



Handbook for Weddings
Saint Agnes Catholic Church

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SAINT AGNES WEDDING DIRECTORY

Father William Saunders, pastor

Father Peter McShurley, parochial vicar

Parish Office, parishoffice@saintagnes.org | 703-525-1166

TBD, Wedding Committee Coordinator, [TBD](#) | TBD

Katrina Keat, Director of Sacred Music, kkeat@saintagnes.org | 03-525-1166 x 131

Donna Owen, Flower Committee Coordinator, dfowen@aol.com | 703-522-4538



WEDDING REQUIREMENTS AND LOGISTICS

Your Wedding

When asked about marriage, Jesus said, "Have you not read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female and declared, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and the two shall become one'? Thus, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, let no man separate what God has joined" (Matthew 19:3-7). Our Lord speaks of a beautiful, grace-filled unity between a husband and wife, built on a foundation of a permanent, faithful, and sacrificial love.

Of course, such unity is easier said than done in a world with all of its pressures and distractions, not to mention two people with their own personalities and backgrounds. Moreover, sometimes the couple may have the right "feeling" to get married, but the wrong "idea" of what it is all about and its responsibilities. Therefore, the Diocese of Arlington strives to help couples have the best preparation for marriage possible.

The Catholic Church believes that marriage is a sacrament and an indissoluble union. Because of this belief, the priest and married couples who administer the preparation programs will do their best to help an engaged couple enter whole-heartedly into this sacrament. Granted, no preparation program is perfect. In all honesty, the efficacy of the preparation depends upon **how much the couples put into it**. While weddings oftentimes become very involved with planning the logistics of the ceremony and the reception, the couple must more importantly be ready spiritually. When the ceremony and reception are over and the relatives and friends have returned home, the couple has to live the marriage. Instead of thinking about a day, one must think about a lifetime partnership with a spouse.

Marriage Preparation

The Diocese of Arlington requires that a couple contact a priest at least six months in advance of their intended date for the ceremony. While a priest does not "count out the days" to enforce this policy, the Church wants a couple to have at least a six month engagement so that they have the time to spend individually and as a couple to grow more firm in their commitment to each other. Exceptions may be made for special circumstances.

Moreover, at least the bride or the groom, or their parents, **must be registered and active members of St. Agnes Catholic Church to begin marriage preparation**. A Church is not merely a building for ceremonies; rather, a Church is a faith community committed to our Savior Jesus Christ.

The couple will meet at least three times with the priest to discuss marriage. These sessions will cover not only the teachings of the Church and the spirituality of marriage, but also address issues of a more practical nature, like communication and finance.

The couple will also attend the formal marriage preparation program, *Three to Get Married*, offered at Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center (www.ourladyofbethesda.org). (A brochure is included with your information packet.) The commitment of time to this program will

Required Church Documents

For both the bride and the groom, the following Church documents must be given to the priest:

A Newly Issued Baptismal Certificate. For Catholics, the Baptismal Certificate must be issued from the Church of Baptism no earlier than the date of the initial meeting with the priest.

A Confirmation Certificate. A copy of the original certificate is acceptable.

The Certificate of Attendance from the formal marriage preparation program.

The Prenuptial Investigation. The priest will complete with the couple a short questionnaire, entitled The Prenuptial Investigation. This questionnaire elicits basic background information from the couple, but also asks questions to make sure there is no impediment to enter into marriage.

FOCCUS. The couple will answer a 156 (or more) question survey instrument entitled, "Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding, and Study." This survey instrument is not a compatibility test; rather, it raises issues concerning a broad range of areas, like religion, finance, communication, sexuality, and parenting. The survey is used to stimulate discussion between the couple. For example, oftentimes a couple may not talk about financial matters in great depth, yet a clear financial understanding is a very important part of having a stable relationship. The FOCCUS survey will be administered during the retreat. Later, the couple and the priest will meet to review the results of the survey.

Affidavits of Freedom. The bride and the groom must each submit two Affidavits of Freedom. These forms should be completed preferably by relatives (especially parents) or others who have known the bride or groom for a long period of time. These affidavits attest that no impediment exists that would prevent the marriage from taking place. The Church requires these affidavits for the couple's own protection. The witnesses must sign the affidavits in the presence of a priest, deacon, minister, or notary public.

Declaration of Nullity. If either party has been previously married, proof of a Declaration of Nullity must be supplied.

The Wedding Ceremony

The parish clergy of St. Agnes Catholic Church are the regular witnesses for all marriages in the parish. However, other priests who are relatives or friends are welcome to assist or to officiate at the wedding. If the couple would like to have a priest other than one of the parish clergy officiate, that priest must present a letter from his Bishop stating that he is in good standing. He also must be licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia; such licensing may be obtained from any Circuit Courthouse.

For a couple of different religious backgrounds, a minister from another Church is welcome to participate in the ceremony. However, this issue needs to be discussed with the priest before any invitation is made. If agreeable to all parties, the priest will contact the minister to invite him to participate and to discuss what parts each will have.

The Ceremony. A Nuptial Mass should be celebrated when both parties are practicing Catholics. A Nuptial Mass may also be celebrated when the bride and the groom are of different religious backgrounds. However, Church law limits the distribution of Holy Communion to only practicing Catholics.

Usually, when a couple is of different religious backgrounds, the Rite of Marriage Outside of Mass is conducted. This Rite consists of the Liturgy of the Word (a selection of readings from Sacred Scripture), the statement of intention, the exchange of vows and rings, and the special nuptial blessings.

For couples who are cohabiting, they are reminded that living together before marriage is both sinful and harmful to the future marriage. Couples who are living together before marriage will be asked to live separately during the preparation time.

Couples who are cohabiting will have to discuss with the priest what is most appropriate for the ceremony. The Sacrament of Marriage is not a “rubber stamping” of a known situation, but the beginning of a new life. Since all parties involved know the couple has been living like husband and wife prior to exchanging vows and formally entering into marriage, a simple ceremony seems most appropriate.

Wedding Times. Times for the ceremony are 11:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m., normally on Saturday. Other arrangements are possible depending upon the overall parish schedule. Members of the wedding party should arrive at the church 30 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony.

Invitations. When sending invitations to the wedding, the address of the Church is "2002 North Randolph Street, Arlington, Virginia 22203." While we live in an age of GPS, it is suggested that a map be enclosed with the invitations with directions to the church.

Flower Girls and Ring Bearers. Flower girls and ring bearers must be at least five-years-old (i.e. Kindergarten age). Children become very nervous, especially in a new environment and with many people. Priests can share many disaster stories about very young flower girls and ring bearers.

Lectors. Couples may have individuals serve as lectors. They ought to be practicing Catholics who have received the Sacrament of Confirmation. They should also be comfortable with public speaking.

Wedding Attire. The couples and wedding party are asked to be properly attired upon arrival at the Church. There is no dressing room at the Church.

Please note: All wedding attire must reflect the virtue of modesty and be appropriate to the respect due to God's house. **The bride and bridesmaids must wear jackets or opaque shawls at all times with strapless dresses – no bare shoulders – no exceptions. Low cut front, backless, or shorter than knee length dresses are not permitted.** Please be sure that the bride's and bridesmaids' dresses reflects “that sense of modesty which should be the most beautiful ornament of the Christian woman” (Pope Benedict XV). No strapless wedding dresses or bridesmaids dresses are permitted. Failure to comply with this requirement will entail the postponement of the wedding ceremony.

Flowers. The parish will provide altar flowers for the wedding as part of the standard fee for the Church. These arrangements will be placed on either side of the tabernacle reredos.

If couples would like to have more flowers in the Church besides these two arrangements, they need to discuss the matter with the priest preparing them.

Sometimes florists will entice the couple with other paraphernalia sometimes used in weddings. These things are unnecessary, usually expensive, and sometimes inappropriate to the Rite of Marriage.

The following regulations apply:

1. Candelabra other than those provided by the Church are not permitted.
2. The "wedding candle" of "unity candle" is not part of the marriage Rite and thereby is not permitted.
3. The use of flowers, petals, seed, or confetti to be thrown in or outside of the Church is not permitted. Any violation of this regulation will result in a fee taken from the security deposit.
4. A white runner to be rolled down the aisle is permitted, but not necessary since the aisle is carpeted. The aisle is 75' in length. Florists generally provide either a thin plastic or gauze material which easily rips and can cause tripping.
5. All boxes for corsages, other trash, and the wedding runner (if used) must be removed at the end of the ceremony. Failure to do so will result in a fee taken from the security deposit.

Photography. All couples want to have pictures to remember this very important day in their lives. Please note the Church is not a photography studio. Pictures may be taken throughout the ceremony; however, usage of a flash is at the discretion of the celebrant. The photographer is never permitted to enter into the Sanctuary area. The photographer should check with the celebrant before the ceremony begins to discuss these regulations.

The official photographer is the only photographer for the wedding. No other pictures should be taken during the ceremony.

After the ceremony, the photographer may take pictures for about 15 minutes. Again, the photographer must remember that the Church is not a photography studio. Other than pictures of the couple, the wedding party, and immediate family, pictures should be taken at the reception place or outside of the Church.

Please remind the photographer to dress appropriately, preferable in formal business attire. Polo shirts, jeans, etc. are not acceptable.

Videography. Filming of the ceremony is permitted. However, the person doing the videotaping should be discrete and as inconspicuous as possible, setting up the video equipment in a suitable place agreeable to the celebrant. The video equipment may not enter into the sanctuary area, and the use of a flood light is not permitted.

Music. All music, instrumental and vocal, must be approved by the celebrant and must comply with the regulations of the Diocese of Arlington. Only sacred music should be selected; no Hollywood or Broadway or other secular music is permitted.

The couple should contact Miss Katrina Keat, the Director of Sacred Music, for assistance with the wedding ceremony, at the Parish Office at 703-525-1166 or at kkeat@saintagnes.org. At the appointment,

she will go over music options and arrange the program.

The organist's fee for the wedding ceremony is \$350, and an added charge of \$200 is made for any cantors or vocalists, or any other instrumentalists (ie. Trumpet, violin, etc.).

If the couple desires to use another organist, Miss Keat must first give her approval. Since she is coordinating the music, a "bench" fee will be charged in these cases.

Wedding License. The couple must obtain from the Circuit Court of jurisdiction a wedding license. The license is valid for 60 days. The couple should present the license to the priest at their last meeting to discuss the ceremony.

Donation to the Church. The offering to the Church should be in relation to the dignity of the occasion. A donation of \$500 is requested (\$1,000 for non-parishioners). Should this donation cause a difficulty, please discuss the matter with the priest.

A \$250 security deposit is also requested. This deposit will be returned three weeks after the ceremony. However, costs for disposal of trash left behind (e.g. flower boxes) or repair of damage to Church property will be deducted from this fee.

The Church offering and the security deposit are due by the time of the last meeting with the priest.

Altar Servers. Generally, the celebrant requires the assistance of one or two altar servers: one for a simple ceremony, and two for a Nuptial Mass. A \$20 cash offering for each server should be given for his services.

The Rehearsal. The rehearsal generally takes place the night before the wedding ceremony. The entire wedding party is asked to be on time. Please alert members of the wedding party about the traffic congestion in the Washington area. Since a time limit is set for each rehearsal, a substantial delay could necessitate the canceling of the rehearsal.

Therefore, by the time of the last meeting with the priest, the following items should be given to him:

The wedding license.

The donation to the Church.

Security deposit.

The donation to the Altar Server(s).

The fees for the musicians. (Checks are made payable to the musician.)

The wedding information sheet for the Parish Wedding Facilitator.

The signed acknowledgement form.

All of these items must be provided **before** the wedding can take place.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

We have received a copy of the Wedding Policy document, "Your Wedding," outlining the policies and requirements for a wedding at St. Agnes Catholic Church. We have read and understand the policies contained and agree to abide by them. We further understand that failure to do so may result in the postponement or cancellation of the wedding.

Bride's Signature: _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

Groom's Signature: _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____

PLANNING THE NUPTIAL MASS

Scripture Reading Selections

First Reading: From the Old Testament

Please choose one of the following:

1. Genesis 1:26-28, 31a

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the cattle, and over all the wild animals and all the creatures that crawl on the ground." God created man in his image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying: "Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth." God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good.

The word of the Lord.

2. Genesis 2:18-24

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

The Lord God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him." So the Lord God formed out of the ground various wild animals and various birds of the air, and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each of them would be its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all wild animals; but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man. So the Lord God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The Lord God then built up into a woman the rib that he had taken from the man. When he brought her to the man, the man said: "This one, at last, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; This one shall be called 'woman,' for out of 'her man' this one has been taken." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body.

The word of the Lord.

3. Genesis 24:48-51, 58-67

A reading from the Book of Genesis.

The servant of Abraham said to Laban: "I bowed down in worship to the Lord, blessing the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me on the right road to obtain the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son. If, therefore, you have in mind to show true loyalty to my master, let me know; but if not, let me know that, too. I can then proceed accordingly." Laban and his household said in reply: "This thing comes from the Lord; we can say nothing to you either for or against it. Here is Rebekah, ready for you; take her with you, that she may become the wife of your master's son, as the Lord has said." So they called Rebekah and asked her, "Do you wish to go with this man?" She answered, "I do." At this they allowed their sister Rebekah and her nurse to take leave, along with Abraham's servant and his men. Invoking a blessing on Rebekah, they said: "Sister, may you grow into thousands of myriads; And may your descendants gain possession of the gates of their enemies!" Then Rebekah and her maids started out; they mounted their camels and followed the man. so the servant took Rebekah and went on his way. Meanwhile Isaac had gone from Beer-lahai-roi and was living in the region of the Negeb. One day toward evening he went out . . . in the field, and as he looked around, he noticed that camels were approaching. Rebekah, too, was looking about, and when she saw him, she alighted from her camel and asked the servant, "Who is the man out there, walking through the fields toward us?" "That is my master," replied the servant. Then she covered herself with her veil. The servant recounted to Isaac all the things he had done. Then Isaac took Rebekah into his tent; he married her, and thus she became his wife. In his love for her Isaac found solace after the death of his mother Sarah.

The word of the Lord.

4. Tobit 7:6-14

A reading from the Book of Tobit.

Raphael and Tobiah entered the house of Raguel and greeted him. Raguel sprang up and kissed Tobiah, shedding tears of joy. But when he heard that Tobit had lost his eyesight, he was grieved and wept aloud. He said to Tobiah: "My child, God bless you! You are the son of a noble and good father. But what a terrible misfortune that such a righteous and charitable man should be afflicted with blindness!" He continued to weep in the arms of his kinsman Tobiah. His wife Edna also wept for Tobit; and even their daughter Sarah began to weep. Afterward, Raguel slaughtered a ram from the flock and gave them a cordial reception. When they had bathed and reclined to eat, Tobiah said to Raphael, "Brother Azariah, ask Raguel to let me marry my kinswoman Sarah." Raguel overheard the words; so he said to the boy: "Eat and drink and be merry tonight, for no man is more entitled to marry my daughter Sarah than you, brother. Besides, not even I have the right to give her to anyone but you, because you are my closest relative. But I will explain the situation to you very frankly. I have given her in marriage to seven men, all of whom were kinsmen of ours, and all died on the very night they approached her. But now, son, eat and drink. I am sure the Lord will look after you both." Tobiah answered, "I will eat or drink nothing until you set aside what belongs to me." Raguel said to him: "I will do it. She is yours according to the decree of the Book of Moses. Your marriage to her has been decided in heaven! Take your kinswoman from now on you are her love, and she is your beloved. She is yours today and ever after. And tonight, son, may the Lord of heaven prosper you both. May he grant you mercy and peace." Then Raguel called his daughter Sarah, and she came to him. He took her by the hand and gave her to Tobiah with the words: "Take her according to the law. According to the decree written in the Book of Moses she is your wife. Take her and bring her back safely to your father. And may the God of heaven grant both of you

peace and prosperity.” He then called her mother and told her to bring a scroll, so that he might draw up a marriage contract stating that he gave Sarah to Tobiah as his wife according to the decree of the Mosaic law. Her mother brought the scroll, and he drew up the contract, to which they affixed their seal. Afterward they began to eat and drink.

The word of the Lord.

5. **Tobit 8:4b-8**

A reading from the Book of Tobit.

On their wedding night Tobiah arose from bed and said to his wife, “Sister, get up. Let us pray and beg our Lord to have mercy on us and to grant us deliverance.” Sarah got up, and they started to pray and beg that deliverance might be theirs. They began with these words: “Blessed are you, O God of our fathers; praised be your name forever and ever. Let the heavens and all your creation praise you forever. You made Adam and you gave him his wife Eve to be his help and support; and from these two the human race descended. You said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; let us make him a partner like himself.’ Now, Lord, you know that I take this wife of mine not because of lust, but for a noble purpose. Call down your mercy on me and on her, and allow us to live together to a happy old age.” They said together, “Amen, amen.”

The word of the Lord.

6. **Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31**

A reading from the Book of Proverbs.

When one finds a worthy wife, her value is far beyond pearls. Her husband, entrusting his heart to her, has an unfailing prize. She brings him good, and not evil, all the days of her life. She obtains wool and flax and makes cloth with skillful hands. She puts her hands to the distaff, and her fingers ply the spindle. She reaches out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy. Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her a reward of her labors, and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The word of the Lord.

7. **Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a**

A reading from the Song of Songs.

Hark! my lover—here he comes springing across the mountains, leaping across the hills. My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag. Here he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattices. My lover speaks; he says to me, “Arise, my beloved, my dove, my beautiful one, and come! “O my dove in the clefts of the rock, in the secret recesses of the cliff, Let me see you, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and you are lovely.” My lover belongs to me and I to him. He says to me:

“Set me as a seal on your heart, as a seal on your arm; For stern as death is love, relentless as the nether world is devotion; its flames are a blazing fire. Deep waters cannot quench love, nor floods sweep it away.”

The word of the Lord.

8. Sirach 26:1-4, 13-16

A reading from the Book of Sirach.

Blessed the husband of a good wife, twice-lengthened are his days; A worthy wife brings joy to her husband, peaceful and full is his life. A good wife is a generous gift bestowed upon him who fears the Lord; Be he rich or poor, his heart is content, and a smile is ever on his face. A gracious wife delights her husband, her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones; A gift from the Lord is her governed speech, and her firm virtue is of surpassing worth. Choicest of blessings is a modest wife, priceless her chaste soul. A holy and decent woman adds grace upon grace; indeed, no price is worthy of her temperate soul. Like the sun rising in the Lord's heavens, the beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home.

The word of the Lord.

9. Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah.

The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers: the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives how to know the Lord. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Please choose one of the following:

1. Psalm 33:12 and 18, 20-21, 22

R. The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

2. Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9

R. I will bless the Lord at all times.

or:

R. Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

3. Psalm 103:1-2, 8 and 13, 17-18a

R. The Lord is kind and merciful.

or:

R. The Lord's kindness is everlasting to those who fear him.

4. Psalm 112:1bc-2, 3-4, 5-7a, 7b-8, 9

R. Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord's commands.

or:

R. Alleluia.

5. Psalm 128:1-2, 3, 4-5

R. Blessed are those who fear the Lord.

or:

R. See how the Lord blesses those who fear him.

6. Psalm 145:8-9, 10 and 15, 17-18

R. How good is the Lord to all.

7. Psalm 148:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-13a, 13c-14a

R. Let all praise the name of the Lord.

Second Reading: The New Testament

Please choose one of the following:

1. Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters: If God is for us, who can be against us? He did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

2. Romans 12:1-2, 9-18 (Long form)

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor. Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality. Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation. Do not repay anyone evil for evil; be concerned for what is noble in the sight of all. If possible, on your part, live at peace with all.

The word of the Lord.

or:

Romans 12:1-2, 9-13 (Short Form)

I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection;

anticipate one another in showing honor. Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality.

The word of the Lord.

3. Romans 15:1b-3a, 5-7, 13

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters: We ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves; let each of us please our neighbor for the good, for building up. For Christ did not please himself. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to think in harmony with one another, in keeping with Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

4. 1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters: The body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, And the Lord is for the body; God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. Avoid immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore glorify God in your body.

The word of the Lord.

5. 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8a

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters: Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts. But I shall show you a still more excellent way. If I speak in human and angelic tongues but do not have love, I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge; if I have all faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own, and if I hand my body over so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-

tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

The word of the Lord.

6. Ephesians 4:1-6

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Brothers and sisters: I, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to live in a manner worthy of the call you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace: one Body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

The word of the Lord.

7. Ephesians 5:2a, 21-33

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians (Long Form).

Brothers and sisters: Live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us. Be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is head of his wife just as Christ is head of the Church, he himself the savior of the body. As the Church is subordinate to Christ, so wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the Church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. So also husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the Church, because we are members of his Body. For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church. In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and the wife should respect her husband.

The word of the Lord.

or:

Ephesians 5:2a, 25-32 (Short Form)

Brothers and sisters: Live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her, cleansing her by the bath of water with the word, that he might present to himself the Church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle

or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. So also husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the Church, because we are members of his Body. For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church.

The word of the Lord.

8. Philippians 4:4-9

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians.

Brothers and sisters: Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice! Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you.

The word of the Lord.

9. Colossians 3:12-17

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Colossians.

Brothers and sisters: Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do. And over all these put on love, that is, the bond of perfection. And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one Body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord.

10. Hebrews 13:1-4a, 5-6b

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

Brothers and sisters: Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels. Be mindful of prisoners as if sharing their imprisonment, and of the ill-

treated as of yourselves, for you also are in the body. Let marriage be honored among all and the marriage bed be kept undefiled. Let your life be free from love of money but be content with what you have, for he has said, I will never forsake you or abandon you. Thus we may say with confidence: The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid.

The word of the Lord.

11. 1 Peter 3:1-9

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Peter.

Beloved: You wives should be subordinate to your husbands so that, even if some disobey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct when they observe your reverent and chaste behavior. Your adornment should not be an external one: braiding the hair, wearing gold jewelry, or dressing in fine clothes, but rather the hidden character of the heart, expressed in the imperishable beauty of a gentle and calm disposition, which is precious in the sight of God. For this is also how the holy women who hoped in God once used to adorn themselves and were subordinate to their husbands; thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him "lord." You are her children when you do what is good and fear no intimidation. Likewise, you husbands should live with your wives in understanding, showing honor to the weaker female sex, since we are joint heirs of the gift of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. Finally, all of you, be of one mind, sympathetic, loving toward one another, compassionate, humble. Do not return evil for evil, or insult for insult; but, on the contrary, a blessing, because to this you were called, that you might inherit a blessing.

The word of the Lord.

12. 1 John 3:18-24

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John.

Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth. Now this is how we shall know that we belong to the truth and reassure our hearts before him in whatever our hearts condemn, for God is greater than our hearts and knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence in God and receive from him whatever we ask, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And his commandment is this: we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another just as he commanded us. Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them, and the way we know that he remains in us is from the Spirit that he gave us.

The word of the Lord.

13. 1 John 4:7-12

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John.

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God; everyone who loves is begotten by God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love. In this way the love of God was revealed to us: God sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we might have life through him. In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also must love one another. No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God remains in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us.

The word of the Lord.

14. Revelation 19:1, 5-9a

A reading from the Book of Revelation.

I, John, heard what sounded like the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying: "Alleluia! Salvation, glory, and might belong to our God." A voice coming from the throne said: "Praise our God, all you his servants, and you who revere him, small and great." Then I heard something like the sound of a great multitude or the sound of rushing water or mighty peals of thunder, as they said: "Alleluia! The Lord has established his reign, our God, the almighty. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory. For the wedding day of the Lamb has come, his bride has made herself ready. She was allowed to wear a bright, clean linen garment." (The linen represents the righteous deeds of the holy ones.) Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast of the Lamb."

The word of the Lord.

The Gospel

Please choose one of the following:

1. **Matthew 5:1-12a**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

2. **Matthew 5:13-16**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

3. **Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (Long Form)**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Jesus said to his disciples: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. “Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock. And everyone who listens to these words of mine but does not act on them will be like a fool who built his house on sand. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. And it collapsed and was completely ruined.” When Jesus finished these words, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

The Gospel of the Lord.

or:

Matthew 7:21, 24-25 (Short form)

Jesus said to his disciples: “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. “Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

4. Matthew 19:3-6

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Some Pharisees approached Jesus, and tested him, saying, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?” He said in reply, “Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator made them male and female and said, For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, man must not separate.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

5. Matthew 22:35-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

One of the Pharisees, a scholar of the law, tested Jesus by asking, “Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” He said to him, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

6. Mark 10:6-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark.

Jesus said: "From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate."

The Gospel of the Lord.

7. John 2:1-11

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

There was a wedding in Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding. When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you." Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings, each holding twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water." So they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it. And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine, without knowing where it came from (although the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first, and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one; but you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs in Cana in Galilee and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

8. John 15:9-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples: "As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. "I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you."

The Gospel of the Lord.

9. John 15:12-16

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples: "This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends,

because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

10. John 17:20-26

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: “I pray not only for my disciples, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me. Father, they are your gift to me. I wish that where I am they also may be with me, that they may see my glory that you gave me, because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Righteous Father, the world also does not know you, but I know you, and they know that you sent me. I made known to them your name and I will make it known, that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in them.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

or:

John 17:20-23 (Short form)

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said: “Holy Father, I pray not only for these, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Music

When choosing music for your wedding, it is important to keep the following in mind: The wedding is taking place in the context of Holy Mass: the music therefore must be sacred in both style and text (Sacrosanctum Concilium 121). Pieces of the Pop, Country, and Rock genres all fall under the secular category and are not appropriate for use in church. Even if the text refers to weddings, love, parents, unity, etc., the musical style must be appropriate for the Sacred Liturgy of which it will be a part. Christian music too, if it adapts secular style and form, is not appropriate for Holy Mass. Additionally, if music comes from opera, musicals, film scores, etc. (while all are legitimate art forms), because of their purpose of entertainment, it will likely be unsuited to use in the Sacred liturgy. A good rule of thumb: if it sounds as though the music may be played on a popular radio station, it is probably not suited for this solemn occasion. Following these guidelines not only allows one to adhere to the timeless desires of the Church, but additionally prevents the use of fad music that will be seen (in the future if not already) as being of lesser quality and in poor taste. Final judgment on whether or not a piece of music fits the criteria of Sacred Music lies ultimately in the hands of the priest and organist. It must be noted here as well that recorded music of any kind is prohibited (Sing to the Lord 93). While online resources can be helpful, it is important to remember that they are often assembled by non-musicians or publishing groups who seek to hock their own music rather than promote the genuine treasury of sacred music that is appropriate for the Sacred Liturgy. Additionally, their notions of what is or is not appropriate music for church use often lie below the standards of the parishes and churches themselves.

Prelude

Prior to the beginning of the Nuptial Mass, there is a prelude consisting of about 10 or 15 minutes of instrumental music as guests arrive and are seated. Music during this time is usually selected at the discretion of the organist and encompasses a combination of pieces that mirror the festive nature of the occasion as well as the quiet dignity of prayerful reflection that should precede Mass. Often the prelude is comprised entirely of solo organ repertoire, but the utilization of other instruments or a soloist is possible as well.

Processional

The processional is usually played by the organ alone or with instruments. The processional (whether quiet or grand) should be of a stately nature and in a meter fit for walking. It may be appropriate to choose one piece of music for the entire processional, or to choose a separate piece for the bride's entrance. In the event that two are chosen, the latter should generally be of a grander nature than the former.

Quiet Processionals

- Canon in D - J. Bach [link](#)
- Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring - J. S. Bach [link](#)
- Prelude on Rhosymedre - R. Vaughan Williams [link](#)
- St. Anthony Chorale - F. J. Haydn [link](#)

Grand Processionals

- Hornpipe - G. F. Handel [link](#)
- Trumpet Tune - H. Purcell [link](#)
- Trumpet Voluntary - J. Clarke [link](#)
- Overture (from Royal Fireworks) – G. F. Handel [link](#)
- Prelude in the Classic Style – G. Young [link](#)
- Festive Trumpet Tune – D. German [link](#)
- Sonata No. 3 (opening) – F. Mendelssohn [link](#)
- Trumpet Tune – J. Stanley [link](#)

Gloria

The Gloria is prescribed by the Roman Missal to be sung at wedding Masses. It is usually taken from the standard liturgical repertoire and will be of the same setting as the rest of the ordinary at the discretion of the Music Director.

Responsorial Psalm

It is highly desirable that the Responsorial Psalm be sung. The psalm chosen must be a text prescribed for weddings by the lectionary and must be done in un-altered responsorial form. The music will be taken from the Noël Chabanel book of Psalms. Please see page of this booklet for text options.

Offertory

At the Offertory either the antiphon is chanted, a solo piece or hymn is sung, or both. The piece selected for the offertory is, as with all music selected, to be of a sacred nature. The text of the piece should reflect the sacred action of the bond of matrimony and/or the sacrifice of Holy Mass taking place. This piece may either be a congregational hymn or a piece done by the organist, cantor, and other musicians.

Antiphon

The Angel of the Lord shall encamp round about those who fear him and shall deliver them; taste and see how good the Lord is. Or: In you have I put my trust, O Lord; I said: "You are my God, my destiny is in your hands."

Hymns

- God in the Planning- SLANE
- Love Divine, All Loves Excelling- HYFRODOL [link](#)
- Be Thou my Vision- SLANE [link](#)
- O Father, All Creating- AURELIA [link](#)
- O God, Beyond All Praising- THAXTED [link](#)
- Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven- LAUDA ANIMA [link](#)

Ordinary

The Ordinary of the Mass (Gloria, Sanctus, Mysterium Fidei, Amen, and Agnus Dei) are the parts of Mass that do not change: it is highly desirable that they are sung. These are selected from the standard liturgical repertoire at the discretion of the Music Director. Mixing different parts from different settings is not permitted.

Communion

At the communion, the antiphon is chanted, and a piece or hymn is sung. The piece for Communion is, like the offertory, either a congregational hymn or a solo piece done by the cantor and organist. The text of this piece is usually of Eucharistic theme. Hymns that speak of 'bread, wine, and table' rather than 'body, blood, and altar' are to be avoided. If communion is expected to take a considerable time, it may be prudent to choose several things.

Antiphon

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God; blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Or:

Seek first the kingdom of God, and all the rest will be given to you in addition, says the Lord.

Hymns

- Jesus My Lord, My God, My All- SWEET SACRAMENT [link](#)
- Draw us in the Spirit's Tether- UNION SEMINARY [link](#)
- Firmly, I Believe, and Truly- SHIPSTON [link](#)
- Praise to the Holiest in the Height- NEWMAN [link](#)
- Alleluia, Sing to Jesus- HYFRODOL [link](#)
- At That First Eucharist- UNDE ET MEMORES [link](#)
- Deck Thyself my Soul in Gladness- SCHMÜCKE DICH [link](#)
- (Anything from Offertory List)

Solo Pieces

- Panis Angelicus- C. Frank [link](#)
- Adoro Te Devote- Chant [link](#)
- Ave Verum- W. A. Mozart [link](#)
- Tantum Ergo - C. Franck [link](#)

Marian Devotion (optional)

It is sometimes customary to take flowers to or light a candle in front of a statue of the Blessed Virgin. This action is usually accompanied by music of a Marian nature. Any of the following are appropriate:

Marian Music

- Ave Maria- F. Schubert [link](#)
- Ave Maria- Caccini [link](#)
- Ave Maria- Bach/Gounod [link](#)
- Ave Maria- C. Saint-Saëns [link](#)
- Ave Maria- Chant [link](#)
- Sub Tuum Praesidium-C. Saint-Saëns [link](#)
- Salve Regina- Chant [link](#)

Recessional

The Recessional is typically the piece grandest in nature and is done by the organ alone or with instruments.

- Pasticcio – J. Langlais [link](#)
- Toccata –T. Dubois [link](#)
- Praise the Lord with Drums and Cymbals –S. Karg-Elert [link](#)
- (Anything from Processionals list)

Postlude

After the Recessional it is desirable that lighter festive organ music is played as the guests exit. This music is usually left to the discretion of the organist.

PLANNING GUIDE

Bride (Full name):

Groom (Full name):

Wedding date:

Wedding time:

Celebrant:

Introductory Rites

 Processional(s):

Liturgy of the Word

 Reading I (New Testament):

 Responsorial Psalm:

 Reading II (New Testament):

 Gospel:

Liturgy of the Eucharist

 Offertory:

 Communion:

 Marian Devotion:

Concluding Rites

 Recessional: