

Regulations for Marriages for Saint Edward Church

Introduction

The regulations contained in this booklet are intended to help you live out your marital relationship as God intended and to preserve in a practical way the integrity and sacredness of the marriage ceremony.

By entering into marriage you and your spouse will establish a covenant that is a partnership of the whole of life. This partnership is directed by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children, so that day by day you may lead a fuller and holier life of faith as a married couple.

With the publication of these regulations on November 1, 2011, all other norms and policies are abrogated.

General Regulations

The law of the church states: ***“Catholics are to be married in the parish church of residence of the bride or groom.”*** Please know that Saint Edward is not a designation site for weddings. Saint Edward does **not** rent the Church to non-parishioners for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage.

Saint Edward Parish reserves the celebration of the sacrament of marriage to registered parishioners and their immediate family members. All couples who meet this requirement and are intending to marry at Saint Edward must meet with the pastor. A determination of the freedom of the couple will be made at this meeting and the regulations for the marriage ceremony will be explained before a date is promised or set on the calendar.

The Church requires proof of freedom to marry and completion of the required pre-nuptial investigations, and dispensation if needed. In addition, the Church requires the Pastor is to give the couple personal instructions on the nature and responsibility of marriage, and determine the couples readiness and ability to assume these responsibilities by the marriage.

The Parish requires proof of one year of residence within the parish boundaries, [the area of the island of Palm Beach north of the Sloan curve], and six months of proper preparation (i.e. Pre Cana instruction, “Focus” or engaged encounter).

Normally, the pastor will be the celebrant of the sacrament of marriage. An exception may be granted for a blood relative of the bride or groom. Priests or deacons, who are friends of the family, may concelebrate or participate in the marriage ceremony. If they are from another

diocese they must obtain a “certificate of aptitude” issued by their proper bishop or religious superior, testifying as to good standing in their diocese or religious community.

The celebration of marriage takes place within Mass when both spouses are catholic, and outside of Mass when one of the spouses is not catholic. The Sacred Scriptures are the only readings permitted during the marriage ceremony.

The date and time of the rehearsal and marriage ceremony are to be established with the pastor of Saint Edward. The times for marriage ceremonies are Saturdays at 10:00 AM, 12 Noon, or 2:30 PM. Marriage ceremonies are **never** scheduled for Saturday evening after the anticipated Mass for Sunday, Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation, Christmas or New Year Eve, nor during the three days before Easter (Easter Triduum). Other days of the week may be available for marriage ceremonies at times different from above listed times for ceremonies.

Rehearsals are usually scheduled for 5:00 PM the evening before the marriage ceremony, subject to the approval of the Pastor.

Documents

Proof of Freedom to Marry

In order to prove freedom to marry, the Catholic spouse(s) are to obtain a Baptismal Certificate with notations, issued within six months of the date of the marriage ceremony from their Church of Baptism. An original Baptismal Certificate may be helpful in obtaining the required current certificate, but is not a substitute for a current certificate. If you were baptized at Saint Edward, the parish will issue a current certificate and place it in your marriage file.

If possible, the Christian spouse of another faith is to obtain a copy of their Baptismal certificate or have two witnesses who were present to verify the Baptism in writing.

Spouses are required to complete the prenuptial investigation forms to determine their proper understanding of the Church’s teaching on marriage: marital consent, impediments to marriage, intention for a permanent faithful union of love and life without reservation, precondition or premarital contract, and an openness to children, and psychological capability.

Spouses may be asked to provide the names of two persons who has known them since puberty to complete a form attesting to the fact the spouse to be has never been married before or have obtained a declaration of nullity from a Catholic Church for any former marriages that ended in divorce.

If applicable, death certificates of former spouse(s) are to be provided as proof of freedom to marry, or Declaration of Nullity decrees are to be provided if a marriage ended in divorce and the former spouse is alive.

Interfaith Marriages

Interfaith marriages may be celebrated at Saint Edward when the non-Catholic party resides within the parish boundaries, and the Catholic party resides outside the parish boundaries. The Parish requires the non-Catholic party to present proof of one year of residence within the parish boundaries, [the area of the island of Palm Beach north of the Sloan curve], and six months of proper preparation (i.e. Pre Cana instruction, "Focus" or engaged encounter).

Interfaith marriages require the catholic party to state in writing or verbally that they intend to remain a catholic and do all in their power to share their faith with the children to be born of this union. The non-Catholic must be aware of the responsibility of the Catholic party. These documents are forwarded to the Diocesan Bishop requesting the proper dispensation or permission for the marriage to take place.

The couple may invite a Protestant Minister or Rabbi to partake in the wedding ceremony. They cannot receive the vows, but offer a prayer or blessing if there is not Mass. If Mass is celebrated, they may participate only after the end of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Civil Requirements

The State of Florida requires a license issued by the state for all who wish to marry in Florida. For further information, please contact the Marriage Bureau of Palm Beach County for details (561-335-2230). Priests are advised not to marry anyone without a civil marriage license. The civil marriage license is to be given to the priest at the rehearsal or to the parish secretary before the rehearsal date. The celebrant of the marriage ceremony and the two official witnesses will sign the marriage license at the end of the ceremony, and the parish office will handle its mailing and forward the marriage certificate, as it is recorded in the parish register, to the newly married couple.

Preparation of Marriage

The preparations for marriage requires a prayerful time of serious reflection on one's vocation in life. Couples are encouraged to pray together and reflect on the great vocation of the marital state to which they are called by God.

Personal Preparation with the Pastor or Priest Instructor

The Church requires the Pastor or the Priest Instructor to instruct the couple personally on the nature and responsibility of marriage, and determine the couples readiness and ability to assume these responsibilities. This usually involves three instructions as part of the six month preparation time for marriage.

Diocesan Programs

The Diocese of Palm Beach and Parish of Saint Edward requires the completion of the “Foccus Program”- a questionnaire survey designed to identify various areas of agreement and disagreement in the couple’s relationship.

The Diocese and the Parish require participation in the program “Engaged Encounter” – A full-day activity that helps promote a relationship based on open and honest communication between the couple. Please phone the Pastoral Center of the Diocese @ 775-9557 for more information and to register for the Encounter or visit the Diocese of Palm Beach Web Site to register. Please know that there are full weekend encounters available, and you are urged to participate in the weekend encounter if possible.

At the completion of the Engaged Encounter, a certificate will be issued acknowledging that you have completed the Encounter Session. Take this with you when you obtain your marriage license in order to receive a discount on your state license fee. Give a copy to the parish secretary for proper filing in the parish files.

Rehearsal

Rehearsals are usually scheduled for 5:00 PM the evening before the marriage ceremony, subject to the approval of the Pastor. All members of the wedding party are to be present for the rehearsal. Marriage consultants may assist the Pastor at the rehearsal, but the Pastor determines the procedures for the marriage ceremony. You must bring your civil marriage license to the rehearsal, if you have not given it to the parish secretary beforehand.

Please remind members of your wedding party to be prompt for the rehearsal and to respect the sacredness of the Church.

Rite of Marriage

The Rite for Marriage is celebrated in accord with Liturgical Law of the Roman Ritual, and nothing can be added or omitted from the Rite.

The celebration of marriage takes within Mass when both spouses are catholic, and outside of Mass when one of the spouses is not catholic. The Sacred Scriptures are the only readings permitted during the marriage ceremony. The couple will be given a booklet to aid in choosing the Old and New Testament Readings, the vows to be recited, the Prayers of the Faithful, and other prayers for the ceremony. The Pastor will finalize the choices with the couple in a timely fashion in order that a worship aid may be properly prepared.

The Priest celebrant will choose the Gospel and the proclamation of the Gospel is reserved to a deacon or priest.

The custom at Saint Edward is to have the Bride and Groom and Best Man and Maid (Matron) of Honor receive the consecrated host and partake of the chalice for Holy Communion if they are Catholic. The Chalice is not extended to the wedding party or to the congregation.

Optional Ceremony at the end of the Ceremony

The spouses may choose the optional ceremony of lighting of the Unity Candle by the mothers of the bride and groom before the ceremony. The spouses light their candle at the end of the ceremony as the bride places her flowers on the altar in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Other Details for a Sacred Marriage Ceremony

The details of the ceremony i.e. the processional and recessional, the placement of kneelers for the Bride, Groom Best Man and Maid (Matron of Honor), the number of Bridesmaids and Grooms Men, (usually 6) so that they can be seated in the first pew are to be finalized with the Pastor at the time of choosing the readings, vows etc.

Bridesmaids and Grooms Men must be adults, dressed appropriately and conduct themselves with proper decorum. Flower girls and Ring Bearers must be at least six (6) years old and able to follow directions.

Flowers

Arrangements of live flowers may be placed on both sides of the Altar of Sacrifice, and their purchase is the responsibility of the couple. The Church has flowers stands, but your florist may choose to use their own stands to accommodate the arrangements. You may leave the flowers at the altar or arrange for their removal immediately after the wedding ceremony.

Nothing is to be attached to the end of the pews. No plants are to be placed in the aisles, or pews. Nothing is to be attached to the outside handrails.

Aisle-runner and swags may not be used in the Church. Flowers petals are never to be used by flower girls. The throwing bird seed, rice and confetti and the blowing of bubbles are not to be done in the Church or at the door or front steps of the Church.

Photography

The rules for photography and videography are issued in a separate document that will be given the couple at their first meeting with the Pastor.

Sacred Music

All musical arrangements and hymns, including instrumentalists, and/or singers other than Saint Edward's Director of Music for the Liturgy are to be made through the Director of Music for the Liturgy, Maralyn Coscia (561-313-3290). Maralyn should be contacted two months prior to the wedding, and you will find her to be most helpful in arranging the sacred music for your wedding, in accord with the approved liturgical norms of the Church. Financial arrangements are to be made with the Director of Music for the Liturgy with regards to her services, the organist, and other instrumentalists, etc.

The Parish Organist is the only one permitted to play the Church organ.

Financial Offerings

When considering a financial plan for your marriage, please consider the use of the Church (the cost of electricity for the lights and air conditioning), and the custodian staff in relation to the expenses incurred for your rehearsal and reception and all that it involves.

The salary of the priests of the Diocese of Palm Beach includes the celebration of the Sacraments. The free will offering for the Church for a wedding is usually \$500.00. When possible, please endorse a check payable to "Saint Edward Church" for \$500.00 to be deposited in the parish account. The monies will be recorded as a donation of the signee in the parish financial records. The offering is to be given to the Pastor at the rehearsal or to the parish secretary before the rehearsal date. If there is a financial hardship, this offering need not be made.

Conclusion

Please understand that neither the Pastor or parish secretary will be involved with anyone other than the couple to be married. The Pastor and parish staff will not deal with third parties no matter how involved they are in the planning of the ceremony. This includes parents of the bride or groom.

It is hoped that these regulations will ensure the sacredness of your ceremony of marriage in the Church of Saint Edward.

Msgr. Thomas J. Klinzing, J.C.L., J.V.
Pastor