

# HOLY FAMILY

7321 BURKITTSVILLE ROAD † MIDDLETOWN, MARYLAND 21769

***Thank you for your interest in having your wedding at Holy Family! If you are not a member of Holy Family parish, you may still have your wedding here; however, there are requirements which must be met.***

As you plan your wedding at Holy Family, we remind you that this is a sacrament most unique: it is the only sacrament that you confer yourselves. The priest or deacon witnesses your vows and confers the Nuptial Blessing, but you are the true celebrants of the sacrament. And so, while your wedding is a joyous occasion for both your families, it is also a sacred moment for both of you and nothing should detract from the prayerful nature of your celebration.

Our church is a unique space, which offers several options for your wedding ceremony. Therefore, you will want to consider the options available, so that your ceremony fulfills your expectations and needs.

## **INITIAL ARRANGEMENTS:**

Your planning process begins by calling our parish office at 301-473-4800 ext. 117, at least six (6) months prior to your wedding date, a time stipulated by Archdiocesan policy. During this initial call, please ask for Linda Berry, a member of the parish staff, who will check to see if your date and time are available. Linda will also discuss the fees associated with having your rehearsal and wedding at Holy Family. The next step is to contact your parish priest or deacon to ask if he is willing to come to Holy Family to do the wedding for you. You will complete your marriage preparation program at your own parish.

Please note that your date and time will not be secured until they have been confirmed by the priest or deacon assigned to your wedding. For your own protection and peace of mind, do not make any other arrangements for your wedding, especially any that have financial considerations (deposits, down payments, etc.) until you are notified by the priest or deacon that your wedding has been scheduled in the Church. Upon confirmation of the date and time, the Church fee will be required to secure the space.

**NOTE:** The Moore Center Legacy Room is available for wedding receptions at Holy Family. If you are interested in obtaining information on costs and availability, please contact Terry Kirby in the parish office (301-473-4800 extension 104; email [tkirby@hfccmd.org](mailto:tkirby@hfccmd.org)).

### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

1. A baptismal certificate for each Catholic party. This certificate must be of recent issue that is no earlier than six (6) months prior to the date of marriage. You may obtain a certificate by contacting the church in which you were baptized.
2. Members of other faiths should present proof of their baptism, if they have been baptized. A certificate or letter from the church in which they were baptized will be adequate.
3. A Marriage License must be obtained from the Office of the Clerk of the Court at the Frederick County Court House on the corner of Patrick and Ice Streets in Frederick. To assist you, please be aware of the following:
  - Either the bride or the groom may apply for the license.
  - You will need to provide the full names of the bride and groom, as well as your ages, addresses and state of birth. Social Security numbers are required. If you are younger than age 19, you will need to provide documented proof of your age.
  - There is a 48-hour waiting period for the license. It is valid for six months from the date of issue.
  - If your license is issued in Frederick, you must be married in Frederick County.
  - If either of you were previously married, you will need to provide the date and the county and state of your divorce, or the date of the death of other party.
  - The Clerk of the Court's Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 am until 4:00 pm. They are closed on Saturday and Sunday.
  - The license fee is \$75.00, cash, Visa or MasterCard. They require a valid photo ID and both parties' Social Security numbers. No Blood tests or physical examinations are required. **Please bring the wedding license to the rehearsal.**
4. Any other forms or permissions required will be taken by the priest or deacon.

### **MARRIAGE PREPARATION:**

Because of the importance and permanence of marriage, the Archdiocese of Baltimore requires couples to attend a marriage preparation program. Arrangements for marriage prep should be made with the priest or deacon who will be doing your wedding.

### **DRESSING AREAS:**

Holy Family does not have a room specifically designated as a bride's room; however, there is an area the bride and bridesmaids may gather before the wedding. It is strongly suggested that the bride dress at home and use the room for final preparations before the wedding.

### **THE WEDDING LITURGY:**

The Eucharist is the sign and symbol of the union of Christ and His Church. Sacramental Marriage recalls that union, and, therefore, is normally celebrated at a Nuptial Mass. However, in some cases, or if one party is not Catholic, you may prefer a ceremony outside of Mass.

Please discuss the nature of your Nuptial Mass or ceremony with the priest or deacon who will officiate at your wedding. Weddings are ordinarily scheduled on Saturdays at a time convenient to all concerned, but 1:00 p.m. is the latest time available at Holy Family. We will ordinarily schedule only one wedding on any Saturday. Some Friday and Sunday dates and times are available if requested.

### **REHEARSAL:**

The rehearsal is usually held the night before the wedding at a time convenient to all. The priest or deacon will discuss this with you. Only those parties directly involved in the wedding need to attend the rehearsal. Our Wedding Coordinator will be present during the rehearsal.

### **LECTORS:**

We encourage members of the wedding party or guests present to act as readers of Scripture and the Prayer of the Faithful. Lectors should attend the rehearsal to familiarize themselves with our microphones and to practice their readings.

### **ALTAR SERVERS:**

Holy Family altar servers (2) or relatives of the wedding party that are trained altar servers are allowed to serve at the altar for Nuptial Masses. Servers are not needed for a wedding ceremony.

### **WITNESSES:**

The official witnesses are the Best Man and Maid (Matron) of Honor. They need not be Catholic.

### **PHOTOGRAPHERS:**

Photographers are permitted to take photographs during the wedding ceremony as long as they do not interfere with the reverence and sacredness of the liturgy. They are not permitted to enter the sanctuary or climb on the baptismal font. We encourage the wedding party to take many of their photographs before the wedding. You may also return to the church for photographs after the wedding, but remember that your guests are waiting for you at the reception.

Videotaping of the wedding Mass or Ceremony is permitted. Because there are video outlets available in the church that include sound, we will not allow separate microphones for the ministers.

### **BANNS OF MARRIAGE:**

Banns of Marriage are no longer required or published.

### **VISITING CLERGY:**

It is the responsibility of the visiting presider to complete all the necessary paperwork, ensure that diocesan policies regarding marriage are fulfilled, facilitate the planning of the ceremony and preside at the rehearsal. We ask that your visiting priest or deacon meet our parish requirements for:

- Marriage preparation for the couple.
- Provide the necessary documents and dispensation, and letter of good standing from the Archdiocese.
- Obtain the delegation from the pastor to perform the wedding.
- If it is a Nuptial Mass, Holy Family will provide the altar servers.
- Follow the norms for liturgical music set forth by Holy Family Catholic Community.

### **RICE:**

Insurance regulations prohibit the throwing of rice, birdseed, etc. after weddings here at Holy Family. We ask your family and friends to refrain from this practice.

### **FLORAL DECORATIONS:**

When considering floral decorations for your wedding, you may do one of the following:

1. Floral decorations are traditionally provided by the bride's side of the family at their expense. Floral decorations are not placed on the altar or in front of the altar. Because of the design of our church, we strongly encourage your florist to visit our space before your wedding and ask them to use our flower containers and stands. Our Wedding Coordinator will offer suggestions and will work with your florist.

The Church will be decorated for the liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and the harvest season. You may not at any time remove any seasonal decoration, flower arrangement, or banner from the Church. Floral decorations sent to Holy Family for use in the church during the wedding will remain in the church after the wedding. If your wedding is taking place during the Christmas or Easter seasons, you may choose not to order flowers for the sanctuary area since it will already be decorated. During the Lenten season (February, March, and the early part of April) there will be no flowers in keeping with the simplicity of the Lenten season. If you order flowers during these months, they must be simple and should be removed after your wedding.

Decorations are not placed on the pews nor are candles used other than the ones in the church. Furniture may not be moved or re-arranged.

Isle runners are not permitted because they are hazardous when walking on our stone floor. The church stone floor must be kept clear at all times (i.e. no flower petals during the wedding procession).

### **LITURGICAL MUSIC:**

Music during the Sacrament of Marriage serves a liturgical function. Although a congregation gathers at a wedding to witness the union of a man and woman, we are also called to praise and worship God. Therefore, the music must be of a liturgical nature.

There is a world of church music available in every style and taste. Sacred Music guidelines clarify that music must be liturgical, pastoral, and musical in nature. Wedding music is meant to enhance the worship of the community as they affirm your commitment to God and to each other. You may have "your own song," but, if it is strictly a love ballad or a show tune, we suggest you save it for the reception.

You need to have a trained cantor present to lead the congregation in liturgical song. Those selected to perform this ministry are qualified singers with knowledge and experience in church singing. If you do not have a singer for your wedding, we will be happy to provide you with one of our cantors. It is possible to have other singers present, but the main cantor must be familiar with singing in church.

Please contact the Director of Music as soon as the date for your wedding has been confirmed. The Director of Music can be reached through the parish office to discuss any preliminary questions you may have and will set up an appointment with you to discuss the details of your wedding music. All requests for instrumentalists and soloists, as well as approval for outside musicians, are handled by the Director of Music.

**Please Note:** Holy Family gives bench rights to its musicians. If you bring in an outside pianist, a bench fee is charged. However, you may use your own cantor (singer), subject to the Director of Music's approval. Fees are due in full no later than two weeks (14 days) prior to the ceremony date.

**SEATING:**

Because of the unique design of the church, there are limited seating options available for your wedding. Please discuss this with the wedding coordinator. In addition, the priest or deacon will discuss options for the procession and the service itself.