

St. Dominic Catholic Church

Kingsport, Tennessee



Preparing for Your Wedding

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ST. DOMINIC CATHOLIC CHURCH

Dear Friends,

We, at St. Dominic Catholic Church and Parish, are happy to assist you in your preparation for the sacrament of marriage! We know that this is an exciting time for you and we hope to help you in your spiritual and faith formation for this beautiful vocation!

In our Catholic faith, marriage is a lifelong vocation and a covenant entered into both between the bride and groom as well as the couple with God. God has brought you together and we believe God will continually strengthen your love and commitment if you are willing to allow God into your marriage and to live your vocation within the support of the Church.

In our assisting your preparation for marriage we hope to discuss and share with you these aspects of the sacrament of marriage and to help give you the resources needed to live out and grow in your commitment together.

For your reference below are listed the components of the marriage preparation process for engaged couples at St. Dominic Catholic Church and Guidelines for the use of the Church. After you have reviewed the information provided please contact one of our parish priests to set up your initial meeting.

May God bless you!

The St. Dominic Parish Community

WEDDING PREPARATION AT ST. DOMINIC CATHOLIC CHURCH

We want your wedding to be a lovely and momentous occasion in your life. To help you prepare for it, below is shared the marriage preparation process as well as the Guidelines for the use of the Church. This information should help you in your preparations and arrangements.

1. Arrangements for your wedding should be made with one of the priests **AT LEAST FOUR (4) MONTHS** before the desired date.

In order to begin the preparation process, the engaged couple will have an initial meeting with one of the priests of the parish. At this meeting the couple and priest will get to know one another. We will also establish the freedom to enter the Sacrament of Marriage through the Pre-Nuptial questionnaire. After this meeting the priest will finalize the date for your wedding (if it is to be held at St. Dominic Church) on the parish calendar. Please note that if neither of the priests of the parish are available to celebrate your wedding due to schedule conflicts it is possible, if the wedding occurs outside of a Mass, to have one of the parish deacons celebrate the wedding. This option can be discussed if needed.

2. It is **YOUR** responsibility to obtain a **BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE** that has been **ISSUED WITHIN THE PAST SIX (6) MONTHS**. It is needed for each Catholic party being married.
3. Pre-marriage instructions are given in preparation for the reception of this sacrament. These instructions take the form of discussing the FOCCUS inventory results and attending an Engaged Encounter retreat. **AN ENGAGED ENCOUNTER WEEKEND is required**. The couple and priest will set their schedule for appointments.

FOCCUS

Once freedom to enter into the sacrament has been established, then the engaged couple will take the FOCCUS inventory. The FOCCUS inventory is a questionnaire raising issues that will be important in assisting couples to prepare for and live out the reality of married life. This part of the marriage preparation process is comprised of taking the inventory online and then meeting with a priest, deacon or a facilitator couple to discuss the results of the inventory.

Engaged Encounter

Engaged Encounter (EE) is a nation-wide engaged couple preparation weekend retreat. The engaged couple is to register for one of these weekends either within the Diocese of Knoxville or in another area if it works better schedule-wise. To find the schedule of weekends and register please go to www.engagedencounter.org. Once you are registered please let the priest whom you are working with know. The EE weekend can be attended at any point in the marriage preparation process.

Natural Family Planning

Natural Family Planning (NFP) is an invitation from the Church for couples to consider how they might live their marriage covenant with the possibility of having children according to the in-built structure of human biology. Usually, at some point during the Engaged Encounter retreat, NFP is presented. We encourage couples to be open to Natural Family Planning and the blessings that it can bring to the marriage. If couples would like further information on NFP or would like to meet with a couple living NFP, we would be happy to assist in this regard.

CHURCH USE AND CEREMONY GUIDELINES

If the wedding is to take place at St. Dominic Church, after the initial meeting and the FOCCUS process, the couple will meet one or two times with the priest to discuss and plan for the wedding ceremony. (If the engaged couple is just doing their preparation at St. Dominic's, but are getting married at another church then they are to work with the priest or deacon at the place of the wedding regarding the specifics of the wedding ceremony.) Please contact the parish office for the Parish Life Center (PLC) Rules and Guidelines in case you might be interested in using the PLC for your wedding reception.

1. Since the celebration of a wedding is considered a sacrament in the Christian tradition as well as a parish community celebration there is no fee for the use of St. Dominic Church for parishioners of St. Dominic's. Catholics who are not parishioners of St. Dominic's who would like to use the church for their wedding are required to pay a fee of \$350.00 for use of the church. This is to be paid when making the reservation.
2. Decoration of the Church is the couple's responsibility. Flowers used for the wedding may be left in the sanctuary for the weekend liturgies.
3. Candelabras may be used. They should be available through your florist or rental store. **PLEASE USE** only **dripleless** candles. Any damage done by the candles or wax is the responsibility of the bride and groom. A plastic sheet under the candelabra is required to prevent any accidents.
4. An aisle runner, if desired, must be rented or purchased by the wedding party from the florist.

5. The florist you select should be told to confer with the Parish Office (288-8101) weekdays between 9:00 AM-3:00PM about the time they wish to place decorations in the Church. This is necessary to insure there is not a conflict with our regular devotions and liturgical functions and that someone will be around to open the church. The florist should be instructed to leave the church neat and clean when claiming equipment **immediately after the ceremony**. The church is **NOT** responsible for anything left on the premises.
6. The rehearsal, which is usually held the evening before the wedding, lasts about thirty minutes to one hour. Please set up the rehearsal time with the priest or deacon witnessing your marriage and make sure that the wedding party is at the church on time to begin the rehearsal. It is suggested that you arrange for someone to coordinate the procession of the wedding party in and out of the church and that the order of procession be arranged prior to the rehearsal.
7. A Nuptial Mass should be celebrated if both the bride and groom are Catholic, or if one is Catholic and both parties desire it. Mass usually lasts about one hour. Without Mass, the ceremony lasts about thirty minutes.
8. The civil license must be furnished before the ceremony.
9. **NO** rice or bird seed is to be thrown outside the church. This is a safety hazard for later church services as we do not have a weekend maintenance person.
10. **NO** alcoholic beverages of any kind in or around the church before or after the ceremony.
11. Please dispose of all trash (boxes, bags, pins etc.) because we do not have janitorial services on weekends.

12. If you wish to use chairs or chair covers for your wedding please inform the priest or deacon so they may be set up.
13. Furnishings, pulpits or other equipment **may not** be moved or removed from the sanctuary.
14. Music used during the ceremony must be religious or instrumental. No secular music is to be used. Please arrange for your own organist and vocalist. Confer with them as to the amount to be paid. The Church organist is Valerie Sibila (330-232-2125, email: vrsibila@gmail.com). The parish vocalists are Dana Bellino (423-288-7957) and Danyelle Porter (423-963-0545). They would be available to assist you. Please feel free to give them a call. (Another organist is Dolores Frederick from St. Mary's in Johnson City –283-0103, cell 737-1009).
15. If you would like to ask a priest other than the parish priests to celebrate your wedding ceremony, permission from the pastor is needed.
16. Although the priest does not charge a fee for his services it is customary to offer an honorarium or gift.
17. Wedding photographers are to ask the priest or deacon celebrating the wedding what can or cannot be done during the wedding ceremony. During the procession into the church, photographers are allowed to be at the head of the aisle in order to take photos. Following the procession in, photographers are to remain to the side and back in order to not cause a distraction. At no time during the ceremony are photographers allowed on the altar area.