

A Guide For Celebrating Marriage

St. Nicholas Catholic Church



St. Nicholas of Myra
Feast Day, December 6

Calendar Year 2017

712 Little Neck Road • Virginia Beach, Virginia 23452 • 757-340-7231

Dear Bride and Groom to be,

Congratulations and best wishes from St. Nicholas Parish and its Staff!

Your wedding will be one of the most important days of your lives. As we come together to prepare for that day, we pray for your marriage, a lifetime sacred commitment. We want your church celebration to be sacred, beautiful, and an enjoyable experience for you, your families and friends.

The booklet has important information that will help to create a prayerful sacrament and memorable wedding day. Please contact us at least six months in advance to begin your Marriage preparation.

Sincerely yours on our journey together in Christ,

Fr. Venancio R. Balarote, "Jun"

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Pastor

THE CATHOLIC RITE OF MARRIAGE

Within the Catholic Church, each Sacrament brings together the faith filled community to experience God's Holiness. Each Sacrament is the expression of the community's faith through ordered ritual, employing those symbols which point to God's action in the midst of the community. In Baptism, the community uses water, oil, a white garment and fire (candle) to express God's gift of new life in the new creation. In the Rite of Marriage, one symbol stands out which speaks of God's covenant of love: *the Bride and Groom together*.

At St. Nicholas, once the wedding liturgy begins, it is totally directed to the centrality of the couple who stands in the midst of the community, expressing their unconditional commitment to wedded life. In the Catholic Church, the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony are the Bride and Groom, not the priest or deacon – who serves as witness to your Sacrament of Matrimony.

The essentials of the liturgy consist of the proclamations of God's word, the exchange of vows, the presence of two witnesses, and the priest or deacon. Non-essentials (how many attendants, seating of guests, etc.) revolve around the essentials but do not obscure them. The choices available to the couple require balance with the elements of the Rite and are oriented toward the couple.

ST. NICHOLAS CATHOLIC CHURCH WEDDING PREPARATION

Pastor Rev. Venancio “Jun” Balarote (757) 340-7231

Deacon.....Deacon Jamie Morgan (757) 477-0413

Pastoral Associate Lora DiNardo (757) 340-7231 x 16

Music Minister James Gardner (757) 340-7231

Flowers.....Cheryl Feltes (757) 589-8412

PARISH SOCIAL HALL

The Social Hall is available for wedding receptions provided the reception is concluded by 4:00 PM on Saturday afternoon. For more information, please call the parish office.

LITURGY - FLOWERS

A flower arrangement will be permitted in the garden area and in front of the altar. Columns are available upon which to place the arrangement. The arrangement in the main sanctuary, although provided by the couple, remains in the Church for the weekend liturgies until Monday morning, at which time it may be removed.

Flowers, ivy, or bows may be placed on the pews. Bows are available for your use. The bows, flowers, or ivy must be removed after the ceremony.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call the flower coordinator listed in the index.

LITURGY - LECTORS

In addition to traditional witnesses, you will need to select two lectors to proclaim the selected readings from the Old and New Testament. Chose friends or relatives who can deliver the scriptures clearly. It is important to get the readings to your Lectors early in order for them to be prepared to read at the rehearsal and wedding service.

LITURGY - EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

If the celebration is a Eucharistic Liturgy (Wedding Mass) you are asked to provide:

1. 2 to 4 persons to carry the gifts of bread, wine, and chalice
2. 2 cup-bearers to assist at Communion (if possible)

UNITY CANDLE CEREMONY

This is not part of the liturgy, but rather a recent custom. Should you choose to include it, you will need to provide the three candles.

Some couples incorporate this ceremony into the rehearsal dinner or at the reception when people are called together for a toast and prayer.

DOCUMENTATION FOR MARRIAGES

- A. *Baptismal Certificate* - must be dated no earlier than six (6) months prior to the wedding date. Write or call your church of Baptism requesting a new copy of your baptismal certificate. In the case of a mixed-religion marriage, a copy of the baptismal certificate of the non-Catholic person is also required. Those baptized by the military may request a certificate from the Archdiocese for the Military Services, P.O. Box 4469, Washington, D.C., 20017.
- B. Copies of the Confirmation and First Communion Certificates (if possible).
- C. A pre-nuptial questionnaire to determine freedom to marry.
- D. A dispensation/permission from the Bishop is required for a marriage of a Catholic and non-Catholic, which includes a promise to baptize and bring the children up Catholic. This is requested by the priest or deacon.
- E. A completion certificate of the required pre-marriage preparation program (Catholic Charities Program or an equivalent).
- F. A marriage License from the Commonwealth of Virginia obtained at any County Clerk's Office. This license must be obtained at least 24 hours prior to the wedding (and not more than 60 days), and brought to the rehearsal.

RECEIVING LINE

Due to the Saturday afternoon schedule which includes the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharistic liturgy, receiving lines at church are discouraged. It is requested the receiving line be held at the reception.

FEES

Fees for services will be set by the individual professions, e.g. music, keyboard, vocal, etc. Fees vary as to the type of music you choose.

Minimum Wedding fees:

Parishioner, \$600

Non-parishioner \$800

The fees cover the cost for the following:

*Wedding coordinator, \$100, for all couples

*Organist, \$100 (if applicable)

Cantor, \$75 (if applicable)

Most couples give the attending priest/deacon a donation.

“*” Indicates the amount that goes to the person. A check for \$800 (non-parishioner) or \$600 (parishioner) should be made out to “St. Nicholas Catholic Church,” and the church reimburses all individuals.

LITURGY - PROCESSION

A wedding preparation book with the complete ritual and scripture readings will be given to each couple.

The official Rite of the Catholic Church (1974) in celebrating

weddings, states the following options for processions (these are in an attempt to show the equality of the bride and groom and move away from the medieval notion that the bride is the property of the father and is being transferred to the groom):

- a. Ushers, Best Man, Bridesmaids, Maid of Honor Parents of Groom Parents of Bride, Bride and Groom
- b. Ushers and Best Man singly or in pairs Bridesmaids and Maid of Honor singly or in pairs Groom and his parents Bride and her parents

(Flower girl/ring bearer should be 6 years of age or older)

Other processional options are allowed, as long as they are respectful, referent, and acceptable to the presider. We ask that you pass on your processional preference to the Wedding Coordinator prior to the rehearsal.

LITURGY - MUSIC

Music will be selected by the couple. The Music Minister, is available by appointment to provide guidance and samples of music appropriate for Christian marriage. He should be contacted as soon as the wedding date is set and will contract for you with a parish cantor and any instrumentalists you choose. It is possible for a friend/relative of the couple to be a guest soloist. The parish cantor, however, will generally be the one to lead the assembly in songs and responses.

RESERVING THE WEDDING DATE

The parish requires that either the bride or groom be a registered member of St. Nicholas for at least 6 months prior to the setting of a wedding date and active in some ministry. Before making any plans, please contact the priest or deacon for the day and time you wish to be married. There is a requirement of a minimum of six months for planning. Weddings are held throughout the year, generally on a Friday evening or Saturday (except during the Season of Advent – December, and Lent – February/March). The latest available time on Saturday is 2pm. for a wedding Mass and 3pm for Liturgy of the Word and Exchange of Vows.

CEREMONY CELEBRANT

If you wish to have a guest priest or deacon celebrate your marriage have him contact the pastor early on in your arrangements, especially if he needs to be certified/bonded in Virginia. Delegation is given by the pastor when the paperwork is complete. The Priest friend residing in the Diocese of Richmond are expected to do the paperwork for the couple as well as plan the liturgy according to guidelines established by the diocese and those outlined in this booklet.

DOCUMENTATION

Documentation is due no later than 3 months prior to the wedding (See checklist). Your wedding cannot take place without this documentation.

PRE-MARITAL PREPARATION

A course of preparation, sponsored by the Richmond diocese (or equivalent) is required. Both bride and groom are required to attend. A schedule for the time and place can be found at www.richmonddiocese.org. go to the Ministries channel – Center for

Marriage – to find out more details and to register for a session in *Unveiled or Engaged Encounter*.

REHEARSAL

Rehearsals take place the evening before the wedding at an agreed upon time.

In order to complete the rehearsal in a timely fashion participants should arrive promptly and give full attention to instructions. The Wedding Coordinator will be on hand to facilitate the rehearsal.

PRINTED WORSHIP AID

It is helpful to guests to have a worship aid in order to follow the wedding rite. The Music Minister will supply suggestions for a format should you decide to print one and is available for proofreading before printing to help ensure accuracy.

EXITING THE CHURCH

We request you do not throw rice, bird seed, flower petals or confetti when exiting the Church.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

Videos and photographs can be taken from the area by the audio console at the top of the ramp just above the Baptismal pool. This allows for the best visibility without being a distraction to the wedding party or visitors.



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