

**ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PARISH**  
1225 Olive St., Oakdale, California 95361  
209-847-2715

## **MARRIAGE PREPARATION**

### **General Information**

1. Call the parish office at least six months in advance to begin the required steps of the Marriage Preparation program.
2. Schedule a tentative date with the secretary which will not be confirmed until after meeting with the priest or deacon. Be advised that no wedding date should be set and no wedding invitations sent out until the wedding date and time have been confirmed with the priest or deacon.
3. Weddings are ordinarily celebrated on Saturday afternoon at 2:00 p.m.
4. The Church does not encourage weddings during the seasons of Advent and Lent.
5. If you wish a priest or deacon from another parish to officiate at your wedding, he must have the pastor's permission and official delegation. Ordinarily he is also expected to do the marriage preparation.
6. Visiting clergy are expected to observe Church law and parish rules and customs regarding the celebration of the liturgy. Also, the couple should compensate the visiting priest or deacon for his service and mileage.

### **Required Documentation**

1. Baptism Certificates: Catholics must provide an updated baptism certificate not older than six months. This should also include dates of First Communion and Confirmation. Christians of other traditions are also required to provide a certificate verifying their baptism. A copy usually can be obtained from the church of baptism by a simple phone call or letter.
2. California Civil Marriage License: This may be obtained from the County Clerk's Recorder Office located at 1021 "I" St., Modesto, CA Phone: 209-525-5250. This license must be submitted to the parish office one week prior to your wedding date since the priest or deacon cannot proceed without it.

3. In a marriage of a Catholic and a non-Catholic, the Catholic party is required to sign an agreement that reads: “I promise to do all that I can to share the faith I have received with our children and to make every effort that I can to have them baptized and reared as Catholics.”
4. If either party was married previously, one of the following is required depending on the circumstances: a copy of the Declaration of Annulment or a copy of a former spouse’s death certificate.

### Fees

**Church:** \$400.  
(payable to St. Mary’s Church)

**Rehearsal:** \$100. 00  
(Payable to Wedding Hostess)

**Music:** \$100. Organist  
\$150. Organist who also serves as Cantor  
\$75. Cantor  
(Music fees payable to musician(s) and not to the parish)

### Formal Preparation

In the initial meeting with the priest or deacon, he will establish your freedom to marry, complete a Pre-Marriage Form and other forms as needed, and give you an overview of the whole preparation process which will involve the following items:

1. Completion of an inventory to determine how open communication is between the bride and groom
2. Meet with a married couple to review the scored results of the inventory.
3. Meet with the priest or deacon to reflect on the Church’s teaching on the sacrament of marriage and to begin planning your wedding ceremony, checking with him for his review and approval in light of Church requirements. You will be provided with a booklet to assist you in making choices for your wedding ceremony.
4. Attend a **required** pre-marriage seminar or an Engaged Encounter weekend at [www.engagedencounter.org](http://www.engagedencounter.org). Check with the parish secretary for dates and registration forms or register online at [www.stocktonee.org](http://www.stocktonee.org)

- If you prefer to attend a pre-marriage seminar in one of the other Catholic parishes, check with parishes for their next marriage preparation classes, register, attend, and bring a copy of the certificate of completion to St. Mary's parish office.
5. Set a date and time for the rehearsal.

## **Music**

The music in church should be appropriate for this religious setting. A musical selection is appropriate if it helps the assembly to reflect on the sacrament of marriage and to pray rather than simply be entertained. Sung texts should reflect not only the love of a man and a woman but also the love of God for the couple and for all people. Show music and any secular music is not liturgical music and is not permitted in the church ceremony.

**Organists/Keyboard:** Tammy Dunbar 838-0674  
Mary Jane Scheuber 537-3456

**Cantors:** Robin Cadmus 765-1725  
Katie Farren 499-3927

**Other Musicians:** Must be approved by the Priest or Deacon.

## **Rehearsal**

1. The rehearsal begins promptly on time and the cooperation of all parties involved is expected.
2. All members of the wedding party and both sets of parents are to be present at the rehearsal

## **Ceremony**

1. Make arrangements with the wedding coordinator for the time to open the church.
2. All members of the wedding party must arrive at church dressed for the wedding as we have no changing room.
3. The wedding is to begin on time.

4. Because the church is a place of worship, observance of proper decorum and dress is expected both during the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.
5. No alcoholic beverage or illegal substance is allowed at St. Mary's during the rehearsal or ceremony.
6. There is no smoking inside any of the parish buildings.
7. Reverence of God's house is expected of all. Abuse of these policies risks cancellation of the wedding. Please inform all members of your party of the above policies and prohibitions.

### **Flowers and Decorations**

1. Any flowers, plants, banners, and other items already in place in the church may not be moved from their places without permission of the pastor.
2. Floral arrangements may be placed in the sanctuary and in front of the altar, but not on the altar.
3. Aisle runners, arches, and strewing fresh or artificial petals are not allowed as they are a source for tripping.
4. Any decorations attached to the pews must be done by elastic bands, ribbons, pew clips or pipe stem cleaners. No tape, glue, adhesives, tacks, nails or screws are to be used.
5. If you choose the option to have a unity candle, it is your responsibility to provide both the candle and the holder. A table will be provided since the unity candle may not be placed on the altar.
6. All flower arrangements must be pre-made and not arranged at the church.
7. Assign a family member or friend to remove all wedding materials and decorations after the ceremony.
8. Schedule a time for decorating with the parish secretary.
9. If you wish to leave the flower arrangements for Sunday Mass, please let the parish secretary know a month in advance as we will not order flowers that weekend.

## Photographer

The bride and groom are responsible for informing the photographer and/or videographer of the following:

1. Please do not:
  - Enter the sanctuary (altar area) once the ceremony has begun.
  - Stop the procession in or out in order to take pictures.
  - Stand on the pews to take pictures.
  - Use flash photography during the wedding ceremony.
  - Move the altar at any time.
2. Please:
  - Finish all pictures in the church 45 minutes after the ceremony.
  - Check with the priest or deacon if you have further questions.

## Final Considerations

1. Please avoid the use of
  - a. Birdseed or rice following the wedding since there is a danger of people slipping and falling, especially some of our older parishioners who arrive for the 5:15 p.m. Mass.
  - b. Confetti, potpourri, and dried or real flower petals inside or outside the church as we have neither the time nor the personnel to clean up for the weekend Masses.
  - c. Helium balloons because of the harm they can cause and because it is forbidden by a city ordinance.
2. Bubbles are allowed outside only!
3. The family is responsible for removing any decorations and equipment which were brought in for the wedding (flowers, worship aids or programs, bows, etc.). Clean up should be completed before 4:30 p.m. Any unclaimed decorations will be removed before the beginning of the 5:15 p.m. liturgy on Saturdays. If you choose, you may leave flowers. The parish is not responsible for loss or damage to any unclaimed item.
4. **ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE REHEARSAL OR WEDDING CEREMONY ARE TO BE DIRECTED TO THE WEDDING HOSTESS, SUSAN GONZALEZ @ 602-1919**

