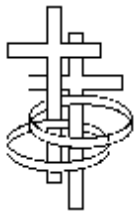




COVENANT COMMUNITY OF JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD
1601 West Mount Harmony Road
Owings, Maryland 20736

Guidelines for the Celebration of the
Sacrament of Matrimony

CONGRATULATIONS!



All of us in Jesus the Good Shepherd Community wish to extend to you our warmest and best wishes as you begin your marriage preparations. We are dedicated to working closely with you so that your wedding is a beautiful celebration of your love for each other and your trust in God.

If you choose to be married at Jesus the Good Shepherd, we ask that the Catholic party participate with us at Mass on Sundays, though you are always especially welcome as a couple.

We offer you the following guidelines to assist you in planning your wedding.

The reservation of a date is provisional pending the successful conclusion of Marriage Preparation Counseling.

PRE-MARITAL PREPARATION



To assist you in your transition to couplehood, we offer two pre-marital programs. You may choose either one.

Our *couple to couple program* involves your meeting, usually four mutually convenient times, with a trained couple of our Community. The discussions are aimed at assisting you to reflect in some possibly new ways upon your relationship. Those who wish to participate in this program will be given a packet of instruments. Discussing the results with you provides the structure of the couple to couple sessions.

Confidentiality. Couples engaged in this ministry will respect your confidentiality. This means anything you share will not go beyond the pastoral team composed of your couple, the Pastor and/or Deacon.

Please be sure to have a couple assigned to you at least six months in advance. You will be assigned one of these couples (or you may request from Sharon Fulton a particular couple): 1) Robert & Suzanne Baczynski, 301-855-6253; 2) Richard & Barbara Beers, 301-855-7873; 3) Richard & Janice Gielda, 301-855-5894; 4) Deacon Chad & Bobbie Martin, 410-257-7177; 5) Tom & Nancy Meringolo, 301-855-8649; 6) Larry & Yvonne Posten,

301-855-4270; 7) Dave & Jane Ritter, 301-627-4074; 8) Deacon John & Jackie Verdon, 410-257-9314; or 9) Ray & Vicki Wenderlich, 410-741-5291.

Since we are limited in the number of our staff, it is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make sure they are linked up with a couple trained for our Couple-to-Couple Pre-Marriage Program. This needs to be done at least six (6) months before the wedding. We can only witness the marriages of couples who have satisfactorily completed a Catholic Marriage Preparation Program.

Engaged Encounter is a weekend experience designed to assist you in discussing honestly and intensively your future lives together. It begins at 7 PM Friday and ends approximately 4 PM on Sunday. Our Community will assist couples in need with the \$250 cost of this weekend. Dates and registration forms are available from either Fr. Mike, Deacon Chad or Deacon John. Registration requests are accepted by mail only and are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. See the following for current Schedule of Catholic Engaged Encounters and list of topics:

TOPICS: *Encounter With Me (God Doesn't Make Junk); Encounter With We (Love Is a Decision); Openness in Communication (Arguing Can Be Healthy); Signs of a Closed Relationship (Will They Change After Marriage?); Called To Be One (Unit is Our Goal); Marriage Morality (What Life-Giving Means); Decisions in Marriage (Applying Life-Giving Principles); Sex and Sexuality (A God-Given Gift); Becoming a Family: Our Love Reflected as Life (Embracing Christian Values); Rap Session (Here's What I Think); Prayer Service (An experience of Community); Wedding: The Beginning of our Sacrament (Our Love is a Sign of God's Love); Betrothal (Are We Ready?); Two By Two (Love One Another); Sharing The Vision (Time, Talent and Treasure); Plan of Life (My Plan vs. Our Plan); Forgiveness in Marriage (Forgive Us as we Forgive Others); and Eucharistic Celebration.*

Important: Please check the availability of dates prior to registering either via the voice mail system or via the webpage. For additional information or to register check website at www.dcengagedencounter.org. If these dates don't meet your needs, please visit Baltimore Engaged Encounter website: www.mdcee.org or Arlington Engaged Encounter's website: www.expage.com/ceearlva for information.

CLERGY

Normally weddings are conducted by the pastor, Fr Michael King, or our deacons, Deacon Chad Martin (410-257-7177; e-mail: deaconchad@chesapeake.net), or Deacon John Verdon (410-257-9314; e-mail: JTVerdon@msn.com).

Sometimes members of other Catholic parishes desire to use our facilities. If permission is given for use of the facilities, it will still be necessary for one of the clergy of your parish to do the interview, pre-nuptial planning, and the wedding service. Fr. Mike, Deacon

Chad and Deacon John are not available for services for our guests.

If you have a special friend or relative who is a Roman Catholic priest or deacon, whom you would like to have conduct your service, we welcome them warmly. Please check this with the pastor and then have the priest or deacon contact Fr. Mike.

SCHEDULING

We make every effort to schedule your wedding when you would like to celebrate it. The schedule of our Community is also affected by other weddings already planned, our Mass Schedule, especially Saturday 4 PM Confessions and the 5 PM Saturday Vigil, other church events, and the availability of our clergy. For these reasons it would be a mistake to schedule a date or lock yourself into a date before speaking formally to us about the date and time, and agreeing on these with us.

Weddings are typically scheduled on Saturdays. Occasionally a candlelight service will be scheduled for a Friday evening. We do not celebrate weddings on Sunday. We can only assign a date after first interviewing you as a couple.

We can schedule a Nuptial Mass and a Simple Ceremony as late as 2:30 PM.

The fourth Saturday of the month is SHARE day, when food is distributed in a cooperative buying service. Since nearly a couple tons of food is involved and much of it set up on Friday afternoon, we avoid morning weddings and any Centre use Friday evening and Saturday mornings on the fourth Saturday. If it is necessary to schedule them at this time, rehearsals will need to be on Thursdays and the wedding could not begin until 2:00 PM, with no Saturday morning access to the facility. Sometimes holiday weekends affect which Saturday is SHARE day.

NUPTIAL MASS OR SIMPLE CEREMONY?

Two Catholics getting married will typically do so during a Nuptial Mass, particularly if they know their guests are familiar with the Liturgy. This service lasts about fifty-five minutes from the time the bride comes down the aisle.

When a Catholic marries a non-Catholic we do not celebrate a Catholic Mass, since it would be unfamiliar to many guests. The "Simple" Ceremony is also beautiful and dignified. It lasts twenty-five minutes.

With either ceremony, you will be given a booklet "Together for Life" to assist you in planning your marriage service. This involves deciding for yourself which scriptures to read and who will read them, and selecting among options for the forms of the vows, blessing of rings, nuptial blessing, etc.

The celebrant will discuss the type of ceremony appropriate during the first interview,

and assist with composing a service booklet if you wish.

All Catholic weddings are conducted in a church.

THE “REHEARSAL WEDDING PARTY”

Those persons who should attend the rehearsal are normally the following persons (*adaptations, of course, where necessary*):

Bride and Groom
 Best Man and Maid (Matron) of Honor
 Groom’s Men
 Bride’s Maids
 (Flower Girl & Ring Bearer)
 Parents of the Bride
 Parents of the Groom
 First Reader: The First Reading
 Second Reader: The Second Reading
 (Third Reader: The General Intercessions)
 (Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist:
 provided by the wedding couple with prior approval by Celebrant)
 (Your personal “Wedding Coordinator”: see page i-ii)



MUSIC

All Weddings Require Music. Nuptial Masses require a cantor who is familiar with Roman Catholic Liturgy since the proper parts of the Mass are sung, for example, Responsorial verse, Alleluia, Eucharistic Acclamation, etc.

Please call Kathy Horsmon three (3) months prior to wedding to arrange for musicians and cantors. For assistance, please contact our Director of Music Ministry, Kathy Horsmon, 301-855-0389. *Recorded music is not allowed.*

Marriage is a sacrament and in keeping with its religious nature, all music within the church needs to reflect and complement the sacredness of your celebration. We recommend an opening hymn after the entrance processions and the celebrant's welcome. Musicians should plan a special fanfare for the appearance of the bride and her father.

Stipends for Psalmist/Soloists are \$125 each; pianist - \$175; and violinist - \$150; and should be turned in, along with the Marriage License, to the Church office at least one (1) week before the Wedding.

RENTAL OF OUR CENTRE FOR A WEDDING RECEPTION

Where you hold your wedding reception is entirely your free decision and we encourage you to shop around to find what best suits your needs.

The Covenant Creek Centre, located across the atrium from the sanctuary of Jesus the Good Shepherd Church, is an elegant location for a wedding reception. The Centre will seat 200 people for a buffet dinner with a dance area. Our round tables seat eight people and come with white linen tablecloths and your choice of colored napkins. Everything from the porcelain china, skirted bride's table to the banquet tables adorned with brass trimmed chafing dishes will be provided.

If you decide you would like to rent the Centre for your reception, call Beth Lennon, our Events Coordinator at 301-812-1411 (e-mail: cblennon@chesapeake.net) and she will send you a packet of information. The packet includes:

- * our buffet and light reception menu and prices
- * contract and deposit information
- * recommendations on local DJs, florists and bakeries

If you decide to hold your reception at Covenant Creek Centre, Beth will sit down with you and discuss the layout of the Centre, your choice of colored napkins, your menu selections, and the scheduling of events during your reception.

We offer a large selection of choices for the buffet dinner. The menu of your choice is prepared on site to provide the freshest food possible. During your reception at the Centre, Beth will remain on site to ensure that everything runs smoothly throughout the evening. Everything is taken care of for you, down to every last detail. Please call Beth as soon as possible to reserve your reception date. (Your guests will be happy about the commute!)

Our building is a completely No Smoking Building .

In decorating the Centre, we do not allow any tape to be applied to our walls. (Tape leaves a sticky residue which then gets dirty.)

PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER

The Photographer/Videographer needs to be reminded of the Church's strict policies, which insure a truly dignified and joyful celebration for the couple and their guests.

Please have your photographer and/or videographer person speak with the priest or deacon before the ceremony. Our concern is that they not detract from the ceremony by being intrusive.

Flash is permitted during the processional and recessional, not during the ceremony. Photographers need to remain away from the altar area. There are special stations from which

photography and videographer are able to record elevated, panoramic scenes.

The use of videography is permitted without lights.

Since the bride and groom face each other to pronounce their vows and exchange their rings, photographers and videographers will get their best views from under the arch at the entrance to the main aisle. If there is a Nuptial Mass, care must be taken not to obstruct those who will be bringing up the offertory gifts.

The photographer and videographer may take pictures discreetly from below the sanctuary steps on the bride's side of the Church. A picture may be taken of Lectors from the side aisle. *Otherwise, the sanctuary area and center aisle are strictly off limits as these distract the guests from their attention to the wedding.*

FLOWERS

Flowers are optional. **Flowers for the wedding MUST remain in the Church following the ceremony. Florists MUST deliver floral arrangements NO later than 4 PM Saturday for an evening wedding.**

In the rare event that two weddings are scheduled in one day, we'll put the brides in touch with each other. You may wish to use the same flowers and split the cost.

We cannot allow plastic or linen runners to be used because the Church floor slopes.

For Saturday evening weddings, floral arrangements may be placed on stands prior to our 5:00 Vigil (*please arrange for the florists to deliver arrangements NO later than 4 PM*). **All other decorations** - unity candle (**Unity Candle Flowers should be 6" or less**), other flower arrangements for the main altar, as well as any pew decorations, **should be done immediately following our Vigil Mass.** You may wish to designate someone to take care of these tasks.

We do have flower stands, so that it is not necessary to rent them. Speak to Sharon Fulton, 410-257-3810; e-mail: SFulton477@aol.com.

WEDDINGS COST TOO MUCH

Often couples are saddened to realize that what began enthusiastically as a celebration of their love can easily get very expensive. Several industries are involved in the typical wedding. Sometimes families spend more than they should because of a desire to do what is right or socially expected.

Some couples have considerably cut the cost of a beautiful wedding. We've seen weddings in which the men wear suits rather than rent tuxedos.

If you hire a caterer it will need to be Covenant Creek Caterer hired by contacting Beth Lennon (301-812-1411), but families who belong to Jesus the Good Shepherd also have the option of self-catering; that is, asking family and friends to set up the hall and put out the food for your reception. We can offer this option to our members because our insurer will provide the liability coverage as part of our general policy. This is probably the single most important savings you could realize on a wedding.

Use of our hall as a reception facility is possible, but limited by the fact that we have a 5 PM Saturday Vigil Mass - which means that the sound level in the reception should be low to moderate during Mass; that is 5:00-6:00 PM.

UNITY CANDLE

The lighting of a unity candle after pronouncing your vows and exchanging rings is an option in both a Nuptial Mass and Simple Ceremony. Typically the mothers of the bride and groom are escorted down the aisle and light one of the side candles to symbolize their giving life to their daughter or son. *We suggest you use your baptismal candle if you still have it as a side candle for your unity candle ensemble.*

Unity Candles can be obtained in religious goods shops. We don't have them on hand. The William J. Gallery Company (11272 Georgia Avenue, - just below University Blvd, Wheaton; 301-942-4700) has been good in sending these out through UPS. Often Christian bookstores carry unity candles (such as the Christian Bookstore in Annapolis). We have the holders for the candles which you are welcome to use.

BLESSING OF THE CRUCIFIX FOR YOUR NEW HOME - An Option

Catholics traditionally place a crucifix in their homes, a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice for our salvation. Many couples have the priest or deacon bless a crucifix they have specially purchased. This blessing occurs before the concluding blessing of your marriage ceremony.

NO RICE, BIRD SEED, FLOWER PETALS, OR CONFETTI

Since we do not have a janitorial staff, it is important to ask your relatives and friends not to throw rice or bird seed within or outside the church. As you may be aware, both of these get slippery when wet and could result in the injury of someone entering the church after you. Flower petals can discolor our floor. If you don't warn your friends about this Fr. Mike would need to clean it all up himself and he's not as young as he used to be.

Food and drink are not allowed in the church.

SEATING

Our church will seat about 500.

FEES

There are no set fees. Couples who choose to, may offer a gift of whatever they wish made out to the celebrant, or to the church. An altar server will usually be given \$10.

Stipends For Music Ministers and Marriage License will need to be turned in no later than the REHEARSAL.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

Catholics will need to write or call the parish of their Baptism to obtain a baptismal certificate issued within the last six months. Non-Catholics will also need to provide a baptismal certificate if they have been baptized. You may also be asked to obtain a notarized "Letter of Freedom" from a parent or relative to the effect that you have not been previously married.

You will need a MARRIAGE LICENSE issued **by the County (jurisdiction) in which the wedding will take place**. The Archdiocese of Washington includes six separate jurisdictions: the District of Columbia and the Maryland counties of Montgomery, Prince George's, Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's.

The following is a summary of the marriage license requirements:

- Though each of the five Maryland counties has its specific regulations regarding marriage, there are also state laws that apply. In all the counties, the fee must be paid in cash.
- Blood tests are not required for marriages in Maryland.
- Either member of the engaged couple may apply for and pick up the license. There is a 48-hour waiting period between application and pickup of the license.
- The license may be picked up or sent by mail.
- In all counties the marriage license is obtained from the Clerk of the Circuit Court. You must be married in the County in which you obtain the license.

Marriage License Procedures. The license may not be used prior to the effective date, which is 6:00 AM on the second calendar date after issuance. You have six months (6) from the effective date in which to use the marriage license before it expires. You must be married in the county where your license was purchased. Replacement licenses may be obtained, during the six (6) month period the original license is valid, for a fee of \$10.00. Prior to your marriage, take the marriage license and these instructions to your clergy. The priest or deacon will complete all information and give the completed marriage license to you after the ceremony.

• In Calvert County the Clerk's Office (Kathy P. Smith) is located at 175 Main St., Prince Frederick is open from 8:30 - 4:30, Monday - Friday (301-855-1243, 410-535-1660 or 1-888-535-0113). The fee is \$55 (cash only). Couples marrying at Jesus the Good Shepherd need a Calvert County marriage license.

- Either parent or a legal guardian may give consent for a minor (16 or 17) to marry.
- If a minor is the age of 15 she must be pregnant, with doctors note and parent or legal

guardian must be present. Identification is not necessary, except for minors, however, both parties must swear under oath.

- The license must be picked up.

You should bring your marriage license with you to your last appointment in which you discuss the plans of your ceremony with the celebrant.

We do not ordinarily issue a Church marriage certificate because we sign and identify ourselves on the certificate provided by the County. However, we will be glad to issue a Church certificate if you wish.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

The Church teaches that it is the way of wisdom to plan our families with a keen respect for the natural ecology of the human body. The Archdiocese of Washington assists couples who wish to learn natural family planning through its Office of Natural Family Planning, 301-853-4564. The natural method can be learned in one two-hour class taught the second Thursday of each month, 7:30 PM, at the Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese. Fee \$25.

SHARING YOUR FAITH WITH YOUR CHILDREN

This is a serious matter which deserves an honest discussion before the engagement.

In order to be married to a non-Catholic in a Catholic Church, the Catholic party must promise the following:

"I reaffirm my faith in Jesus Christ and, with God's help, intend to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church.

I promise to do all in my power to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and reared as Catholics. "

PUNCTUALITY

It is a courtesy to your guests to begin the wedding on time. This requires that the mothers are prepared to be seated or taken up to light part of the Unity Candle ensemble when the wedding is scheduled to begin. Remember, "Punctuality is the politeness of the privileged."

WEDDING PARTY

We never thought we'd have to say this but the members of the wedding party should know how to conduct themselves in a church during the rehearsal and ceremony. Manifestation of drug or alcohol influence, or unruly, uncooperative conduct could mean that we would need to exclude someone from participating in the wedding party and we reserve the right to do this.

USHERS

You will need to decide before the rehearsal how you wish ushers to get to their places. They can (A) go to their places by the side aisle before the bridal procession enters; (B) they can walk singly or together ahead of the procession; or (C) they can come down in pairs with the women. It's your choice. Please indicate your choice on the "Summary of Decisions" Sheet included with the material.

Please designate ahead of time which usher will escort the groom's mother to her place; and which usher will escort the bride's mother. These ushers bear a special responsibility for assisting you in starting on time. This is a courtesy to your guests. Its easy for mothers to lose track of time in the excitement of a wedding. A reminder from the usher assigned to her will be appreciated.

Ushers should know that the bathrooms are located behind the door midway down the Centre, on the right as you enter. Guests coming from a distance arrive early and often need to know where the bathrooms are.

LIVING TOGETHER BEFORE MARRIAGE & SEXUAL INTIMACY BEFORE MARRIAGE

We see many couples who are already living together when they come in to arrange a marriage. Often these couples are responsible couples well suited to enjoying a life-long marriage together. We are aware that living together can have financial advantages, is a widespread practice in our society, and does not trouble the consciences of some of the couples whose marriages we witness.

When Jesus was talking about marriage he said: "From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide." (Mark10:6-9)

In Jesus' view to make love to another person is to become one with that person. Jesus envisions this happening because "God has united" them. You come to God's altar to be united by God, and we believe that a life of sexual intimacy is meant to follow this uniting by God. While the world laughs at such views, we believe these views are wise, and help constitute a firm foundation upon which to build a joyful life together.

God blesses with a unique inner strength those who "live in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him in every way" (Colossians 1:10). We suggest to you that it is the way of Christian wisdom to separate if you are living together. The willingness to separate until marriage is implied in making a sincere confession in spiritual preparation for the sacrament of marriage. Couples living together before marriage should not receive Holy Communion when they attend Mass. Please take this matter to the Lord in prayer.



CONFESSION BEFORE A SACRAMENT

One should be free of any serious sin before appearing before God's altar to speak vows in the sight of God. For this reason, we encourage Catholics to make a good confession before their marriage. At ***Jesus the Good Shepherd***, confessions are heard from 4:00 PM to 4:45 PM on Saturdays in the Chapel. At ***St. John Vianney's*** at 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM on Saturdays. At ***St. Anthony's*** in North Beach, 4:30 PM to 5:15 PM on Saturdays. At ***Jesus the Divine Word*** on Wednesdays, 7-8 PM and Saturdays after 9 AM Mass. At ***St. Mary's in Upper Marlboro*** on Saturday's 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM. A Catholic may choose to go to any confessor he or she wishes. Fr. Mike will be glad to make himself available for hearing confessions before or after your rehearsal.



SYMBOLIC GIFT TO THE POOR

As you celebrate the great day of your marriage with your family and friends, wouldn't it be a graceful act on your part to give some poor person somewhere a special reason to celebrate? One the concluding blessings of your marriage ceremony catches the idea: "May you be ready and willing to help and comfort all who come to you in need. And may the blessings promised to the compassionate be yours in abundance."

From Old Testament times (e.g. Leviticus 19:9-10, rules before the Harvest festival), people of faith who were celebrating have wanted the poor or downtrodden to also have some special reason to give thanks.

You can continue this tradition of compassion by making a special point of helping a poor person, or making a gift to a worthy charity as part of your marriage celebration. In this way your marriage will start out on a compassionate basis - your love for each other will be a blessing for the less fortunate. Your love for each other will help make Christ's love more real and effective in this world.

At the end of your wedding program, before you re-state the location of the reception, you can say something like:

"As part of their marriage celebration N_____ and N_____ have made a symbolic gift to the poor - , or, have sent a symbolic gift to _____ (a particular charity) - in order to begin their married life with an act of caring about others."



PRAYER & FLOWER OFFERING TO OUR BLESSED MOTHER

For many centuries, brides leaving the altar have first paused to pray at a shrine of Our Blessed Mother and leave a white rose. Sometimes this is accompanied by the singing of the Ave Maria or some other appropriate piece of music. This beautiful moment can be part of a simple ceremony as well as a Nuptial Mass.

IN CONCLUSION

The first miracle Our Lord worked in the Gospel of St. John (chapter 2, verses 1-12) was at the reception in Cana of a newly married couple. Jesus and his mother deeply felt

the joy of this couple and what their wedding celebration meant to them. The same Lord will be with you to deepen the joy of your wedding day and will remain with you to offer you the graces of a lifetime of happiness together.

Feel free to call us for any further information or help you may need.

Fr. Michael King
1601 W. Mount Harmony Road
Owings, MD 20736

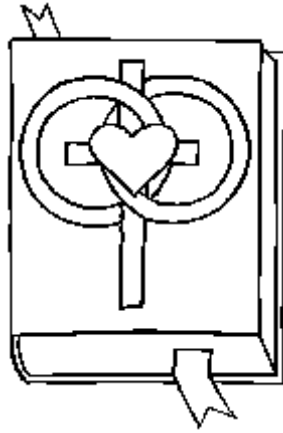
410-257-3810
e-mail: pastor@ccjgs.org
Fax: 410-257-6334

Deacon Chad Martin
9217 Easy Street
Owings, MD 20736

410-257-7177
e-mail: deaconchad@chesapeake.net

Deacon John Verdon
9905 Golden Russet Dr.
Dunkirk, MD 20754

410-257-9314
e-mail: JTVerdon@msn.com



SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

Pre-Marital Preparation: Couple-to-Couple Engaged Encounter

Ceremony: Nuptial Mass Simple Ceremony

 Music Minister(s) Chosen & Consulted about the Ceremony.

 Altar Server(s) no yes (needed for Nuptial Masses)

Stipends For Music Ministers and Marriage License turned in at REHEARSAL. yes no

Your Personal Wedding Coordinator (Name and Phone No.)

Blessing of a Crucifix for your home no yes

Unity Candle no yes

Documents turned into Celebrant:

- Baptismal Certificate of Groom yes unbaptized
- Baptismal Certificate of Bride yes unbaptized
- Letter of Freedom, Groom yes not requested
- Letter of Freedom, Bride yes not requested

USHERS

Method for Seating A B C (see Ushers section)

Escort for Groom's mother _____.

Escort for Bride's mother _____.

ARE THERE GRANDPARENTS WHOM YOU WILL WANT TO HAVE ESCORTED OUT IN THE RECESSIONAL? yes no

(See Reverse)



SYMBOLIC OFFERING TO THE POOR/NEEDY AS PART OF SERVICE. yes no



SPECIAL TIME TO MAKE A CONFESSION BEFORE MARRIAGE? yes no

Please bring this sheet of decisions with you, along with the filled out booklet TOGETHER FOR LIFE to your meeting with the Celebrant to discuss your ceremony.

“WEDDING COORDINATOR”

Jesus the Good Shepherd does not permit a professional wedding coordinator to conduct your rehearsal or wedding ceremony. All of the ceremony is ultimately the responsibility of the presiding minister, therefore, the official wedding coordinator is always the clergyman.

Nonetheless, it is often very helpful if a **volunteer** is selected from **outside** the Wedding Party to assist the presiding minister with some of the details of the wedding day. Often the Bride will select someone who is well-organized and willing to “take charge” of the Groom’s Men, the Bride’s Maids, with a particular view towards starting the wedding on time and “getting” the wedding party from the Baptistry “down the aisle” in a reverent, efficient, and timely manner.

Your personal “wedding coordinator” should come to the rehearsal and be introduced to the presiding minister. The wedding couple, the “wedding coordinator,” and the minister should review the general “scenerio” of events before the rehearsal takes place, so that as much confusion and misunderstanding are avoided when the actual rehearsal is conducted. This time spent in getting organized beforehand is very practical, since it’s sometimes the case that some of the wedding party may arrive late (for whatever reason) and thereby delay the actual rehearsal time.

The “wedding coordinator” takes detailed notes about “who’s who” and who does what, when, where”, *etc.* One of the most important details for the “wedding coordinator” is to line-up the wedding party in the Baptistry in an organized and quiet fashion 5 minutes before the scheduled hour of the wedding. At that time, the “wedding coordinator” asks the Groom’s Men who are not required to “bring down” the Mother of the Groom (Grandmother of the Groom), and the Mother of the Bride (Grandmother of the Bride) to go to the Sacristy and to join the Groom and Best Man there.

Those Groom’s Men who are required to escort the parents (grandparents) down the main aisle just at the scheduled hour, go to the Baptistry and stand to the left of their respective escorts in the following order:

(Escort / **Grandmother of the Groom**)

(Grandfather follows behind)

Second Pew on the Right

Escort for the **Mother of the Groom**

(Husband follows behind, seated closest to the aisle)

Second Pew on the Right

(Escort for the **Grandmother of the Bride**)

(Grandfather follows behind)

Second Pew on the Left - 3 & 4 seats in

Escort for the **Mother of the Bride**

Second Pew on the Left - 2 seats in

While the pictures are being taken, the “wedding coordinator” is asked to make sure flower boxes, programs, etc., are removed. The couple may wish to save the programs to send to family and friends who could not be present, especially those who are ill. All flower boxes should be taken by the florist or put in the dumpster out back. Please take the Unity Candle - but ***not*** the stand provided by the Church - for the bride and groom. The Unity Candle is often forgotten. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated in this detail.