

# Catholic Community of South Baltimore

## Wedding Information Brochure

**The information in this brochure is for weddings celebrated in 2015**

### *Blessing from the Rite of Marriage*

**“Married Christians, in virtue of the sacrament of Matrimony, signify and share in the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and his Church; they help each other to attain holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children; and they have their own special gift among the people of God.”** —*Introduction to the Rite of Marriage, #1*

## WELCOME

The parish welcomes you to the Catholic Community of South Baltimore ([www.southbaltcatholic.org](http://www.southbaltcatholic.org)) for your wedding, and we congratulate you on your engagement. When lived with respect and fidelity and with faith in Christ's sustaining presence, marriage can be an extraordinary blessing throughout all of life's moments. The staff at Holy Cross, St. Mary, Star of the Sea and Our Lady of Good Counsel is pleased to share in this time of preparation to make possible the best beginning for your married life. This preparation has spiritual and personal components as well as practical ones. With that in mind this brochure contains important information which will help direct the planning. Every effort will be made to consider your desires in union with the many components.

# SCHEDULING AND PREPARATION

## SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING AND REHEARSAL

It is best to set a firm date at least six months in advance of your wedding at one of the three parishes. The staff can assist you in finding a date that fits your schedule as well as the schedules of the parishes including those of the clergy staff of the parishes.

The times that may be chosen are as follows:

### **Saturday**

Holy Cross*:	12 noon	2 pm	4 pm
St Mary*:	12 noon	2 pm	4 pm
Good Counsel*:	12 noon	2 pm	4 pm

(Exceptions may be made due to pastoral reasons)

**Sunday – Friday** weddings are also possible, please check with the parishes as to available times.

The rehearsal can be booked once you are within five months of the wedding.

\*Please note that the parish may need to do renovations to any of the churches due to their age and upkeep. Each wedding is booked at least at two churches in case the church of your preference is not available due to renovations or extensive maintenance. You will definitely have a church in which to be married. You would know prior to printing the invitations if a change has to occur, unless there is an emergency in one of the buildings.

Please be attentive to start on time due to other liturgical events before or after your rehearsal and wedding. Each wedding has the church for two hours (30 minutes prior to the announced start time and 90 minutes after the announced start time). There is a 5:30 pm mass each Saturday evening, immediately after a 4:00 pm wedding. Staff members for the wedding are also staffing the 5:30 pm mass. If there is a delay, some aspects of the wedding may need to be forfeited (receiving line, photographs) due to the start of the next liturgy. Due to proper staffing of the wedding (musicians, clergy, sacristans etc) typically only one wedding can be occurring at any one time among the three churches.

## **GUEST CLERGY**

You are welcome to invite a Roman Catholic priest or deacon who is a personal friend or family member to witness the wedding. If the priest or deacon is from outside of the parish he must write to the parish that he is committing to the wedding at the time of the initial scheduling and consult with the parish regarding the pre-nuptial preparation. If he is from outside of the Archdiocese, the standard suitability form will need to be completed.

The clergy officiant will need to receive this information packet to assure he is aware of the parishes' guidelines. The guest clergy will be granted delegation from the parish clergy once all the canonical paperwork is complete and the wedding ritual is submitted for approval. The visiting clergy should also observe the parish's guidelines for the wedding ritual. Please make sure you have his written commitment before making the other arrangements (reception, photographer etc).

## **WEDDING IN ANOTHER LOCALE OR CHURCH**

If you are a parishioner and you wish the parish to assist you in receiving the sacrament of marriage in another house of worship (Catholic or not Catholic) at another location, please notify us. This situation occurs when the fiancé is not Catholic and the marriage is taking place in his/her church. Your marriage can be recognized by the Roman Catholic Church with or without Roman Catholic clergy present. The parish can also assist you with the preparation when as a registered parishioner you will be married in a Roman Catholic Church elsewhere.

## **MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM**

All couples preparing for marriage are required to participate in a church-sponsored Marriage Preparation program e.g. The *Engaged Encounter* retreat weekend or the *Pre-Cana class*. This link will provide information various programs. <http://www.marriagemattersbalt.org/preparing/marriage-prep.cfm>. Marriage preparation should be completed at least three months prior to the wedding date.

## **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION AND PAPERWORK**

Baptismal certificates of the Catholic bride and groom need to be obtained. For Catholics, new copies from the church of baptism need to be issued and dated within six months of the wedding date.

## **OFFICIAL WITNESSES**

The official witnesses (best man and maid/matron of honor) may be of any faith. Their names must be given to the officiating priest or deacon for inclusion in the marriage records.

**PERMISSION FROM HOME PARISH:** If neither the bride nor the groom is a member of one of the CCSB parishes, written permission from one of their own parish pastors needs to be obtained in order for the wedding to be held in CCSB.

## **MARRIAGE LICENSE**

A civil marriage license is obtained for Baltimore City from the Clarence Mitchell Courthouse, Room 628, 100 N. Calvert Street. For more information please call the Marriage License Bureau at (410) 333-3780. The marriage license may be obtained within 6 months of the wedding.

## **WEDDING CELEBRATION**

When both parties are of the Catholic faith, it is recommended that the celebration of the marriage take place within a mass. If one of the parties is not Catholic, the celebration usually takes place at a ceremony without the Celebration of Eucharist. If you are having a nuptial mass on a Saturday evening after 4:00 pm, that wedding mass will fulfill your Sunday obligation.

## **PROCESSION**

Since the bride and the groom are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage, they have a prominent place throughout the liturgy. Following the General Norms of the Roman Rite and to promote the sanctity of the liturgy, the parish has this standard format for its processions. The full wedding party (groomsmen, bridesmaids, best man, maid/matron of honor, bride and groom) process down the aisle during the musical procession. The officiant (priest/deacon) also processes. He or someone whom he delegates (readers, server) carries in the Gospel Book to emphasize the sanctity of the moment. The bride and groom with the celebrant can decide the order that bests fit them.

It is the practice in the Roman Catholic tradition that one is presented for the reception of sacraments that are received once (or infrequently) e.g. parents/godparents present a child at Baptism; sponsors at Confirmation. It is highly encouraged that the bride and groom be presented (escorted). It has typically been standard practice in society for the bride to be escorted by one or both parents, the same should occur for the groom. Obviously, due to family relationships, other arrangements might need to be made. The bride and groom may escort each other if they so choose.

## A SAMPLE PROCESSION

Once the cantor invites all to stand for the procession, it is as follows:

- The Gospel Book processed in
  - Clergy (if not carrying the book)
- Groom escorted by parents
- Bridesmaids /Groomsmen escorting each other
- Flower Girl/Ring Bearer
- Maid (Matron) of Honor/Best Man
- Bride escorted by parents

## MUSIC FOR THE WEDDING

The Director of Music Ministry for the parishes will assist you with music selections and personnel that are appropriate for the sacrament of marriage. Your wedding will be scheduled with the director's calendar as well. The director or designee will handle all the liturgical music needs for your wedding.

All weddings are staffed by an organist and cantor from the parish. The Director of Music will take care of securing these musicians for you. If additional musicians such as instrumentalists or guest singers/soloists are desired, please contact the Director of Music prior to making arrangements with any other musicians or singers. Guest musicians will be expected to meet with the Director of Music for a separate music rehearsal as requested/arranged by the director.

## LECTORS

It is proper for a lay person to proclaim the First and Second Readings from scripture and to announce the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful. (The readings during the Liturgy of the Word must be from the scriptures. If readings from other sources are desired, a more appropriate place during the ceremony might be found or used at the reception). Couples should invite members of the family or the wedding party or other close friends to serve as readers. The nature of the Word of God requires that such persons be persons of faith and effective public speakers. They will be given copies of the readings in advance and it is best that the readers be present at the rehearsal. The responsorial psalm which is sung will be chosen at the time you meet with the music director.

### **ALTAR SERVERS**

If the couple desires altar servers please specifically request this, because of the limited number of altar servers at the parish this is not always possible. Couples may invite servers from among their family and friends if the server is or recently has been a server in his/her own parish. If the parish is securing the altar servers, a stipend would be appropriate for the server. It is not necessary to have a server.

### **EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS**

When the sacrament is celebrated in the context of a mass, the priest is most welcome to offer the chalice (Blood of Christ) to the entire assembly. If the bride and/or groom have friends or family members who are Eucharistic Ministers in their own parish, they are welcome to assist with Eucharist at mass at the invitation of the priest-celebrant.

### **RING BEARERS AND FLOWER GIRLS**

It is necessary that the ring bearers and flower girls be at least five (5) years of age in order to assure that the children are mature enough to handle the responsibility.

### **PROGRAM BOOKLET**

Many couples desire to have a liturgy booklet outlining the sacramental celebration. The parish has templates whether the ceremony is during a mass or not. If this template would be helpful to you, one can be forwarded to you as the date gets closer. Once the program booklet is drafted, please send it to the Director of Music and the clergy-president prior to printing to assure that all is in the correct ritual order.

### **UNITY CANDLE**

The practice of lighting the Unity Candle is often chosen by couples. If you desire this, please bring the candle to the rehearsal so it can be put into place. It is the standard practice that the initial lighting for the candle is from the Paschal Candle as a reminder that the sacrament of marriage is connected to the sacrament of baptism.

# WEDDING FEES

The fee for the wedding is \$1200. This fee covers the sacristan who is present at the rehearsal and wedding as well as the general costs of the church (utilities, cleaning after the wedding, general upkeep of the church). Please submit a partial payment of 25% of the fee at the time of the booking of your wedding to secure the date. The fee minus a \$100 is refundable in the event your plans change. The full payment should be complete by the time of the wedding. Please make the check payable to the Catholic Community of South Baltimore, 110 E. West Street, Baltimore, MD 21230. One may also pay by credit card. <https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=c8685a>

Fees for musicians are in addition to the fee for the church. These fees should be paid to each individual parish musician one month prior to the wedding. The base fees are as follows:

Fee for Organist: starts at \$250.00.

Fee for Cantor: starts at \$175.00.

These fees are for standard wedding music. Additional musical selections or rehearsals will incur additional fees. Musicians do not attend the wedding rehearsal.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### PHOTOGRAPHY/ VIDEOGRAPHY

Photographs and/or video certainly are welcome to make sure you have a great keepsake of the day. Please have the photographer discuss with the celebrant prior to the liturgy any guidelines regarding from where pictures may be taken. The photographer is asked to stay within the nave of the church. You may wish to suggest to family and friends to limit their picture taking so as not to interfere with the professional photographer.

### FLOWERS

Please ask the florist to contact the church to establish a time for delivery to be assured the church is open and available. Typically the florist would have access about an hour prior to the start of the wedding. It is customary for the flowers to remain in the church after the wedding. If there are multiple weddings on the same weekend, you may wish to coordinate flowers to help minimize your expense. The parish staff can inform you of other weddings.

### SAFETY

Please refrain from the following due to safety: aisle runners, pew candles, candles in the aisles and the tossing of rice, confetti, birdseed, flower petals in or outside of the church as well as blowing of bubbles. These items often cause a hazard on the steps of the church. Eco-confetti may be used, outside only.

## **WEDDING COORDINATORS**

Some couples choose to hire a wedding coordinator to assist with planning the wedding. If you have hired one, please have him or her contact the clergy-celebrant well in advance to coordinate roles and responsibilities and how best the parish can support their role.

## **FACILITIES IN THE CHURCH**

Please be reminded that the three churches were built when there was no indoor plumbing. There is only one restroom in each Church. Please encourage at your wedding party to be aware of this. The churches do not have space for members of the wedding party to get dressed at the church. There are small rooms in Our Lady of Good Counsel and Holy Cross for the wedding party to gather prior to entering. St Mary's Star of the Sea has a foyer where the wedding party can line up prior to the procession.

## **ALCOHOL**

Unfortunately, experience has shown that this statement needs to be made. Since this is a Sacrament taking place in a Church, consumption of any alcoholic beverages on Church property before, during or after the wedding rehearsal or wedding is prohibited. Please have any and all alcohol reserved for the receptions. Please make sure everyone understands and is in compliance with this requirement. Anyone attending either the rehearsal or the wedding who is inebriated will be asked to leave.

**THE INFORMATION IN THIS BROCHURE IS FOR WEDDINGS CELEBRATED IN 2015. If you need to ask an exemption for any of the guidelines, please consult with any one of the clergy assigned to the Catholic Community of South Baltimore.**