

## Appendix: Preparation and Rehearsal Liturgical Checklist.

From: Liturgical Guidelines for the Celebration of Marriage

The following is a partial list of those liturgical items which should be discussed by the engaged couple and the celebrant. The first meeting with the celebrant should take place at least six months before the date of the wedding.

A. Choice of Date and Time of Marriage Good planning suggests that the date and time of the ceremony should be arranged before the time and location of the reception is determined.

B. Necessary Church Documents The priest or deacon should inform the couple of the documents which they must provide. This will normally include baptismal certificates for Catholics, reliable information regarding the place and date of baptism for non-Catholic Christians, proof of freedom to marry for non-Catholics and for those Catholics whose freedom is not otherwise known to the priest or deacon, and the certificate indicating the completion of the marriage preparation course.

C. Schedule for the Marriage Preparation Courses The priest or deacon should provide information distributed from the Family Life/Respect Life Office regarding archdiocesan marriage preparation courses. He should describe the content and emphasis of each type of course and point out that early application is important in order to secure a place in the course of the couple's choice.

D. Marriage Preparation: Parish Responsibility It should be noted that archdiocesan marriage preparation courses deal with more general concepts regarding the meaning of Christian marriage and the Church's teaching on human sexuality. They do not normally devote much discussion to the liturgy of the marriage rite, and so there is not usually much opportunity for dialogue with the couple about matters of individual concern. Hence, two important responsibilities devolve upon the parish: providing the opportunity for unhurried conversation about individual questions and problems and fostering a proper understanding of the wedding liturgy. Discussion of the liturgical aspects of the marriage ceremony can lead to a deeper appreciation of the meaning of Catholic liturgical worship. Thus, the priest or deacon should take care to ensure that sufficient time is allowed in order to take advantage of the pedagogical and pastoral opportunities offered by this important event.

E. Stipends/Fees At their first meeting with the priest or deacon, the couple should be given information concerning the usual offering to the parish church and staff (e.g., sacristan, servers), as well as the fees for the organist, cantor, and other musicians.

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F. Wedding Rehearsal Sufficient time should be set aside for an unhurried and thorough rehearsal in the days leading up to the wedding. The celebrant can use this occasion to establish a warm and friendly rapport with the members of the wedding party and share with those gathered the Church's belief in the sacramental nature of marriage and the nature of Christian liturgical worship. As well, a careful walkthrough of the ceremony can contribute to building up the couple's confidence and peace of mind so that the wedding liturgy may be celebrated in a prayerful and dignified manner.

The rehearsal is also an appropriate time for settling final details and points of procedure, including a last review of the readings and a rehearsal of the readers, finalizing the music and the songs, ensuring that gift bearers have been selected, and determining the arrangement for the Sign of Peace.

In the case of a celebration of a marriage within Mass or with the distribution of Communion, the celebrant is encouraged to recall for the group the guidelines for a worthy reception of Communion by Catholics and present Church discipline regarding inter-communion. The practicalities of arranging the wedding party to accommodate those who will not be receiving Communion should be addressed.

The rehearsal may also present an opportunity for brief prayer, the proclamation of an appropriate passage from Scripture, and the individual celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

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