

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 attendance at Sunday Mass as a couple, frequenting the Sacrament of Penance and daily prayer is central to your belonging to our community of faith and your preparation for receiving this sacrament of the Church. We need you, just as you need us, for it is only together that we are the People of God. The priests of this parish are here for your benefit. Feel free to contact them for Confession and/or spiritual direction.

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 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 and bless your marriage 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 the Liturgy of the Word, Rite of Marriage and Liturgy of the Eucharist, must be performed by a priest, while a Nuptial Blessing Outside of Mass, which consists of the Liturgy of the Word and the Rite of Marriage, can be performed by either a deacon or priest. As Catholics, we should receive the Sacrament of Marriage within the Rite of the Mass. You will also decide, with the priest, on the number of participants – their part and place in the celebration, the reading selections, and prayers.

Pre-Cana:

The Diocese of Paterson requires that you attend two separate Pre-Cana programs before you are married.

1. Pre-Cana Life Skills

This program is conducted on a parish level. Assumption church schedules two dates for Pre-Cana Life Skills each year, a Saturday in March and a Saturday in November. This one day program requires pre-registration and should be taken at least six months before your wedding. The cost of the program is \$125.00.

2. God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage

God's Plan for a Joy Filled Marriage is a Pre-Cana Diocesan wide program. To register for God's Plan, held either at a local parish or at St. Paul Inside The Walls in Madison NJ, visit insidethewalls.org.

If you are not comfortable attending an in-person class you may complete your Pre-Cana requirements online at **Ascension Press Joy-Filled Marriage, Certification Course**. The Cost for the program is \$50.00

Visiting Clergy:

Visiting priests or deacons are welcome to perform your marriage. Let the parish know when you reserve your wedding date. The visiting priest or deacon **must** contact the pastor **within a month of the reservation in writing** stating they will complete all the documentation and paperwork required. It is also requested that a letter stating he is a priest or deacon in good standing be provided by the diocesan office in which he serves. Visiting clergy are obligated to perform weddings in accordance with the parish policies. We ask that you provide him with a copy of this document. They are also expected to take care of all pre-marital instruction meetings 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 Certificates of both parties, including non-Catholic Christians, must be received by Assumption Parish within six months of the wedding date. Contact your church of Baptism and ask them to: provide a **Baptism Certificate** with the church's raised seal, and include **annotations** on the back indicating the reception of Holy Communion, Confirmation, Annulments, etc. Annulments, if applicable, must be annotated to prove freedom of marriage. A Confirmation certificate is only necessary when the date of Confirmation is not annotated on the back of the Baptism certificate. Ask your celebrant if he prefers documents be mailed to Assumption Parish or brought with you at the time you meet with the priest or deacon.
2. Disparity of Worship. If the marriage is between a Catholic and non-Catholic Christian, 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 Catholic party must make a promise to raise their children, to the best of their ability, in the Catholic faith. A Freedom to Marry affidavit form will also be necessary in the case of the non-Catholic Christian and/or the non-Baptized to prove freedom to marry.

3. Decree of Annulment. If either party has had a previous marriage annulled, a copy of that decree of annulment must be provided. In the case of either party being previously married but not yet annulled, that marriage needs to be annulled before they can proceed. If you are in need of an annulment, this process will take time, therefore, contact the priest as soon as possible. We will also need the civil decree of divorce from that prior marriage(s). If prior spouse is deceased, please provide certificate of death.

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.** After your wedding, it will be returned to the Town of Morristown.

Date and Time of Your Wedding:

Wedding dates are given on a first come, first served basis. 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.

Punctuality

Punctuality is important. When a wedding is scheduled, Assumption allots 90 minutes (1 ½ hrs.) for the ceremony. Please be sure that you are on time for your wedding, as there may be another wedding or other church event (funerals, baptisms, choir practice, etc.) to consider. In addition, the priest or deacon officiating at your wedding may have other appointments to keep that day. Punctuality will go a long way towards establishing a relaxed, comfortable and beautiful 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.** 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 priest and knows how the priest rehearsed the wedding party. Everyone is expected to follow directions given to them conforming to what the priest and couple have previously planned.

Optional Unity Candle:

Lighting of the Unity Candle is optional. If the couple decides that they want to include the Unity Candle, after consulting with the priest, they must purchase their own Unity Candle. Bring the Unity Candle to the rehearsal and leave it overnight with the Celebrant.

Optional Symbolic Gift for the Poor:

It is an option 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.

Optional Presentation of Flowers to Mary:

It is traditional to place a bouquet of flowers 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.

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:

Upon request, we will provide you with a Wedding Mass or Nuptial Blessing Outside of Mass format to guide you in preparing a program for your wedding.

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. This fee can be added on to the \$450 check due the night of rehearsal. The guest is required to provide their own music and the music for the organist. **In all cases, the full Music and Sexton fee of \$450 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 sacred liturgy, vocal and instrumental, must be in keeping with the sacred nature of the sacrament and must follow the rubrics of the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church. Certain secular texts are appropriate for the reception, but not in the sacred, liturgical 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.

Flowers:

Arrange with any florist of your choice. 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. The flower arrangements are to be left in the Church after your wedding. For insurance reasons, a runner is **not** permitted in the Church. Fire code prohibits candles, lanterns or other such items on the pews, in the aisles or in the sanctuary.

Rice/Confetti/Rose Petals/Bird Seed/Balloons:

Your guests may **not** throw rice, confetti, rose petals or bird-seed. Balloons are also not acceptable. For insurance reasons, it is absolutely forbidden to do so and there are **NO EXCEPTIONS**. Bubbles or small bells as “favors” are nice substitutes.

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

Alcohol & Drugs:

We prohibit 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 wedding. Please let the limousine driver know of this policy. People who are intoxicated or under-the-influence of drugs will be prohibited from entering the church, this includes those in the wedding party. If the bride or groom are under-the-influence, the wedding will have to be re-scheduled as they cannot sufficiently make an act of consent for a valid marriage to take place.

The Cost of a Church Wedding:

The cost of a wedding for parishioners at Assumption is \$950. The cost of a wedding for non-parishioners is \$1,450. \$500 dollars for parishioners or \$1,000 for non-parishioners, covers the cost of the physical plant and must be paid to the Church at the time you secure your wedding date. This check, should be made payable to Assumption Church. The remaining \$450 covers the Director of Music, the Organist, and the Church Sexton and should be given to the priest/deacon at the rehearsal. This check should also be made out to Assumption Church.

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 bagpipers. 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).

Payment Schedule	Parishioners	Non Parishioners
Deposit (due when reserving date)	\$500	\$1,000
Balance (due at the wedding rehearsal)	\$450	\$450
Total	\$950	\$1,450



Assumption Parish Priests:

Msgr. John E. Hart

Rev. Lukasz Wnuk

Assumption Parish Deacons:

Deacon Brian Beyerl

Deacon Elliott Stein

Deacon John Mihalko

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