

# Partner Parishes of St. Pius X and Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

## *Marriage Guidelines*

A Christian wedding is an act of worship in which the bride and groom come together to celebrate a sacrament, to offer thanks and praise together with their family and friends, and to ask God's blessing on their life together as husband and wife. Normally, weddings are celebrated in the parish of the bride or groom.

### ***Scheduling***

Weddings must be scheduled at least six months to a year before the ceremony.

**Both individuals must be free to entire into the sacrament;** if there is a previous marriage, please [contact the parish office](#). A wedding date will be confirmed on the church calendar only after the parish priest or pastoral associate has spoken with the engaged couple and determined the couple's freedom to enter into the sacrament of marriage.

For this reason, no commitments should be made with caterers, reception halls, etc., until the date is confirmed.

A Saturday wedding may be scheduled at 1:30 p.m. or earlier. A Friday wedding may be scheduled between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Only one wedding will be scheduled per day.

Weddings are not scheduled on Holy Days or any date that would conflict with a scheduled diocesan or parish event.

A visiting priest is welcomed to be the celebrant at the liturgy. Visiting priests must follow all parish guidelines for the celebration of the wedding liturgy.

The wedding rehearsal is usually scheduled on the evening before the wedding.

If a cancellation occurs, please contact the [parish office](#) at 724-547-1911 as soon as possible.

### ***Preparation***

#### **Meeting with the pastor or pastoral associate**

There will be a number of meetings with the pastor and pastoral associate: the necessary paperwork completed, documents gathered, the FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study) survey given and reviewed, arrangements for the wedding discussed, and a rehearsal date and time set.

#### **Documents**

All baptized persons preparing for marriage must present a copy of their baptismal record. Catholic parties must present a baptismal certificate issued **within six months** of the marriage date. To obtain a recent copy of your baptismal certificate, call the church where you were baptized and ask to have a copy sent to you or to the parish office.

All necessary interviews and subsequent paperwork must be completed between four months and one month prior to the wedding.

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A marriage license from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania must be obtained and presented to the priest before the wedding. Marriage licenses can be obtained from any county courthouse but are not available until 60 days prior to the wedding date.

## *Marriage Preparation*

The Diocese of Greensburg requires that all couples preparing for marriage participate in some form of marriage preparation program. There are various programs available.

Please review the options below with the parish priest or pastoral associate to decide which option best suits you.

- ✚ Sponsor Couples involve one married couple and one engaged couple. The couples meet in the home of the married couple over the course of several evenings that are scheduled at the convenience of those involved. The priest or pastoral associate will arrange for the sponsor couple if this option is selected.
- ✚ Engaged Encounter is a weekend program that begins on a Friday evening and ends Sunday afternoon. This program takes place in the Greensburg area and is led by two or more married couples with up to 20 engaged couples in attendance.
- ✚ “Days for the Engaged” is offered on two Sundays in the spring of the year. The program is led by a number of married couples. Please [contact the parish office](#) if you believe that you need to participate in this program.

All Catholic dioceses and many parishes offer marriage preparation programs that are accepted by the Diocese of Greensburg. If the engaged couple can more conveniently arrange for marriage preparation elsewhere—particularly if one or both of those engaged are located outside the Diocese of Greensburg—then any is permitted.

Proof of participation in the marriage preparation program needs to be given to the priest preparing the couple.

- ✚ The **FOCCUS Survey** (if not completed at the Days for the Engaged) is to be completed prior to meeting with the pastor or priest. This survey should be completed at least six weeks before the wedding. Please contact [Cindy Copeland](#) to schedule an appointment to complete this survey.

## *Liturgy Planning*

Throughout the year, the parish conducts two Liturgy Planning Sessions. Each couple must participate in one of these to choose the music and readings for the wedding. Please contact the Parish office at 724-547-1911 to register. Both sessions are held at St. Pius X Church.

- ✚ Sunday, July 29, 2012 at 2:00 p.m. for weddings between October 2012 & April 2013

After the couple chooses the readings, prayers, blessings, they must then schedule a final meeting to complete a number of diocesan forms. This meeting should take place **after** completing the **FOCCUS Survey** but at least four weeks prior to the wedding.

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### ***Celebration***

Weddings between two practicing Catholics are normally celebrated within Mass.

#### **Liturgy**

##### **OPENING RITES**

Liturgical Procession  
Greeting  
Opening Prayer

##### **RITE OF MARRIAGE**

Instruction  
Consent  
Blessing / Exchange of Rings  
Prayers of the Faithful

##### **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

Reading (Old Testament)  
Responsorial Psalm  
Reading (New Testament)  
Gospel Acclamation  
Gospel  
Homily

##### **\*LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

Preparation of the Gifts  
Eucharistic Prayer  
Communion Rite  
Prayer after Communion

##### **CONCLUDING RITES**

Blessing and Dismissal  
Recessional

\*When the Rite of Marriage outside Mass is celebrated, the **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST** is omitted.

*Many customs and traditions have been introduced into the wedding liturgy which are not a part of the Roman Rite.*

#### **✠ Unity Candle**

The unity candle is not a part of the liturgy of the Church; however, it may be used at St. Pius and Visitation Churches.

#### **Music**

A Christian wedding is a liturgical celebration and therefore a communal event. The guests are present not as spectators, but as worshippers. They should be drawn into active participation through prayer and song, so that they may share fully in the sacramental encounter with Christ the Lord.

Musical texts must always be consistent with Catholic teaching; indeed they should be drawn chiefly from holy scripture and from liturgical sources (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy [CSL], 121).

Music involves the assembly led by a cantor and/or instrumentalist(s) (cf. CSL, 28).

The use of pre-recorded music is not permitted during the liturgy (cf. Liturgical Music Today [LMT], 60).

Music in the liturgy which promotes performance over participation is not permitted. "The music selected must express the prayer of those who celebrate. Individual preference is not, of itself, a sufficient principle for the choice

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of music in the liturgy. It must be balanced, with liturgical and musical judgments and with the community's needs." (LMT, 12)

### **Ministers**

Since the wedding is a liturgical celebration, the usual ministries should be represented including servers, reader(s) and extraordinary ministers of holy Communion. The practice of assigning these ministries to family members for the sole purpose of including them in the ceremony is to be avoided. Normally, those who have been formally trained and who presently serve in one of these ministries are eligible to minister within the wedding liturgy.

### **Fees**

#### **Parishioners**

The \$365 stipend partially covers the **FOCCUS** instrument, marriage preparation materials, church and clergy stipend, server stipends, sacristan assistance and custodial care. This stipend is to be paid prior to the wedding. If parishioners do marriage preparation in another parish, or invite an additional priest to concelebrate, they are still responsible for the \$365 stipend as well as any other stipends.

**The stipend for the clergy is set by the Diocese of Greensburg.**

✠ **Please note:** If there are **any extenuating financial circumstances**, please speak to the pastor or pastoral associate.

#### **Non-parishioners**

Non-parishioners may marry at St. Pius or Visitation Churches provided the following points are observed:

- ✠ The date and hour of the wedding cannot be scheduled earlier than six months before that date. Prior to six months, parishioners are given first preference.
- ✠ **All parish guidelines must be followed.**
- ✠ The stipend for non-parishioners is \$465.00. This stipend partially covers the use of church, server stipends, sacristan and custodial care. The clergy stipend for the visiting priest presiding at the wedding is not included in the parish stipend. The parish stipend is to be paid one month prior to the wedding.

### **Music**

These figures **do not** include costs for music. Fees for organist, cantor, soloist, instrumentalists, etc. are determined by the musicians contracted for the wedding. **All fees to musicians are to be arranged between the musician and the family.**