



THE CHURCH OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE

Mother Church of the Paulist Fathers

The Sacrament of Marriage

An Information Guide for Weddings



The Church of Saint Paul the Apostle

405 West 59 Street

New York, NY 10019

(212) 265-3495

A Message from Our Pastor

Dear Friends,

Congratulations on your engagement to be married!

We are very happy to accompany you as you prepare for the sacrament of marriage – for the day of your marriage celebration and for the celebration of the sacrament as it unfolds in your daily life as a new family.

This booklet is intended to help you as you begin your preparation. Please contact any of the priests by telephone or by e-mail via our website, www.stpaultheapostle.org for more information or to continue your journey to your wedding day and beyond.

May God Bless You.

Yours sincerely,

Gilbert Martinez, CSP

Rev. Gilbert Martinez, CSP

Pastor

gilbert.martinez@stpaultheapostle.org

Your Wedding At The Church of Saint Paul the Apostle

The Sacrament of Marriage

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What is Marriage?

“The marriage covenant, by which a man and a woman form with each other an intimate communion of life and love, has been founded and endowed with its own special laws by the Creator. By its very nature, it is ordered to the good of the people, as well as the generation and education of children. Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of a sacrament.” - Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1660

These reflections by the Church point to the deep and lasting significance of the step you are taking in your lives as a couple, as a family, and as part of the Church. We look forward to the celebration of your wedding at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle.

Initial Arrangements

To prepare properly for your wedding and for the vocation of married life, please contact the parish offices at least six months prior to your intended wedding date. The period serves both as a time of “engagement” for you as a couple and gives the parish the necessary lead-time to facilitate your preparation for marriage and the wedding ceremony itself. One of the parish priests will meet with you to begin the process of preparation for marriage here. Ordinarily, both members of the couple should be present for the initial and subsequent meetings with the priest. Obviously the very nature of marriage as a life-long, adult commitment, requires that arrangements with the Church should not be delegated to parents, wedding coordinators, or others assisting with wedding plans and details. Only when you as a couple have met personally with one of the parish priests will a definite wedding date be set. An initial deposit of \$200 in cash or check is required to confirm a wedding date. At the initial meeting, the priest will also explain the legal and other requirements which must be fulfilled in order for you to be married at the Church.

Wedding Deposit

The \$150 non-refundable deposit for the wedding is a separate fee which will not be applied towards your Church fee total. There will also be a \$50 fee if the ceremony begins more than 15 minutes late. The start time is signified by the procession of the wedding party down the aisle. If security or maintenance staffs are needed, there will be a \$100 fee.

Wedding Dates & Times

Weddings are generally celebrated at the Church on Saturdays at 11 am, 1 pm, and 3 pm. Other dates and times may be available after discussion with one of the parish priests. The liturgical calendar and other scheduled events in the Church may also have to be considered when settling a wedding date or time.

Marriage Preparation

The Archdiocese of New York requires couples to attend a Marriage Preparation Workshop to help lay a good foundation for married life. A variety of workshop options are offered. Complete information and schedules for these workshops are available in the archdiocesan booklet *Preparation Programs for the Sacrament of Marriage*, which the priest will give you at your initial meeting.

Documents

At one of your meetings with the parish priest, he will conduct a formal interview called “The Matrimonial Investigation” with each of you individually. The purpose of the interview is to record some essential biographical information and to confirm your freedom and readiness to marry in the Catholic Church. During the time between the initial meeting with the priest and the actual wedding, “Affidavits of Freedom,” signed by relatives or others who can testify to your freedom to marry will also be required. All Catholics who are preparing for marriage must also provide a recently issued baptismal certificate from your Church. You can obtain this by contacting directly the local parish where you were baptized. A “recent” copy should include any notations of on-time-only sacraments (e.g., confirmation, marriage, ordination) that you have received since being baptized. Baptized and non-Catholics must provide equivalent proof of Christian baptism in the form of a church certificate (original or later copy) or other official documents (e.g., written testimony from a witness of the baptism). Finally, for the wedding itself, the City of New York requires a current civil marriage license.

Permissions & Dispensations

In the case of a marriage between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic or between a Catholic and an unbaptized person, a *permission of dispensation* from the Archbishop is needed. To apply for this, the Catholic party will be required to sign a short declaration, in the presence of his/her fiancé, reaffirming his/her faith in Jesus Christ and intention “to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church,” and also promise “to do all in my power to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and reared as Catholics.” The priest who is preparing you for marriage will discuss this and any other requirements with you.

Church Fees

In addition to the initial deposit, the following fees are to be paid to the church at least one month prior to the date of the wedding:

WEDDINGS BEFORE 6:00 PM

Parishioners	\$750
Non- Parishioners	\$1500
Suggested Gift to Priest	\$150

WEDDINGS AFTER 6:00 PM

Parishioners	\$850
Non-Parishioners	\$1600
Suggested Gift to Priest	\$150

“Parishioners” means that you are a registered, contributing member of the parish for at least one year prior to the date of the wedding, or is associated with this parish by some other obvious or long-standing connection recognized as such by the parish. All payments should be made out to The Church of St. Paul the Apostle.

Music & Fees

As soon as your date has been scheduled, please contact the Parish Director of Music Ministries, Valerie Shondel, at (212) 265-3495, ext. 345 or valerie.shondel@stpaultheapostle.org You must consult with the director regarding musical repertoire as well as the selection of organist, singers, instrumentalists, etc.

Organist & Cantor (Soloist) Fee: \$525

Additional instrumentalists and/or singers require separate fees accordingly and will be contracted by the Parish Director of Music. Rehearsal/Conducting fees will be applied accordingly with the use of additional musicians. A “bench fee” of \$150 is required if musicians other than those of the Church of St. Paul the Apostle are used.

All music fees are due one week prior to the wedding. A late payment fee of \$25 per musician will be applied for balances past due. A fee of \$40 will be assessed for all returned checks. No refunds will be given on the day of the wedding. All payments should be made out to individual musicians as directed by the Director of Music.

Flowers

Floral arrangements for wedding are welcome. They should be of such a nature and size as to enhance the beauty of the ceremony without overshadowing the wedding or the altar. Please consult with the priest well in advance regarding any floral arrangements or other decorations that may be permanently in place in the church on the date of your wedding because of the occurring season of the Church’s liturgical year (e.g. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter) or other occurring church occasion.

Flowers can be delivered directly to the church on the day of the wedding, an hour or two before the ceremony. Please check in with Security at the entrance to the church. If there is another service scheduled in the Church prior to your wedding, please make any necessary arrangements in advance.

No tape, tacks, staples, or nails are to be used to attach floral arrangements to the pews. For safety reasons, no throwing of rice, flower petals, confetti, or birdseed is allowed either in the church or on the steps or sidewalk outside. No decorations are allowed outside the church. Aisle runners inside the church are also not allowed.

Any flowers placed on the altar are considered a gift to the Church and are to be left there after the ceremony is completed. This is an ancient tradition. Otherwise you or your florist should arrange for their removal immediately after the ceremony. If the florist intends to pick up any stands, vases, etc., the florist should do so as soon as possible after the ceremony and before the church building closes for the day. Such pickups cannot be made during Mass times (e.g., Saturday 5 – 6:30 pm) or during other services. The parish is not responsible for storing or saving any such furnishings for the florist.

Photography

Photographers and Videographers should consult with the priest before the beginning of the ceremony. They may not stand in the sanctuary area or use any additional fixed lighting.

Wedding Rehearsal

Sometime prior to the actual wedding, the priest (or deacon) who will preside at the ceremony will meet with you to help you plan the wedding in accordance with the appropriate liturgical norms. You may also wish to schedule a rehearsal with the priest (or deacon) during a day or evening prior to the wedding. It is generally desirable that as many members of the wedding party as possible be present for this rehearsal—especially those who have been chosen to proclaim the scripture readings and petitions of the General Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful). To avoid conflicts with other scheduled events in the church, it is prudent to schedule the date and time of the rehearsal as far in advance as possible.

Guest Priest or Deacon

If you have a relative or friend who is a Catholic priest or deacon and you would like him to officiate at your wedding at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, please inform the parish priest who is preparing you for your marriage as early as possible in the process. In all such cases, the outside priest or deacon must personally contact the pastor of the parish, Rev. Gilbert Martinez, CSP, for authorization to perform the wedding. Also, if he is not already civilly registered to officiate at weddings in New York City, he will have to register with the city prior to performing the ceremony.

Preparation for Wedding Elsewhere

If you are a parishioner at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle planning to be married in another parish (outside the Archdiocese of New York) but plan to do your marriage preparation here, you will need to make all necessary arrangements regarding date, ceremony, music, etc. with the parish where you plan to be married. You will also need to meet with one of the parish priests here to prepare the necessary documents, to request any necessary permissions or dispensations, and to arrange the attendance of the required Marriage Preparation Workshops. When all the required documentation is ready, the priest will send everything to the Archdiocese of New York to be forwarded to the place where the wedding will take place. A donation to the parish of \$100 made payable to the Church of St. Paul the Apostle is requested for this service. If the marriage documents are to be sent to a diocese outside of the United States, the Archdiocese requires a processing fee of \$50 made payable to the Archdiocese of New York to cover the cost of this process.

Directions to the Church

The Church of St. Paul the Apostle is easily accessible by car or public transportation and is located on Columbus Ave (9th Ave) between 59th and 60th streets. The following directions should be helpful to you in directing your guests to your ceremony.

By Subway

The A, B, C, D, and 1 Train all stop at the 59th Street/Columbus Circle station. The Church is located one block west.

By Car

From Points North, via the George Washington Bridge/95: Join the Henry Hudson Parkway (West Side Hwy) South. Exit at 79th Street (Boat Basin). At the second traffic light, turn right onto West End Avenue. Continue South to 65th Street and turn left. Turn right onto Columbus Avenue. Keep right on Columbus Avenue and turn right onto West 59th Street. Public parking garages are on either side of 59th Street. The entrance to the Church is on Columbus Avenue between 59th and 60th Streets.

From Points South, via the Lincoln Tunnel: Take Parkway North to Exit 142 (Union Tollbooth). Go to the far right toll booth of Exit 142 for I-78 East. Follow I-78 East to the New Jersey Turnpike North. Exit at the Lincoln Tunnel, #16E and follow signs to go Uptown. At 41st Street turn left. Turn right onto 10th Avenue and follow to 60th Street. Turn right onto 60th Street, then right onto Columbus Avenue. Turn right onto 59th Street.

Final Thoughts

We hope that this information brochure has answered most of your preliminary questions. It is designed to help you, your guests, and the parish community to make your wedding day an appropriately memorable occasion for all. If you have any further questions, please contact one of the parish priests on the parish staff. Congratulations and God bless you on your special day and for a lifetime of married life together!

Prayer of Blessing For An Engaged Couple



May God who in His gentle plan draws you together in love for one another, strengthen your hearts so that you will keep faith with each other.

May you grow in your respect for one another and cherish each other with a sincere love and come to the happiness of celebrating the sacrament of marriage.

May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.