

Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

91 Maple Avenue
Morristown, New Jersey 07960
973-539-2141, Fax 973-984-0632



MARRIAGE POLICIES

The celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony is one of the most significant experiences for you and the entire Christian community. It should be a reverent and happy occasion. An important part of your preparation is spiritual. Regular celebration of Sunday Mass as a couple is central to your belonging to our community of faith. We need you, just as you need us, for it is only together that we are the People of God. Another Sacrament beneficial to your spiritual preparation for marriage is Reconciliation. Talk to the priest helping you prepare and arrange to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

*The following policies are provided in order that your preparation will be as orderly and complete as possible. The items listed below must be accomplished as you prepare for your marriage. ***For record retrieval purposes, all communication to the parish must indicate the date of your wedding.****

Parish Membership:

It is expected that at either the bride or the groom is a registered member of the parish, either as an individual or through their family. If you will be living in the parish after the wedding, please inform our parish office by becoming a registered parishioner.

Priest/Deacon:

The priest/deacon who will witness your marriage celebration will guide you through the various stages of preparation. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with him and arrange for the necessary appointments. Together you will gradually decide on all the elements of the celebration of your marriage. A Nuptial Mass, with Scripture readings, Prayers and Holy Communion, must be performed by a priest, while a Wedding Ceremony, Scripture readings and Prayers, can be performed by either a deacon or priest. You will also decide on the number of participants – their part and place in the celebration, the reading selections, and prayers.

Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter:

The Church requires that you attend either a *Pre-Cana* session at Assumption Parish or an *Engaged Encounter* weekend offered in a neighboring Diocese. *Engaged Encounter* information can be found at www.engagedencounter.org. You also have the option of attending a course titled *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage* by registering at www.joyfilledmarriagej.org or enrolling in an on-line Pre-Cana course at www.catholicmarriagepreonline.com. To register for the on-line course you must first obtain permission from the priest or deacon who will marry you. It is your responsibility to register for one of these programs. The fee for Pre-Cana at Assumption is \$75 per couple. Please register early, as sessions are only offered twice a year, in the Spring and in the Fall. Once you have completed any one of these programs, you must send a Xeroxed copy of the certificate to the priest/deacon witnessing your marriage (**please notate the date of your wedding**).

Visiting Clergy:

Visiting priests or deacons are welcome to perform your marriage. If you wish to have an outside priest or deacon, let the parish know when you reserve your wedding date. The visiting priest or deacon **must** contact the parish **within a month of the reservation via letter** stating they will do the wedding and complete all the documentation and paperwork required by the Church. Visiting clergy are obligated to perform weddings in accordance with the Assumption Parish policy. A copy of this policy will be sent to them. They are also expected to take care of all pre-marital instruction meetings with you and to arrange and conduct the rehearsal. A visiting minister or rabbi is welcome to participate in an inter-faith marriage.

Documents Required:

1. Baptismal Certificate of the Catholic party must be sent by the Church of Baptism within six months of the wedding date, and no sooner. Contact your parish of origin and ask them to: 1.) send a **Baptismal Certificate**, 2.) **sealed** with the Church's raised seal, and 3.) **annotated** on the back indicating the reception of the Holy Communion, Confirmation, Annulments, etc. It must be sent to Assumption Parish. **Remember to ask them to notate your wedding date somewhere on the documentation.**
2. If you received the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and/or Confirmation at different parish(es) from your parish of origin you will need to contact those parish(es) and have them send a certificate, **sealed** with the Church's raised seal, indicating the Sacraments and the dates they were received. Have them sent to Assumption Parish. **Again, remember to ask them to notate your wedding date somewhere on the documentation.**
3. A copy of the Baptismal Certificate of non-Catholic party, issued anytime, and a Freedom to Marry form which we provide, is required.
4. Mixed marriage. If the marriage is between a Catholic and non-Catholic, you must complete an application, which we provide, for Dispensation from Disparity of Worship. This will be done in the presence of the priest or deacon who will be witnessing the marriage. The promise on the Catholic party's part to raise as Catholic any children born of the union, is a part of this application.



Civil Requirements:

State Law requires a Marriage License. Within one month before the wedding the couple should apply to the License Bureau in the municipality of the bride. You must be accompanied by one witness over 18 years old. Call the Bureau to find out costs and any other requirements. The license will be issued three days after the application is made. **Bring the license to the rehearsal.** Do not fill it out. That will be done by us after the marriage ceremony and it will be returned to the municipality so that your marriage will be civilly registered.

Date and Time of Your Wedding:

Wedding dates are given on a first come, first served basis. Weddings are scheduled to avoid conflicts and congestion, therefore, punctuality is more than a courtesy, it is an **absolute necessity**. Weddings may be scheduled only at times which will not conflict with parish functions; i.e., no weddings will be scheduled later than 3:00 p.m. on a Saturday. Due to the scheduled Sacrament of Reconciliation and Saturday Evening Mass, it is imperative that all wedding parties finish their picture-taking **no later** than 4:15 p.m.



Symbolic Gift for the Poor:

It is a long-standing tradition to bring a medium sized basket of non-perishable food items to be carried up to the Celebrant during the Offertory procession of the Mass, or before the Nuptial Blessing in the Ceremony. It is a moving gesture that one of the first things you do as a married couple is to attend to give something away for others in need.

Bouquets of Roses:

It is traditional to give your parents and grandparents a bouquet of red Roses during the wedding. Advise your florist if you choose to practice this custom. The bouquets should be at least three roses with some greens tied with a ribbon. It is also traditional to place a bouquet of white Roses at the Statue of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary; again, if you chose to do so, advise your florist. They will be delivered to the church with all other flowers.



Rice/Confetti/Rose Petals/Balloons:

Your guests may **not** throw rice, confetti or bird-seed. Balloons are also not acceptable. It is absolutely forbidden to do so and there are ***NO EXCEPTIONS***. It makes a mess outside the Church especially if the sidewalk is wet. It is carried on shoes into the Church building for several days, and requires special rug cleaning costs. Bubbles or small bells as “favors” are nice substitutes. If your wedding party chooses to throw rose petals outside of the church there will be an **additional** clean-up charge of \$50.

Alcohol:

Parish policy prohibits champagne, wine or any other alcoholic beverages from being served or consumed in front of the Church, on the sidewalk, or anywhere near the Church premises before or after the ceremony or rehearsal. Please inform your limousine drivers of this policy as well as members of your bridal party.

Flowers:

Arrange with any florist of your choice the decorations for the Church. If you plan any unusual or elaborate decorations, you must have the florist contact the parish office for the Church specifications. Needless to say, nothing may be taped, stapled or tacked-up anywhere in the Church. If the florist doesn't have them, we do provide large elastic bands for securing decorations to the pews. There are 40 center pews. We suggest that you check with our office staff to see if there are any other weddings scheduled for the day of your wedding. It may be possible to contact the other party and share the cost of flowers. Generally, we recommend two large and "loose" flower arrangements placed in the Sanctuary area. The flowers arrangements are to be left in the Church after your wedding. No runner is permitted in the Church. Fire code prohibits candles, lanterns or other such items on the pews, in the aisles or in the sanctuary.

Unity Candle:

The Celebrant will prepare the liturgy with the bride and groom and offer several suggestions or options. One of those is the lighting of the Unity Candle. If the couple decides that they want to include the Unity Candle in their wedding, they must purchase their own Unity Candle. Talk with the celebrant about how you want to include this option. Bring the Unity Candle to the rehearsal and leave it overnight with the Celebrant.



Wedding Invitations:

The correct name of our church that should be used on your invitations is – "*Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary*". The address is 91 Maple Avenue, Morristown, New Jersey 07960. Directions to the church will be provided.

Programs:

We provide you with a Wedding Program format to guide you in preparing one for your wedding.



Rehearsal:

The date and time of your wedding rehearsal will be set by both you and the priest/deacon. All persons participating in the marriage ceremony are needed at the rehearsal. **Impress on all the need for punctuality.** Usually the rehearsal is one of the many scheduled appointments the priest/deacon will have, and tardiness in getting started is not only frustrating to the priest or deacon but also may result in a hasty rehearsal. There may very well be other rehearsals scheduled that evening for other weddings.

Bring to the rehearsal the Marriage License issued by the Town Clerk (without anything written on it by anyone other than the Town Clerk). The documents will be signed in the presence of the priest. Remember State Law forbids the priest from celebrating any wedding for which he does not have in his possession a marriage license from the civil authorities.

The Music Director assists the Celebrant on the day of the wedding by directing the "Seating of the Mothers," the "Entrance of the Groomsmen" and the "Wedding Procession of Bridesmaids and the Bride." The Director follows the directions received from the Celebrant and knows how the Celebrant rehearsed the wedding party. Everyone is expected to follow directions given to them conforming to what the Celebrant and couple have previously planned.

Liturgical Music Required for the Ceremony:

Assumption Organists and Cantors are required at all weddings. If you wish to have a friend and/or relative sing or play an instrument during your wedding in addition to the required liturgical music provided by our Director of Music, you **MUST** make these arrangements with the Director of Music. While a guest vocalist or instrumentalist is certainly welcome to perform at your wedding ceremony, if the Assumption organist is to cover any expenses or time spent for special rehearsals and teaching of music, a guest fee of \$50 is required and payable to the Assumption organist. Each scheduled session with the organist would require an additional guest fee. The guest is required to provide their own music and the music for the organist. **In all cases, the full Music fee of three hundred fifty dollars (\$350) must be paid, no matter what you arrange in terms of other's participation.** Keep in mind that this celebration of Marriage is a Sacrament and all music chosen for the Liturgy, vocal and instrumental, must be in keeping with the sacred nature of the Wedding and must follow the rubrics of the Roman Catholic Church. Certain secular texts are appropriate for the reception but not in the sacred, spiritual setting of the Church.

The Director of Music is theologically and professionally prepared to instruct you in planning the musical selections for the Ceremony. The Director of Music, Claudia Nardi, can be reached at 973-539-2141, extension 19, or email: claudiabn@aol.com. Mrs. Nardi will contact you about the Bridal Music Workshop and appointments to plan your wedding.

Photographer:

You must inform your photographer of the following Policies of Assumption Church governing picture-taking and video filming:

1. Use of flood lights (for film/video recorder) must be kept to a minimum.
2. Video recorders are restricted to certain areas of the Church.
3. The photographer may not, under any circumstances, enter the Sanctuary.
4. The photographer is expected to respect every part of the Ceremony or Nuptial Mass, such as sacred readings.
5. The changing of film is not to be done in the Church proper, rather it may be done in the vestibule or some other enclosure.
6. There must be a minimum of motion by the photographer in the Church, even as he or she tries to find spots from which the best pictures can be taken.
7. The photographer, like any other guest, is expected to dress appropriately for the wedding, not in casual or sloppy clothing.

The photographer must introduce himself/herself to the priest/deacon before the wedding begins.

The Cost of a Church Wedding:

The cost of a wedding for parishioners at Assumption is \$600. The cost of a wedding for non-parishioners is nine-hundred (\$900). Two hundred dollars (\$200) covers the cost of the physical plant and must be paid to the Church at the time you secure your wedding date. An additional fee of three hundred dollars (\$300) for non-parishioners is also due at this time. This check, made payable to “*Assumption Church*”, should be brought with you when you come to the parish office to complete preliminary paperwork. This required step confirms the dates of your wedding/rehearsal. The remaining four hundred- dollars (\$400) covers the Director of Music, the Organist and the Church Sexton and should be given to the priest/deacon at the rehearsal. Make out three checks: one check for one hundred seventy-five dollars (\$175) for the Director of Music and Cantor; one check for one hundred seventy-five (\$175) for the Organist; and one check for fifty dollars (\$50) for the Church Sexton’s work in set-up and clean-up. These three checks should be made out to “cash.”



<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>FOR</u>	<u>CHECK MADE OUT TO</u>
\$200	Church Fee	“Assumption Church”
175	Dir. of Music/Cantor	“Cash”
175	Organist	“Cash”
50	Sexton	“Cash”
<u>\$600</u> (Parishioners)		

\$ 300
\$ 900 (Non-Parishioners)

It is appropriate to give a gift check in the amount of your choosing to the priest or deacon in recognition of their help and time spent with you in preparing for your wedding. In addition to the required services of Assumption Church’s Director of Music, Cantor and Organist, some couples choose to hire harpists, trumpeters, violinists or bag-pipers. The cost for these musicians is **not** included in the above charges for Church Music. Arrangements for these must be made through the Director of Music, and any fees that result are contracted independently between the couple and the additional musician(s).



MAY ALL YOUR DAYS TOGETHER BE FILLED WITH THE
PRESENCE OF CHRIST AS YOU ENCOUNTER HIM IN EACH
OTHER, THE COMMUNITY AND SACRAMENTS, AND IN THE
BEAUTY OF ALL HIS CREATION.

Assumption Parish Priests:

Msgr. John E. Hart
Rev. Dennis J. Crowley

Assumption Parish Deacons:

Deacon Michael Hanly
Deacon Brian Beyerl