

## **ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON WEDDING POLICY PACKET**

### **Celebrating Marriage: Preparing the Roman Catholic Wedding A Workbook for Engaged Couples**

### **Sharing a Beginning...:Enrichment Programs for the Engaged**

### **F.O.C.U.S Facilitating open couple communication understanding and study**

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Dear Friends,

Congratulations on your decision to marry! This packet of information is given to aid you in your preparation for celebration of the sacrament of Catholic marriage.

As a starting principle, it is important that all aspects of the wedding celebration be guided by awareness that you are preparing for a Catholic **marriage**... not simply a civil union. A Catholic marriage is a sacramental sign and symbol of God's love for his people and of Christ's love for his Church. The sacrament of matrimony is above all a celebration of this love as it is reflected in the married love of a man and a woman.

Another important principle is that the sacrament of marriage is a **public community event**... not just a private family affair. Therefore, the wedding celebration is meant to speak to and involve all present—the congregation as well as the bride and groom. It highlights and celebrates your love as the reflection of God's love for us in Christ.

In order to help stabilize and strengthen marriages, and in order to promote meaningful, attractive, and prayerful liturgies, it is imperative for the Church to require a program of preparation prior to celebrating the sacrament.

**There are two major phases of this preparation:**

- 1. The assessment and instructional phase;**
- 2. The preparation and planning phase.**

Both of these phases are explained in the accompanying packet of information. Please read this information carefully to help us all avoid misunderstandings.

We at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton look forward to assisting you at this most important time. We hope and pray that this period of preparation for your marriage will be blessed in every way. May God bless you in your love for one another.

Sincerely,

Father Joe Aufdermauer  
Pastor

# MARRIAGE PREPARATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION AND INITIAL MEETING

A. **Membership:** Either the bride or the groom or both must be participating members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish for a minimum of six months prior to scheduling the wedding. Special consideration will be given to couples whose parents are members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. In the latter case, a letter must be obtained from the parish where the bride or groom reside. This letter must state that:

1. The bride/groom is a member in good standing;
2. The pastor gives permission for a priest from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to administer the sacrament of marriage

**The marriage may not be scheduled without membership or receipt of the above mentioned letter.**

B. **Initial Meeting:** The couple sets up an initial meeting with the priest at least six months or more in advance of the wedding. The purpose of this meeting is to explain the two major phases of the preparation process, to fill out the initial set of papers required by the church and to answer any questions which the bride or groom may have.

### **Items to bring to the initial meeting:**

1. FOR CATHOLICS: a copy of your "annotated" baptismal certificate which was recently issued (within six months of your wedding date). If the initial meeting takes place earlier than this, wait and request the certificate later. This can be obtained by contacting the parish of your baptism and asking them to forward a copy to you.  
FOR NON-CATHOLICS: any copy of your baptismal certificate.
2. FOR CATHOLICS ONLY: the date and place of your confirmation (this will appear on your annotated baptismal certificate).
3. FOR NON-PARISHIONERS: the letter of permission from your pastor.
4. Affidavits of Freedom to Marry – Two affidavits (witnesses as to your freedom to marry) are needed for both bride and groom. These two witnesses for each may be your parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, good friends or anyone else who has known you most of your life. These people are to call the priest/deacon as soon as possible and make an appointment to fill out these forms. This must be done by a personal interview in the presence of a priest or deacon. It will normally take about 10 minutes. These affidavits are needed in all Catholic and inter-faith marriages when the party is not personally known by the priest/deacon.

### **Other documents needed before the wedding but not at the initial meeting:**

5. The Parish Census Form (enclosed)
6. Your marriage license must be obtained through the Clerk of Courts in the county where one of you is in residence in the state of Wisconsin. Out of state residents must obtain a Wisconsin license in Waukesha County.

County Clerk's Office  
Milwaukee County Courthouse  
901 N. Ninth Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53233  
(414) 278-4071

Waukesha County Clerk's Office  
1320 Pewaukee Road  
Waukesha, WI 53188  
(414) 548-7878

***Make sure that the priest or deacon has your license no later than the rehearsal.***

**C. Please Note:** If either of you has been married previously in either a church or civil ceremony, it is important that you inform the priest immediately. In this case you should have the initial meeting with the priest sooner than the standard six months before the wedding.

## **II. THE ASSESSMENT & INSTRUCTION PHASE**

### **A. Enrichment Day**

The couple participates in an Enrichment Day for the engaged, sponsored by the Archdiocese and offered at parishes throughout the Archdiocese. The day is presented by married couples and staff people from the Archdiocesan Office of Adult & Family Ministry. Since registration is limited, couples need to register early. A brochure listing dates and locations is available at the parish office.

### **B. F.O.C.C.U.S. Inventory**

The couple also meets with a married couple from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton to take the F.O.C.C.U.S (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study) inventory. This will involve at least two meetings: one to take the survey and one or more meetings to discuss the results. The survey is not a test but rather an opportunity to see how well couples are communicating about important marriage issues. The priest will give your name to one of our F.O.C.C.US couples after the initial meeting.

### **C. Instruction**

The priest will also meet with the couple for additional instructions on the nature of sacraments and the sanctity of marriage as a sacrament. You are preparing to make a statement of faith as you exchange your vows of love. It is appropriate that some time be spent reflecting on the nature of the statement you will be making. These sessions will vary in number and length based upon your needs as a couple.

### **D. Decision to Delay a Marriage**

In consultation with the pastor and the couple, a priest may decide to delay a marriage. A decision to delay a marriage is made only for a just cause. When a delay is recommended the couple will be offered resources to help remove the cause(s) of delay and will be advised of the process of appeal. Priests and deacons can refuse the sacrament of marriage only if the marriage will not be valid or licit.

### III. THE LITURGY PLANNING PHASE

**A.** Once the Assessment and Instruction Phase has been completed, the couple meets with the priest to **prepare the wedding liturgy**. An explanation of the various liturgical options (procession, prayers, Scripture readings, placement, ministers, etc.) is included with this packet and will be discussed in detail.

**B.** All decisions regarding the liturgy are subject to approval by the priest of the parish. All choices of wedding music are subject to approval by the parish Director of Music and Liturgy. Once you have met with the priest to discuss the liturgy, be sure to arrange a personal appointment with the Director of Music and Liturgy at least three months in advance of your wedding date. The Director is most willing to help you select music for your wedding.

**C.** Saturday weddings are usually celebrated at 2:00 p.m. An earlier time is subject to the approval of the priest. Friday evening weddings are an exception to the rule and will only be scheduled with due consideration of the calendar. A rehearsal for a Friday wedding will be scheduled earlier in the week.

**D.** Rehearsal times will be scheduled at the time of scheduling the wedding. Rehearsals are scheduled at the intervals before/after any scheduled wedding on Friday evenings. Rehearsals may be arranged on other days of the week, depending upon church availability and the priest's schedule.

**E.** Please have everyone ready to begin **on time** for both the rehearsal and the actual wedding liturgy. Smoking is not allowed in any of the church buildings; no consumption of alcohol or other behavior-influencing chemicals is allowed anywhere on the parish grounds. Anyone under the influence of such substances will be asked to leave. If the bride, groom or other attendants are involved, the priest has the right to postpone the marriage. The marriage, if witnessed while the bride or groom has been drinking, could be considered invalid because of the lessening of one's freedom through the use of alcohol/drugs.

**F.** No rice, bird seed, confetti, rose petals or other matter is to be thrown. The bride's room, church entry area, and the chairs are to be in good order after your wedding. No furniture is to be moved at any time.

**G.** The parish does not allow the use of aisle runners. The floors are kept clean on a daily basis and aisle runners have proven to be hazardous to wedding guests.

**H.** Your church decorations cannot conflict with those of the parish and the parish decorations may not be disturbed. Decorations must be approved by the parish priest in advance of your wedding date. No flowers/decorations may be placed on top of the altar or in such a way as to obscure it. The Wedding Candle, if used, may also be incorporated into a flower arrangement. If you desire to light a Wedding Candle during your wedding liturgy, you must provide the larger candle, the two smaller candles, and any necessary candle holders. These items will be placed on an appropriate table provided by the parish, and not on the altar.

**I.** Be sure to read the insert entitled, "*Guidelines For Videotaping and Still Photography at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.*" Anyone involved in this process should receive these guidelines and confer with the priest beforehand to resolve any related question.

## SPECIAL NOTES FOR INTERDENOMINATIONAL OR INTERFAITH COUPLES

A. It is generally presumed that interfaith couples will celebrate marriage without the Eucharist. This is done so that all those present can fully participate in the entire liturgy. It is not necessary to celebrate Mass as part of the wedding liturgy *and The Rite of Marriage outside of Mass* is a beautiful ritual. Ministers of other Christian denominations (e.g. the pastor of the non-Catholic spouse) are most welcome to participate at the wedding ceremony at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. The Roman Catholic priest or deacon must be the witness to the vows. In rare cases where Mass would be celebrated for an interfaith marriage there are more restrictions on the involvement of the non-Catholic minister.

B. If the marriage is to take place in another Christian church, the permission of the Archbishop is required. Please discuss this with the parish priest.

C. An interfaith marriage is a special opportunity for unity among Christians and for growth in mutual respect. An interfaith marriage also raises many questions about how the couple and family will share faith. The couple is urged to discuss these issues beforehand, and especially during the preparation process. In an interfaith marriage, the Catholic party is expected to take responsibility for the faith of any children born of the marriage. Specifically, the Catholic person will be asked to sign the following promise:

*"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."*

The couple is urged to discuss this with each other and with the priest or deacon. When a marriage is celebrated between a Catholic and a non-baptized person or member of a non-Christian faith, the marriage is never celebrated within the context of Mass. Special care to the planning of these celebrations needs to be taken.

## **USHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. You are primarily ministers of hospitality. The bride and groom have invited their guests. You are to greet them upon arrival and make them feel welcome.
2. Ushers should be at the rehearsal. Learn the locations of the restrooms, fire extinguisher, sacristy, telephone and bride's room. A First Aid kit is available.
3. Arrive at least 40 minutes before the wedding liturgy. Keep the outside doors of the church closed as much as possible. After the liturgy begins, please close the inside doors to the Church as well. This will allow the heating and air conditioning systems to work properly.
4. Begin to seat people no later than 20 minutes before the liturgy is to begin. People are most welcome to visit before the liturgy begins, but it is your job to move everyone toward their places so that we can begin unhurriedly and on time. Seat people on both sides of the altar. As people arrive, greet them warmly and hand them a printed Order of Worship as you guide them to their seats.
5. Be alert for any persons with disabilities who may need assistance from their cars and/or getting to their seat. You may remove a chair or two from the end of a row in order to allow a person using a wheelchair to sit among the congregation and not "out in the aisle." After the ceremony, it is your responsibility to replace the chairs.
6. We strongly discourage the practice of seating friends of the bride on one side and friends of the groom on the other. We are one Christian community. Simply seat people from the front rows to the back, leaving only the necessary reserved rows for the immediate family and the wedding party.
7. Once the ceremony has begun, be alert to latecomers. Position yourself so that you can keep an eye on the entire assembly, including the wedding party. If anyone becomes dizzy or ill, immediately help them to a restroom or out of the church with as little commotion as possible.
8. After the liturgy, pick up all Orders of Worship, Kleenex, etc. from the chairs and make sure that the entry area and restrooms are neat and in order. If you see anyone prepared to throw rice or other matter, please remind them in a friendly manner that this is not allowed.
9. At no time is any furniture to be rearranged with the exception mentioned above for those living with disabilities.
10. The priest or deacon will inform you of any special duties regarding the liturgy at the rehearsal.

**Thank you for performing this important ministry of making everyone feel welcome!**

## GUIDELINES FOR VIDEOTAPING AND STILL PHOTOGRAPHY

Above all else, a wedding celebrated at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish is the Church's celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. Hence this ritual is sacred prayer in which the whole congregation participates. This must be kept in mind at all times. Based on this principle are the following rules:

1. Photographic personnel are expected to behave in a professional, courteous manner at all times. They are not allowed in the altar area during the liturgy. They are not to climb on or move any furniture. Throughout the liturgy, they are to create no distractions, and are never to obstruct the view of anyone. They are to leave no litter behind.
2. Photographic personnel are welcome to attend the wedding rehearsal. If they have any questions regarding the guidelines, they should speak directly to the priest or deacon before the liturgy. Photographic personnel are to observe **strictly** the time limits surrounding your wedding celebration. This is defined as no more than one hour before and after the wedding.
3. Flash photography is allowed. Video or movie flood lights are not allowed. During the entrance and recessional processions, there is to be no signaling of directions to persons in the procession.
4. At all times the priest or deacon is the one who is in charge of directing the actions of the wedding party. He will instruct them to spend some time preparing quietly before the liturgy begins and may need time with members of the wedding party after the ceremony is finished.
5. All posed pictures are to reflect a basic respect for the church as a house of prayer; e.g.: no "garter shots" of the bride or "gag shots" in or around the church.
6. When situating video equipment please consult with the priest or deacon for the recommended locations. All equipment is to be removed afterwards.
7. You are responsible for all of your own equipment. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parish is not responsible for any equipment damaged or stolen.

## LITURGY PLANNING ITEMS

### *INTRODUCTION*

The Wedding Liturgy is first and foremost the public worship of God. In other words, even though it focuses on the bride and groom, the wedding liturgy is the total community's act of worship within which the bride and groom's exchange of vows takes place.

What happens at Sunday Mass is really the model to be used in planning a wedding. Therefore, the easiest way for a couple to plan and prepare this liturgy is to think about what happens at Sunday Mass...

- **USHERS** welcome the people, help them to find a place and hand out the participation aids;
- **LECTORS** (readers) proclaim the Word of God from the Sacred Scriptures;
- The **ASSEMBLY** participates in song, prayer, and gesture;
- **MINISTERS OF COMMUNION** assist in the distribution of Holy Communion;
- The **GIFT BEARERS** present the bread and wine as well as food for the needy;
- **MUSIC MINISTERS** (instrumentalists and singers) lead the assembly in song;
- The **PRESIDER** calls the community to prayer, coordinates the various ministries and leads the worship.

All of the above mentioned ministries are encouraged at the wedding liturgy. In addition, the BRIDE & GROOM are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage, while the Best Man and Maid or Matron of Honor, both of whom must be 18 years of age or older, are the legal witnesses. Other than the two legal witnesses, there is no real function for other attendants at the wedding. Therefore, try to keep the number of Groomsmen and Bridesmaids at a minimum. The use of small children in the wedding party is discouraged.

### *CHOICE OF MINISTERS*

**Cross Bearer** - The procession that begins each worship service focuses the attention of the community on the Lord and the fact that we have gathered to worship. The processional cross is that focal point. You might choose a family member or friend to carry the processional cross. This person should be present at the rehearsal.

**Lector** - The lector normally reads two Scripture readings and the general intercessions (petitions). You may choose to have one lector read all three or you may divide the responsibility among two or even three lectors. Ideally, the lector would be someone who reads in their church. However, any person of faith who reads well may proclaim the Scriptures. The lector also carries the Book of Scriptures in the procession. Lectors should be present at the rehearsal.

## LITURGY PLANNING ITEMS, P. 2

**Ministers of Communion** - If the wedding is celebrated within the context of Mass, at least one minister of the communion cup will be needed. If you have friends or relatives who perform this service at their parish, you might ask them to distribute at your wedding. They should be present at the rehearsal.

**Gift Bearers** - If the wedding is celebrated within Mass, you will need at least two gift bearers to bring up the bread and wine. Anyone may serve as a gift bearer, so children too young to participate in other ways may be included in this, along with their parents or older siblings.

**Musicians** – **The primary ministers of music for your wedding will be the parish Director of Music and a Cantor of her choice.** If there is someone whom you would like to have play a musical instrument or sing, be sure that they have had previous experience and are comfortable with public performance. Anyone whom you invite to help with your music, whether vocalist or instrumentalist, must observe all aspects of the parish wedding music policy; they must meet with the parish Director of Liturgy and Music and be approved by her, and they must cooperate with her guidance.

**NOTE:** A properly prepared Order of Worship is required for all weddings celebrated at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. The preparation of this Order of Worship is done by the Director of Music and Liturgy with your consultation. A camera-ready or digital (PDF) copy will be prepared for you and the printing will be done at Seton. The Director of Music and Liturgy will direct you as to the size and weight of paper. If you choose to have the printing done outside of the parish you must use the camera-ready or digital (PDF) copy prepared for you. All music published must have proper copyright permission. The parish owns many of the license agreements that make this duplication of music legal.

## Suggested Wedding Music List

**This is just a sample of music available for weddings. Additional selections will be made available at your meeting with the Director of Music.**

### *Processional/Recessional*

Canon in D - Pachelbel  
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - Bach  
Prince of Denmark March - Clarke  
Trumpet Tune - Purcell  
Psalm XIX - Marcello  
Allegro Maestoso from *The Water Music* Suite - Handel  
Prelude in Classic Style - Young  
Processional of Joy - Beethoven/Hopson

### *Gathering Songs*

God Is Love D. - Haas  
God, In The Planning - J. Bell (SLANE)  
When Love Is Found - B. Wren (O WALY WALY)  
Hear Us Now, Our God and Father - H. Huxhold (HYFRYDOL)  
All Things New B. - Wren (STEEPLE BELLS)

### *Responsorial Psalms*

33 Blessed Are We J. - Cotter  
33 The Earth Is Full of Beauty - J. Cotter  
34 Every Morning In Your Eyes - R. Cooney  
34 I Will Always Thank The Lord - S. Soper  
34 Taste And See J. - Moore, Jr.  
34 Taste And See M. - Haugen  
34 The Goodness of God D. - Haas  
103 The Lord Is Kind And Merciful - J. Cotter  
103 The Lord Is Kind And Merciful - M. Haugen  
112 God's Command D. - Haas  
128 Blest Are Those Who Love You - M. Haugen  
128 Happy Are They Who Honor The Lord - D. Haas  
145 I Will Praise Your Name - D. Haas  
145 Our God Is Compassion - J. Cotter  
148 Let All Praise The Name Of The Lord - J. Cotter.

## Suggested Wedding Music List, P2

### *Communion Songs*

Eat This Bread - J. Berthier  
Gift of Finest Wheat - O. Westendorf/R. Kreutz  
God Is Love - D. Haas  
I Am the Bread of Life - S. Toolan  
I Myself Am the Bread of Life - R. Cooney  
I Say "Yes," Lord - D. Peña  
In the Breaking of the Bread - B. Hurd  
Jesu, Jesu Ghana Folk Song  
One Bread, One Body - J. Foley  
Prayer of St. Francis / *Make Me A Channel Of Your Peace* - S. Temple  
Song of the Body of Christ - D. Haas  
The Servant Song - Gillard  
Ubi Caritas - B. Hurd  
Ubi Caritas - J. Berthier  
We Have Been Told - D. Haas  
We Remember - M. Haugen  
We Walk by Faith - M. Haugen  
You Are Our Living Bread - M. Joncas

## **Wedding Fees**

The standard fee for weddings at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton is \$500.00.

A non-refundable deposit of \$250.00 is required at the time the couple reserves the date for the wedding and picks up the wedding packet. The Balance of \$250.00 must be paid at the Church Office at any time during the week prior to the wedding.

Included within this fee are the following:

### ***Marriage Preparation***

- Packet
- Document Processing
- FOCCUS Couple
- Consultations with Presiding Minister and Director of Music & Worship

### ***Facilities Use***

- Changing rooms and restrooms beginning one hour before the Ceremony.
- Heating or Air conditioning for the Rehearsal and Ceremony.
- Church for photography before the ceremony and one half hour following the ceremony.
- Custodial services.

### ***Clergy and Musicians***

- Stipends for Presiding Minister for Rehearsal and Ceremony.
- Stipends for the Director of Music and Cantor for Ceremony.
- Note: The Parish Director of Music and a Cantor selected by the Director of Music will usually be the primary ministers of music for the wedding liturgy.

### ***Standard Order of Worship (Program)***

- Electronic file (PDF) for production either by Parish or off-site.
- Parish supplies standard 24# paper, printing, folding and collating.

### ***Not included:***

The following items are not included in the Standard Fee and will be charged separately.

- Musicians present at the Wedding Rehearsal.
- Rehearsal with Singers or Instrumentalists other than the day of the Wedding.
- Wedding Program using non-standard papers ("torn edge" or embossing), color printing, color photography, stapling or binding must be printed commercially.

**SETON PARISH CENSUS FORM  
FOR ENGAGED AND NEWLY MARRIED COUPLES**

After your wedding you will want to register as a couple in the parish of your choice. Please complete the information below and return this form to the priest/deacon who is assisting you in the preparation of your wedding. Thank you.

Family name after marriage	
Address after marriage	
City, State Zip Code	
Telephone number:	(     )

	Husband	Wife
First Name		
Date of Birth		
Place of Employment		
Type of Work		
Business Phone		
E-mail		

(Please circle one)

We **will** / **will not** continue membership at St. Eliabeth Ann Seton Parish after our wedding.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Please inform us of the location of the parish nearest to our new residence.

For Office Use:

DELETE/INACTIVE NUMBER	
RECORDED ON MEMBERSHIP CARDS	
RECORDED ON COMPUTER	