



Dear Newly-Engaged Couple,

Congratulations and best wishes on your recent engagement! The priests and deacons of the Diocese of Allentown in conjunction with the Diocesan Office for Marriage and Natural Family Planning look forward to assisting you in planning a Wedding that is loving, lasting, sacred and dignified. This resource serves as a general reminder of some basic principles in achieving that goal. The clergy of the parishes can further assist you in the particulars for that day. Please know of our prayers as you journey to your Wedding Day.

Office for Marriage and Natural Family Planning & Office for Divine Worship

❖ **General Intro and Explanation of the Revisions and the three Orders.**

The Order of Celebrating Matrimony, 2nd edition includes three separate rites: 1) Within Mass, 2) Without Mass (commonly referred to as a ceremony), and 3) Matrimony between a Catholic and a Non-Christian.

In regards to which option is to be selected, the pastor along with the couple should decide which is pastorally appropriate for the occasion governed by the norms of the Catholic Church. These links will help guide the couple:

www.foryourmarriage.org/rite-for-celebrating-marriage-within-mass

www.foryourmarriage.org/rite-for-celebrating-marriage-outside-of-mass

www.foryourmarriage.org/rite-for-celebrating-marriage-between-a-catholic-and-an-unbaptized-person

❖ **Liturgy of the Word**

This link will guide you in selecting the Old Testament, New Testament, and Gospel Reading that will be proclaimed at your Wedding Mass/Ceremony:

togetherforlifeonline.com/wedding/catholic-wedding-readings

❖ General Statements about Music, Flowers , Photographers (in Guidelines)

WEDDING FLOWERS

The inherent beauty of the Church, calls for good taste and a measure of restraint in the use of flowers, candles, ribbons and other decorations for wedding ceremonies in the church. Candlelight weddings are not permitted. Please advise your florist that **no tape or adhesive** may be applied to the pews.

Arrangements for all or any of the above mentioned additions to the Church for a wedding ceremony are the responsibility of the marriage couple, and they are to be approved by the priest or deacon in charge of the wedding ceremony.

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS

Wedding couples are invited to have photographs and video taken as a remembrance of their marriage ceremony. Care should be taken, however, that the liturgical celebration is not disturbed or interrupted by the taking of pictures and video or the obtrusive presence of the photographer or videographer. During the wedding ceremony they must remain in one place in a pew and they are not permitted in the sanctuary or the sacristy, nor are flood lighting or flash allowed.

RICE, CONFETTI, BIRD SEED

Due to insurance regulations, wedding couples are asked to tell their guests not to throw rice, confetti, bird seed, flower petals or similar substances either inside or outside the Church at their wedding ceremony. This practice dirties the church and its surrounding areas, and it causes hazardous walking conditions, especially when the weather is inclement.

WEDDING LITURGY

The priest or deacon will invite you to plan your wedding liturgy with him, using a special liturgy booklet which will be provided to you. In the event that you have chosen a non-guest priest or deacon to officiate, you should meet with him to discern the ceremony. This booklet contains those prayers, readings, blessings, forms of consent (vows) and other formulas approved by the Church for use in wedding liturgies. Only these prayers and readings are permitted.

WEDDING MUSIC

Music plays an integral role in the beauty of your wedding. You have the opportunity to select pieces that are special to both of you. The Music chosen for a wedding celebration should fit the nature of the liturgy in its text, form, placement and style. The Music must conform to Catholic doctrine and are drawn chiefly from Sacred Scripture and accepted liturgical sources. Therefore, **no secular songs are allowed during the wedding ceremony**. The music chosen should take great care involving the congregation at the important moments of the celebration and that the liturgy is a prayer for all present.

UNITY CANDLE

A number of years ago some churches began allowing the use of a unity candle during a Catholic wedding liturgy. It is supposed to symbolize the unity of the newlyweds. However, the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* in the Catholic Church includes the exchange of rings immediately after the exchange of vows symbolizing the unity of the couple. The *Order* makes no provision for the use of a unity candle during the liturgy.

If you want to use a unity candle on your wedding day you might consider using one at the reception; its lighting can be incorporated into the blessing before the meal.



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Short-term preparations for marriage tend to be concentrated on invitations, clothes, the party and any number of other details that tend to drain not only the budget but energy and joy as well. The spouses come to the wedding ceremony exhausted and harried, rather than focused and ready for the great step that they are about to take...Here let me say a word to fiancés. Have the courage to be different. Don't let yourselves get swallowed up by a society of consumption and empty appearances. What is important is the love you share, strengthened and sanctified by grace. You are capable of opting for a more modest and simple celebration in which love takes precedence over everything else. Pastoral workers and the entire community can help make this priority the norm rather than the exception.

(Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia # 212)