

Taking the First Steps~

Your first step should be to arrange an appointment with one of the priests, or the deacon, to discuss your plans. At that first meeting, your wedding date will be entered into the parish calendar, and the necessary paperwork and pre-marriage discussions will be completed. This should be done *9 months to a year before the planned date for your wedding*.

At a second meeting, you will complete the FOCCUS inventory. This personality profile is a discovery questionnaire that will personalize your marriage preparation and give you insights into yourself and your partner.

At a third and perhaps fourth meeting you will discuss the FOCCUS results with the priest or deacon who will preside at your wedding. At the final meeting you will plan the wedding Mass or ceremony with the presider.

Please be sure to contact one of our wedding coordinators in order to schedule a meeting *six to eight weeks prior to your wedding*, at which she will review with you final arrangements for your wedding day, such as music, flowers, photography, and other details. You can obtain her name and phone number from the priest or deacon preparing you for the wedding.

Officiating Priest or Deacon~

If you would like to have a Catholic priest or deacon from outside the parish perform your wedding, please advise Fr. Jim by contacting the parish office. Visiting clergy are always most welcome. If the priest or deacon is local, we would ask that he be responsible for the completion of all paperwork. If he is not from Massachusetts, he must receive a special license from the Secretary of State's office in order to witness the marriage. You should advise him of this requirement.

Wedding Coordinator~

This person serves as a liaison between the parish and the engaged couple. She is available to answer questions, address concerns and conduct the wedding rehearsal, and will be present on your wedding day to ensure that all runs smoothly.

Floral Arrangements~

Please make your own arrangements with the florist of your choice. If the flowers will be delivered earlier than one hour before the wedding, the florist should contact the presiding priest or deacon to arrange for the church to be open at that time. Ordinarily, the flowers used to decorate the church for your wedding should be left at the church as a token of appreciation.

Since our church is carpeted, we discourage the use of a white carpet runner, especially those ordinarily provided by florist. Most of them are made of material that is lightweight and thus tend to be a safety hazard.

Marriage Candle

If this is something you wish to incorporate into your ceremony or Wedding Mass, please provide the Unity Candle, along with two white or ivory tapers. You can discuss this option with the presiding priest or deacon.

Offerings~

In some parts of the world, couples tithe 10% of the cost of their wedding day to the church where they celebrate their wedding. What might 10% of what will be spent on your wedding day amount to? You are free to express your gratitude to Holy Cross Parish by making a free-will offering as large as your means and generosity allow.

Some who marry here at Holy Cross have a direct connection with the parish. Others may have little or no connection with the parish. We at Holy Cross have certain legitimate expectations of minimum levels of generosity on the part of those seeking its services.

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Photography and Videography~

Capturing the prayerfulness and love of your celebration on film and videotape will enable you to relive the memory of your wedding for years to come. Photographers and videographers ought not to intrude upon the reverence of the moment. With this in mind, our policy is as follows:

- All videotaping is to be done from the back of the church, or from either of the side aisles, in a manner that does not intrude upon the ceremony or the movement of the congregation.
- At no time is the photographer or videographer permitted in the sanctuary.
- Only the lighting available in the church may be used during the liturgy or wedding ceremony. Photographers and or videographers may introduce no additional lighting.
- We ask that they meet with the presider and the wedding coordinator one half hour before the start of the wedding.

Please feel free to use the church for photographs up to 30 minutes before the time your wedding is scheduled to begin. You are also free to use the church up to 30 minutes after the ceremony ends. However, if your wedding takes place at 2 pm on a Saturday afternoon, you will not be able to take pictures in the church after the ceremony. The church is needed for confessions at 3:15 p.m., followed by the 4:00 pm Vigil Mass.

Diocesan Preparation Program~

All couples are required to attend an Engaged Encounter or diocesan Pre-Cana marriage preparation program. This program is intended to give you a fuller understanding of the sacrament of marriage, as well as some of the practical tools for building a lifetime together. The Engaged Encounter is in the form of a weekend retreat. The diocesan Pre-Cana program is conducted in either a one or a two-day format. You can do your Pre-Cana program in any diocese and location that is convenient for you.

These programs fill up months ahead of time. The diocese asks that you reserve a space in one of the programs (at least) eight months before your wedding. For this reason, it is important that you register for one as soon as possible. You can contact the following locations for more information on local marriage preparation programs:

- ❖ www.fallriverfaithformation.org - Marriage Tab>Schedule of Programs for the
 - Engaged Encounter Weekends
 - Diocesan Preparation Programs
- ❖ www.retreathouse.org or 508-238-2051 for the Holy Cross Retreat House Pre-Cana Program (held on Saturdays)

Church Records~

Baptismal certificates, *dated within six months of the wedding date*, as well as confirmation certificates are required for both of you. These can be obtained from the churches where the sacraments took place, unless, of course, Holy Cross was the parish where the sacraments were received.

If there will be an interfaith marriage, the priest or deacon will arrange for a dispensation from the Diocese of Fall River. If the non-Catholic is a baptized Christian, it would be helpful to have a copy of their baptismal certificate.

Marriage License~

A marriage license can be obtained from any city or town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The license *must* be presented to either the wedding coordinator or the priest at the time of the rehearsal. By civil law, *no marriage can take place without the license.*

Rehearsals~

Your rehearsal time will be arranged with the officiating priest or deacon at one of your preliminary meetings. The optimum time for the rehearsal is 6:00 or 6:30 p.m. We will allot one (1) hour for your rehearsal, so we ask that you make sure everyone is prompt. Time availability will depend on other weddings taking place on that same day or weekend.



Music~

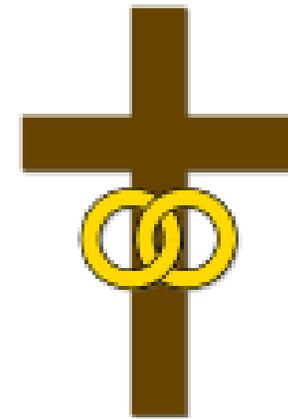
Once the date and time of your wedding ceremony has been determined with the priest or deacon, please contact Chris Iannitelli, our Director of Music. He can be reached by phone at (508) 580-0726. This will allow him to reserve the day and hour of your wedding on his calendar. It will also give you an opportunity to ask him any early questions you may have about music at your wedding and to arrange a meeting with him. He will assist you in the selection of music for your Mass or ceremony.

If you would like to invite musicians other than members of our own Music Ministry to participate in your wedding, approval must be obtained from our Director of Music. Visiting musicians will be held to the same high liturgical standards as our own, and their selection of music for your wedding must be approved by our parish Director of Music. In addition, the Director of Music will still be contracted by you to be present at the wedding in order to assist the visiting musicians with our parish instruments and sound system. He will likewise be available to them for one music rehearsal in the church.

If, in collaboration with your priest or deacon, you develop a wedding program booklet, please submit a draft to the Music Director so that he may insure that the titles, order of the musical selections and any copyright requirements are correct.

Mention should be made here, too, that recorded music of any kind is not allowed according to the Church's liturgical guidelines and federal copyright laws. Nor is original music composed by a relative or friend normally allowed.

CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE AT HOLY CROSS PARISH



- When there is a direct parish connection—i.e., when either bride or groom or one of their families are currently registered and active members of the parish—a minimum contribution of \$350 is requested as an offering to your parish as a token of your commitment to its support and well-being.
- If the bride and groom and their families are not currently registered parishioners of Holy Cross Parish, a minimum contribution of \$500 is requested.
- Liturgical guidelines call for two music ministers at a Wedding Mass: an instrumentalist (normally Christopher Iannitelli, our Director of Music) and a cantor (normally from our list of recommended vocalists). Chris Iannitelli's stipend, whether he is utilized as the instrumentalist or not, is set at \$200. The cantor's stipend is set at \$125.
- These offerings should be given to the wedding coordinator at your wedding rehearsal. She will see that they are distributed to the intended recipients. You may also wish to offer a gift to the wedding coordinator for her assistance in planning the ceremony, at the rehearsal, and at the wedding.
- Occasionally, a couple who, in some way or other, is connected to Holy Cross parish may opt to be married elsewhere—in another parish or at the college from which they graduated. In this instance, it is suggested that the couple offer the priest or deacon a token of appreciation for his assistance in completing all the preparatory work.
- It goes without saying that any couple whose financial situation is such that any of the above recommendations would be truly burdensome has only to make us aware of this. They can rest assured that, though exempted from making any contribution to the parish that would cause them hardship, they will receive the same high level of dedicated service as any other couple who chooses to marry here at Holy Cross.

Our sincerest congratulations! You are about to enter into the Sacrament of Christian Marriage. We are pleased to welcome you and happy you have selected Holy Cross Church for your wedding.

Arranging for your wedding celebration should be an exciting time for the both of you. As you know, weddings are a time of intense planning. This pamphlet is provided to assist you in preparing for the religious part of your wedding. We hope you will find the information provided to be helpful as you plan your wedding Mass or ceremony.