

INTRODUCTION

The Wedding Guild of St. Oliver Plunkett Catholic Church is a ministry that we have chosen for service. Our commitment to this ministry is to make your Nuptial Mass or Wedding Ceremony a most joyous and solemn occasion.

St. Oliver's requires each couple to use the services of our parish Wedding Directors. Our directors have been trained to assist you and the priest or deacon in every need related to your wedding in our church. A Wedding director will contact you after your wedding is planned and the date is set with the church office. The Wedding directors are responsible for the following in regards to your wedding at St. Oliver Plunkett Catholic Church.

- Pre-wedding meeting with the prospective bride and groom to discuss the guidelines for weddings at St. Oliver Plunkett.
- Conduct the wedding rehearsal the day prior to the wedding with all members of the wedding party.
- Assist with necessary preparations before the wedding.

- Assure the Church is ready for Mass after the wedding.

Wedding Directors receive no fee for their services. Please be mindful of the fact that they donate many hours of service in planning each wedding and should be given the proper respect as church staff members.

First Steps

The first step in your preparation is a meeting with one of the priests or deacon of the parish for the required **Pre-Marriage Interview**. The purpose of this meeting is to help determine that both parties are free and ready to marry. This is usually held six months prior to your wedding.

Weddings are celebrated at St. Oliver's on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. No weddings are held after the 6:00 p.m. Saturday Vigil Liturgy.

Rehearsals are held on Friday evenings at 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. or the evening before the wedding date.

[Note: All previous marriages are presumed to be valid by the Catholic Church. A previously married person is free to marry in the Catholic Church only if the former spouse is deceased or if the previous marriage has been declared null by the church tribunal.]

At your first meeting, the priest or deacon will explain the need for certain documents, which should be completed and returned to him as soon as possible:

1. Baptismal Certificate
2. Affidavits of Freedom to Marry
3. Required Promise in Interfaith Marriages
4. Marriage Preparation Requirement (FOCCUS, Engaged Encounter or Archdiocesan Pre-Cana Program)

Your *Marriage license* should be given to the Wedding Guild directors at the rehearsal.



Music

Your wedding is a sacred moment; sacred music is appropriate. Recorded music may not be used before or during the ceremony. Please contact the Director of Liturgy and Music, Mrs. Mary Jane Insull, at least 3 months in advance of your wedding date, to schedule a consultation regarding the music at your celebration.

The Wedding Liturgy

The model for any liturgical celebration in the Catholic tradition is the Sunday liturgy, since it is the heart of our worship life.

Liturgy is communal prayer. The ceremony is community-oriented as well as prayerful, personal, beautiful and memorable both for the couple and for their assembled relatives and friends.

This community focus does not mean that you, as a couple, will be unable to make this celebration “your own.” In addition to choosing members of your wedding party, you are encouraged to select from among the options provided by Catholic tradition, readings from Sacred Scripture, prayers

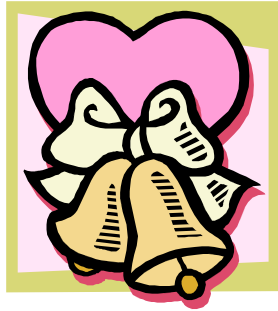
and music, and to decide who will participate as ministers in the celebration.

- **Interfaith Weddings:** It is usually preferable to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage in the context of a Liturgy of the Word rather than a Mass.
- **Introductory Rites:** While guests are assembling, instrumentalists or vocal soloist may perform appropriate music. The purpose of the prelude music is to gather up and unite the thoughts of all present and to prepare them for the celebrations of Christian marriage.
- **Liturgy of the Word:** You will invite readers from among your family and friends to proclaim the first and second readings you have chosen – from the Old and New Testaments, respectively. These readers should be selected for their devotion to the Word of God, and for their ability to speak clearly in public. Do not include the actual text of these readings and other prayers in programs or worship aids. The assembly will benefit more from listening actively to the readings and prayers well prepared and well proclaimed. The Responsorial Psalm and Gospel

acclamation will be sung. The cantor will sing verses of each, with the assembly singing a simple response after the verses. The priest or deacon will proclaim the Gospel, which is followed by the homily.

- **Rite of Marriage:** The Marriage Rite includes the statement of the couple's intentions, the exchange of vows, the blessing and exchange of rings, and general intercession.
- **Liturgy of the Eucharist:** [When celebrated in a Nuptial Mass] The gifts of bread and wine are brought to the altar by two of your family members or friends who will be participating in the Holy Communion.
- **Concluding Rites:** The blessing and dismissal are followed immediately by strong, joyous recessional music, which can be a song sung by the assembly or an instrumental selection.





Other Considerations

- **Attendants:** The Church requires you to be married in the presence of an ordained minister and two witnesses. You may choose to have honorary witnesses (bridesmaids and groomsmen).
- **Added Ceremonies:** In its reform of the liturgy, the Second Vatican Council mandated that the primary liturgical symbols be allowed to “speak” and that there be a noble simplicity in the rituals used. Therefore, in preparing your wedding liturgy, any elements that might not add to the communal prayer of the liturgy, should be treated cautiously, and perhaps omitted. These might include:

- **Very Young Children:** Those below the age of seven are often uneasy about being in front of large groups and might detract from the solemn occasion of your wedding.
- **The Presentation of Flowers to the Blessed Mother** is not actually a part of the rite. It is best done privately, immediately following the liturgy, but not during it. St. Oliver’s does not have a statue on the altar for this purpose.
- **The Unity Candle:** This is an optional part of your celebration. You should be aware that it is included as part of your cost of holding your wedding at St. Oliver’s. Unity Candle stand is available for those desiring to purchase candles from another source.
- **Throwing Rice, Seeds, or Flower Petals:** This is a pagan fertility custom that has little or no Christian meaning. We have no staff on duty to perform clean up; therefore, the throwing of rice, seed, flower petals, or similar items is **not** permitted on church grounds.

- **Environment:** At weddings, flowers are often used for their beauty, freshness and promise of abundant life. Flower arrangements and plants should be modest, and must not visually overwhelm the primary symbols of the altar, the ambo, the presider's chair, and the couple. All decorative ideas must be approved with your parish Wedding Directors.
- Aisle Runners on the carpet tend to pose a hazard to those walking down the aisle. Aisle runners are **not** permitted. This poses a liability if someone were to trip and injure himself or herself.
- Tacks, nails, tape, or other damaging means of securing decorations to the walls, pews, furniture, or fixtures may **NOT** be used.
- During the Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter seasons, as well as at other times during the year, the Church and sanctuary are already decorated in an appropriate manner with or without flowers and/or other installations. Under no circumstances may these be removed for weddings.



- All flowers and other decorations must be removed from the Church immediately following your picture sessions. We invite you to take your flowers with you to your reception where you may enjoy them again.
- **Lay Ministers:** You are offered a great deal of freedom in the selection of lay ministers for your wedding: readers, altar servers, greeters, ushers, presenters of gifts, and ministers of the Eucharist. We suggest you think of the skill needed in performing these ministerial responsibilities as you select members of your family and/or friends.
- **Pastors of other Faiths:** In the case of an interfaith marriage, the non-Roman Catholic party may invite his/her pastor to participate in the ceremony. In the context of the Liturgy of the Word, the visiting

pastor may vest, proclaim one of the lessons before the gospel, and offer a message. At the conclusion of the ceremony he or she may offer an additional prayer and a blessing. If an interfaith wedding is celebrated during a Mass (which is not recommended); the visiting pastor may come from the assembly at the end of the ceremony to offer additional prayers, exhortation and a blessing. This should be discussed with the parish priest or deacon who is assisting you.

- **Worship Aids:** To help your guests follow the plan of the Catholic rite, and to encourage the congregation to participate, particularly in the singing of songs, responses, and acclamations, you may want to consider preparing a special booklet or program for your wedding.
- **Map to St. Oliver Plunkett:** Please include with your wedding invitations a detailed map to guide your wedding party and guests to the church. The parish office is not open on Friday nights or Saturdays

to respond to your guests' last minute calls for directions.

Rehearsal

Normally, all rehearsals are held the evening before the wedding. You must call the Parish Office at 770-978-2500 to set your rehearsal time after you have set your wedding date and time with your priest or deacon.

- **Rehearsal must start on time:** There may be two rehearsals on one evening. Members of the wedding party should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal time. Please remind them of traffic delays on Highway 78 in Snellville on Friday evenings, and ask them to plan accordingly.
- **Rehearsal will proceed in a quiet, dignified manner:** Members of the wedding party should be reminded that they are in a holy place. They should dress appropriately. The use of alcohol/drugs before or during the

rehearsal or before the wedding is absolutely prohibited. Smoking is permitted only outdoors.

- **Parish Wedding Directors conduct rehearsals:** The priest or deacon do not attend rehearsals as a general rule. It is recommended that **ONLY** the wedding party members attend the rehearsal. The rehearsal will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour, with only one walk-through rehearsal. **Please inform your wedding directors of any special circumstances or arrangements you have discussed with the priest or deacon. No changes in the ceremony can be approved at the last minute.**

Bride's Waiting Room

The preferred plan for a Catholic wedding is that the bride, her attendants, and her family arrive at the church ready to walk down the aisle. The groom and his attendants arrive first and precede her into the church.

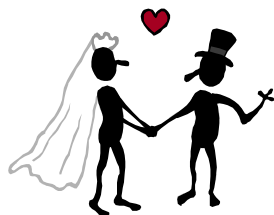
You are welcome to use the room next to the conference room near the church offices for a bride's dressing room. Please, no food, drinks, or smoking in these rooms. All valuables should be left in cars or at home. A friend should be designated to come clear the bride's waiting room directly **after** the ceremony ends. Please leave the room in an orderly condition. Remember to clean up pins, needles and other sharp objects.

Reception in the Parish Hall

The parish hall is available for rental for registered parishioners of St. Oliver's who have established an accountable history of parish support by their Stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure.

For all hall rentals, a contract must be signed and an Alcohol Awareness policy must be read and signed and an insurance rider must be provided. Parish Hall rentals must be reserved well in advance of your wedding date. The hall bookings are held with a rental deposit and totally refundable

upon cancellation. **Please contact the Parish Office for further details.**



Gifts and Fees

It is customary to make an offering to the church on the occasion of marriage. The offering is made to the Church and the Parish Office will advise you of the fees.

[This offering covers the cost of heating, air conditioning, light and maintenance of the Church. It is not for the personal use of the priest or deacon. It does not include the fee for the music ministers.]

Any fees pertaining to music will be discussed directly with the Parish Director of Music, Mrs. Mary Jane Insull.

It is also customary to give each altar server a gratuity of at least \$20 cash.

Photography

We understand that photographs are important reminders of your wedding. We ask that these pictures be taken and completed 30 minutes before or after the ceremony. . The officiant will be happy to pose with you in the first picture immediately after the ceremony; please understand that he will have many other weekend commitments, and may not be available if your pictures are delayed.

During the ceremony, the photographer may take pictures without flash only from the rear of the church or the balcony. Your photographer is free to photograph the wedding party as they come down the aisle after the service.

No pictures may be taken from anywhere in the sanctuary by relatives and friends in the pews after the ceremony begins. Flashes of light,

electronic camera noises, movement of camera equipment or photographer, loading and unloading of film, etc., creates a very disturbing environment and destroys the solemnity of the worship.

After the wedding, you may stay 30 minutes for posed pictures

The sanctuary is a sacred place in our Catholic tradition. The altar is consecrated as a symbol of Christ's presence. It is inappropriate to use the sanctuary as a studio for casual photographs. In particular, sitting on the floor or on the sanctuary steps, and moving the altar or leaning against it are not permitted.

The following additional guidelines are in effect for videography:

- All video equipment must be in place no later than 30 minutes prior to the start of the wedding.
- A stationary, unmanned video camera on a tripod is the only photography allowed from the choir loft and to the left of the altar.
- No additional lighting may be used.

- No wires may be laid across any aisles.
- Nothing may be affixed in any way to church walls or furnishings.

Photographers and videographers should be appropriately dressed for their work in a sacred place. To avoid misunderstandings, please deliver these guidelines to your photographer and videographers in plenty of time before the wedding.

We reserve the right to ask photographers or video people who are not following these procedures to correct their activities or to leave the premises.

Receiving Line

Due to the time schedule of events in the Church, a receiving line in the Church is **not** permissible. This should be reserved for your reception.



*A Wedding Is A Day
A Marriage Is A Lifetime
St. Oliver's Wedding Guild
Mission Statement*

The Wedding Guild was created to assist the bride and groom in the planning of their nuptial ceremony or liturgy. It is our mission to insure that each wedding is prayerful and memorable. The Wedding Guild arranges an initial consultation with each bridal party, conducts the rehearsal and directs the wedding service. Our primary expectations are that each marriage celebration be sacred in nature and follow the regulations set by St. Oliver's and the Catholic Church. We hope that your wedding day is a beautiful and memorable occasion. May the Lord

bless both of you abundantly on your journey together.

*Compliments of
St. Oliver's Wedding Guild*

Your Wedding Directors



Checklist for Marriage Preparation

Responsibilities of the couple:

- To see that all meetings with priest or deacon, music minister, and wedding directors are scheduled in a timely fashion.
- To register and participate in the designated marriage preparation program in good time.
- To assemble the necessary documents and submit them to the priest or deacon.

At Least 6 Months Before the Proposed Wedding:

- Meet with priest or deacon
- Register and participate in approved marriage preparation program
- Meet again with priest or deacon for follow-up sessions as needed

At Least 2 Months Before Wedding:

- Meet with Director of Liturgy and Music
- Meet with a Parish Wedding Director Team

Documents Needed:

Groom:

- Baptism Certificate
- Affidavit of Freedom to Marry #1
- Affidavit #2
- Church Annulment (if needed)
- Death Certificate (of previous spouse)

Bride:

- Baptism Certificate
- Affidavit of Freedom to Marry
- Affidavit #2
- Church Annulment (if needed)
- Death Certificate (of previous spouse)

- Marriage License
- Liturgy Selection

Important Phone Numbers

St. Oliver's Parish Office... 770-979-2500

Dir. of Liturgy and Music...770-979-2500

Sonia Victorio. 770-979-2500

Wedding Directors:

Jan Masiello 770-466-3001

Kathy Shelton 770-978-2668