



**THE SACRAMENT
OF
MATRIMONY**

**CATHEDRAL OF
SAINT HELENA**

For Linda McCray ©92

Hello!

Congratulations on your recent engagement! What an exciting and grace-filled time in your lives. Thank you for saying “yes” to the Lord’s plan for you to be united in the holy sacrament of matrimony. Please know of our prayers and support for you at every step of this journey.

This initial packet will help you prepare not just for your wedding but for your marriage. You’ll see that there are quite a few steps to ensure that you are free and ready to be married in the eyes of the Catholic Church. To that end, the preparation prior to your wedding day is crucial in deepening your understanding of the richness of the sacrament you will give to each other, the unique gifts that God wishes to bestow upon your relationship, and how He will strengthen the love that you already have for each other. Your wedding liturgy will be the culmination of your preparation, so please invest in this formation with open and ready hearts. Your marriage in the Church is meant to be more than just a gift for you but also for your family, friends, the Church, and the culture at large. This is a wonderful time to dive into the deepest questions and desires of your hearts—questions and desires that ultimately find their fulfillment in the Person of Jesus Christ.

Above all, we want you to know how grateful we are for the love you have for each other and the way in which that love points beyond itself to God. May each day be a deeper experience of that love.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Marc Lenneman

Rector
Cathedral of St. Helena

SELECTION OF A DATE AND TIME

Marriage Liturgies are scheduled for Friday between 4:30 P.M. and 6:30 P.M. or on Saturdays between 1:00 P.M. and 2:00 P.M. A different day may be chosen for a special need with pastoral permission. Selected dates may be scheduled one year prior to the Marriage if one of the couple is an active/practicing member of the Cathedral Parish. All others must wait six months before the desired date. Marriage Liturgies are not scheduled on Saturday evenings, Sundays, Solemnities, the Friday, or Saturday following Christmas, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day, nor during the Season of Lent.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM

By establishing a period of **six-months** for preparation for Marriages, as well as providing programs, interviews and guidance, the Church seeks to help couples as they begin this lifelong journey.

The Cathedral Parish offers two seven-week classes to assist you as you prepare. These sessions are offered January - March or October - November. The discussions are led by a team of married couples who share their knowledge of marriage.

If for some serious reason, you are unable to participate in the preparation for Marriage offered by the Cathedral, other options may be arranged in consultation with the Priest or Deacon preparing you for the Sacrament of Marriage.

If you do not currently reside in Helena, please consult your current parish about attending their marriage preparations courses. We will require a letter or certificate from your parish upon completion of their preparation course.

THE LITURGY

The model for the Wedding Liturgy is the parish Sunday Celebration of the Eucharist. Please read and select Scripture Readings that are provided in the booklet, ***Together for Life***. You may obtain this booklet and the policy booklet from the Parish Office or Priest / Deacon who is assisting you in your preparations.

The Catholic Church offers two options when celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony:

The Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass – when both the bride and groom are active and participating Catholics and ***The Order of Celebrating Matrimony without Mass*** – when a Catholic marries a person who is not baptized. If an active and participating Catholic marries a Baptized Christian of a different denomination they may choose between Marriage during Mass or outside of Mass depending upon which best reflects the choices of both future spouses as well as their expectations.

More information about the Liturgy and The Order of Celebrating Matrimony will be provided with the booklet, ***Together for Life***.

MUSIC FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

Please contact the Cathedral Director of Music before planning any music. As with all Liturgies at the Cathedral, music plays an integral role in the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. The Cathedral Director of Music is responsible for the music at the Marriage Liturgy and will assist you in choosing and approving the music for the celebration of the Sacrament. Because of the unique acoustics of the Cathedral qualified Cathedral Musicians are required.

The Cantor leads the people in song at various times during the celebration. The Cantor is necessary for leading the Responsorial Psalm the acclamations during the Liturgy of the Eucharist. **Please do not make arrangements with vocalists or instrumentalists prior to meeting the Director of Music. To schedule a meeting, please contact the Director of Music by phone at 406-442-5825, extension 1021 or via email at jembry@sthelenas.org.**

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

The interior of the Cathedral of Saint Helena is a beautiful setting—very little is needed to enhance the Cathedral for the celebration of Marriage. In the sanctuary there are six historic “Brondel” candlesticks that may be decorated. These are the only candlesticks used in the sanctuary for the Liturgy. (Please note that the Unity Candle is not a prescribed element of the Marriage Rite and is not permitted during the Marriage Liturgy.) Floral arrangements are never placed on or in front of the Altar of Sacrifice. Please note that the use of rice, confetti, birdseed, flower petals, or bubbles within the Cathedral or outside, is considered a safety hazard by our insurance provider and are prohibited.

Brass eyes are located on the inside of each pew for attaching decorations—no tape please. Aisle runners, balloons, or other informal party decorations may not be used.

Please note that decorations during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Easter may not be changed. If you have questions about decorations particular to each Liturgical Season, please call the Parish Office. The furnishings and fixtures may not be re-arranged. It is presently arranged to provide for the flow of the Liturgy and for the greatest visibility.

Floral arrangements are frequently left as a gift to the Cathedral for the weekend Masses. Please inform the Pastoral Associate for Liturgy if this is your wish and an acknowledgement will be printed in the Sunday bulletin.

CARE OF THE CATHEDRAL

The Cathedral of Saint Helena is a sacred place of worship and prayer. A prayerful atmosphere is expected during rehearsal, prior to the Marriage Liturgy and after the Liturgy. Please assign members of the wedding party to “pick-up” the dressing area, vestibule and pews following the Marriage.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Consumption of alcoholic beverages prior to the wedding is strictly forbidden. It is the responsibility of the couple to inform the wedding party comply. Noncompliance will result in the automatic forfeiture of the deposit and the exclusion of anyone who is intoxicated.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals are scheduled on Thursday or Friday between 4:00 and 5:00 P.M. and last between 30 and 45 minutes. The Pastoral Associate for Liturgy, or delegate, conducts the rehearsal. Please limit the number of people attending to Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Greeters and the members of the Wedding Party.

HOSPITALITY AND DRESSING ROOMS

The Cathedral provides a dressing room for the bride and prior to the celebration. We are unable to provide changing rooms for the groom and groomsmen.

The wedding party is welcome to bring light snacks and water to the lower level of the Cathedral. **We respectfully request that no food or drink be brought into the Cathedral proper.**

WEDDING FEES

The fee specified helps cover the cost of the services of the Parish Staff (musicians, preparers, celebrants, administration) as well as the expense of maintaining the facilities, lighting, utilities, etc. The fees are not to be understood as paying for the Sacrament or the renting of the Cathedral building.

There are two fee schedules at the Cathedral of Saint Helena: one for parishioners and another for non-parishioners. Normally, a parishioner is someone who has been registered and a active member of the Cathedral Parish for at least two years prior to the Marriage date. Parish staff members will help you determine your status should there be any questions.

All fees are paid at the time of your meeting with the Pastoral Associate for Liturgy.

A refundable \$200 deposit is required for all Marriage celebrations whether you are a parishioner or not. **The deposit will be returned within 30 days assuming you have complied with all policies and procedures.**

No parishioner of the Cathedral of Saint Helena is ever turned away because of an inability to pay the fees. If you have financial difficulties, please discuss the matter with the Priest, Deacon or the Business Manager. This need will be held in confidence.

Couples often ask whether it is appropriate to make a monetary gift to the Priest or Deacon who celebrated their Marriage. Though not required, it is a kind customary way to express thanks.

FEES SCHEDULE

Fees for parishioners:	\$800 Contribution for the Cathedral \$200 refundable deposit.
Fees for Diocesan parishioners:	\$1200 Contribution for the Cathedral \$200 refundable deposit.
Fees for non-Diocesan wedding ("destination wedding"):	\$2000 Contribution for the Cathedral \$200 refundable deposit.

Please make two separate checks for each fee.

THE LITURGY

The model for the Wedding Liturgy is the parish Sunday Celebration of the Eucharist. Like any Liturgy of the Church, it involves active participation of the people in spoken and sung prayer. In preparing for the Marriage Celebration, you will want to read and select Scripture Readings that are provided in the booklet, ***Together for Life***. You may obtain this booklet and the policy booklet from the Parish Office or Priest / Deacon who is assisting you in your preparations.

The Catholic Church offers two options when celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony: ***The Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass*** – when both the bride and groom are active and participating Catholics and ***The Order of Celebrating Matrimony without Mass*** – when a Catholic marries a person who is not baptized. If an active and participating Catholic marries a Baptized Christian of a different denomination they may choose between Marriage during Mass or outside of Mass depending upon which best reflects the choices of both future spouses as well as their expectations.

In the positive spirit of ecumenism, great care must be taken to respect the integrity and faith of both people in “interfaith” Marriages. This second form is preferred for interfaith Marriages because it contains elements in which both the bride and groom and their families can fully participate.

The Order of Celebrating Matrimony within Mass, also referred to as the ***"Nuptial Mass"*** is modeled after the Sunday Mass with its full complement of ministries. The Rite of Marriage is celebrated after the homily. It should be remembered that one of the unique features of the Rite of Marriage is that the bride and groom are the ministers of the Sacrament. This is their ministerial function, and therefore, they do not serve as Readers or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

The Order of Celebrating Matrimony without Mass begins with the Liturgy of the Word, followed by the Rite of Marriage. The Universal Prayers, Lord's Prayer and Nuptial Blessing conclude the Liturgy.

Couples are welcome to provide an *order of worship / program* for the Faithful attending the Marriage Liturgy. The *order of worship* lists the names of musical selections, scripture readings, acclamations, and responses, as well as the names of the participants of the Marriage Liturgy. If you wish to use this option, the Pastoral Associate for Liturgy will provide you with a *template*. It is the couple's responsibility to have it printed.

PARTICIPANTS

The Faithful – This is the congregation, the guests that you have invited to the celebration. The faithful take an active part in the celebration. Please remember that this Sacramental Celebration is not “outside of the Parish”, but one more grace-filled encounter with the Lord within this Parish and the Faithful who are the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church.

The Bride and Groom – As ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage, it is your consent and exchange of vows that forms the focus of this celebration. *"Marriage arises in the covenant of Marriage, or irrevocable consent, which each partner freely bestows on and accepts from the other."* General Introduction to the Rite of Matrimony,

The Celebrant – The Priest or the Deacon who leads the faithful in prayer to God and presides at the exchange of vows is the celebrant. In an interfaith Marriage, the minister of the non-Catholic spouse may participate in the Liturgy, offering prayers and blessing the couple. The Pastoral Associate for Liturgy will give instructions for their participation.

The Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion – These are lay women and men who assist with the distribution of Holy Communion. These ministers are commissioned and are active in the Cathedral Parish or their own parish.

The Servers – These individuals function as Cross-bearer and Candle-bearers, assist the Celebrant as Book-bearer, and prepare the altar for the Liturgy of the Eucharist. There are usually three or four Servers at the Marriage liturgy. Servers are young men and women who are trained and active in the Cathedral Parish. It is customary to make a monetary gift to each Server who assisted at the Liturgy.

The Readers – These individuals are people selected to proclaim the first and second readings during the Liturgy of the Word. The second reader usually leads the Prayers of the Faithful. Readers are active baptized Catholics, in the Cathedral Parish or their own parish and/or are well versed in speaking before a large assembly.

The Maid of Honor and Best Man – These two assist the bride and groom and stand as official witnesses to the ceremony. Ordinarily, they are family members or close friends. They are also active participants in the celebration of the Liturgy and sign the Marriage License following the celebration.

The Greeters – They may be friends or relatives assigned to greet people at the door, to distribute the *order of worship*, and assist with seating the guests as needed. It should be noted that it is also acceptable for the bride and groom to greet their guests as they enter the Cathedral.

The Flower Girl and Ring Bearer – must be of a responsible age to be aware of their role and able to fulfill it. Generally, children that are younger than 4 years of age cannot meet this expectation.

CHECK LIST IN PREPARATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

- ❑ Contact a Priest/Deacon to solemnize your Marriage six months prior to the scheduled date.
- ❑ Read the *Cathedral of Saint Helena Marriage Policy* and sign agreement.
- ❑ Complete Bride and Groom Questionnaire Form.
- ❑ Provide **recently issued** Baptismal Certificates from the church of Baptism.
- ❑ Provide copies of Civil Divorce and Church Annulment, if applicable.
- ❑ Witnesses complete *Freedom to Marry Form*.
- ❑ The Priest or Deacon must contact the Parish Office to schedule the Marriage Celebration.
- ❑ Visiting clergy from outside Montana State must contact the Chancery for permission/delegation.
- ❑ Sign-up for the Marriage Preparation Program.
- ❑ Complete the Pre-Marriage Inventory profile.
- ❑ Read the *Together for Life* booklet and select the Readings from Sacred Scripture that you wish to use.
- ❑ Contact the Pastoral Associate for Liturgy and schedule an appointment.
- ❑ Contact the Director of Music and schedule an appointment.
- ❑ Obtain Marriage License from County Court House.
- ❑ Arrange for a Florist.
- ❑ Select the photographer.
- ❑ Pay deposit fee.
- ❑ Pay fee for use of Cathedral.
- ❑ Present Order of Worship to Pastoral Associate for review and approval.
- ❑ Keep each other in prayer each day that the preparations may not overwhelm you, but make your day of Marriage one of true joy and prayerful celebration for you!