

WEDDING POLICY

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
CATHOLIC CHURCH



Preparation:

1. If you wish to receive the blessing of your engagement, there is a Rite of Betrothal that the priests would be happy to bestow.
2. Pray together on a regular basis; try to acquire the habit of going to Sunday Mass and praying before and after meals, and the daily Rosary. Practice chaste love. The virtue of chastity is essential to preserving marital fidelity. Be clear as to what lines may not be crossed that your souls be not in peril. Be in the habit of making a good confession on a regular basis. Be in the habit of tithing for your parish.
3. There should be a period of at least eight months from the first contact of the couple with the priest to the date of the wedding, in accord with the policy of the Archdiocese of Denver. All arrangements should be between the couple and the priest or the wedding coordinator and the priest, and not with multiple people such as parents or relatives.
4. The Archdiocese provides a number of classes to help the couple prepare for matrimony, such as Catholic Engaged Encounter, Catholic Marriage preparation, and classes on Natural Family Planning. Information on these will be provided by the priest.

Permissions and Dispensations:

1. A baptized Catholic man is expected to marry a baptized Catholic woman. Any deviation from this requires a permission or dispensation which cannot be given by the Pastor but only by the Archdiocesan Metropolitan Tribunal.
2. Mixed marriage, that is, between a baptized Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic, is possible but discouraged. The Nuptial Mass will be discouraged for a mixed marriage.
3. A marriage license from the County must be obtained no later than the time of the wedding rehearsal, which is normally the evening before the wedding.

4. Couples who are cohabitating, or who are in a common-law marriage will be expected to separate for at least one month before the wedding. If this separation is not possible, marriage at OLMC is still possible, but only as a private wedding, without Mass, and immediate family only in attendance.

Date and Time:

1. The date and time of the wedding will not be set until the completion of the Pre-Nuptial Form. Included with the Pre-Nuptial form must be a recent baptismal certificate; recent is defined as within six months of the contact with the priest. This form determines if the couple is truly free to marry. If there are dispensations or permissions which need to be obtained, then the date of the wedding will be set only after they are granted.
2. The date of the wedding will normally be on a Saturday, although other days of the week are possible. The choice of the exact time of the wedding will be determined by the priest and the couple.
3. All the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion need to be received before the marriage.
4. Wedding programs are acceptable, but they should be shown to the priest before publication, and are done by and at the expense of the couple. Small wedding booklets for the Mass are available from the parish.

Place:

1. Only the parish church will be used for weddings.
2. Outdoor weddings are permitted in the Archdiocese, but for the wedding only and not a wedding and a Mass. Outdoor weddings are very difficult on the priest and will be granted only if necessary.

The Priest Officiating:

1. Any priest assigned to OLMC may witness a wedding here, and the couple may choose whom they wish.
2. A priest from outside the parish must receive delegation from the pastor to witness a wedding here at OLMC.

The Ceremony:

1. The 1962 Roman Ritual is used for all weddings at OLMC. The 1962 Roman Missal is used for the Mass.
2. The choice of a High Mass or a Low Mass is left to the couple, but having a High Mass will depend on whether a choir can be secured for the wedding.
3. A devotion to Our Lady may be added to the wedding or the Mass, to consecrate the marriage. The time of this will be determined by the priest with the couple.

Decorations:

1. Two arrangements of flowers may be used for the altar. They must not obscure the Reliquaries, or extend over the *mensa* of the altar.
2. Other arrangements of flowers may be possible, this should be discussed with the priest.
3. Flowers or other decorations may be placed on the pews using string, but no tacks, tape, wire or clamps may be attached to any parish furniture. It is customary to leave the flowers in the church as a votive offering to Our Lord or the saints.
4. The parish has reservation signs available.
5. No aisle runners.

Candles:

1. Only the candles on the altar are used for a Nuptial Mass.
2. No other candle arrangements may be used in the church.

Attire and Conduct:

1. The dresses for the bride and her maids must be approved by the priest. An example of modest and acceptable wedding gowns may be found at: www.latterdaybride.com/modest-wedding-dresses.php
2. Invitations to guests should include an instruction on the Mass and comportment (see last page).

The Bride's Room:

1. The bride's room is located at the bottom of the stairs in the basement of the parish hall.
2. This room is for the bride and her attendants and will be secured for her at the rehearsal on the evening before the wedding if she wishes to use it.

The Groomsmen:

1. It is better if they can come to the church already dressed, but if they need a room one will be provided for them.
2. The dress of the groomsmen should also be approved by the priest.
3. The groomsmen will assemble in the back portion of the parish hall and may use the parish office to store their belongings. This room can be locked if necessary.

4. This room will be available to the groomsmen at any time on the morning of the wedding.

Altar Boys:

1. The altar boys used for the wedding will be assigned by the priest officiating.
2. If the members of the wedding party have relatives that they wish to serve as altar boys, they should inform the priest at least one week before the wedding. Altar girls are not used at OLMC.

Holy Communion:

1. The Catholic Church does not practice open communion, so only Catholics who are not conscious of mortal sin and have availed themselves of sacramental confession are free to receive Communion.
2. Holy Communion is distributed to the communicants who are kneeling, and on the tongue only; however, if there is some reason why a communicant cannot kneel, then he or she should stand at the communion rail. These two points could be included in the wedding invitations.

Music:

1. We have both a competent choir and organist and they can be requested for your wedding. If the parish organist cannot play for the wedding, it is the responsibility of the couple or one of their representatives to secure and finance an organist. We strongly suggest that you make these arrangements at least three months before the wedding during busy wedding season. The parish music director will need to approve all music to be played before, during the mass itself, and after the ceremony (this includes both preludes and postludes). It is the responsibility of the couple or their representative to confirm with the music

director in a timely manner all music for the ceremony. Even if you bring in your own musicians you must get the approval of the music director for all music in ceremony. If you have difficulty choosing appropriate music you're most welcome to email the music director at music.director@olmcfssp.org, and he will help you.

2. Stipends for parish musicians are \$250 for the music director, \$200 for the organist, and \$150 for each singer. Their services should be secured at least three months in advance of the date of the wedding. Please contact the music director at music.director@olmcfssp.org
3. No recorded music may be used for the sacrament.

The Photographer:

1. They may take pictures in the church from any position in the nave, or set up a video, but must not use the sanctuary. Once the Canon of the Mass begins, he should remain stationary if in the church. Non-flash cameras are preferred.
2. Pictures may be taken before and after the wedding, but should not go much over thirty minutes afterward. The bridal party should not be in the sanctuary for the pictures. The Blessed Sacrament is present, so the photos ought to be taken in a reverent and silent atmosphere.

The Parish Hall:

1. The use of the parish hall is free for any registered parishioner who is married here.
2. A facility usage/indemnity agreement (a document drawn up by our insurance company) must be signed by the couple to be married one month before the hall's date of use.
3. Alcoholic beverages may be served at the reception for a period of one hour, but one hour only.

4. The couple to be married must assign someone to be in charge of the reception. This person needs to speak with the priest about cleaning the hall and bathrooms after their use, since we do not have a custodian, but rely on volunteer labor to keep the building clean.

Fees:

1. For a Low Mass, the approximate fees are \$300. This consists of stipends for the organist, two altar boys and the priest. Please contact the parish bookkeeper at bookkeeper@olmcfssp.org for additional details.
2. For a High Mass, the approximate fees are \$1,300. Please contact the music director at music.director@olmcfssp.org for additional details.
3. All stipends must be paid directly to the individuals (i.e. musicians, servers, priest) and not to the parish.
4. A free-will offering made directly to the parish is gratefully accepted, but not required.

Rehearsal:

1. Generally the rehearsal is done on the evening before the wedding. Please be on time, and for out-of-town guests, please inform them about Denver traffic and the need to start early. The organist and altar boys do not attend the rehearsal.
2. The rehearsal usually takes about 30 minutes, and is conducted by a priest and not by a wedding coordinator.

Anniversaries:

1. Any registered couple in the parish is encouraged to celebrate publicly their 25th, or 50th (and higher) anniversaries. These are great accomplishments, important for our times.

2. At a daily Mass of their choosing, couples may receive a special blessing taken from the Roman Ritual, which the priest will give after Mass.
3. A reception afterwards in the parish hall is a fine thing to do, so that the brethren can offer their congratulations.

Suggested Wedding Invitation Insert

To our guests at weddings performed at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church:

If you are not familiar with this rite of Holy Mass, know that we firmly believe that Our Lord Jesus Christ is present in our church, and that the Mass is the real presentation of His sacrifice on the cross. Because of this belief, reverence and modesty is called for in the church, and to a lesser extent, in the parish hall. The following are guidelines to maintain reverence and modesty.

1. Silence: Silence is necessary for prayer, and the Mass is a prayer. “Be still and know that I am God,” say the Psalms. The wedding rehearsal, the time before the wedding in the church, and after the wedding, should be times of silence. “My Father’s house is a house of prayer,” said Our Lord, and so our church is not a place for conversation or for clapping.
2. Dress: Please wear modest clothes. Modesty needs to be defined a little in our times, and to keep modesty we ask that no shorts or tee-shirts be worn. For the ladies in the bridal party, we ask that no strapless, low-cut, backless or sleeveless dresses be worn. Chapel veils are encouraged for ladies and girls because of their dignity. Men and boys should wear coats and ties.
3. Participation at the Mass: The responses to the invocations are made only by the altar boys on behalf of the congregation at the Low Mass (Mass without singing). At a High Mass (Mass with singing) the choir sings the responses, but the faithful are encouraged to sing as well.
4. Holy Communion: Catholics in a state of grace may receive Holy Communion at the communion rail, kneeling, and on the tongue only. Communion in the hand is not practiced in this rite of Mass.
5. After the Wedding: Please do not throw rice, birdseed, flowers or confetti or anything at the newly married couple when they leave the church.