

## **Marriage Guidelines**

### **Our Mother of Good Counsel Catholic Church**

*Matrimony is a sacrament of the Church. We are glad to celebrate this special event in the life of the Church with you! Here are some of the guidelines and policies of the Church as practiced here at Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish.*

We ask for a six-month period of preparation at minimum for all couples preparing for this lifetime commitment.

Certain conditions are necessary for marriage in the Church.

At least one party lives within Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish, or has been a registered member for at least six months.

#### **Items that must be addressed before a date can be set for your wedding:**

1. At least one of the parties is a Roman Catholic.
2. An annulment or church document stating freedom to marry must first be obtained by anyone who has been previously married.
3. Certificates: A recently issued (6 months old) certificate from the church of Baptism is needed for all Catholic parties (photocopies and faxes are not acceptable). Certificates of Holy Eucharist and Confirmation are expected as well. Proof of baptism is needed for all non-Catholic Christians as well.
4. Two affidavits of Freedom to Marry are each required of the bride and groom.
5. A California Marriage License is required.
6. Marriage Preparation Class: An Engaged Encounter Weekend is required of all. A schedule booklet of these classes can be found at: [www.la-archdiocese.org/org/familylife/marriage](http://www.la-archdiocese.org/org/familylife/marriage)  
The priest/deacon may recommend, in addition, that you take a pre-Cana course as well.
7. Meetings with the priest/deacon who is celebrating your marriage ceremony. Each priest/deacon is responsible for asking you important questions concerning your understanding of marriage, making sure you are free to marry in the Catholic Church.

**Items that must be addressed once you've set your date:**

1. The couple needs to set up an appointment with the wedding coordinator. This can be arranged by contacting the parish office, ext. 351 (2 months prior to wedding).
2. A rehearsal date and time is to be reserved through the wedding coordinator. Please encourage all members of the wedding party to be on time.
3. Flowers and, if desired, "unity" candles are to be provided by the wedding party.
4. Cultural traditions are honored but must be addressed with the priest/deacon and the wedding coordinator before the rehearsal date.
5. The wedding itself is to start on time.
6. Photography may not take place longer than ½ hour after the wedding. If the wedding starts late, the photographer may be asked to reduce his/her camera work by the number of minutes the wedding was delayed.
7. Music: We suggest that music be used to enhance the prayerful mood of your wedding ceremony. The parish has many qualified musicians and vocalists we can recommend. Liturgical (church) music is to be used during your ceremony.

**Fees and stipends\*:**

\$1,000.00	Facilities fee (\$700 for registered families contributing \$500.00 or more p year)
\$150.00	Marriage preparation by priest for marriages outside the parish.
(\$100.00)	Deposit to reserve date (credited to facilities fee)
\$100.00	Stipend for deacon (if requested or required)
\$100.00	Fee for parish wedding coordinator (required)
\$ 20.00	Stipend for altar servers (if requested)
	The stipend for the priest is left to the discretion of the couple.
Music*:	
\$200.00	Per parish musician / cantor (rehearsals are additional)
\$50	Bench fee for musicians not associated with OMGC.

*\*commensurate with wedding expenses, payable to musician(s) and submitted to parish with balance of account no later than two weeks prior to ceremony.*

Flowers: (to be provided by wedding party)

**Balance of fees and all paperwork, including the marriage license, is due no later than seven business days prior to the ceremony date.**

Please be aware that we need to work with the other professionals you might have contracted with for your celebration. All photographers and videographers are asked to meet with the wedding coordinator before the ceremony and respect all boundaries. A prayerful liturgy is always the priority. Photos may be taken after the wedding ceremony if time permits. Flowers and Decorations also need to be appropriate. Please make sure all your flowers and decorations are removed after the ceremony. We ask that the church be left as tidy as it was when you entered! You are welcome to leave floral arrangements in the church after your wedding but you must notify the wedding coordinator first. All pew decorations need to be removed.

Church restrictions for your celebration:

- No runners
- No rice or birdseed
- No flowers thrown or dropped in church
- No flowers placed on the altar itself
- No flowers obstructing the view of the priest/deacon or readers
- No flowers or decorations that restrict access in/out or within a pew
- Photographers may not be in the sanctuary during the ceremony
- Photographers may not interrupt the ceremony for a picture