

JANUARY 18, 2018

Saint Clement's Church
231 Lake Avenue
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
www.scpny.org

Parish Norms for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage

****** Please do not make any other arrangements before seeing a priest ******

1. Saint Clement's Membership. --- As in all of the sacraments, the Sacrament of Marriage is always celebrated in the context of the Catholic community. Therefore, one of the parties must have a distinct connection to the parish of Saint Clement's. (Namely the following: the bride and/or groom **live within** the geographical boundaries of the parish, the bride or groom were **raised** in the parish, or their parents or grandparents are **registered** parishioners.) Those who are Catholic and live in the geographical area of the parish are, by default, parishioners, but they still must register with the parish to be accepted. This basic guideline is broad enough to accommodate many situations. No other exceptions will be made.

1B. Special Note. --- Those who are inquiring about a wedding at Saint Clement's, who have no tangible connection to the parish, and have already reserved their reception at Saratoga Golf & Country Club (or elsewhere) because it is convenient, will not be considered as eligible. Please inquire at your home parish. However, as a courtesy to other Albany diocese priests, outside weddings will be allowed, but that priest **must** make the request on a couple's behalf.

2. Marriage Date. --- The date and time for the marriage will be set based upon the following criteria: **A)** An initial interview with the pastor or one of the priests, **B)** The couple agrees to attend the required Diocesan Program, and **C)** The couple agrees to and attends the Marriage Preparation sessions in the parish. It is tentatively written into the Mass Book, in pencil, at the initial meeting. Upon completion of these criteria, the date and time are officially finalized.

3. Baptismal Certificate. --- If you are Catholic (and baptized elsewhere), you are required to obtain from the parish where you were baptized, a recently signed and sealed Baptismal Certificate within six month prior to the wedding. No copies will be accepted. If you are baptized in another faith, we would also like, if possible, proof of your baptism.

4. Wedding Date & Times. --- The following times can be reserved for weddings. These specific times are chosen because there are other events (funerals, baptism, confessions, Masses, etc.) which occur on a regular basis. Friday evenings at 5:30 PM. Saturdays at 11:00* AM, 1:00 PM, or 6:00 PM. Weddings will not be held on Sundays. **These times are non-negotiable.**

(* This time is not always available because baptisms made be scheduled then. Please consult the pastor or secretary to see if that time is available for that particular Saturday.)

5. Rehearsal. --- Depending upon the wedding date and time, rehearsal will be held at the following times. For Friday weddings, rehearsal will be at 6 o'clock on Thursday evening. For Saturday weddings, rehearsal will be at 6 o'clock on Friday evening. **IN THE EVENT OF MULTIPLE WEDDINGS** (for example, one on Friday and another on Saturday), we will request some flexibility of both parties to accomplish the rehearsals in good order. Please keep this in mind. Thank you.

Please tell your rehearsal party to arrive promptly, properly dressed, and without any beverages or chewing gum. Thank you.

6. Sacramental Preparation. --- The Catholic party (or parties) are supposed to go to confession prior to entering into the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. The priest will inquire at rehearsal is he/she has done so. It is imperative to receive this sacrament in the state of grace.

7. Fees. --- On the evening of the rehearsal, the couple is required to bring the following: **A)** the civil marriage license, **B)** the church offering of \$300, and **C)** either the bench fee of \$125 or the organist fee of \$200. **D)** There is also a \$100 fee for the cantor, if this applicable.

8. Music Arrangements. --- Please call the Music Minister for an appointment at least three (3) months before the wedding. Mr. Jeffrey Halstead can be reached at the following number: (518) 424-6951. His task is to make certain that the celebration is appropriately arranged with acceptable music.

9. Other Offerings. --- With reference to #7 above, it is up to you if you wish to make any other offerings. (As for myself, I am not looking for payment---Father George). If you have a visiting priest or deacon officiating at your wedding, I would suggest giving him a stipend.

10. Flowers & Decorations. --- Floral arrangements are optional at a wedding. Flowers may be placed near the altar but not upon it. Anything attached to the benches must be done without the use of tape or any other means that would harm the wood or its finish. Runners are permitted, but are generally discouraged. ALL decorations and floral arrangements will be removed once the wedding is completed. (Please designate someone among family and friends to do this.)

11. Photos & Video. ---- Photographers are free to take pictures in the body of the church, but they may not enter the sanctuary (where the steps begin). Since they are professionals, it is expected they will maintain a discrete distance at time from the wedding party as they move about, particularly during the Marriage Ritual. Photographs may be taken after the ceremony or Mass, but

the photographer and participants must depart the church to make room for the next use of the church. (A prime example is that confessions begin at 2:30 on Saturday afternoons.) If you are taking pictures outside (e.g., by the grotto), we would suggest doing that after taking all of your in-church pictures. In a similar vein, we hope that you will work with the priest to inform everyone that cell phones need to be silenced during this time. Thank you.

12. After the Ceremony. --- Please make sure that someone is assigned to clean up (flowers, unity candle, runner, other decorations) immediately after the wedding.

13. Inter-faith Weddings. --- Where the bride and groom share different faiths, only a ceremony will be celebrated.

14. The Wedding Itself. --- Please take care to choose lectors who fully understand and fulfill their role. The priest reserves the right to disqualify a lector at the rehearsal if they show themselves incapable. If a Mass is celebrated, it will only be under one species, namely, the host. The priest will instruct the congregation beforehand, in a gentle fashion, who may come forward to receive.

15. Several Serious Final Notes --- Please inform family and friends that the use of rice, confetti, birdseed is prohibited. Beverages, food, and chewing gum are not permitted in the church. The discovery of alcoholic beverages will mean the wedding is immediately cancelled. Additionally, if the ceremony or Mass does not begin on time and you discover there is no sufficient time for photographs, then that is the consequence.

16. Final Note: Catholic Wedding. --- Please keep in mind that you are not renting a church nor are you renting a priest. This is a Catholic wedding, not a church wedding. We are celebrating this life-changing event with you. You are entering into a sacred covenant, and we rejoice and hope that it is the beginning of a beautiful, life-long blessing.

Lastly, it is your duty to inform your family, friends, and guests of what applies to them in these guidelines. Thank you.