

# A GUIDE FOR YOUR WEDDING PREPARATION

## Saint Margaret Mary Parish

111 South Hubbard Street  
Algonquin, Illinois 60102  
(847) 658-7625

### **Priests:**

Rev. Zbigniew Zajchowski, OFM Conv, Pastor  
Rev. Martin Buntov, OFM Conv, Parochial Vicar  
Rev. Daniel P. Zdebik, OFM Conv, Parochial Vicar

### **Permanent Deacons:**

Deacon Robert Armstrong  
Deacon Mike LeRoy  
Deacon Timothy Pignatari

Deacon Roman Budek  
Deacon Donald Miller

Deacon Howard Fischer  
Deacon Rick Orabutt

**Wedding Coordinator:** Mary LeRoy

## **CONGRATULATIONS ! YOU ARE ENGAGED AND CONSIDERING MARRIAGE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH!**

We are happy for you. These months before your wedding will almost certainly be filled with hectic planning, financial concerns, stress and crucial decisions. The community of Saint Margaret Mary wants to take this opportunity to assist you as you prepare for married life. Our Marriage Preparation Program is fairly demanding, but perhaps we can provide the kind of attention that would help you to continue to grow in your relationship with one another throughout your years of marriage.

By deciding to have your wedding at Saint Margaret Mary, you are expressing your faith. You seek to prepare to receive the Sacrament of Marriage in the Catholic Church. God's love for all people is faithful and everlasting. Christian Marriage reflects this kind of love. Together, you will serve as reminders to the world of God's concern and attention to humanity. The following guidelines should answer many of your questions about the wedding day and the Marriage Preparation Program.

### **WHEN SHOULD WE CONTACT THE PARISH REGARDING OUR MARRIAGE?**

Contact us at least six months or more in advance of your preferred wedding date (in practice to get a specific date, most couples have to plan at least one year in advance). When you contact the Parish Office, you will be scheduled to come into the Parish Office to discuss the preliminary date for your wedding and to discuss the wedding preparation process. You will be directed to complete two programs, a **PRE-CANA COURSE** and a **NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING COURSE** offered by the Diocese of Rockford (See the website: <https://www.rockforddiocese.org/life/marriage-prep/>). Next, you will need to arrange an initial interview for you and your fiancé to meet with one of our priests or deacons. We will discuss any questions that you may have regarding the

preparation program and give you further specific information. The priest or deacon will discuss the Diocesan programs you must take as well as the documentation requirements.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS AT THE PRENUPTIAL INTERVIEW WITH THE PRIEST OR DEACON?**

The priest or deacon will collect all the required documents. A Prenuptial Questionnaire will be completed with the bride and the groom. All witnesses will provide their testimony via affidavit. All the documentation will be forwarded to the Diocese for review.

#### **HOW DO WE ESTABLISH A DATE FOR OUR WEDDING?**

With the assistance of the priest or deacon, you will tentatively schedule your wedding date at the initial interview. However, please do not reserve your reception hall, photographer, etc. until after the date is finalized at the Church. There are a number of options concerning the day of the week and time chosen. Weddings can be scheduled on weekdays during the day or evenings. Saturday weddings, can only be scheduled at 2 PM. Weddings are normally not scheduled during the Season of Lent, and our Diocese of Rockford does not permit Sunday Weddings.

#### **DO WE NEED TO BE A CERTAIN AGE?**

The Diocese of Rockford does not permit marriages of people under the age of 19 years without extensive evaluation of the maturity of the person preparing for marriage.

#### **DO WE NEED TO BE MEMBERS OF SAINT MARGARET MARY PARISH TO BE MARRIED HERE?**

Church Law only allows the Pastor of the Parish in which you are registered, to celebrate your marriage. If you are members of another parish or do not physically live within the boundaries of Saint Margaret Mary, you will have to obtain written permission from your Pastor to have your wedding celebrated here at Saint Margaret Mary. Your Pastor is the Pastor of the Church, whose boundaries you live within. Couples who grew up at Saint Margaret Mary, but live elsewhere, still need permission from their present Pastor.

#### **ONE OF US IS NON-CATHOLIC. CAN WE STILL HAVE OUR MARRIAGE AT SAINT MARGARET MARY CHURCH?**

It is common that many of our weddings are between Catholic and non-Catholic people. The Wedding Ceremony may take place without the Mass in these circumstances. It is also possible for the non-Catholic's Minister to also participate in the ceremony.

#### **CAN WE HAVE OUR WEDDING ANY EARLIER OR LATER ON SATURDAY?**

We keep the Church free on Saturday Mornings in case there is a Funeral. The Vigil Mass is scheduled to begin at 4:30 PM. This schedule does not allow for weddings to begin later than 2 PM. Once the Vigil begins with the 4:30 PM Mass, no weddings are to be celebrated later on that weekend. If you wanted an earlier afternoon wedding, you may discuss this with the Pastor.

#### **WHAT ARE THE PRE-CANA AND NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING (NFP) COURSES?**

Diocesan preparation consists of two courses: Pre-Cana course and Natural Family Planning course. After completion of each course, you will receive a completion certificate for each course. There are several pre-Cana options that provide relational insights from contemporary research with Catholic teaching on marriage. Couples will gain insights from the Church teachings on the sacramentality of marriage and receive practical tips. Our goal is to help couples give the gift of themselves to each other and unpack the grace received during the Sacrament of Marriage so that couples can build a strong and lasting marriage. The NFP options present the true gift of being open to God, to each other, and to new life. Couples learn the scientific, natural, and moral approach to family planning that helps them achieve or postpone pregnancy by understanding and tracking their joint fertility. NFP fosters self-knowledge, respect, and appreciation for the gift of fertility. NFP supports God's design for married love by fostering free, total, faithful, and fruitful communion between husband and wife. Once you complete the programs, if you have any questions, you may schedule a meeting with a priest or a deacon of the parish to discuss your questions by contacting the Parish Office.

### **HOW DO WE PLAN FOR OUR WEDDING CEREMONY?**

Once you have completed your Pre-Cana course and Natural Family Planning course and have met with your priest or deacon for the Prenuptial Interview please contact the Wedding Coordinator to set up a time to go over Music, Scripture and liturgical decisions, along with the policies on Video/Photography.

### **WHO IS AT THE REHEARSAL?**

Everyone who has a special part in the wedding ceremony should be at the rehearsal. This may include the ushers, groomsmen, bridesmaids, parents and lectors. Allow at least one hour for the rehearsal on the night before the wedding.

### **DO WE NEED ANY DOCUMENTS?**

1. Newly issued Baptismal and Confirmation Certificates for both Groom and Bride from the Churches where each was Baptized and Confirmed. These must be dated no earlier than 6 months prior to your meeting with the priest or deacon.
2. If one party is non-Catholic, it is necessary that the Catholic party sign a document promising that the children will be Baptized and raised Catholic.
3. A civil marriage license must be obtained from the MC HENRY COUNTY CLERK's Office, located in the GOVERNMENT CENTER in Woodstock. This should be presented to the Church Office at least one week before the wedding. This license goes into effect the day *after* you obtain it and it is valid for only 60 days after it is issued, so do not request it early.
4. Other special documents as needed.

### **WHERE DO WE GET READY ON THE DAY OF THE WEDDING?**

The bride may prepare in the Nazareth Room.

### **WHAT ELSE DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE DAY OF THE WEDDING?**

1. When in the church and the chapel, please respect the presence of the Eucharist and ask others to maintain that respect.
2. The use of alcohol and/or other drug substances is strictly prohibited on the day of the rehearsal or wedding until off the parish grounds.
3. Holy Mass on Saturday begins at 4:30 PM. All photography in the Church must conclude by 4:00 PM.
4. For reasons of safety and maintenance, the use of rice and/or bird seed on the church property is strictly prohibited. Balloons or other signs of celebration should be discussed with the priest or deacon.
5. We encourage you to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation in preparation for your Wedding Day. Please set an appointment with one of the priests, or come to the Church any Saturday between 9 and 10 AM, or 3 and 4 PM, or Tuesday evening between 6 and 7 PM.