HOLY SPIRIT FREMONT

Sacrament *of* Marriage & Wedding Guidelines

* Raffaello Sanzio (Raphael). *The Marriage of the Virgin.* 1504

CELEBRATING YOUR SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

My Dear Couple,

Congratulations on your engagement! We rejoice with you as you embark on this beautiful and exciting journey toward getting married in the Church. Thank you for saying yes to this beautiful vocation of God's gift to you and your future family.

We pray for you. Throughout this process, may you find this booklet helpful and rewarding. Know that we are always here to help, support and accompany you. If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to let us know.

The success of this program depends on your commitment and cooperation.

Again, congratulations and may God's blessings be upon you always,

Sincerely yours,

Fr. Kenneth Sales
Pastor

THINGS YOU NEED TO DO

- [ ] 1) Courtesy Visit or Call with the Pastor
- [ ] 2) First Interview with Celebrant (priest or deacon)
- [ ] 3) Reserve the Church for the ceremony, turn in church deposit with a signed copy of the Wedding Guidelines Agreement
- [ ] 4) Second Interview: Self-Testimony or Form A

5) Required Documents:

- [ ] Original Baptismal Certificate issued within 6 months of wedding date
- [ ] Copy of First Holy Communion Certificate
- [ ] Copy of Confirmation
- [ ] Certificate of Completed Marriage Preparation
- [ ] California Marriage License
- [ ] 6) Form B or Witness Interview

7) If previously married

- [ ] Marriage Certificate of previous marriage
- [ ] Decree of Divorce
- [ ] Original Decree of Nullity from Ecclesiastical Tribunal

8) Marriage Preparation Program:

- [ ] FOCCUS inventory
- [ ] Evenings for the Engaged
- [ ] NFP
- [ ] 9) Sacrament of Reconciliation
- [ ] 10) Complete any remaining financial offerings and fees due to the Church 3 months prior to wedding date.
- [ ] 11) Contact the Director of Liturgical Music
- [ ] 12) Contact the Wedding Coordinator
- [ ] 13) Wedding Ceremony Guidelines

Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1601

The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament.

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Our parish community rejoices with you on your engagement. By choosing our parish to witness your commitment to each other, you have chosen to be a part of this community. In turn the parish promises to rejoice in your joys and be a support in times of need. Here are the steps that you need to follow.

1. *Courtesy Visit or Call with the Pastor.* The Pastor is the father and head of our faith family and community. When he is not the celebrant at your wedding, we ask that you meet, call, or email the Pastor during this period of preparation to introduce yourself and your fiancé(e).
2. *First Interview with the Wedding Celebrant (priest or deacon).* This is the first step in the wedding preparation process. At least 6 months before the desired date of marriage, please contact your wedding celebrant (priest or deacon) to schedule a meeting. This informational meeting will give you an overview of the requirements for marriage. You will also discuss your unique situation as it relates to marriage in the Catholic Church. *No wedding date or time can be set until after this meeting.*
3. *Church Reservation and Initial Deposit.* Select a wedding date and time in accordance with church availability Turn in the church deposit to reserve the date along with a signed copy of the *Wedding Guidelines Agreement*.
4. *Second Interview: Form A or Self-Testimony.* The law of the church requires establishing that you are free from coercion and free from impediments to marry. Form A is a formal declaration of your freedom to marry in the presence of the priest or deacon. Statements of the bride and the groom are recorded. When the other party is not Catholic, the priest who prepares you will help you obtain a dispensation from the Diocese of Oakland for the Catholic wedding.
5. *If Previously Married,* In cases where one or both parties were previously married whether in a church, or in a civil ceremony, the status of that marriage must be determined before any wedding date or preparation for a Catholic wedding can be completed. You need to provide copies of the Marriage Certificate of the previous marriage and a cover page of the Decree of Divorce in order to complete a petition for the declaration of nullity to the Oakland Diocese Tribunal. Additionally, if there was a previous attempt to marry in the Catholic Church that was

declared null by the Ecclesiastical Courts, you must provide the original Decree of Nullity issued by the tribunal.

6. *Required Documents.* The following documents must be submitted within a given time frame.
   1. Recent Baptismal Certificate. Baptismal Certificate, with all notations that show subsequent sacraments received must be current and obtained from the parish you were baptized in. It must be issued within 6 months of your wedding date.
   2. Copies of First Communion and Confirmation Certificates. These certificates can be obtained from the parish where you received the sacraments.
   3. Certificate of Completed Marriage Preparation (See no. 7)
   4. California Marriage License. Obtaining the civil marriage license from the County is your responsibility. Check the requirements and fees with the County. Civil marriage licenses are valid for only 90 days. The civil marriage license must be handed over to the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal.
   5. Other Documents if Previously Married (See no. 4). Copies of
      (1)Marriage Certificate of previous marriage,
      (2) Decree of Divorce, and
      (3) Original Decree of Nullity if declared null by the Ecclesiastical Tribunal.
7. *Form B or Witness Affidavit of Free Status.* Two-forms are filled out for both the Bride and the Groom by family members who have known them since puberty. It confirms that you are not currently married to another and that you plan to follow the teachings of Christ regarding the sacrament of marriage. This form must be completed in the presence of the Catholic priest or deacon. If the witness resides outside the Diocese of Oakland, the witness can go to their local Catholic Church and ask a priest or deacon to do the interview and fill-out the form together. Once completed, the Catholic priest/deacon will affix the Parish seal to the document and mail it to us for inclusion in your wedding file.
8. *Holy Spirit Marriage Preparation Program (HSMPP).* This includes: *Evenings for the Engaged*, a six-week course covering discussions topics such as Communication, Intimacy in Marriage, etc.; *FOCCUS Inventory*, a questionnaire that the bride and groom completes separately and which provides a personalized profile of the couple's relationship; and *Natural Family Planning*, a two-part course that helps couples better understand God's design for marriage and spousal love.

9. *Sacrament of Reconciliation.* It is very important that you go to confession before your wedding especially if you have been away from the sacramental life of the Church for a long time or if you have not been to confession for a while. Make an appointment with the priest who is celebrating your wedding or other priests in the parish. In order to receive Communion, one must be in a state of grace.

10. *Wedding Guidelines Agreement.* Once the priest or deacon preparing you for marriage and conducting the pre-nuptial assessment establishes your freedom to marry, this information is passed on to the Facilities Coordinator who will reserve the church for your wedding. At this time, we ask that you read and understand the requirements in this packet before you sign the agreement on page 11. Please turn in the signed agreement and the wedding deposit to the Facilities Coordinator.

11. *Financial Offerings.* Our church is maintained through donations and the generosity of parishioners. We request a suitable contribution to fund our mission, our evangelization and maintain parish grounds and facilities. We ask that you prayerfully consider making a donation to the church that is comparable to other expenses incurred in the celebration. All financial offerings should be paid in full 3 months prior to the wedding.

For Weddings Outside Holy Spirit Church. When your Marriage Preparation takes place here in Holy Spirit parish, but your wedding ceremony will be celebrated at another Catholic parish, a fee of $250 will apply.

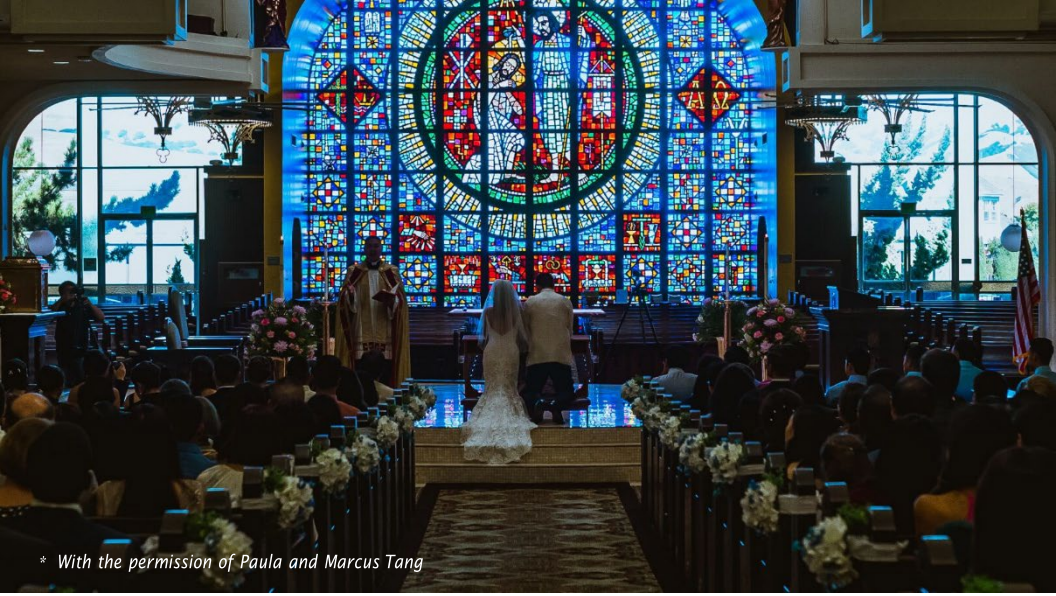
Fees

Reservation Deposit *(Refundable provided that all requirements in the Wedding Ceremony Guidelines section of this packet are met)*	$150
Registered Active Parishioners	$500
Non-Parishioners	$1000
Marriage Preparation Sessions	$175
Processing Fee for Marriage Paperwork	$250
Wedding Coordinator	$150
Music *(Please contact Director of Liturgical Music)*	

Donations

Suggested donation to the clergy	$125-200
Acolytes and Sacristan	$ 15 each

12. *Meeting with the Director of Liturgical Music.* It is advisable to meet with the Director of Liturgical Music at least two months before your wedding. He will assist you in selecting appropriate pieces for the ceremony and arranging for a vocalist, if needed.
13. *Meeting with the Wedding Coordinator.* The parish assigns a wedding coordinator to assist couples in planning the details of the solemn ceremony. The wedding coordinator schedules a rehearsal, arranges the procession into church and ensures that the wedding ceremony goes smoothly in all aspects. Any wedding planners that you may have retained have no authority on church premises. Liturgical norms, Canon Laws and parish guidelines are to be strictly adhered to.



* With the permission of Paula and Marcus Tang

THINGS TO EXPECT: WEDDING GUIDELINES

1. *Wedding Schedule.* Wedding celebrations are scheduled for Saturdays at 10 am, 12 pm and 2 pm in the Church or by special arrangement with the priest. We attempt to schedule weddings in such a way that all parish activities can be accommodated, and no one will feel rushed. Each couple will have approximately one hour and fifty minutes for the arrival of guests,the wedding liturgy and post celebration photography. Weddings may also be held on a Weekday as per clergy discretion and Church availability. It is extremely important that all participating members be on time for the rehearsal and the wedding mass. If the ceremony is late, the priest may have to eliminate some of the nonessential rites to avoid a disruption of parish life. The Church is needed for Masses and other planned events and tardiness disrupts the entire schedule.

Wedding begins at:	**Church available at:**	**Church cleared by:**
10:00 a.m.	9:30 a.m.	11:30 a.m.
12:00 p.m.	11:30 a.m.	01:30 p.m.
02:00 p.m.	01:30 p.m.	03:30 p.m.

In accordance with long standing Catholic practices and Diocesan policy, weddings must take place inside a church building. Weddings are not celebrated in homes, outdoors or elsewhere.

2. *Decorum.* Silence and reverence are appreciated in the Church. Please do not bring any food, drink, or gum into the Church. Please turn off your phones prior to the Mass beginning. Men must never wear a hat or cap while women are allowed to wear something covering their heads. No one should wear sunglasses in the church unless for health reasons. Limit conversations with others in the Church to maintain the sanctity of prayer.
3. *Readings.* If you are celebrating your wedding with a Nuptial Mass, you may select the Scripture Readings and Responsorial Psalm from a list of approved texts which the priest or the wedding coordinator will give you. As you choose them, we encourage you to read together all of the readings and psalms available and to prayerfully meditate on them as a couple.
4. *Ministers.* Couples may invite family members or friends to serve as Lectors to read the texts of scripture and Prayers of the Faithful, and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at the wedding ceremony. Those you select should be Catholics in full communion with the Church. They should attend the rehearsal to practice the proclamation in the specific acoustical environment of the Church unless they are regular and trained Lectors of Holy Spirit Church. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must be chosen from those who have been trained in this practice here at Holy Spirit Church.
5. *Priest or Deacon Celebrant.* If you would like a priest or deacon other than Holy Spirit clergy to preside at your wedding, that priest or deacon must send a letter to our pastor requesting a delegation mandated by Canonical Law to lawfully witness your marriage. If this visiting priest is from a diocese other than the Diocese of Oakland, he would additionally need to contact his diocese or province to obtain specific documentation which must be turned in 60 days prior to the wedding. Please contact the parish office for further details.
6. *Rehearsal Times.* Rehearsals are normally the evening before the ceremony at 6:00 PM or another time arranged with our Wedding Coordinator. On the First Friday of the Month, rehearsals must begin early (4:30 PM) to accommodate the First Friday Mass at 6:30 PM.
7. *Customs.* Specific wedding customs should be discussed with the celebrant and approved by the Pastor.
8. *Music.* The celebration of a wedding is a public liturgical action of the Church, only music that has been composed for the liturgy can be used during the celebration. This requirement precludes many selections about romantic love or other music associated with marriage and love in the secular sense, that may have meaning for an engaged couple but

may not be appropriate for a Catholic service of worship. For this reason, the parish Director of Liturgical Music must approve all musical selections in advanceof the ceremony. No pre-recorded music is allowed.

9. *Wedding Program.* If your wedding will be celebrated within a Mass, please include a brief paragraph in your program reminding non-Catholic guests to refrain from receiving Holy Communion. Below is an acceptable description:

> *During Holy Communion, those practicing Catholics who are properly disposed, in a state of grace, and have fasted for one hour may come forward to receive Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. All others are invited to come forward for a blessing, or to remain prayerfully in their place.*

10. *Attendants.* Children asked to serve as ring bearers or flower girls must be of an age able to walk unassisted easily down the church aisle. We recommend that after taking part in the procession, young children then sit with family members for the duration of the ceremony.
11. *Attire.* The wedding ceremony is a sacred celebration which takes place in a sacred space of divine worship. Such an occasion requires a corresponding dignity and modesty of dress in all members of the wedding party. We leave it to your good conscience to apply these policies to your choice of apparel, but if you or one of your attendants appears in what is a clear violation of Holy Spirit's dress code, that may need to be corrected before they participate in the wedding ceremony. If you do not wish to wear a gown with sleeves, please obtain a shawl or other shoulder covering for the bride and bridesmaids that can be worn for the duration of the time in the church and removed thereafter.
12. *Alcohol and Illegal Drugs are prohibited on the Church grounds.* If anyone in the wedding party appears to be intoxicated or in possession of alcohol or illegal drugs, they will be asked to leave immediately. If the Bride or Groom appears to be intoxicated, the wedding will be immediately cancelled, since intoxication prevents the valid exchange of wedding vows.
13. *Decor.* Any seasonal church decorations already in place at the time of your wedding should be left undisturbed. If your marriage is taking place during Advent or Lent, we ask that you respect the penitential nature of the seasons and be discreet with the flower arrangements.

14. Please do not tape, staple, glue, pin or otherwise affix anything to the pews, walls, doors or other furniture or furnishings in the church. Pew bows, should you wish to use them, may be attached to the pews with rubber bands or string, but notwith anything which might damage the finish. Nothing may be placed on the altar itself.

15. *Flowers.* Only real, fresh flowers or live greenery may be placed on the sanctuary. The florist should be aware that there may be other celebrations taking place immediately before yours which should not be disrupted. The florist may arrive approximately 30 minutes before the start of your weddingtime to begin setting up. If you would like to make a gift of flowers for the Sanctuary in honor of your wedding, please contact the parish office.

16. *Practices.* Ribbons, flowers, fabrics, veils, and the like are not permitted down the middle aisle – or either of the side aisles. They are not to be hung from the pews in any way either. Holy Spirit follows the diocesan insurance policies which prohibit throwing petals or any other items (rice, confetti, bird seed, flowers, flower petals, mini candy hearts, blowing of bubbles, etc.) inside or outside the church.

17. *Photography and Videography.* To maintain the reverent character and the solemnity of the celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, please explain these policies to your photo/videographer:

    1. The photographer will have approximately 20 minutes following the celebration to take pictures of the bride and the groom. Please inform your photographer of this rule. Please remind the photographer that Holy Spirit Catholic Church is a sacred space and, therefore, pictures taken ought to be dignified and appropriate to the space.
    2. They may not in any way disrupt the ceremony and they ought to be discreet while the celebration is taking place. They are not allowed in the sanctuary area (around the altar) at any time during the celebration.
    3. Flash Photography is prohibited.
    4. Photographers and videographers must dress in a manner suitable to the environment and the occasion.

18. *Prayer.* Prayer is communication with God. It should be on-going and continuous, especially at this time for the gifts of holiness, unity, and indissolubility. We strongly encourage you to meet regularly with the priestor deacon who is helping you to prepare for marriage, to find time for personal prayer and communal prayer with your future spouse and to develop the habit of going to Confession and Mass together before your wedding and beyond.

CONTACTS

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WEDDING GUIDELINES AGREEMENT

We have read and understand the requirements for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage within the Diocese of Oakland at Holy Spirit Catholic Church and agree to respect and abide by the guidelines for weddings as established by the parish. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the reservation deposit.

_____ _____
Name & Signature of the Groom *Name & Signature of the Bride*

_____ _____
Wedding Date Today's Date

Revised: 08.12.2025