

# CATHEDRAL BASILICA OF SS. PETER AND PAUL

1723 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-561-1313 • Fax 215-561-1580 • [www.cathedralphila.org](http://www.cathedralphila.org)



## MARRIAGE PREPARATION INFORMATION

*A discussion concerning a previous marriage, whether Church (Catholic or any other Church), Civil or Common-law, by either party must be discussed immediately with a Priest when requesting to set a wedding date.*

### I. NECESSARY DOCUMENTS OR CERTIFICATES REQUIRED

1. *Letter of Permission* – is needed immediately for visiting couples from either the Bride or Groom's present Catholic Parish. We must encourage visiting couples to invite your Parish Priest or another Priest you know to celebrate/witness your marriage at the Cathedral Basilica. Due to so many requests for weddings here, the Cathedral Priests are not able to handle all of them. When the Bride and/or Groom are registered members of the Cathedral Parish, a letter of permission is not needed and any of the Cathedral Priests are available to celebrate/witness your marriage.
2. *Baptismal Certificates* – (dated no more than 6 months old) When calling the Church of Baptism, please tell the Priest or rectory staff person that the certificate is for marriage purposes. Also, please make sure that the name and address of the Church of Baptism are on the certificate as we will send notification of your marriage to that Church.
3. *Confirmation Certificates* – of Catholic parties.
4. *Pre-Cana Program* – You must attend a Pre-Cana Program in preparation for your Marriage. To learn about the dates of Archdiocesan sponsored Pre-Cana programs and to register, please check the Family Life Office web-page on the Archdiocesan website at <http://archPhila.org> and click on Marriage Preparation. Your Catholic Parish may offer a one-day Pre-Cana Program. If you live in another diocese or another state you may attend a Pre-Cana program there. Upon completion of the program please forward the Certificate to the Cathedral Rectory for our records.
5. *Pre-Nuptial Investigation, Witness Forms* and, if needed, *Dispensation(s)* – The Pre-Nuptial Investigation Form is completed by you and the Priest who will officiate at your wedding; or if necessary, with a Cathedral Priest. The Witness Forms (2 for each person) are completed by family members or very close friends with any Catholic Priest. They are forwarded to the Priest completing the Pre-Nuptial Investigation Form. You are responsible for making appointments for this work to be done 6 months prior to your to your wedding. Please request your Priest to forward all completed paper work immediately upon completion to the Cathedral Rectory. If you are outside of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, this paperwork must be forwarded through the local Bishop's Office first. **This is most important.**

6. *Civil Marriage License* – A Pennsylvania civil marriage license must be obtained prior to your marriage. The license is valid for sixty [60] days. Please obtain the civil license four or five weeks before your wedding date. The marriage license is to be dropped off at the Cathedral Rectory two weeks before the wedding date. The signed document will be given back to you at the wedding. ***The civil license must be obtained in Pennsylvania.***

## II. OTHER IMPORTANT AND HELPFUL INFORMATION

1. *Promptness* – Please be on time for your wedding! It is a great inconvenience to many people and discourteous to your invited guests to be late. Additionally, out of respect and concern, the couple who follow you ought to be able to start their wedding on time so as not to lose the time planned for their reception. Even after the last wedding, the Basilica staff needs to prepare for our next celebration or event. If you are more than 15 minutes late getting started, the ceremony will be shortened to accommodate the time constraints.
2. *Rehearsal* – On the night of the rehearsal, all members of the wedding party are to enter the Cathedral Basilica through the Race Street entrance, (the gold door next to the Rectory). This will be the only entrance open for use for security reasons. The rehearsal is conducted by a Cathedral sacristan or deacon. Your priest need not attend.
3. *Offerings/Fees* – Please ensure that the appropriate fees are completed ***one month*** before the wedding date. You may drop them off or mail them to the Cathedral Rectory.
  - A. Cathedral – The offering for the Cathedral is \$2,500.00. A \$500.00 non-refundable deposit is due at the time the wedding is scheduled. The balance should be completely paid one month before the wedding.
  - B. Music – Music fee for Cathedral organist and cantor: \$600 (not included in wedding offering). You will work directly with the Director of Music – Charlene Angelini. She can be reached at [cangelini@archphila.org](mailto:cangelini@archphila.org).
  - C. Priest Celebrant – A separate offering for the Priest who is celebrating your marriage is a welcome token of gratitude. You may wish to consider a gift of \$100.00. Please give it personally to the Priest.
4. *Altar Flowers* – Flowers are an option and the couple's responsibility. Flowers may be delivered to the Cathedral Basilica on the day of the wedding. There can be no candles, flower arrangements, plants or trees along the aisles, in the pews or attached to the pews. Bows may be tied or secured with ribbon or rubber bands to the pews. No clips or tape may be used. Altar flowers provided for the wedding are to be placed near the altar of Sacrifice and should stay at the altar after the ceremony as they are a gift to the Lord and His House.
5. *Photographer/Videographer* – If you choose a photographer and/or videographer, they should be instructed to be reverent at all times while in the Cathedral Basilica and to remain outside of the Sanctuary for pictures. Flash is permitted. The name, address and phone number of the photographer and videographer are to be sent to the Cathedral Rectory one month before the ceremony.  
***Please note that the Cathedral Basilica cannot be used for posed pictures before or following the Wedding, either inside or outside the Basilica.***
6. *Runner* – A runner is not permitted due to safety considerations, the length of the Cathedral Basilica's aisle and the beauty of the inlaid marble flooring.
7. *Receiving Line* – Due to the many liturgies and celebrations in the Cathedral Basilica, NO receiving line is permitted. There can be no exceptions! Please reserve greeting your family and guests to your reception. While it is very embarrassing to have to ask you to leave if you attempt to have a receiving line, there is no choice due to the Cathedral Basilica's schedule.
8. No Rice, Confetti, Bird Seed, Flower Petals, Bubbles, Balloons, Butterflies, Doves, *Sparklers, etc.* – Please advise your family, friends and guests that the throwing of rice, confetti, bird seed, flower petals, the use of bubbles, the releasing of balloons, butterflies, doves, etc. is absolutely prohibited inside and outside the Cathedral Basilica.
9. *Parking* – Parking in the lot adjacent to the Cathedral, for either the rehearsal or wedding, cannot be guaranteed due to anticipated construction.

While one does not like to think of it, in the event of a regrettable cancellation, please notify the Cathedral Rectory in writing at the earliest opportunity.

If there are other questions you have or we can help in any way, please feel free to call the Rectory at 215-561-1313, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### III. WEDDING MASS OR WEDDING CEREMONY

1. *Booklet/Program* – A printed booklet or program is completely optional but is the couple's responsibility. Care must be exercised regarding any copyrighted materials you wish to use (e.g., the prayer texts, Scripture texts, music or music texts). You will need the proper permission of the copyright holder.
2. *Lectors/Readers* – You may have up to three Lectors - for the First and Second Readings and the Prayer of the Faithful. A family member, a friend or member of the wedding party may read. If the wedding is in the context of Mass, the lector is to be a practicing Catholic. If it is a wedding ceremony alone, a non-Catholic may read. Arrangements should be made and discussed with the Priest celebrant.
3. *Offertory Gifts at a Nuptial Mass* – You may wish to choose one or two people to bring up the bread and wine at the Offertory. They are to be practicing Catholics.
4. *Music* – All of the music before, during and after the wedding liturgy reflects the Christian meaning of the Marriage Rite. Therefore all music must be taken from the treasury of sacred repertoire. The Director of Music will meet with you to plan your music selections.
5. *Confession* – In preparation to receive the Sacrament of Marriage, we encourage you to receive the Sacrament of Penance by going to confession. We also ask that the members of the wedding party and family members go to confession in their own parish or another parish before the day of the rehearsal.
6. *Holy Communion at a Wedding Mass* – Catholic couples may receive Holy Communion under both species (the Host and from the Chalice) on the occasion of their wedding. Catholics in attendance who are properly prepared to receive Holy Communion will receive in the usual manner, the Host only. For those receiving Communion, the Eucharistic Fast is refraining from food and liquid (except water) for one hour before receiving. Please include in your booklet that only Catholics, who are properly prepared, may receive Holy Communion.
7. *Prayer before Shrine of the Blessed Virgin* – This is an option which is traditionally done at the end of the ceremony. It is the couple's responsibility to provide any flowers you wish to be presented at this time.

*God bless you and keep you as you prepare for your wedding day and your new life together!*