

Guidelines for Wedding Rehearsals

When:

Rehearsals are usually scheduled late afternoons and evenings during the week. We make every effort to schedule your rehearsal at a convenient day and time for you; contact the Rectory no more than four months prior to your wedding date. PLEASE BE ON TIME as there are usually other events scheduled before and after your rehearsal!

Where:

St. Rose of Lima Church
Merrick Road
Massapequa, NY 11758
516.798.4992

Who:

Rehearsal attendees should be the: Bride, Groom, Parents, Bridal Party, others in the procession, readers and gift presenters (Nuptial Mass only). Please note that the Ring Bearer and Flower Girl(s) should not be younger than 3 years of age.

What to bring:

- a. Civil Marriage License
- b. Unity candle set, including base and tapers & Wedding Programs (both optional); be sure all are together and labeled with your names, date and time of the wedding.
- c. Order of Service (from the *Together for Life* book) if not previously submitted
- d. Order of Procession
- e. Any paperwork still outstanding
- f. Offerings for the church and music
- g. Optional 'tip' for two altar servers

How the rehearsal is run:

The Bride and Groom meet with the Rehearsal Coordinator in the Sacristy. The Coordinator will:

- Check if the marriage license is filled out and valid (at least 1 day and less than 60 days old).
- Assemble final documents brought by the Bride and collect the offering check(s), and unity candle.
- Fill out Sacristan's information sheet, and attach it to the unity candle &/or any other items brought for the wedding.
- Once the rehearsal is finished, the Coordinator will obtain signatures from witnesses on marriage license.

1) Wedding Procession:

- a) The Groom and Best Man arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of the wedding and stay in the Priest's Sacristy until the wedding begins. When the Bride arrives, the Sacristan will give a cue to the Groom and Best Man to take their positions outside the side door until the processional song is played.
- b) The Ushers must make sure they get the guests seated promptly or the Bride will not exit the limo and the ceremony will not start. The Bride's side sits on the left side of the Church and the Groom's side sits on the right. Please remember Confessions are heard in the Church on Saturdays between 2:30 and 4:30. If your ceremony is within these times please respect those present for Confession, and try to keep the Bridal Party's tone quiet.
- c) After the Bride has arrived and before the runner is pulled and the Bridal Party enters, the Mothers of the Groom and Bride (in that order) are escorted to their seats by a person of their choice. Step-mothers are seated before the biological mothers in the 3rd pew. The Mother of the Groom is escorted to the 2nd pew on the right side. The Mother of the Bride is escorted to the 2nd pew on the left side. The runner (if used) is placed by the limousine service down the center of the aisle at the very beginning of the procession. Please remind the limousine company they need to bring the extra long runner as the aisle is 120'.
- d) The Bridal Party will line up in order in the lobby (Narthex). Usual order of procession is Bridal Party (from shortest to tallest), Ring Bearer and Flower Girls (any order or arrangement), Maid/Matron of Honor and lastly the Bride accompanied by her Father or both Parents.
- e) The Sacristan will signal when all is ready to begin.
- f) Entrance song begins, which signals the entrance of the Officiant, Groom and Best Man, and the start of the Bridal Party entrance. The Sacristan will give cues to and space the Bridal Procession. The Officiant comes to the front of the altar. The Groom stands at the end of the first pew with his Best Man to his right and a little behind the Groom.
- g) Bridesmaids and Ushers entering as a couple stop at the 1st pew, bow and walk to the end of the 1st pew. If the Bridesmaids walk alone, the Ushers enter the Church and sit down right before the Moms are seated. The Ushers can also meet the Bridesmaids halfway down the aisle and continue to their seats together. The Ushers sit in the 1st pew on the right; the Bridesmaids sit in the 1st pew on the left. First one in, will be last one out. If the Bride wants the first one in to be first out, the Bridesmaids and Ushers can walk in front of the pew during the entrance, and enter the pew from the far side, walking toward the center aisle. Please remember to bow before you enter the pew.
- h) The Maid of Honor enters and stops at the end of the 1st pew on the left.
- i) The Bride escorted by her Father/Parents stops even with the 2nd pew. If the Mother is escorting, she lifts the Bride's veil and gives her a kiss first. If just the Father is escorting, he lifts the Bride's veil, gives her a kiss and brings her hand to the Groom. The Father acknowledges the Groom (usually a handshake or hug) and places the Bride's hand in the Groom's left hand. The Father waits for the Bride's train to pass and he continues to

his seat in the 2nd or 3rd row. The Groom escorts the Bride to her chair on the altar and stands in front of his chair. The Maid of Honor and Best Man follow the Bride and Groom up the altar and stand in front of their own chairs. Bride is always on the left, Groom on the right.

2) Liturgy of the Word:

- a) When the entrance song ends there is a short Opening Prayer and the congregation is asked to sit down.
- b) The Officiant will announce the first reader. He/she will walk up to the steps in front of the altar and bow (if they are not Catholic it is their choice to bow). He/she proceeds to the lectern at the altar and starts the reading with "A reading from the..." and finishes with "The Word of the Lord", waits for the response "Thanks Be to God" and returns to his/her seat, down the steps and makes another bow as he/she leaves the altar.
- c) After the first reading is the Responsorial Psalm. The Officiant will announce the reader for this and that person will follow the same procedure in b) above. Usually the Responsorial Psalm is sung by the Church's singer.
- d) The Officiant will announce the second reader. This person will follow the same procedure in b) above.
- e) The Gospel is read by the Officiant and followed by a Homily. After the Homily, the Officiant moves toward the Bride and Groom, accompanied by the altar servers, and says "Please stand". Only those on the altar are to stand for the Rite of Marriage.

3) Rite of Marriage:

- a) The Officiant asks the couple to declare their consent by answering 3 questions. The response to the 1st question is "I do." The responses to the 2nd and 3rd questions are "I will." Both Bride and Groom respond simultaneously.
- b) The Officiant will then direct the Bride and Groom to face each other and join right hands to state their intentions. The vows can be recited after the Officiant or asked through questions with the response "I do." It is important to look at each other and speak loudly when exchanging vows.
- c) The Officiant asks the Best Man to place the rings on the tray. The Officiant blesses them and asks the Groom to take the Bride's ring. The Groom, while looking at the Bride and sliding the ring down her finger, recites after the Officiant. The Officiant asks the Bride to take the Groom's ring and place it on his finger, also looking at him and reciting after the Officiant.
- d) If the couple is having a Candle Ceremony they approach the altar and light the tapered candle from the altar candles. They combine the lights of both tapered candles and light the Unity Candle with one flame. They replace the lit candles in the holder, and ask the Blessed Virgin Mary for her blessing by quietly saying the "Hail Mary", and then return to their seats. The Best Man and Maid of Honor may be seated when the Bride and Groom come up to the altar.
- e) If the wedding is only a Ceremony, the flowers to the Blessed Mother or to the Mothers can be done at this time. The Flowers to The Blessed Mother are placed at the foot of her statue, to the left of the altar. The Bride and Groom should quietly recite a "Hail

Mary” before returning to their seats. If a Nuptial Mass, the flowers can be brought to the Mothers during the Sign of Peace and to the Blessed Mother right after that. Flowers may be distributed after the offertory, after communion, or before the final blessing. Please verify the best time with your Officiant.

- f) If the Prayer of the Faithful is to be read by a family member, the Officiant will announce their name. The reader will go to the lectern in the same way the other readers went to the altar in 2b) above. After the Officiant introduces the Prayer of the Faithful the reader states “The response is...” and continues with their petitions. The Officiant will recite the last petition; the congregation responds “Amen” and the reader may return to his/her seat.

4) Liturgy of the Eucharist (Nuptial Mass only)

- a) After the Prayer of the Faithful the Priest will go to the steps to receive the gifts from those designated by the Bride and Groom. This can be one to three people. These gifts are placed on the offertory table just in front of the third pew. The Nuptial Blessing will be during the Eucharistic Prayer.
- b) Kiss of Peace: The Bridal Couple may give the Kiss of Peace to each other, Best Man, Maid of Honor and any member of the Bridal Party and immediate family. If the Bridal Couple is going to give flowers to their Mothers it is done at this time. The Groom will pick-up the flowers for their Mothers on their way to greet the Bridal Party. If the Bridal Couple wishes to give flowers to the Blessed Mother, it is done on their return from the Kiss of Peace. On their return, they make their way to the Blessed Mother’s statue. On the way the Groom picks up the flowers and rejoins the Bride and they move to the Blessed Mother. The Bride lays the flowers at the Blessed Mother’s feet and they quietly say a “Hail Mary” and return to their seats.

5) Wedding Procession:

a) After the final blessing and the “Groom may kiss your Bride” the Maid of Honor gives the Bride her flowers and, together with the Best Man slides the Bridal Couple’s chair aside so the Bridal Couple can turn in and exit the Church. The Couple waits until the photographer takes their picture and then they exit. The Best Man and Maid of Honor follow along with the Bridal Party. The Ring Bearer and Flower Girl may exit with the Bridal Party. The Bride’s parents are the first to exit after the Bridal Party followed by the Groom’s parents. If the Bridal Couple wishes, a Receiving Line may be formed in the back of the Church.

6) Receiving Line:

a) The Receiving Line is formed in the rear vestibule of the Church (Narthex). The Bridal Couple stand on the left side (as you exit the Church) flanked by their parents. The listing below shows the suggested order:

Outside of Church

Best Man	Groom's Dad
Maid of Honor	Groom's Mom
Usher	Groom
Bride's Maid	Bride
Usher	Bride's Mom
Bride's Maid	Bride's Dad

Rear Church Doors

- b) If the Bridal Couple do not want a receiving line, the rear doors can be closed when the Bridal Party exits and the Parents can still greet the people as they exit the east doors.
- c) Please exit the Church promptly as there may be other functions immediately following.