



SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Beloved in the Lord,

Congratulations! You have chosen to be married in the Orthodox Christian Church. In the Orthodox wedding ceremony, a man and a woman are joined as a couple through Christ. At the same time, they are also joined to the community in which they are married. This means that you should get to know the Church that you are being married in, since it will be like a new family and a second home. Weddings require a good deal of preparation - such as preparing invitations, booking a caterer etc. At the same time, it is greatly important to prepare spiritually for this mystery, the union of two people in a *Christ-Centered* Community. Here are some of the steps to becoming a closer member of our Community and while helping you prepare for your Marriage in Christ:

- ❖ ***We must take the time needed.*** The time and effort you put into getting ready for your wedding is never waste. It is important that this period of preparation is never rushed but used effectively to build a strong road to your Marriage. A wedding is a day, a marriage is a lifetime.
- ❖ ***Preparatory Meetings.*** It is important to get to know your Priest and feel comfortable to discuss any thoughts or concerns you may be feeling with him. This requires more time than just during the Sunday Fellowship times. For this reason, a few meetings will be planned in order to discuss the meaning of the Marriage Service and the Orthodox way of life. Also during this time the preparation of the wedding license and affidavit from the Archdiocese will be completed.
- ❖ ***Participating in the Liturgical Life of the Church.*** This means coming to Church Services often and preparation for Holy Communion. In the coming days you can get to know Fr. Theodoros and speak about how to involve yourself in the Church. It is recommended that everyone participating in the sacrament be properly prepared by fasting, prayer, receiving Holy Communion, and participating in the Sacrament of Holy Confession. Essentially a confession should include everything that a person may have done in their life up until this point that is not 'Christ-like'. Sometimes it is helpful to make a list so as to not forget anything.
- ❖ ***The Koumbari (Sponsor(s) – Best Man or Woman).*** The person(s) who will be involved in the wedding service, during the Ring Blessing and Crowing, must be Orthodox and in good standing. They will be a source of support during this time of preparation and afterwards in your daily life. It is a good idea to discuss candidates for sponsors with your Priest as he can help you guide you to the best choice in fulfilling their duties.
- ❖ ***It takes a Community to build a family.*** It is the Christian teaching, that to join to Christ is inseparable to joining His Church. This means that, as we stated before, being married in a Church leads to being a member of that Church. Being a part of the family has both physical and spiritual benefits and responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to keep your membership current and up to date. Your contributions to the Community, through your time and financial support, are what allow it to live and grow. In return you are joined by an entire group of like-minded persons all working for the same common goal, a loving relationship with each other in Christ. For information on membership please speak to a member of our Community Council.
- ❖ ***Rehearsals*** – Though not mandatory, a rehearsal (which normally lasts about 30 minutes) is advised to ensure that everyone will know their responsibilities. Please speak to Father to arrange a time.

Please remember that all good things come with hard work and which is sometimes accompanied by stress. While difficulties, both spiritual and organizational are unavoidable when planning a Wedding, do not forget that you are not alone. If you need any help please contact Fr. Theodoros at (647) 500-3947.

With fatherly love and blessings,

Fr. Theodoros Alamanos
Parish Priest

Sacrament of Marriage Check List

Before the Wedding:

- Ontario Wedding License
- Archdiocese Affidavit License to Marry
- Sponsor Verification Form
- Paid Community Membership & Sacrament Fees
- Honorariums for the Clergy and Chanter are at the discretion of the sponsors

On the day of the wedding you will need the following items:

- 2 white candles united by one white ribbon
- A silver platter (which can be decorated with rice and kouffetta)
- The wedding crowns. They should be white and united by one white ribbon.
- The rings (the can be placed on the silver platter)
- The rings must be wedding bands made of silver or gold and must reflect the sanctity of marriage.
- Wedding Programs (Fr. Theodoros can give you information to prepare these)

Important Notes:

It is suggested that the couple being married, and the sponsor(s) also participate in the Sacrament of Holy Confession and receive Holy Communion before the Marriage so as to also be prepared. Essentially a confession should include everything that a person may have done in their life up until this point that is not *'Christ-like'*. Sometimes it is helpful to make a list so as to not forget anything. Feel free to speak with Father and he will assist you in preparing for this. Since the couple is beginning a new chapter in their lives therefore it is important for the family to start this new life in Christ together completely prepared. It is important for the couple and sponsor(s) to attend Church together on a regular basis leading up to the Marriage but also as often as possible after the Marriage. The days before the Marriage should be devoted to prayer and preparation.