

MARRIAGE PREPARATION INFORMATION

Congratulations on your engagement! We are so blessed to be a part of the beginning of your married life together. We hope our efforts help you prayerfully and joyfully discern marriage. Our marriage preparation process is designed to help you grow in your love and knowledge of the faith, and your ability to give yourselves to God and each other with your whole heart, mind and soul. This booklet is to familiarize you with the marriage prep process and get you started.

Step 1: Initial Meeting

Contact the parish office and set up a meeting with Deacon John or Fr Todd to review the process, answer any questions you may have, and fill out the necessary forms for marriage in the Catholic Church. If one or both of you have been married previously, we will discuss if any annulments or other paperwork is needed. We cannot set a wedding date until we determine what, if any, steps we need to take together to ensure your freedom to marry.

Step 2: Obtain your Baptismal Certificates

WITHIN 30 DAYS OF STEP 1, each baptized person will need to provide your baptismal certificate. It must be dated within 6th months of us receiving it. Old certificates and copies from your family file will not work. To get a new copy, call the parish where you were baptized. They'll ask for your name, your parents name, and your birthday. Ask them to send your certificate directly to the parish:

Sacred Heart Parish		St. Mary on the Lake Parish
207 S. Market	or	450 Manitou Rd
Hudson, MI 49247		Manitou Beach, MI 49253

Step 3: Pre-Marital Inventory

WITHIN 30 DAYS OF STEP 1, COMPLETE THE PRE-MARITAL INVENTORY. The Pre-Marital inventory is a confidential compatibility survey you both complete to determine strength and potential growth areas in your relationship. This survey IS NOT intended to tell you whether or not you can get married. It is designed to identify those areas where your relationship is sound and any areas which could potentially cause a conflict once you are married.

Go online to <http://www.catholicmarriageprep.com/> register for the "Pre-Marital Inventory". Once you get to the address above, look for the tab in the middle of the page that reads "Pre-Marital Inventory". Click it to see that you have two options. The cost of the first option is \$45.00. The results will be sent to Fr Todd or Deacon. Deacon John and Kimberly, will meet with you to review the results and discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Step 4: Marriage Prep Classes

COMPLETE THE MARRIAGE PREP CLASSES WITH 6 MONTHS OF STEP 1. These classes are available from one of the following on-line courses:

www.catholicmarriageprep.com or www.livingourfaithinlove.com

Throughout this time, Deacon John and his wife Kimberly will meet periodically with you to check in and see how you are doing.

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Step 5: Participate in a Natural Family Planning (NFP) Together. Please see the FAQs in this booklet for more information on what NFP is all about. NFP classes are available throughout the diocese. You can register by going to dioceseoflansing.org, selecting “Ministries” on the menu bar, and clicking on “Natural Family Planning” in the drop down menu.

Step 5: Wedding Liturgy Plan

WITHIN 45 DAYS OF THE WEDDING DATE, schedule a meeting with Deacon John and Kimberly to develop the plan for the wedding liturgy. A Liturgy Plan handout and worksheet will be provided to you at the Initial Meeting in Step 1.

Finally, we invite you to make sure that you use this time of marriage preparation to enter into the life of the Church. Getting married in the Church is not about the building, it’s the invitation the two of you extend to Christ to be the center of your marriage. By faithfully coming to Church together and participating in the Sacramental life of the Church, you are offering yourselves the blessings of God’s grace and the life and wisdom of the Church. Couples are encouraged to pray and worship together, as well as explore other faith opportunities as part of our Parish Family. These opportunities can be found in the parish bulletin or by contacting the office.

FAQ’s

Do both of us need to be Catholic to get married here?

Not at all. As long as one of you are Catholic, we can work together and celebrate a wonderful wedding.

My future spouse wants to become Catholic.

That’s great news! Please let us know so we can meet and discuss the process with your spouse and you.

I’m not a parishioner. Can I get married here?

You do not need to be a parishioner to get married here. You are encouraged to register here or, if not, please make sure that you are registered at a parish and actively participating in the life of that parish. It’s really important that you and your future spouse practice a life-giving faith together.

Who will perform the wedding ceremony?

Fr. Todd or Deacon John can celebrate that great day with you. However, some people have family and friends that are priests or deacons and they are more than welcome to preside at your wedding, or concelebrate or assist at Mass.

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What time can weddings be performed?

If you are getting married on a Friday, the usual times are 5:00, 6:00 or 7:00pm. If you are getting married on a Saturday, our usual times are 11:00am, 1:00pm, or 1:30pm. We can adjust those as you need. However, on Saturday afternoons, the entire wedding party and all guests must be out of the church by 3:00pm so the Church can be quiet for the Sacrament of Reconciliation beginning at 3:30pm, and prepare for 4:30pm Mass.

How long will the wedding last?

A Wedding Mass lasts for approximately 1 hour. The Rite of Marriage without a Mass lasts approximately 40 minutes.

How long will the rehearsal be?

Assuming everyone shows up on time and are ready to start, rehearsals should take 30 to 45 minutes depending on the size of the wedding party. However, we ask you to plan for 1 hour. Parents, lectors, ushers, wedding party, bride, groom, and musician should all be present for the wedding rehearsal. The photographer is welcome, too.

For the rehearsal, we will first do a “walk-through” so everyone gets the feel for where they need to be and what they need to do. Then, we do a “live” rehearsal with the music playing. It is not unusual for couples to make changes to the liturgy plan once they see the procession and other details come together at rehearsal. If this happens, it’s OK. We are prepared for it and will make the appropriate changes to the liturgy plan.

What are the requirements for music?

Music is an important part of our marriage celebrations in the Catholic Church. Please contact Deacon John for a list of our parish musicians. Musicians may charge different fees, so please discuss this with them. Marriage couples are responsible to pay the fee directly to the musician. You are also welcome to provide your own musicians. Music must be liturgically correct for a Catholic liturgy. Not all “traditional” wedding marches are suitable for a Catholic wedding. Suitable processional music includes:

- Trumpet Voluntary (Prince of Denmark’s March) by H Purcell/J. Clarke
- Rigaudon by André Campra
- Canon in D by Johann Pachelbel
- Jesu, Joy of Our Desiring by J.S. Bach
- Trumpet Tune* by David N. Johnson
- Fanfare by Gordon Jacob
- Grand Choeur Dialogue by Eugene Gigout
- Air from Water Music by G.F. Handel

Deacon John will help you with music selections which are appropriate for the liturgy.

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Is there a charge?

We do not charge for use of the church. However, we ask you to make a donation to the parish to help cover the costs of janitorial services, candles, and other items we use at the wedding. If you are unable to make a donation, we certainly will accept your prayers!

Can we complete our Marriage Preparation at another parish?

While we strongly encourage couples to complete their Marriage Preparation at our parish, we understand the difficulties this may cause for couples who do not live in the area or have complicated work schedules. In these cases, alternate arrangements can be made to complete your Marriage Preparation at another parish, or participate in a modified process at our parish. Please discuss this with Deacon John or Fr Todd **BEFORE** you begin Marriage Preparation somewhere else to avoid duplication of effort or issues which may delay your wedding.

What else can we do to prepare ourselves for Marriage?

Spend some quality, quiet time together to get away from the hustle and bustle of work, wedding planning, and all the decisions that have to be made now. Things to consider doing together include:

- Join a bible study or a small faith sharing group
- Make a Holy Hour together in the church
- Go on a date night each week
- Attend an approved retreat for marriage prep couples
- Ask a couple married for a long while to share their “secret” with you

Is there anything else we should know?

- Aisle runners and throwing of flower petals on the floor are not permitted.
- For maintenance reasons, do not throw rice, birdseed, or anything else in or outside the church.
- Flowers are optional. We encourage you to keep it simple, as the church is already very ornate. You may take the flowers with you after the wedding or leave them for the parish to enjoy.
- Bows and other décor on the pew ends must be hung with ribbon or cord. Tape of any kind is not allowed as it damages the finish on our pews.
- **ALCOHOL, DRUGS, VAPING, AND SMOKING ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE CHURCH OR ON PARISH GROUNDS.** Be vigilant celebrating before the wedding. If you appear to be intoxicated, or have alcohol on your breath, you could be deemed unfit to make the marriage vows which would delay your wedding to another date.
- Dress modestly and appropriately for a church wedding, including the rehearsal. Men must remove their hats when inside the church and hall. Behave respectfully and keep in mind that you are in God’s house.
- Appoint someone to clean up after your wedding to do a walk-through of the church and hall to check for any personal articles left behind after the wedding.

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What is an annulment?

The Sacrament of Marriage is intended to form a lifelong family-building covenant between a man, a woman, and God. Once established, this covenant cannot be broken by any human means. However, for a variety of reasons, it is possible to enter into marriage without forming the sacramental covenant so the Church has an annulment procedure to investigate if the covenant was never established. If you or your intended spouse have been previously divorced, please contact the office to determine if an annulment is needed.

Marriage Prep Check List:

1. Initial Meeting
2. Obtain Baptismal Certificates
3. Complete Marriage Prep program by_____
4. Complete Pre-Marital Inventory by_____
5. Discuss Pre-Marital inventory with Deacon John & Kimberly
6. Attend a Natural Family Planning class
7. Develop liturgy plan by_____
8. Obtain Marriage License