



## **Celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage at St. Therese Catholic Church Wrightsville Beach, NC**

### **Congratulations**

Congratulations on your engagement to be married!

We are blessed to have a beautiful location right on the beach with a cozy, beautiful church, so understand why people want to celebrate their wedding here. Since we are an active parish of over 600 households and have limited resources, we cannot accommodate most requests from outside the parish.

We assume that at least one party is a Catholic who intends to practice his or her faith. If you are a member of St. Therese, you must attend Mass on a regular basis before the wedding ceremony. This is required.

We assume that neither bride nor groom have been married previously unless the former spouse is deceased. In case of a previous marriage, we will help you to explore the possibility of obtaining a Declaration of Nullity from the Catholic Church.

All communication and planning is done only with the bride and/or groom. We do not discuss wedding details with third parties (such as parents or professional wedding planners).

To arrange a wedding at St. Therese, the couple must first meet in person with our Pastor.

### **Getting Married in the Catholic Church**

There are three basic steps to prepare for a Catholic wedding:

- Preparing for a lifetime commitment of love and fidelity
- Documenting your marriage with papers required by Church and State
- Planning your ceremony

### **Preparing for a Lifetime of Love and Fidelity**

The Church rejoices with you in the love you have found in one another. Cherishing and nurturing your love requires commitment and skill. The Diocese of Raleigh has developed a workshop to help you establish a strong foundation for a lasting and fulfilling marriage relationship. We ask you to participate in the *One-Day Marriage Preparation Workshop* offered by the Diocese. Description and registration information may be found at: <http://www.dioceseofraleigh.org/offices/marriage-and-family-life/marriage-preparation/one-day-workshop>

When you register you will be invited to take the *Fully Engaged* premarital inventory, which will help you to identify some aspects of your relationship that it would benefit you to discuss in more depth. After you attend the workshop, we ask you to meet with our Pastor or the priest or deacon who is assisting you with marriage preparation to review the *Fully Engaged* results and discuss how to have a faithful and fulfilling marriage.

## Documenting your Marriage

The Church asks for the following documents:

- A *recently issued* Certificate of your Baptism. This may be obtained by contacting the church where you were Baptized. Give them your full name, the full names of your parents with mother's name prior to marriage, and your date of birth. Persons from other Christian traditions may provide a photocopy of your original Certificate of Baptism.
- Pre-Nuptial Investigation Form, which you will complete with the priest or deacon who is assisting with your marriage preparation.
- The State of North Carolina requires that you obtain a Marriage License from the Register of Deeds in any county in NC (must be obtained within 60 days of wedding).

## Planning your Ceremony

We will help you select the prayers, Scripture readings, and other elements of your marriage liturgy so that your ceremony will be appropriate and personal. Our Music Coordinator will help you to plan music and one of our Wedding Coordinators will assist with the many details required to make your wedding a joyful celebration. You will need a booklet: *Together for Life* (Sixth Edition) which you can purchase online at Amazon.com. Use the form in the **back** of the book to list your preferred prayers, readings, and the names of those who will participate in your wedding. You may also fill out this form online at <http://www.togetherforlifeonline.com/selectionform>. Discuss your choices with the priest or deacon as part of your preparation.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **Can a Catholic marry someone who is not Catholic?** Yes. The Catholic party is asked to promise to do all in his or her power to Baptize and raise their children as Catholics. Ministers from other faith traditions are permitted to assist at the wedding ceremony. Catholics can obtain permission to celebrate their wedding in a place of worship of another faith tradition, providing they fulfill requirements of the Catholic Church.
- **Can we have a wedding on the beach?** No. To emphasize the sacramental aspect of marriage, the Catholic Church requires that weddings be celebrated in a church. Exceptions are rare and must be obtained from the Bishop of Raleigh.
- **Can I get dressed at the church?** Yes. You can arrange with our Wedding Coordinator to use the Parish Hall for the wedding party to dress.
- **What is the capacity of St. Therese facilities?** Church seats 289; 60 parking spaces.
- **How many bridesmaids can I have?** Due to space limitations, 6 bridesmaids, including the Maid of Honor, are permitted.
- **Can a priest or deacon from outside the parish officiate?** Yes. We welcome visiting priests and deacons. We require that they follow our liturgical practices. Clergy from outside the Diocese of Raleigh are required to have a letter of good standing sent to the Vicar General's office of the Diocese of Raleigh. North Carolina state law recognizes ordained clergy from out of state; no special state certification is required.
- **Can we photograph our ceremony?** Yes. We welcome professional photographers/videographers who respect the sacred nature of the marriage liturgy. Photographers/videographers can only be at the rear of the church, not in the aisle or in the sanctuary. Audio equipment may not be connected to our church sound system; the celebrant will not wear a microphone for audio production.
- **The use of cell phones is strictly prohibited during the ceremony.**

- **Can we throw rice, birdseed, etc.?** No. These present safety concerns and we do not have staff to clean up before weekend Liturgies.
- **Can we use an aisle runner?** No. Aisle runners are not permitted.
- **May we light a unity candle?** The unity candle is NOT part of the Catholic celebration of Matrimony. We ask that if you desire a unity candle, it be used at the rehearsal dinner or reception.

### Fees

- **Facility, Parking & Music:** \$550 covers music preparation and presentation, air conditioning/heating, lights, parking attendant, setup and cleanup. Non-refundable fee must be paid in full before wedding is put on parish calendar. Please make check payable to St. Therese Church and remit to our Office Manager with your signed Wedding Registration Agreement.
- **Celebrant:** Donations are appreciated; the celebrant does not have a set fee.
- **Flowers:** You may provide flowers of your choosing at your expense. We require that sanctuary flowers remain in the church for weekend liturgies. Or, you may opt to have St. Therese Parish provide flowers of our choosing with a donation of \$125. Please consult our Parish Office before ordering any flowers.

### Day & Time

**Weddings** are normally scheduled at St. Therese on Saturdays at **11am** or **1pm**. Couples and guests may arrive one hour prior to the ceremony and remain for no more than one hour after the ceremony to assure that our facilities are available for other parish commitments.

**Rehearsals** are normally scheduled on Fridays from **4:30 until 5:30pm**.

We are happy to consider weddings/rehearsals on weekdays when we can be more flexible about times.

### Assistance

**Parish Wedding Coordinator:** A volunteer Wedding Coordinator from St. Therese will assist you with wedding preparations and will be present for your rehearsal and wedding to make sure everything goes smoothly. She will want to know which florist and photographer you select, and can recommend vendors if you request. You may not use an outside wedding director.

**Coordinator of Music & Liturgy:** Kevin Donnelly, a member of our parish staff, will assist with planning the music for your ceremony. He will provide organ accompaniment and will secure a musician to be Cantor. Guest musicians are welcome, under the direction of our Parish Coordinator of Liturgy & Music, who participates in all weddings at St. Therese. Fees for any additional musicians are your responsibility. Please remember secular music is not appropriate or permissible for a sacred liturgy.

## CHECKLIST

### REQUIRED STEPS

### DATE ACCOMPLISHED

Preliminary meeting with priest or deacon	_____
Set dates for wedding & rehearsal with Parish Office Manager	_____
Attend Marriage Preparation workshop/retreat	_____
Provide recently issued Certificate of Baptism	_____
Order <i>Together for Life</i> booklet for planning your ceremony	_____
Review <i>Fully Engaged</i> pre-marital inventory results with priest or deacon	_____
Complete Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire with priest or deacon	_____
Complete and discuss <i>Together for Life</i> Selection Form	_____
Meet with priest/deacon to agree on ceremony	_____
Meet with Music Coordinator <i>(you are responsible to contact him after priest/deacon approves ceremony)</i>	_____
Meet with Parish Wedding Coordinator <i>(you are responsible to contact her after priest/deacon approves ceremony)</i>	_____
Obtain Marriage License from County Register of Deeds	_____
Bring Marriage License and <i>Together for Life</i> selection form to <b>rehearsal</b>	_____

### **Saint Therese Catholic Church**

209 Lumina Avenue S

Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480

Kevin Donnelly      [worship@CatholicWB.org](mailto:worship@CatholicWB.org)      910.256.2471

Heather McLaren      [office@CatholicWB.org](mailto:office@CatholicWB.org)      910.256.2471

To contact the pastor, please contact Heather McLaren.

# Wedding Registration Agreement

St. Therese Catholic Church  
209 Lumina Avenue S  
Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed date of Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed date of Rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Officiant: \_\_\_\_\_

**We have read, understand and agree to the Wedding Policies of St. Therese Parish and enclose our check for the *non-refundable* fee of \$550 (payable to St. Therese Catholic Church).**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Bride or Groom

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Accepted on behalf of St. Therese Parish by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of authorized parish representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Saint Therese Parish assumes no responsibility for acts of God beyond our control, such as damage from storm, fire or other unavoidable obstacles that would prevent fulfillment of this agreement. Fees will be refunded in such circumstances and we will make every effort to provide a satisfactory alternative.*