

# MARRIAGE @ LITTLE FLOWER



Congratulations on your engagement  
and upcoming wedding!

We are thrilled to celebrate this especially joyous moment in your life.

God's gift of married love initiates an astonishing life-long commitment. Through the Sacrament of Marriage, God forges a sacred partnership of love and life.

It is important to keep before you that your wedding day is the first day of your married love.

The Bible highlights four characteristics of married love: *free*, *total*, *fruitful* and *faithful*.

- *Free* means loving each other willingly and cheerfully. God's gift of married love is not controlling, manipulative, stifling or dominating.
- *Total* means loving each unconditionally and without restrictions just as Jesus gave Himself for us and for our salvation.
- *Fruitful* means joyfully cooperating with God's Will for children to be blessed fruit of married love and to continue growing closer to each other in every way.
- *Faithful* means that words and actions reflect undying commitment to each other and relentlessly seeking to help each other get to heaven.

This special booklet will assist you with the preparation process. Please let us know how else we can help make your experience meaningful and memorable.

See you at Mass!

In Jesus Through Mary,

Father Dave Nuss, S.T.L.

Pastor



# Getting Started

**Congratulations, you're engaged! Now the work begins.**

All Catholics are welcome to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage at Little Flower. If you belong to another parish because you live out of town or for another understandable reason, the permission of your pastor will be required. We enthusiastically support your efforts toward becoming active parishioners wherever you are living. If one of you is not Catholic, we gladly will guide you through a few extra steps that are required.

## **Setting Your Date and Time**

We are happy to help you make these important decisions as soon as possible.

- Please contact us at least six months in advance in order to allow ample time for thoughtful and prayerful preparation.
- Weddings customarily are celebrated on Saturdays at 2:00 p.m.
- We sometimes celebrate weddings on Friday evenings and gladly will consider all other requests.

*Contact the parish as soon as possible to schedule a meeting with the pastor who will confirm your wedding day and time. Do not schedule vendors until you first have met with the pastor.*

Engaged Couples Workshop JOY-FILLED MARRIAGE is an enjoyable interactive experience. This special weekend offering is led by married couples who delve into practical life skills along with the sacramentality of marriage. To learn more and to register: [jfmtoledo.eventbrite.com](http://jfmtoledo.eventbrite.com).

# Your Wedding Preparation Essentials

TIMELINE & CHECKLIST	<b>6 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING</b>		<b>2 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact parish office to submit information and request meeting with the Pastor to set wedding date	<input type="checkbox"/>	Finalize the wedding Liturgy with the Pastor/Deacon and Director of Liturgy and Music
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign contract and pay Parish and Music fees		
	<b>4 MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING</b>		<b>DAY OF WEDDING REHEARSAL</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Schedule several meetings with the Pastor/Deacon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Give your marriage license to Pastor/Deacon
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Schedule a meeting with Director of Liturgy and Music	<input type="checkbox"/>	Have everyone involved in your liturgy in attendance
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Schedule your assessment as directed by your priest or deacon	<input type="checkbox"/>	Give your ushers copies of "Ushers' Responsibilities"
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sign up for an Engaged Couple Workshop		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Submit all necessary Church documents			
<p><b>DAY OF THE WEDDING – YOUR BIG DAY IS HERE!</b>            The church, bridal room and narthex are available for your use from 12:30pm to 3:30pm. All rooms must be vacated after the ceremony and returned to their original conditions. We are not responsible for the safety and security of any personal items. Only bottled water is allowed anywhere on the campus.</p>				

PAPERWORK	<p><b>Church Contract</b> – Your signed contract and full payment is due 6 months prior to your wedding date..</p>
	<p><b>Baptismal Certificate</b> - This can be obtained from the church where the baptism was celebrated. For Catholics, it must be a newly issued certificate, with notations. Baptized Christians should provide a copy of their baptismal certificate or a letter from the church where the baptism took place showing the place, date and presider.</p>
	<p><b>Marriage License</b> – Marriage licenses are issued by the County Probate Court. If the bride or groom is a resident of Ohio, then you should apply in the county where they reside; if both applicants are Ohio residents and live in different counties, then you can apply in either county. For out of state residents, you must apply for the marriage license in the county where the wedding will occur. Bring the license to the rehearsal.</p>

FEES	<p>A Facility Usage Fee of \$250 (\$100 of which is a non-refundable deposit) is required to finalize your wedding date and use of the church. Parish family members committed to living their Catholic faith, including their worship of God at Sunday Mass each week, will receive a refund of \$100 after the wedding as our way of supporting their decision to live as intentional disciples of Christ Jesus.</p>
	<p>A professional services fee of \$200 paid directly to the Director of Music and Liturgy. If requested, special soloists and instrumentalists are available at various fees.</p>

# Planning Your Liturgy

Marriage is the astonishing union and sacred partnership of a man and a woman. Equal and beloved as God's children, man and woman are created with important differences that allow the free, total, fruitful and faithful gift of themselves to be given to each other.

For those getting married in the Catholic Church, the high point of the wedding day is the wedding liturgy (or ceremony). Thoughtful and prayerful planning for your liturgy will make the celebration and even more profound encounter with Christ Jesus the Lord.

Customarily, when two Catholics are being married the Rite of Marriage will be celebrated within the Mass. When only one person is Catholic, the Rite of Marriage is celebrated outside of Mass.

Sacred Scripture readings and petition suggestions for your wedding liturgy are conveniently listed in the back of this book (Appendix A). Two months prior to your wedding liturgy, you will meet with your priest or deacon to finalize all the details.

## FAQs

**May we have a Unity Candle?** Because the lighting of a candle by the couple is not a part of the Rite of Marriage, it is not done in the Diocese of Toledo. The mixing of sand, water and other materials is also not permitted.

**May we present flowers to the Blessed Virgin Mary?** Many couples place a flower or bouquet at the base of the statue of Our Lady and then take a moment together to pray privately.

**We have a wedding coordinator. What will they do?** The priest/deacon will handle everything to do with the wedding ceremony.

**May we have a reception line after Mass?** There only is time for either a reception line or pictures. Couples can decide in advance with their priest/deacon which they prefer.

**May we use an aisle runner?** Safety concerns prohibit the use of an aisle runner.

**May we throw rice or birdseed after Mass?** Safety concerns prohibit the throwing of birdseed, rice, glitter or confetti. Sparklers and other items using fire are not permitted.

**May alcohol be consumed?** Alcohol consumption strictly is prohibited on the premises. Alcohol is not permitted to be consumed before the wedding by the couple and all wedding party members. *Failure to follow this policy may result in the cancellation of the wedding.*

# Planning Your Music

Music at any worship service is integral to the spirited praise and worship of God. At your wedding liturgy, it is fitting that music be chosen which expresses and supports the sacredness of the celebration.

Encouraging couples to take an active part in the preparation of their wedding liturgy, they will work cooperatively with the Director of Music and Liturgy in the planning of music that above all else makes the ceremony a prayerful, memorable and meaningful experience for everyone.

For your convenience, a listing of opportunities for selected music during your wedding liturgy is provided on the next page.

An important criterion in selecting the most appropriate music is the ability of songs to enhance a meaningful encounter with Christ Jesus. Catholics profess Him to be at the very center of married love. When the Catholic Rite of Marriage is celebrated within the Mass, the centrality of the Holy Eucharist rightly is honored and respected in addition to the sacred partnership of life and love being celebrated.

## FAQs

### **Can we sing a Rascal Flatts song?**

The Catholic wedding liturgy makes available to all a real and personal encounter with God. While many popular songs beautifully express the romantic feelings between two people, Christian marriage fundamentally celebrates God's love for us. A particular secular song which may not be sung at the wedding liturgy might better be used at the reception.

### **Might we use recorded music?**

During liturgy, music is a form of prayer and prayer is best when expressed in real time by ourselves. As a norm recorded music is not appropriate within Catholic liturgy to replace the congregation, the choir, the cantor, the pianist and other instrumentalists.

### **May our friend sing a solo?**

We always are glad when family and friends can share their God-given gifts and make the prayer even more personal. Keeping with a graceful, prayerful and beautiful liturgy, the Director of Music and Liturgy happily will discuss possibilities of using other singers and musicians.

# Opportunities for Music in the Wedding Liturgy

## **Prelude**

Prelude music rightly fosters an atmosphere of prayer and reverential silence while members of the assembly are gathering and being seated. Several selections may be used that combine instrumental as well as vocal pieces.

## **Procession / Entrance Song**

Music for the entrance song begins the wedding liturgy and serves also to unify everyone assembled for this special prayer. Whether instrumental or sung, the entrance song should be a hymn of praise or a hymn of petition, asking God's blessing on the couple to be married.

## **Responsorial Psalm**

The musical setting of any psalm is appropriate here, provided it is responsorial in style; that is, with the cantor singing the verses and the assembly responding with a sung refrain. Paraphrased renditions of psalms never are to be used in place of the actual Sacred Scripture.

## **Gospel Acclamation**

The Gospel acclamation rightly is sung. Any appropriate setting of the "Alleluia" or acclamation of praise during the season of Lent can be chosen.

## **Preparation of the Gifts**

During a wedding liturgy, this ritual action does not take a long time. Respecting the flow of liturgy, instrumental music often is especially fitting.

## **Eucharistic Acclamations**

The Preface Acclamations, Memorial Acclamation and Doxology properly are selected from musical settings familiar to the worshipping community. Helping to bring about the active, full, and conscious participation of the assembly, the best acclamations are familiar to many and easy for all to sing.

## **Communion Procession**

The music for the communion procession rightly is Eucharistic in nature; that is, music expressing clear praise and thanksgiving of God along with stressing unity in Christ. A short, simple refrain to be sung by the assembly with the verses sung by a cantor often enhances participation by everyone.

## **Concluding Procession**

The music at the Nuptial Procession is traditionally instrumental and joyful in nature.

Music selections always should be in keeping with the liturgical seasons.

# Planning Your Wedding Party

While Church Law requires only two witnesses for your wedding liturgy, most wedding parties today have more than just a best man and maid or matron of honor. As a practical matter, wedding parties up to four couples fit comfortably in our sanctuary. A wedding party totaling more than 10 people – including the wedding couple - quickly becomes crowded and will be difficult for photography. Rather than having the wedding party milling around anxiously before the wedding, consider asking them to greet guests as they arrive at the church.

Please extend the courtesy to all the members of your wedding party that in our Catholic practice we do not eat or drink in church at any time and we also do not chew gum during the liturgy. Even those who are of a different religious tradition will appreciate knowing how to act properly in our church and not have to have it explained to them by the priest or deacon either before or during the wedding liturgy.

We are excited for you to have special pictures from your momentous day and welcome photography in the church after the liturgy. Please remember how proper and fitting it is to maintain decorum that is joyous and respectful of everyone and always mindful and reverent of God's Presence.

## **Children**

If you want to have a ring bearer and flower girl as a part of your wedding liturgy, please select children of sufficient age who are able to understand what they are to do and are able to be away from their parents. We respectfully ask that girls not drop petals, either real or silk, during the procession or at any time during the ceremony. Kindly keep in mind that children rightly are to enhance, not detract from the prayer. It is our experience that children five years of age and older are best suited for these roles.

## **Seating**

Typically the members of the wedding party sit in the front row with bridesmaids on the left (in front of the Blessed Virgin Mary statue) and groomsmen on the right (in front of the Saint Joseph statue). Family members customarily sit immediately behind them in the second row. Chairs will be placed in the sanctuary for the wedding couple to use.

# Ushers' Responsibilities

Sometimes members of the wedding party fulfill the duties of ushers while other times separate family and friends are asked to help with greeting guests and helping people find their way in and around the church.

Kindly have people assigned to make sure nothing is left behind in the church, narthex, bride's room, restrooms and anywhere else on the church property. Please make certain that everything inside and outside the church is proper and orderly prior to your departure.

# Your Wedding Rehearsal

Customarily the wedding rehearsal takes place the night before the wedding liturgy. This is a special time for prayer and introductions as your wedding weekend commences. We recommend that everyone who has been given a specific role in your wedding liturgy be invited to the rehearsal. This normally includes all the bridesmaids and groomsmen along with individuals you have asked to proclaim a reading from Sacred Scripture and to lead the Petitions. The rehearsal will not last more than one hour, and usually is around 45 minutes from beginning to end.

Please keep in mind that there may be friends who are unfamiliar with Catholic practices and customs. Kindly extend the courtesy of letting everyone know about proper behaviors in our church.

## **Marriage License**

Be sure to bring your marriage license to the rehearsal and hand it to the priest or deacon if you have not delivered it to him previously.

## **Wedding Coordinator**

If you have contracted with a wedding coordinator, they are welcome to *observe* the rehearsal. Kindly explain to the wedding coordinator that everything involving the wedding liturgy will be led by the priest or deacon. If the priest or deacon has a need for assistance, he will ask.

## **Music**

Music is not performed at the rehearsal. The Director of Liturgy and Music will schedule music practice with soloists and instrumentalists separately, if needed.

## **Overnight Storage**

We are not able to store items at church nor are we responsible for any personal items before, during or after the ceremony.

# Your Wedding Day

## **Bridesmaids**

We are pleased to provide a comfortable room and private bathroom for use by the bride and her bridesmaids where you may ready yourselves for the wedding liturgy. *The door to the bridal room is not locked.* All valuables must be secured personally and we are not responsible for the theft or loss of any items the entire time you are in our facility. Only bottled water is permitted in the room with food and other beverages not allowed. Kindly see that the room is cleared and clean upon your departure from church.

## **Groomsmen**

The groom and groomsmen are to arrive dressed as we do not have a similar room for them in our facility. They will have received instructions from the priest or deacon at the rehearsal where they are congregate and what they are to do. They may bring bottled water, kindly respecting our Catholic practice and custom never to drink or eat in church and to refrain from using phones and other electronic devices at any time in church.



# Photography and Videography

A Catholic Wedding Liturgy is a sacred event that offers all present a profound encounter with Christ Jesus the Lord. We hold marriage to be a sacred partnership of love and of life with no less than the Living God to be its creator, its sustainer and its proper destination.

We appreciate your respect of our religious belief and spiritual practice and ask that you *kindly do not use any flash* at any time during the liturgy.

In the Catholic tradition everything is done to preserve and promote the praise and worship of Almighty God for His love that is witnessed in the Holy Sacraments.

We appreciate your respect of our religious belief and spiritual practice and ask that you *kindly remain behind the last row of people throughout the entire ceremony. If you wish to take pictures or video from the sides, please remain in the aisle along the walls.*

The Catholic Wedding Mass is one sacred event among several others that are celebrated on the same day. We appreciate your respect of our religious belief and spiritual practice and ask that you *kindly exit the church no later than 3:30 p.m. on Saturday.*

Sacred furnishing and fixtures throughout the church witness the importance of beauty which is at the center of Catholic custom and practice. We appreciate your respect of our religious belief and spiritual practice and ask that you *kindly refrain from moving or rearranging any and all items in our church.*

The sanctuary ("altar area") is the most sacred and revered part of the entire church. We appreciate your respect of our religious belief and spiritual practice and ask that you *kindly never go behind the altar or instruct anyone there, refrain from placing props anywhere in the sanctuary, and never to set anything atop the altar.*

# Flowers and Other Decorations

How fortunate it is that our church is decorated beautifully and tastefully year round, always in accordance with the current liturgical season.

If additional flowers and decorations are desired for display during your wedding liturgy, make certain that nothing in church is moved, removed or altered. You are wise to discuss all flower and decoration ideas you have with the priest or deacon well in advance of your wedding day.

People generously contribute to our Flower Fund which makes our peaceful interior possible for everyone to enjoy.

# Miscellaneous Notes

Dress appropriately for all meetings and the rehearsal, and act respectfully in the sacred space of the church.

Be on time for meetings, the rehearsal, and the ceremony.

Please ask us about inviting other clergy you personally know to participate.

When meeting with your photographer/videographer be sure to discuss the short window of time available for pictures per the wedding contract.

Be sure your florist understands the time frame for flower delivery to the church.

If you would like to invite your presider to your rehearsal dinner or to your wedding reception, please do so as early as possible. It is always in good taste to send him a formal invitation. Should your presider's schedule allow him to attend, he is always willing to provide a blessing before the meal, or a prayer of some kind.

Weddings are a happy time of getting together and reacquainting with family and friends. It is also a sacred time, where we put ourselves in the presence of God and ask Him for His blessing. The outside grounds and narthex just inside the doors are great areas to meet and greet family and friends. Once inside the church, we should quiet ourselves and realize we are literally in God's house. Some talking is anticipated during the rehearsal, but in general an attitude of reflection and prayer is expected.

As Catholics, we all have a right to the Sacraments, and money is never an issue. If any of our fees cause a financial hardship, please speak with your presider about having them reduced or waived.

We at Little Flower are all here to be of service to you, and we will do all that we can to ensure your wedding day is everything you hoped it to be!



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# Sacred Scripture Readings

*The Old and New Testament together form the inspired Word of God. The books of Sacred Scripture reveal God's eternal truth for the sake of salvation.*

*Sacred Scripture is a deep font for the Church's worship and prayer life. Since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the Church makes expanded use of Sacred Scripture in worship (liturgy) as well as the devotional life of the Church.*

*In Catholic worship and praise of God, the New American Bible is used.*

## **Catholic Wedding Readings from the Old Testament** (select one)

- OT-1 Genesis 1:26-28, 31a
- OT-2 Genesis 2:18-24
- OT-3 Genesis 24:48-51, 58-67
- OT-4 Tobit 7:6-14
- OT-5 Tobit 8:4b-8
- OT-6 Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31
- OT-7 Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a; 8:6-7a
- OT-8 Sirach 26:1-4, 13-16
- OT-9 Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a

## **Catholic Wedding Readings from the New Testament** (select one)

- NT-1 Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39
- NT-2 Romans 12:1-2, 9-18 (*shorter version*: Romans 12:1-2, 9-13)
- NT-3 Romans 15:1b-3a, 5-7, 13
- NT-4 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20
- NT-5 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8a
- NT-6 Ephesians 5:2a, 21-33 (*shorter version*: Ephesians 5:2a, 25-32)
- NT-7 Philippians 4:4-9
- NT-8 Colossians 3:12-17
- NT-9 Hebrews 13:1-4a, 5-6b
- NT-10 1 Peter 3:1-9
- NT-11 1 John 3:18-24
- NT-12 1 John 4:7-12
- NT-13 Revelation 19:1, 5-9a

## **Catholic Wedding Gospel Reading** (select one)

- G-1 Matthew 5:1-12a
- G-2 Matthew 5:13-16
- G-3 Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (*shorter version*: Matthew 7:21, 24-25)
- G-4 Matthew 19:3-6
- G-5 Matthew 22:35-40
- G-6 Mark 10:6-9
- G-7 John 2:1-11
- G-8 John 15:9-12
- G-9 John 15:12-16
- G-10 John 17:20-26 (*shorter version*: John 17:20-23)

# Prayer of the Faithful ("Intercessions")

Here is the standard set of intercessions:

- For Pope Francis and all the bishops that they may lead us to deeper faith in God and a stronger love for others, we pray to the Lord.
- For our President and all leaders of government that they may be effective in achieving peace and eliminating poverty, we pray to the Lord.
- For this newly married couple now beginning their life together, that they may have divine assistance at every moment, we pray to the Lord.
- For those who have died, especially the relatives and friends of the bride and groom, that they may enjoy everlasting life and love, we pray to the Lord.

*Please edit the intercessions in ways so desired to make them more personal – e.g., the inclusion of the actual names of those who have died from your families.*

If you want to write your own intercessions, you may do so by following a simple three-part pattern.

- *First*, clearly identify the person, group or interest for which we are praying.
- *Second*, succinctly express the specific need for which the assembly is asked to pray.
- *Third*, invite the assembly to pray together.

*Here is an example of the simple three-part pattern for writing an intercession:*

**"FOR those who are persecuted because of their Christian belief, THAT divine protection will keep them safe from all harm, WE PRAY TO THE LORD."**

# NINE BIBLE VERSES SURE TO DEEPEN YOUR MARRIED LOVE

**1) “Above all, let your love for one another be intense, because love covers a multitude of sins.” (1 Peter 4:8)**

*We tend to overcomplicate everything including our relationships. All we simply need to do is to love each other deeply, truthfully, selflessly and wholeheartedly. Love always overpowers the imperfections and flaws we all have.*

**2) “The man and his wife were both naked, yet they felt no shame.” (Genesis 2:25)**

*God’s original design for marriage was perfect and it included nakedness without shame. Not only do we marvel upon the sheer beauty of marriage as God intended, but we also recognize the “nakedness” that needs to happen on an emotional and spiritual level. Nakedness represents transparency, honesty, vulnerability and cultivating an atmosphere of seeing someone for who they are and still accepting them completely. That is vital in marriage.*

**3) “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.” (Romans 12:2)**

*You don’t have to read too many magazine covers or watch Hollywood news very long to realize the world’s standards for marriage are twisted and perverse. Married life and love can’t be based on the world’s standards. Instead, dare to allow God’s Word to transform your minds, shape your thinking and empower your marriage.*

**4) “Those who commit adultery have no sense; those who do it destroy themselves.” (Proverbs 6:32)**

*The Bible has a lot to say about adultery, because it causes so much pain and destruction. This particular verse points out that adultery doesn’t just hurt the person who has been “cheated on” but it also causes great harm to the person who does the cheating. NOBODY wins with an affair.*

**5) “Jesus said, ‘I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.’” (Matthew 5:28)**

*This is one of Jesus’ teaching about adultery and he raises the standard to include “mental infidelity.” Our motives, our thoughts and our fantasies matter. We need to be mentally monogamous as well as physically monogamous. This is such a high standard and it removes the option for destructive (yet common) things like porn in a marriage.*

**6) “Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God.” (Philippians 4:6)**

*This clearly isn't just good marriage advice, but this applies to all parts of life. God doesn't want us going through life worried and anxious. He wants to give us peace. Peace is God's very Presence and Power. In married love, you get the supreme benefit of making your way to God together.*

**7) “Be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Ephesians 5:21)**

*Set aside politically correct squabbling over the meaning of “submission” in contemporary culture and instead just venture into its profound biblical meaning. Married couples are to serve one other out of reverence and respect for Christ Himself. Every time a husband and wife dares to place the needs and desires of their spouse ahead of their own, the marriage absolutely will thrive.*

**8) “Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.” (Ephesians 4:32)**

*Work to increase kindness and compassion in our married love. This happens when we are forgiving – that means both asking for forgiveness and receiving forgiveness. Imagine how strong marriages would appear if couples simply made forgiveness a daily priority.*

**9) “Do not let the sun set on your anger, and do not leave room for the devil.” (Ephesians 4:26-27)**

Anger is a contagion that left unchecked will ruin everything. Anger is checked by forgiveness. Resist temptations to work it out in the morning. Do not go to bed angry lest the opponent get the chance to compromise your love.



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