Wedding Information

The Church of the Immaculate Conception BVM



Immaculate Conception Rectory

604 West Avenue

Jenkintown PA 19o46

Dear Friends,

Congratulations on your recent engagement. We hope that this time of preparation and planning is a special time of grace for you. It is our prayer that you grow in appreciation of the love you have for one another and that you may also grow in your appreciation of God’s love for each of you.

We offer this booklet as a starting point for your wedding at Immaculate Conception Church. Hopefully, it will help to focus your attention on the Sacrament of Marriage which you will be receiving. We cannot stress enough the importance and the sacredness of your wedding day. The guidelines and suggestions, the rules and regulations contained in the booklet are offered, not to challenge or limit you, but to offer you guidance and direction based on the collective experiences of the Church and of the Priests of the Parish.

As you begin this “season” of preparation, know that we are praying for you. We are truly happy that you have chosen to celebrate your Sacrament here at Immaculate Conception Church. Our beautiful church will provide a proper and fitting environment to the sacredness and solemnity of your wedding day. May your days of preparation be blessed with God’s love.

Cordially,

Father Howarth

**Information**
**for**
**Couples Anticipating Marriage**
**at**
**Immaculate Conception Church**

It is the sincere wish of the priests of the parish that your wedding celebration be a fitting, sacred and joyous beginning of many happy and holy years of married life. With this in mind, the following is offered for your information regarding your wedding at Immaculate Conception Church

**SCHEDULING**

Weddings may be scheduled for most Saturdays that are not holydays. Friday evening weddings may be scheduled at the availability of the church and the priest celebrant. Normally, we would prefer that no Friday wedding be scheduled after 5:00 P.M. Weddings on Saturday may be scheduled for 10:30 A.M., 12:00 P.M. and 2:00 P.M. Arrangements must be made at least six months before the anticipated wedding day. Please call the parish office (215-277-1539) and make an appointment to see a priest about your arrangements.

**GUEST CELEBRANTS**

Couple are encouraged who have family members or friends who are members of the clergy to perform the wedding ceremony. Should the priest or deacon not be of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, he must present a Celebret ( a letter of good standing/faculties in his own Diocese/Institution of Consecrated Life/Society of Apostolic Life which includes the following:

1. The ministry to be performed and the date
2. The Seal of the Diocese/Institute/ Society
3. The date of issuance.

Also, he must observe the customs and procedures of this parish and be present for the rehearsal.

**PRE-MARITAL INSTRUCTIONS (PRE-CANA)**

These are required for all couples anticipating marriage. Regional pre-marital instructions are offered by the Archdiocese and are scheduled in the Spring and Fall of each year. A schedule of times and places is available at the rectory or through the Family Life Bureau: @archphila.org/evangelization/famlife/marriage\_prep/marriage

**PREMARITAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

The Church requires that persons anticipating marriage answer a series of questions designed to establish their freedom to marry and their awareness of the nature and sanctity of marriage. Couples should make an appointment with the parish priest who is responsible for this part of the preparations. The appointment should be made no earlier than 6 months or later than 3 or 4 months before the marriage date. The following documents are required for presentation at this meeting: baptismal certificates from the church where the sacrament was administered, issued within 6 months of the date of the marriage and a certificate starting that the couple has attended the Pre-Cana conference.

Each party must be able to provide two witnesses attesting in writing to the parties’ readiness for marriage. The Witness Questionnaire will be given to the couple by the priest at this meeting. The Witness Forms should be returned to the rectory within 7 days of this appointment.

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

Any case that may require special procedures (e.g., marriage between persons of different religions, marriage of minors, marriage of persons who have been previously married or attempted marriage before, etc.) should be brought to the attention of the priest immediately.

**MUSIC**

Marriage in the Church is a Sacrament, a religious and sacred event. All music selected for the church must reflect the sacred character of the ceremony and must follow the guidelines of the Archdiocesan Commission on Sacred Music. These may be discussed with Peg Long, the Director of Music. You should call the Director of Music as soon as possible so that you may secure his services for the occasion of your wedding @ 2158334735. Fees for our official organist and singer are mandatory whether their services are used or not. Fees for any other organist, singer, or musician(s) you may choose are your added financial responsibility. Couples meet with the Music Director to plan their wedding music. Couples are to bring the music fess to that meeting.

**FLOWERS**

Your flowers are welcome at the altar to give glory to God and enhance the beauty of your marriage setting. It is expected that they will remain in the church and not be removed after the ceremony. Any bows, etc., placed on the pews are to be put on with ribbon only. No tacks, staples, or sticky tape are to be used on the pews. We do not allow the use of an aisle runner as these have proven to be a danger to those walking up the aisle. Flower Girls are to carry flowers, not strew them. There is the danger that people will slip and fall. Also, they are very difficult to clean up once they have been walked on.

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Please advise your photographer to consult the priest before the ceremony. No photography is permitted in the sanctuary area during the ceremony. The photographer should not become a distraction to the congregation in any way. Posed pictures may be taken after the ceremony for **15 minutes** and provided there is time before the next scheduled liturgical event at the church. On Saturdays, pictures are not permitted to be taken in the church after 4:00 P.M. because of the pending 4:30 P.M. **Mass. Couples intending to take pictures in the church, can’t have a receiving line at after wedding ceremony**. This will allow adequate time for your pictures in the church while allowing the people who are coming to the 4:30P.M. Mass to park conveniently near the church.

**BIRDSEED, RICE, BALLOONS AND CONFETTI**

These cause a real and immediate danger to your guests and our parishioners. Please ask that your guests refrain from throwing any of the items noted above. Archdiocesan Guidelines do not allow the use of the Unity Candle. Flower Girls are not to through petals in the aisle. No runners are to be used in the aisle.

**ALCOHOLIC BERVERAGES**

These are not permitted on the property at any time during the rehearsal or before, during or after the wedding ceremony.

**LITURGICAL OBLIGATIONS**

The bride and groom are encouraged to work closely with the celebrant in planning the wedding liturgy. They should consult with him regarding the selection of readings, prayers, hymns for the celebration. To aid in the selection, a booklet of options will be supplied by the priest. Note that couples are not permitted to develop their own form for the exchange of consent. Should a wedding booklet be created, the priest should be consulted before printing.

**FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

You are being married in a church of historical importance and great beauty. Obviously, the maintenance, heating, cooling and lighting of the church is expensive. Your offering is used for these purposes as well as the maintenance of the grounds.

The church fee is $800. An offering for the altar servers (usually, two) of $20.00 each is appropriate. There is also a $125 charge for the wedding coordinator who conducts the rehearsal, prepares the church for the wedding, orchestrates the ceremony, coordinates photography and cleans up the church after the ceremony.

**REHEARSAL**

Rehearsals are subject to the availability of the church and the priest/ wedding coordinator. It is preferred that the guest priest officiating at the wedding be at the wedding rehearsal with the wedding coordinator to conduct the rehearsal. Typically, there should be one day separating the rehearsal and the day of the wedding. If the wedding is on Saturday, the rehearsal would be conducted on Thursday evening at 6 pm.

The following should be brought to the rehearsal:

1. The complete marriage license as received from the city or the county.
2. The church offering.
3. The offering for the altar servers.
4. The offering for the wedding coordinator

**Spiritual Preparations**

As you attend to the many details of your wedding day, you should give attention

 to that which will have lasting impact on your married life: spiritual preparation. The wedding taking place in church should be a visible manifestation of the fact that you take the faith seriously. Serious Catholics practice their faith by attending to the obligation of going to Mass on Sundays. As you approach this sacred moment between you and God you should be in the state of grace. That is, you should be free of any serious sins, such as missing Mass on Sundays by making a good confession. To receive the sacrament when one is conscious of serious sin that has not be confessed and forgiven is a sacrilege. This is hardly a good way to begin one’s married life. You will find that the priests of the parish are always there to forgive and not to ask questions. The priest is to be a visible expression of the love of Christ and not a condescending or mean-spirited judge of another.

**OTHER GUIDELINES**

It is of the utmost importance that rehearsals and weddings start promptly at the scheduled time. Extreme tardiness will result in a truncated ceremony.

Dress and decorum at both the rehearsal and the wedding should reflect respect for the house of God and the coming of Christ in Word and Sacrament.

In consideration of the next wedding or scheduled service, the parking lot should be vacated by your party and guests as soon as possible after your wedding.

Common sense and good taste are, perhaps, the best guidelines in preparing for and celebrating your Wedding Day. It is our intention to do all we can to preserve and manifest the meaning, beauty, and dignity of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Please do not hesitate to ask or tell us anything that might assist you in attaining the same end.

**Handicap Faculties**

Parking for our special needs visitors and parishioners is available by the Sacred Heart Elevator entrance to the Church. The elevator affords easy access to the church.

A bathroom is located in the Sacred Heart extension to the church. Additional bathrooms are located by Conahan Hall at the parking lot level of the Church.