



*Preparing
for your
Marriage*

*Church of St. Luke
Long Valley, New Jersey
908-876-3515*

In Summary

1. Set the dates early.
2. Catholics need a recently dated certificate of Baptism. Holy Communion and Confirmation certificates are not required.
3. Christians of other traditions need a copy of their original baptismal certificate.
4. The marriage preparation process includes approximately five sessions, including the rehearsal.
5. Ministers of other religious traditions are invited to participate in the ceremony involving a member of their congregation.
6. Floral arrangements are more elegant when simple.
7. Aisle runners are discouraged.
8. Photographers are welcome but should consult with the celebrant prior to the wedding.
9. Throwing of rice or birdseed is not permitted.
10. Fees for the organist or soloist should be presented before the rehearsal.
11. Bring the license to the rehearsal.
12. Consider your guests ~ **be here 30 minutes ahead of time.**

Michael J. Drury, Pastor

Thomas F. Healy, Deacon

Kevin Cleary, Deacon

Ray Chimileski, Deacon

7. *The Runner:*

Due to several near accidents, we suggest that a runner **not be used**. It is very easy for anyone, especially the elderly, to trip. The parish suggests a cloth runner, if necessary.

8. *Rice, Bird Seed and Flower Petals:*

The strewing of rose petals on the aisle is not recommended. They are difficult to remove and tend to make the tile floor quite slippery.

For reasons of safety and courtesy, the throwing of rice and seed is not permitted. St. Luke Parish does not enjoy custodial services on the weekends and therefore, the celebrant is left with the responsibility of clean up.

9. *Punctuality:*

We ask brides to be particularly attentive to this item. It is no longer socially acceptable or even courteous toward the guests, for the bride to arrive late. We ask that you plan to arrive **30 minutes** ahead of the time of the ceremony. We have three people who act as our wedding consultants, who provide assistance to the men and their needs before the wedding – as well as the Bridal Party. You will be greeted at the door when you arrive. You will have an opportunity to relax – enjoy some refreshments and use the restroom. Please consider the fact that the guests have been seated from ten to fifteen minutes before the time of the wedding ceremony. Lateness places a damper on the ceremony and diminishes the spontaneity, which is so important for the celebrant. **Please be sure that you inform your photographer and limousine service of the above expectations.**

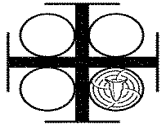
10. *Fees:*

A **\$250** fee is recommended as a donation to St. Luke Church. There is **\$175** fee for our wedding music coordinator. A **\$150** donation is requested for our three wedding consultants who assist during the rehearsal as well as before & after the wedding. Please make checks payable to St. Luke Church. All fees should be presented at the wedding rehearsal. There is no fee required for the celebrant but a free will offering is appreciated.

*No longer two
But one*

*From the beginning of
creation God made
them male and female.
~ This is why a man
must leave father and
mother and the two
become one body. ~
So then what God has
united man must not
divide.*

Mark 10:8-9



Church of St. Luke
Long Valley, New Jersey 07853
908-876-3515

Dear Friends,

Although you have already begun your preparation for marriage, we want to assure you of our desire to make the ceremony a meaningful celebration of faith for you and your guests. But even more than this, we are anxious to provide a hospitable setting in which you can continue to sculpture your relationship into a lifelong marriage that will bring you much joy and fulfillment.

This brochure is offered as a practical guide. We hope it will alleviate any undue anxiety about the preparation process and enhance this time of preparation.

Over and above the times we meet formally to talk about your plans, we want you to know that we will be available on an informal basis to assist you in any way you suggest. It is important to us that the celebration of your wedding be a memorable experience for you, for your families, and for your friends. We look forward to our meetings and promise our support.

May the love you have for each other today deepen as the years pass and may it reflect the power of God's love to all those whose lives touch yours.

Sincerely yours,

Father Mike

Michael J. Drury
Pastor

Thomas F. Healy
Deacon

Ray Chimileski
Deacon

Kevin Cleary
Deacon

5. The Flowers:

St. Luke Church was designed to offer a simple but elegant setting for religious worship. The altar and the ambo (lectern) are the primary focus of attention. Any and all decoration should not detract from these liturgical appointments. Our parish environmental committee tastefully decorates the sanctuary in accordance with the liturgical seasons. Every effort has been made to avoid sharp colors and wall hangings that would be a contrast to the theme of the wedding. Therefore, liturgical drapery may not be removed for wedding ceremonies.

Local florists are familiar with our sanctuary and will provide appropriate floral settings that enhance our sanctuary for your wedding ceremony. One large floral arrangement on a pedestal to the right of the celebrant's chair is attractive. Remember that the immediate members of the wedding party occupy much space in the sanctuary. Too many floral pieces can make the sanctuary seem very crowded and detract from its simplicity. Normally, wedding flowers are left in the sanctuary for the weekend liturgies. If you intend to take the flowers with you after the ceremony, please let us know so that our sacred environment committee may make other provisions for the weekend liturgies.

6. The Photographers:

Photographers should be chosen wisely. It is assumed that they will be discreet and exercise the usual sensitivity for the sacred character of the church and sanctuary as well as the solemnity of the ceremony. They should never be allowed to interrupt or distract from movements of solemnity. The use of focus lights is not permitted during the ceremony. In order to avoid any misunderstandings, the photographer should always consult with the celebrant prior to the ceremony. You are welcomed to return to the sanctuary immediately following the wedding ceremony. However, this will depend on the time that the ceremony concludes. Photographs cannot not be permitted beyond 2:30PM for a 1:00PM wedding or beyond 4:30PM for a 3:00PM wedding – (Saturday only).

or friends may also be invited to proclaim the readings from the Holy Scriptures. Other readings or meditations of a spiritual nature may be incorporated in the ceremony in consultation with the celebrant. Only readers who have had some experience in public speaking should be invited. It will be helpful for them to attend the rehearsal.

- ❖ Altar servers are not usually assigned for weddings. However, family members or friends are welcomed to serve in accordance with the wishes of the bride and groom.
- ❖ In case of a marriage between Roman Catholics and non-Catholics, we suggest that the ceremony be celebrated without a Mass. We make this recommendation as an expression of sensitivity for those not of our faith who may feel awkward participating in a full liturgy. However, the nuptial Mass always remains an option for all. In any case, the celebrant will make every effort to accommodate the guests of other religious traditions.

4. The Music:

Music for the liturgy should be planned in consultation with our parish Wedding Music Coordinator. It will be helpful to know if the arrangements include a request for a soloist. At an appropriate time prior to the wedding, the engaged couple should contact the Wedding Music Coordinator in order to set up an appointment to go over the music. The Wedding Music Coordinator does not attend the rehearsal.

The organist and soloist fees include consultation as well as the rehearsal with any instrumentalists. Please contact them through the Parish Secretary, as soon as possible to make certain your wedding date is on the calendar ~ 908-876-3515. In the situation in which a couple desires to invite a member of the family or a friend to provide the music, the usual consultation is still expected. In any case, the music fees (explained to you when you make contact), are expected at or prior to the Wedding.

In General

1. Our involvement in your plans and preparations begins with an initial conversation with the priest or deacon who will be officiating at your ceremony. This session offers us an opportunity to get to know one another if we have not already met. It also helps us to be better acquainted even if we already know one another. Couples are sometimes anxious about this first meeting. We want to allay any fears and assure you of our hospitality. To avoid calendar conflicts, it is important to settle the time and the date of your wedding and the rehearsal at this first meeting. All wedding dates remain tentative until the officiating priest or deacon confirms them after this initial meeting.
2. The officiating celebrant is usually a priest or deacon assigned to St. Luke Parish. However, a priest or deacon of your choice (a relative or close friend) will always be welcomed. In this situation, it is customary for the guest celebrant to assist in the preparation process. Therefore, it will be very helpful for the celebrant to contact us to discuss his participation. It will also afford us the opportunity to extend our hospitality to him. In any case, we will still attend to any details that will contribute to the success of your preparation.
3. It may be helpful to you to know that the preparation experience is not a period of instruction but a process in which you may continue to "sculpture" your relationship. You initiated your preparation long before you approached us. We are simply providing a hospitable setting in which this process can continue.
4. During the second session, you will be invited to take the Prepare/Enrich Inventory. This inventory was developed by Dr. Olsen at the University of Minneapolis MN several years ago to assist engaged couples preparing for marriage. It is a self-knowledge assessment but it is not a test or an evaluation. It will affirm the strengths in your relationship

and identify those areas in which you are still growing. It has proven to be a wonderful tool for couples that wish to deepen their relationship. The inventory is usually completed at the Parish office and then mailed to Minneapolis for scoring. The priest or deacon conducts the feedback session within one month following the completion of the inventory. A scoring fee will be requested.

5. The rehearsal is usually conducted on the evening before the wedding ceremony. It is important that all the attendants be present. It is also recommended that readers and others taking an active role in the liturgy be present so that they may be acquainted with the space and the rhythm of the ceremony.

1. Church Documents:

- ❖ A recently dated certificate of Baptism, issued not more than six months prior to the first preparation meeting, is required for all Roman Catholics. This certificate may be requested from the church of Baptism by telephone, letter or in person without a fee. It is a routine, uncomplicated procedure. Holy Communion and Confirmation certificates are not required.
- ❖ A copy of the certificate of baptism will suffice for a baptized Christian of another tradition.
- ❖ Obviously, no certificate is required for anyone who has not been baptized.
- ❖ A notarized statement of permission of parents or guardians is required for those under 18 years of age. In this situation, further consultation with diocesan authorities may also be required.
- ❖ Interfaith marriages are permitted but must have the courtesy approval of the Bishop of the Diocese. Persons of other traditions are not expected to participate in any religious instructions in the Catholic Faith. Every effort is

made to accommodate the particular expectations of the bride or groom of a different religious tradition. Clergy persons of other faith traditions may be invited to participate in the wedding ceremony.

- ❖ In certain circumstances, permission may be obtained for marriage between a Roman Catholic and a person of another tradition to be celebrated in another church or chapel or even in a secular setting. However, in this case, it is assumed that the officiate will be the minister of the other tradition or a civil magistrate.

2. Civil Documents:

A civil marriage license must be obtained from the state in which the marriage is to be celebrated. It may be obtained in the municipality of the bride or groom as long as either or both reside any place in the state of New Jersey. In the case of residency outside of New Jersey, the license must be obtained in the municipality in which the marriage is to be celebrated. The license extends for thirty (30) days only. A blood test is no longer required to obtain a license. **The license should be presented to the priest or deacon celebrant at the rehearsal** at which time it will be signed by the official witnesses (maid of honor and best man). The bride and groom do not sign the license.

The parish secretary must return the license to the town registrar within five (5) days after the ceremony. The bride and groom will receive a copy of the license with the official church certificate immediately after the wedding ceremony. The copy is not an official certificate. Official church documents are accepted for civil proof. However, if a civil document is required, it may be obtained at a later date from the borough clerk.

3. The Liturgy:

- ❖ The bride and groom are asked to take an active part in the preparation of the marriage ceremony and liturgy. Several options are available in the selection of readings, prayers and rituals. Members of the wedding party, family