy substances from spray cans, does not relate to any part of the Catholic marriage liturgy and is not permitted anywhere on Divine Child church property, indoors OR outdoors. There is NO exception to this policy.

SOME NOTES ABOUT THE CEREMONY



The Wedding Party

When selecting couples for the wedding party, keep in mind that only two witnesses, besides the church minister, are required by civil and Church law. Please select only one Best Man and one Maid/Matron of Honor. Please select a reasonable number of groomsmen/ushers and bridesmaids.

Also, your wedding is a sacred rite and not an occasion for "something cute." Thus, you may have a ring bearer and flower girl, but please make sure they are old enough to process comfortably down the main aisle without being afraid. **Carrying of signs or dropping of petals, etc. by the flower girl or ringbearer is not permitted.**

The bride and groom, with the best man and maid of honor, are the only people permitted in the Sanctuary. Bridesmaids and groomsmen are seated in the front pews. Flower girls and ringbearers typically are seated with their parents.



The Readings

Only readings from the Scriptures may be used. **The readers MUST BE Catholic**, capable and rehearsed. It may be an imposition to ask anyone to read if they are not motivated by faith, do not have an adequate voice, or are not accustomed to speaking before a group. They must also be physically able to navigate the stairs leading up to the main ambo of the church.

Fees & Honorarium

Fees Pertaining to Divine Child

The current fess for a wedding AND/OR preparation at Divine Child are as follows:

- **One check for \$450** payable to "Church of the Divine Child" covers the marriage counselor/PREPARE evaluation (\$235) and the wedding/administrative fee (\$215). **THIS FEE APPLIES TO ALL WEDDINGS COORDINATED THROUGH DIVINE CHILD, REGARDLESS OF LOCATION OR ASSIGNED PRIEST.**

A **second check for \$150** payable to "Matthew Simpson", the organist. If there is a cantor, **a third check for \$100** payable to him/her. (Obtain name from Mr. Simpson).

A MARRIAGE PREPARATION CLASS AND A NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING (NFP) CLASS ARE ALSO REQUIRED; PAYMENT GOES DIRECTLY TO THE FACILITATOR.

Please submit your checks when you bring your marriage license and any remaining paperwork to the Rectory AT LEAST ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE CEREMONY.

To keep costs at a minimum, we respectfully ask that the families leave the church building as it was before the ceremony. Please do not leave any food containers, empty flower boxes, water, other beverage containers, extra programs or pew bows behind. **It is expected that the couple take on this responsibility and ensure this minimal amount of clean-up.**

Honorarium

If you choose to give the priest who presides at your marriage ceremony a monetary gift (honorarium), it is appreciated but not required. **Also, if you wish to invite the priest to the reception, please send him a written invitation.**

A small (\$5-10 each in cash) honorarium is also requested for the altar servers (*usually two*).

"To Do" Marriage Checklist

- ☐ Complete required marriage forms.
- ☐ Obtain an original of your Baptismal Certificate **dated within 6 months of the wedding date** and deliver or have mailed to the Divine Child Rectory Office, Attn: Alicia.
- ☐ Complete the PREPARE evaluation, followed by meeting(s) with Marriage Counselor.
- ☐ Complete the Marquette Method Natural Family Planning (NFP) instruction.
- ☐ Complete one Marriage Preparation class/seminar.
- ☐ Plan the liturgy and ceremony (choosing readings and music); initial meeting with the priest celebrant of the wedding and subsequent meetings as the priest requests.
- ☐ Contact the Director of Music Ministry - Matthew Simpson.
- ☐ Schedule the wedding rehearsal. Rehearsals may **begin** no later than 6:00 PM.
- ☐ Apply for the Marriage License with the County Clerk. The Clerk's Office will advise you of any requirements. Remember, the Marriage License is only valid for 30 days.

At Least One Week Before the Ceremony

Deliver to the Rectory Office:

- ☐ Marriage License (*3 original copies*)
- ☐ Wedding Procession Sheet
- ☐ Signed photographer and/or videographer contracts
- ☐ Any remaining paperwork
- ☐ Your envelope with **three** checks:
 - 1) \$450 Wedding Fee (*payable to Church of the Divine Child*)
 - 2) \$150 Organist Fee (*payable to Matthew Simpson*)
 - 3) \$100 Cantor (singer) Fee (*if applicable*)
 - 4) Optional - Honorarium for 2 Altar Servers (*in cash*)

Thank you!



PRAYER

With all of the demands associated with preparations for marriage, frequently you may find yourselves lacking time to relax and reflect upon your relationship and the commitment into which you are about to enter. This can also be a time of spiritual growth for both of you, growing in your love for each other and for Jesus Christ. We hope the following prayer will help you in the months ahead:

Creator God,

*We thank you for your many gifts, but especially for
the love we share.*

*We ask you to be with us and guide us in these times of
preparation and waiting for our wedding day.*

*May the days and hours ahead not all be frenzy,
but may we find time to know our hearts and consider
the promises we shall make.*

Thank you for my partner, _____,

I am grateful for his/her love.

*Keep him/her in your care during this time
of preparation and in all the days ahead.*

*Grant us patience, dear God, with each other,
with our families, and with all those with whom
we come into contact.*

*Be with us, and give us your peace,
in good times and in bad, now and forever.*

Amen.