



*Basic Information*

**The Celebration of the  
Sacrament of Marriage  
at the  
Cathedral of the Annunciation**

*“A Wedding is a Day -  
A Marriage is a Lifetime.”*

## **A Prayer of Blessing of an Engaged Couple**

We praise you, Lord,  
for your gentle plan draws together your  
children  
in love for one another.  
Strengthen their hearts,  
so that they will keep faith with each other,  
please you in all things,

## **Whose Wedding is this?**

Yours—and the Church's.

You marry one another. You promise each other love and fidelity for all days. But you do this before the community of the Church that gathers around you in your family and friends and neighbors and parish community on your wedding day.

The Church — because it values Marriage and believes the promises that you make to one another are sacred and lasting for life— has laws and policies and regulations and procedures to protect sacredness of what you do and to help you to do it well!

The parish community of the Cathedral of the Annunciation wants to help you prepare and celebrate your Wedding. But more, we wish to help you prepare for and live your Marriage!



# Preparations for Marriage:

## **1. You must notify the parish community of your intention to marry at least six months before your Proposed wedding date.**

*[It is the policy of the Diocese of Stockton that there be six months of preparation for marriage before the wedding date accordance with the comprehensive plan for the Diocese. Exceptions to this policy for solid pastoral reasons are: emergencies and hardships such as: military service, relocation, partners living in separates states. Even when there are exceptions, it is essential to accordance with the guidelines of the Diocese.]*

Contact the Cathedral Secretary [463-1305] to arrange the date and time of you wedding and the wedding rehearsal.

Weddings at the Cathedral are normally celebrated on Saturdays. Due to the regular schedules of Masses and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the times available for the Sacrament of Marriage are 10:30am, 2:00pm. A weekday wedding is sometimes possible. Your date on the Cathedral calendar will be reserved when you have completed and return the agreement form and paid the required deposit [\$100.00 applicable to the wedding fee].

According to the custom of the Church, the celebration of marriage is discouraged, though not prohibited, during the penitential season of Lent. However the decoration of the church must correspond to the season.



## 2. Gather the necessary papers:

- a. **A recent copy of the record of your Baptism**  
[ dated within the last six months]. [This is not necessary if you were baptized at the Cathedral. If you were baptized at another parish, write or phone the parish and tell them that you are preparing to marry and ask them to send you a copy of your baptismal record.]
- b. **Information about your Confirmation and First Communion.** You need to know the parish, city and date of your Confirmation and your First Communion. [You will need the information but not the certificates.]
- c. If you were married before outside the Catholic Church, you will also need a copy of your previous marriage record, a final divorce decree or a copy of your former spouse's death certificate. [The priest or deacon will help you collect the documents you need.]

## 3. Make an appointment with the priest or deacon whom you wish to witness your marriage. [Call the Cathedral Parish House/ 463-1305].

- a. The Priest or deacon will help you complete a pre-marriage declaration of intention and freedom. [Form A].
- b. He will also ask you to invite someone who has known you your whole life to swear to your freedom and your understanding of the responsibilities of marriage. [Usually Parents are invited to complete this declaration.] [Form B]
- c. He may also ask you complete a pre-marriage questionnaire [Pre-Marriage Inventory/FOCCUS/ Taylor Johnson Temperament Analysis/etc.]

- d. If the priest or deacon is from outside Annunciation Cathedral Parish, please obtain a Form of Delegation from the parish office. Give it to the priest or deacon Who will be visiting the Cathedral and ask him to complete and return it to the parish.

#### **4. Participate in one of the programs of Marriage Catechesis and preparation:**

- a. **“Catholic Engaged Encounter”** This is a weekend marriage preparation program— Saturday morning through Sunday afternoon— held periodically throughout the year. For information regarding the weekend dates and /or weekend availability please call at 209-505-9005 or go to [www.engagedencounter.org](http://www.engagedencounter.org). which includes meals, facilities and handouts.
- b. **“FOCCUS”** This parish Pre-marriage preparation process gives couples an opportunity to explore and discuss a variety of issues and influences that impact a marriage relationship. Foccus is designed for couples who are parishioners of Annunciation. Applications available at the parish office.

#### **5. Plan your Wedding Liturgy.**

- a. The priest or deacon will provide you with *Guidelines & Suggestions for Celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage at the Cathedral of the Annunciation* as well as a booklet of suggested readings from the Scriptures, prayers, the form of the vows, and the wedding blessing for the Rite of Marriage. You are encouraged to select what you wish for your wedding liturgy and give a copy of your choices to the priest or deacon and the wedding coordinator.
- b. The Cathedral Director of Music, [463-1305], will meet with you to plan the music for the wedding. You should review the *Musical Suggestions in the booklet* questionnaire [Pre-Marriage Inventory/FOCCUS/ Taylor Johnson Temperament Analysis/etc.]

of *Guidelines & Suggestions*.

- b. One of the Cathedral Wedding Coordinators will meet with you to finalize the Wedding Liturgy.

## **The Wedding Rehearsal**

All members of the wedding party and all who have a part in the liturgy are invited to the rehearsal [usually the evening before the wedding].

Please invite all participants to be on time since due to other schedule events in the Cathedral, rehearsals must start and end on time. No food or drink is to be brought into the Cathedral. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted anywhere on the Cathedral property [building or grounds].

Please bring the marriage license to the rehearsal and give it to the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator.

[It is the custom for the couples to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance before their wedding. This might most calmly and prayerfully be done the week before the wedding or at a time scheduled with one of the priests.]

## **The Wedding Liturgy**

The center and focus of the Wedding Liturgy is your vows, your pledged word to one another before God and the community of the Church. You are the ministers of the Sacrament. We encourage you to keep everything in proportion to what is most important: you and your marriage promises. The booklet *Guidelines & Suggestions for Celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage at the Cathedral* will help you to do this.

## Some Useful & Necessary Information

**Marriage License:** The civil license to marry may be obtained at the County Recorder's Office [44 N. San Joaquin St. Suite 260 Stockton, CA. 95202 / 468-3939] from 8:00am to 4:00pm. Monday through Friday. Both bride and groom need to be present and must bring a photo ID to prove their age [18 or over]. Fee: \$64.00. The license is valid for 90 days anywhere in California.

**Ministers:** The bride and groom are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage. They ordinarily do not take any other ministry [such as Reader or Eucharistic Minister] at the wedding. The couple should invite others in the wedding party or from among their family and friends to welcome and seat the people, to read the Scriptures, to bring up the gifts, and to help distribute Communion. [The parish provide a Cantor, a Musician, and Altar Servers.] From experience we discourage inviting very small children—under age of five—to be part of the wedding party.

**Seating:** We strongly discourage the practice of having “friends of the bride” on one side of the church and “friends of the groom” on the other. Ushers should simply be instructed to fill the church from the front back, leaving only the necessary pews for the family in front. The seats immediately in front of the altar are reserved for the wedding party.

**Procession:** The Church asks that there be one procession of all the ministers, the people to be married, their witnesses, and their families. The church ritual invites the bride and groom, as the ministers of the Sacrament to enter together at the end of the procession, immediately preceded by their parents. An alternate is the groom, accompanied by his parents, enters immediately before the bride, accompanied by her parents.

**Music:** The couple is asked to meet with the Director of Music of the Cathedral to select the music of the wedding liturgy which, according to the requirements of the Church, must be appropriate



and fitting to the sacred nature of the Sacrament and help the community to pray and participate. The Cathedral provides the services of a Musician and Cantor for the wedding liturgy. And the Music Minister can provide a list of other musicians, soloists, choirs, vocal and instrumental groups, and others who might be engaged to provide music for the liturgy. The Director of Music is in charge of all arrangements for music in the Cathedral.

**Flowers & Decorations:** Except during Advent and Lent, when the decoration of the church is to be kept simple and in keeping with the season, you may decorate the sanctuary and the church with flowers. However, no flowers or candles are to be placed on the main altar table. [The back altar of Reservation, below the crucifix, may be used for both flowers or candles.]

Standing candles must have plastic sheet below them to protect the floor. Bows and ribbons may attached to the pews with string or wire but not tape. No aisle runner is permitted. No flower petals may be strewed in the aisles during the procession. Nothing [flowers, arches, candles, etc.] must obstruct the people's view of the couple being married or the altar or the pulpit.

**Photography:** Photographers are not allowed in the sanctuary during the wedding liturgy. One person may take photos during the wedding the procession. And one stationary video camera may be placed in the corner of the sanctuary [using available light only]. The church is usually at your disposal for photographs for one hour only prior to the wedding liturgy and 30 minutes after the liturgy. During many months of the year, outdoor pictures can be taken.

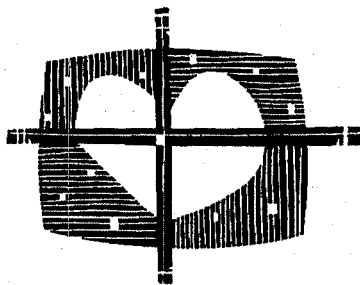
**Rice & Clean Up:** It is your responsibility to leave the church as clean as you found it. Since you will not be able to see this yourselves, please arrange to have someone in your party to be responsible for clean up. In a world of starving people, we discourage the throwing of rice. Rice and bird seed also present a danger of falling to many.

**Fees and Donations:** There is a fee for using the Cathedral for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. This **fee includes the services of the Wedding Coordinator, the Organist, a Cantor and two altar Servers**. It also takes into account the cost to the parish community of a custodian, a sacristan, the utilities, etc. This fee must be paid 60 days prior to the wedding.

Anyone in the Diocese has the right to be married in the Cathedral **and the fee is set at \$1500.**

It is the custom to offer the parish community a donation on the occasion of the celebration of a Sacrament. It is also the custom among Christians to make a gift to the poor on the occasion of a party or feast. A part of that donation might be made to the parish community.

All wedding donations go to the parish community. The priest or deacon does not receive a stipend for weddings. Therefore you might wish to offer the priest or deacon an honorarium for his service.



## Checklist:

- At least six months in advance, contact the Parish Secretary to see that the date and time you want for your wedding is available.
  - Make an appointment with the priest or deacon you wish to witness your marriage.
  - Sign and return the Wedding Agreement with the deposit to Secure de date.
  - If you are having a priest or deacon from outside the parish witness your marriage, obtain a Form of Delegation from the parish office. All visiting clergy must complete this form and return it to the parish office.
  - Gather the required documents and complete the necessary pre-marriage questionnaires [Forms A & B].
  - Participate in a program of Pre-Marriage Catechesis and Preparation.
  - Make an appointment with the Cathedral Director of Music to plan the music.
  - 60 days prior to the wedding, pay the required fees.
  - Meet with the Parish wedding Coordinator to finalize the wedding liturgy.
  - Obtain a marriage license from the County and give it to the the Wedding Coordinator at the time of the rehearsal.
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**The Cathedral of the Annunciation**

**425 West Magnolia Street • Stockton, CA • 209/463-1305**