

St. Cyril of Jerusalem Parish

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MARRIAGE PREPARATIONS, REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES



Congratulations on your decision to marry in the Catholic Church!

The community of St. Cyril of Jerusalem Parish is happy you will be celebrating your wedding with us. The commitment which you are making to each other is a solemn one, shared by you, your families, the Parish, the Catholic community, and our loving God. The heart of the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage is the covenant or promise, made between the two of you and God, and your wedding day will be a date to be kept as a precious anniversary and an occasion of God's grace in our Parish.

As you may already know or will soon discover, your wedding day is an event of great magnitude and requires much careful preparation in order to run smoothly. There will be many details and people involved in this celebration, and the knowledge and experience represented in our Parish Priest, Wedding Coordinator, and Music Director will help make your wedding a beautiful ceremony.

The following information has been assembled for your convenience to answer the frequently asked questions of those planning on marriage, and to help you better understand the procedures and guidelines of the Catholic Church, St. Cyril of Jerusalem Parish, and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Please carefully read these requirements and guidelines prior to contacting the Parish Office to schedule a date for you and your fiancé to come in and meet with our Priest.

1. INITIAL CONTACT

Since marriage is a Sacrament of the Catholic Church, at least one party in the marriage must be a practicing Catholic and a parishioner of St. Cyril of Jerusalem Parish.

Engaged couples wishing to be married in the Catholic Church must contact their Parish Priest **at least six months** prior to the anticipated wedding date. It is recommended that you make contact at the very beginning of your engagement.

2. ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Every engaged couple is asked to participate in an assessment process with their Priest. This process is designed to help you and the Church assess your readiness for marriage. The process begins with the initial interview with our Priest. The discussion points include your faith experience, your relationship as a couple, and your views on Christian marriage.

A decision to proceed with (or delay) the wedding is made by the Priest and the couple following the assessment process. **The wedding date is finalized only after the decision to proceed has been made.**

3. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

There are special circumstances that require additional steps to assist a couple in preparing for marriage in the Catholic Church. The existence of any of these circumstances does not necessarily mean that you cannot be married in the Catholic Church; it does mean that an honest discussion is necessary. Please share with the Priest any of the following circumstances:

- If either of you is a teenager
- If there is a pregnancy involved
- If you are presently cohabiting (living together)
- If one of you is of another faith or no particular faith
- If either of you have been married before
- If either of you have been married before in any type of ceremony or common law union
- If you are currently civilly married and wish to have your marriage *convalidated* in the Catholic Church

4. PLACE OF THE WEDDING

- The wedding of two Catholics takes place in the Parish Church of either the bride and/or groom..
- To be married in another parish, it is proper that permission be received from the parish in which you wish to be married, as well as the parish(s) in which you reside.
- The wedding in which only one of you is Catholic, *an interreligious marriage*, takes place in the Parish of the Catholic party. The Archbishop may permit you to celebrate your wedding in the place of worship of the non-Catholic party when a pastoral reason exists.
- Weddings in hotels, private homes, out-doors, or in wedding chapels *are not permitted* in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

5. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The Priest preparing you for your marriage will require the following documents:

- **CERTIFICATE(S) OF BAPTISM**

The Catholic Certificate is to be acquired within the last six months.

- **LETTERS OF FREEDOM**

Two for the Bride and Two for the Groom - These forms will be provided by our Parish Office. Each of you are required to have two witnesses (preferably your parents) who will testify before a priest or deacon as to your freedom to marry.

- **PRE-NUPTIAL INQUIRY**

This is a questionnaire administered by the Priest regarding your freedom to marry and your views on Christian marriage.

- **STATE OF CALIFORNIA MARRIAGE LICENSE**

The couple must obtain this license within 90 days of the wedding date. Unless this license is present, no marriage can occur. The license is brought to the wedding rehearsal, and is signed by the priest and the Best Man and Maid of Honor immediately following the wedding; it is then mailed to the County by our Parish Office.

- **CERTIFICATE(S) OF CONFIRMATION**

Catholics who have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation are to receive it before being married, if this does not cause serious inconvenience.

- **RECORD OF PERMISSION FOR MIXED MARRIAGE**

Required for or a Catholic to marry a person baptized in another Christian faith.

6. REQUIRED MARRIAGE PREPARATION

You will be required to attend one of the Archdiocesan approved marriage preparation programs. Participation is to be completed no later than three months before the wedding date. The Priest who is preparing you for your marriage will provide you with information regarding the program he wishes you to attend.

7. CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS

The most important part of your marriage preparation is your own relationship with Christ the Lord, who leads and guides us through life. You are encouraged to pray for the graces and strength to respond generously to God's call to marriage. Participating in the life of the Church by celebrating the Sacrament of Penance and faithfully attending Sunday Mass is necessary for a healthy and lasting marriage.

8. CELEBRATION OF WEDDING BY VISITING PRIEST

If a Priest other than one assigned to the Parish is to witness the exchange of vows, he must receive specific delegation from the Parish Priest in order to officiate at the ceremony. To make these arrangements you must inform the Parish Office immediately. If the Priest is from out of town, or is not able to handle your preparation, it remains the responsibility of our Parish Priest to prepare you for marriage in the Catholic Church.

9. PLANNING OF THE WEDDING LITURGY

You as a couple, with the guidance of the Priest and SUSAN MILLS DURHAM, our *Wedding Coordinator*, will plan your wedding liturgy. Will it be a Nuptial Mass or a Wedding Ceremony? Discuss these questions with the priest in order to determine which liturgy is right for you as a couple:

- What is your relationship with Sunday Mass? How is your attendance at Sunday Mass? Have you been away from Mass? Are you Faithful in joining the church community at Sunday Mass?

In view of your responses to the questions above, is a Nuptial Mass or a Wedding Ceremony the better context for your wedding? If one of you is from another religion and is therefore unable to share in Holy Communion, is a Wedding Ceremony perhaps more appropriate?

Suggested readings will be provided to you in the booklet, *"Together For Life"*, which includes a worksheet form for you to complete and return to the Wedding Coordinator. There is also a *"Worksheet for Wedding Coordinator"* that is included in the *"Wedding Planning Information Sheet"* form. We encourage you to complete it and send it to the Wedding Coordinator as soon as you have your wedding date finalized.

10. PLANNING OF THE WEDDING LITURGY MUSIC

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles has specific guidelines for sacred music in the Catholic liturgy, and these guidelines are to be followed for all wedding liturgies. When your wedding date has been finalized and

confirmed, you will contact WILLIAM BECK, our *Director of Music/Organist*. He will meet with you to plan, review, coordinate and direct all music and musicians for your wedding.

11. FINANCIAL OFFERINGS

There is “no charge” for the Mass. However, we suggest a minimum offering donation of \$450.00 for use of the Church Facilities. This facilities fee includes: interview, document preparation, rehearsal, and liturgy planning, and also covers the cost of the maintenance of a large church (utilities, custodial costs, sacristan, etc.). A deposit of \$150.00 to hold your wedding date on the calendar is due when your wedding date is finalized; the balance of the offering donation is due one week prior to your wedding date.

This offering donation DOES NOT include the:

- STIPEND FOR THE PARISH PRIEST (*please ask parish office for suggested stipend offering*)
- WEDDING COORDINATOR FEE
- ALTAR SERVERS’ STIPENDS
- MUSICIANS/ VOCALISTS
- FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

-Suggested Minimum Offering Donations for Services-

Altar Servers (two)	\$ 20.00	each	
Director of Music/Organist	\$ 200.00		WILLIAM BECK- 310- 475.2693
Musician(s)/ Vocalist(s)	\$ 200.00	each	
Wedding Coordinator	\$ 200.00		SUSAN MILLS DURHAM- 818- 807.5343

12. ADDITIONAL PARISH REQUIREMENTS

THE WEDDING COORDINATOR

When your wedding date has been finalized and confirmed on the parish calendar, the parish office will notify SUSAN MILLS DURHAM, our *Wedding Coordinator*. The Wedding Coordinator will direct the rehearsal and the wedding. She will contact the bride to discuss details of the rehearsal and wedding liturgy. An outside wedding coordinator may be used for other aspects of your wedding, but during the rehearsal and the wedding, he/she will turn responsibility over to our wedding coordinator.

CHURCH DECORUM

Because we have reverence for the place in which our community gathers for worship, we ask that everyone in the wedding party be aware of the sacredness of the Church Sanctuary. In every Catholic Church there is the Reserved Sacrament of our Lord’s Body and Blood, and for this reason, we ask that all who enter the Church at any time -*whether before, during, or after the rehearsal and wedding*- observe these basic rules:

- RESPECT AND REVERENCE WHILE IN THE CHURCH
- NO FOOD, DRINK OR CHEWING GUM
- SMOKING OR ALCOHOL BEVERAGES ARE NOT PERMITTED IN OR AROUND ANY AREA OF THE CHURCH OR CHURCH GROUNDS, INCLUDING THE PARKING LOTS
- CELL PHONES ARE TO BE TURNED OFF OR SET TO VIBRATE
- PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR WEDDING PARTY IS ON TIME FOR REHEARSAL AND WEDDING
- ATTIRE FOR YOUR REHEARSAL IN THE CHURCH MAY RANGE FROM BUSINESS CASUAL TO “SUNDAY CHURCH DRESS”. IN ALL CASES, REMEMBER THAT THE CHURCH IS A SACRED SPACE, AND EVERYONE NEEDS TO DRESS WITH APPROPRIATE RESPECT AND MODESTY.

DECORATIONS

- FOR SAFETY REASONS THE USE OF RICE, BUBBLES, BIRDSEED, ETC. IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.
- SMALL ARRANGEMENTS OF FLOWERS OR BOWS MAY BE USED TO MARK RESERVED PEWS. SUCH ARRANGEMENTS MAY ONLY BE ATTACHED IN SUCH A WAY AS NOT TO DAMAGE THE PEWS (NO NAILS, GLUE OR TAPE THAT WILL LEAVE A MARK).
- THE CHURCH WILL PROVIDE KNEELERS AND CHAIRS.
- FLOWER GIRLS MAY DROP SILK PETALS ONLY (*NO FRESH PETALS*). THEY MAY ALSO CARRY ARRANGEMENTS IN BASKETS.
- IF YOU HIRE A FLORIST TO DECORATE OR DELIVER FLOWERS, YOU MUST CONFIRM A DELIVERY TIME WITH OUR WEDDING COORDINATOR (PREFERABLY NO MORE THAN ONE HOUR PRIOR TO THE WEDDING), OR ARRANGE WITH THE PARISH OFFICE FOR SOMEONE TO OPEN THE CHURCH FOR YOUR FLORIST. NO FLOWERS MAY BE DELIVERED AND SIMPLY DROPPED OFF AT THE DOORS OF THE CHURCH BEFORE THE WEDDING.

PHOTOGRAPHY DURING AND AFTER THE WEDDING

We gladly welcome professional photographers. In order to avoid interfering with the liturgy and distracting the congregation, the photographer must remain at least five feet away from the couple and celebrant, and not advance any farther than the bottom step of the altar. Videographers can film from the balcony in the back of the Church; just inform the wedding coordinator. Photographs after the wedding may be taken on the altar for *15 minutes only*, but you are welcome to take photographs outside in our beautiful Grotto area for a longer period of time. *Only* dignified and formal photographs may be taken inside the Church.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AS YOU PREPARE FOR THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY !



St. Cyril of Jerusalem Parish

REVEREND EBEN M. MACDONALD, *Administrator*

PARISH OFFICE MAILING ADDRESS: ... 4601 Firmament Avenue
Encino, CA 91436

CHURCH STREET ADDRESS: ... 15520 Ventura Boulevard
Encino, CA 91436

PARISH OFFICE PHONE: ... 818- 986.8234

PARISH EMAIL ADDRESS: ... parish+marriage@st-cyril.org

PARISH WEBSITE: ... st-cyril.org

WEDDING COORDINATOR:
Susan Mills Durham: ... 818- 807.5343
email: ... sdurham@stcyril.net

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC/ORGANIST:
William Beck: ... 310- 475.2693
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