

# Liturgical Procedures

## BASIC INFORMATION

Two to three months prior to your wedding, a meeting must be scheduled with your Church Wedding Coordinator to discuss the various opportunities for liturgical practices and music during your ceremony. The information given during this meeting may be presented to the couple during a “regular” meeting with the Church Wedding Coordinator (in which case a “special Liturgical procedures meeting” need not be scheduled). Another appointment should be scheduled two to three weeks before the wedding to finalize your decisions.

You will be given a booklet called “Together For Life” to select readings and prayers from. This is the most important part of planning your wedding. Readings should speak to you about who you are as a couple and how you see your relationship with God. Selections in the booklet are made from:

- Old Testament Reading
- New Testament Reading
- Gospel Reading
- Blessing and Exchange of Rings
- Prayer of the Faithful

If you decide to celebrate with a Nuptial Mass, other options are given in the booklet. Couples are given the option to stand, sit, or kneel at the altar. Proper Liturgical Posture (sitting/standing) will be adhered to regardless.

## OTHER LITURGICAL PROCEDURES

There are cultural traditions that can be included in your wedding ceremony. Most of these traditions emphasize “the two are now one”. The following are some cultural traditions used in the past here at St. Joseph. If you have a special cultural request that you do not see listed, please speak with your Church Wedding Coordinator. All of these traditions are optional.

- **Presentation of Flower to Parents**



- **Unity Candle** – This ceremony speaks of a new family “created” from the couple’s families. The two taper candles are normally lit by the parents (or just the mothers) as they are seated during the processional. This signifies the two families. The couple, to signify the unity of marriage and the joining of two families, lights the main candle. A stand is available to use if you do not wish to purchase one, however the couple must provide all three candles.



- **Lasso** – The lasso is a Hispanic tradition. It symbolizes lifelong binding of the couple and calls them to imitate the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph as the examples of their lives. A large double rosary made from flowers, beads, or other precious material is placed over the heads of the couple (resting on their shoulders) by another couple to exemplify Christian marriage in the eyes of the bride and groom. Like a lasso, it joins them together.



- **Arras** – The exchange of coins (arras) is also a Hispanic custom. The 13 coins are blessed by the celebrant and presented by the groom to the bride. The presentation symbolizes the groom’s willingness to provide the material necessities for the newly formed family. In accepting the arras, the bride promises on her part that everything given will be used with care for the benefit of the home and family.

*Note: When the Unity Candle is used, the Lasso and Arras coins cannot be used.  
The Flowers to the parents can be use in addition to any of the other customs.*

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The following is additional information contains important instructions for the Bride and Groom.

1. Catholic Brides and Grooms **MUST** have a copy of their baptismal record issued within the past six months. This must be obtained from the parish of baptism. When requesting the record, please indicate that you want it with "notations". This will indicate your freedom to receive the Sacrament of Marriage.
2. Catholic parties must provide a completed Affidavit of Free Status to also ensure freedom to receive the Sacrament of Marriage.
3. Certificates of attendance/completion for all Marriage Preparation Programs including Pre-Cana, Cana II, Today-Tomorrow-Forever, Natural Family Planning, Engaged Encounter, and/or Sponsor Couple are also required.
4. **A Marriage License must be presented to the celebrant at the rehearsal. The marriage cannot be performed without this document.**
5. Rehearsal must be scheduled with the Church office and the Church Wedding Coordinator. You and your wedding party are expected to be ON TIME for the rehearsal, which usually lasts about one (1) hour.