

PLANNING THE CEREMONY

An important part of your Wedding Day will be the Ceremony. It is important that you think about it carefully. A guiding principle that the priest will follow is: *this is a religious ceremony*. As well as celebrating your love for each other, you also celebrate your faith in Jesus Christ and your belief in the Sacrament of Marriage.

CHOOSE THE READINGS

The first reader should read the Old Testament reading and the Psalm unless the Psalm is being sung. Check with your liturgical musician if he/she will sing the Psalm.

The second reader should read the New Testament reading and the Gospel acclamation (i.e. Alleluia) unless the Alleluia is being sung. Again check with the musician if he/she will sing the Alleluia.

The Priest/Deacon will read the Gospel.

For a selection of readings (options) download the file below. If you come across a reading that is from the Bible but not one of the options given, you can use it - just make sure it is from the Bible.

If you know someone who regularly reads in Church, you could ask that person to read or you could ask a member of your family or a friend. If they wish to practice the reading at the wedding rehearsal he/she/they are welcome

THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

The marriage ceremony is divided into three parts:

1. The address by the priest (your understanding of Christian marriage).
2. The declaration of consent (you exchange your marriage vows).
3. The blessing and exchange of rings.

The rite of marriage can conclude with the couple praying together '*The Prayer of the Newly Married Couple*'.

CANDLES

Some couples like to light candles during the ceremony - one each usually at the beginning of the ceremony representing two individual persons and the 'wedding candle or unity candle' once they are married symbolizing that the two have become one. You can use ordinary white candles or purchase specially made candles (e.g. justcandles.co.uk). The Church has a stand that will hold two thin candles and one 'pillar' candle.

THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

These prayers can be read by members of your family and friends (including members of other Christian Churches). It is important that whoever leads these

prayers feels comfortable with - and is capable of - reading in public. The number of people reading the Prayers depends on how many prayers you have. If you wish one person can read all the prayers. There are some examples in the order of services downloadable below (i.e. Rite of Marriage).

PRESENTING THE GIFTS OF BREAD & WINE AT THE ALTAR

The gifts are the bread and wine to be consecrated during Mass. You can ask members of your family or friends to carry the gifts forward during the ceremony. Usually the number of gifts to be carried up is two.

SACRED MUSIC

Music is an important part of the ceremony and will add to the solemnity of the occasion. Keeping in mind that this is a *religious ceremony*, it is important that appropriate music be chosen. Love-songs or pop-songs are more suited to the reception (your first dance), but are not appropriate in the Church. If you have any queries, you can check them with the priest marrying you.

Musicians must be insured to sing in the Church – contact the Parish office for more details.