

The Parish of Our Lady of Hope
(Roman Catholic Families of St. Jerome Church and St. Mary of the Assumption Church)
West Long Branch and Deal, NJ

AGREEMENT TO THE WEDDING GUIDELINES

1. The Catholic Bishops of New Jersey have agreed on a pastoral policy that requires couples planning to marry to contact the parish priest or deacon **one year** before the wedding date. This is to ensure that proper documentations are completed and that interviews, formation sessions and inquiries are done and held. It is not possible to be adequately prepared and reflect on the importance of the commitment of matrimony in less time than that.
2. It is extremely important that you arrange your wedding date first with us **before** arranging a reception facility. Please set the date with our priest or deacon for an appointment (732-222-1424). The wedding date will only be secured in our church calendar after **your appointment with our pastoral minister (priest or deacon)**.
3. If you intend to request a Priest or Deacon from outside the parish to officiate at your wedding, please obtain approval well before hand. Visiting priests or deacons from a diocese other than Trenton must have a letter of Suitability from their Diocesan Bishop or Religious Superior.
4. Our weddings are generally celebrated on Friday evening (4:00 p.m. or after), Saturday early afternoon (12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. You may schedule your wedding for any day except for Holy Week, during the Easter Triduum, Christmas, or All Saints/All Souls day, or Holy Days of Obligation. During Advent (the time from four Sundays before Christmas through Christmas Eve) or Lent (the penitential period of about forty days between Ash Wednesday and the Easter Triduum), weddings held during these times should take into account the fact that the whole Church is observing a special period of penance.
5. On your first appointment with the priest or deacon, you will be asked to obtain the following documents during the preparation process.
 - a. **Pre-Cana Certificate** or its equivalent attesting completion of an approved Matrimony Preparation program. See schedule at dioceseoftrenton.org/precana to sign up.
 - b. **FOCCUS Certificate** to be scheduled with Deacon Louis Jakub.
 - c. A recently dated copy, **obtained within six months of the marriage date**, of your Baptismal Certificate **WITH NOTATIONS**. This may be obtained by calling the parish in which you were baptized. *Old copies of baptismal certificates will not be accepted.* First Communion and Confirmation records should be requested as notations on the Baptismal Certificate. For Non-Catholics, a baptismal certificate is required if they have been baptized.
 - d. If you are outside of the Diocese of Trenton a letter giving delegation of the faculty to marry to our priest or deacon must be obtained from your pastor.
 - e. Those who have had a previous marriage of any kind must consult with a priest or deacon before proceeding any further. If a Declaration of Nullity has been received, this should be brought in the first session.

All documents must be in your file by the time you call to schedule your third interview at least ***two months prior to your wedding***. It is your responsibility to make sure that all of your paperwork is in on time. Priests and deacons are not legally allowed to marry you without the proper paperwork and as a result, failure to obtain the proper documentation will result in a CANCELLATION.

6. Approximately two months before the wedding, the Parish Office will provide you with the information to contact our music ministers. Fees are payable directly to the Musicians and are to be presented **no later than the evening of the rehearsal**. Fees: Organist - \$250, Cantor - \$150.
7. Regarding your wedding flowers, please discuss with the pastoral minister beforehand. It is customary to leave the flowers used at weddings after the ceremony is over.
8. For safety and liability reasons, **no aisle runners** are permitted in the church.
9. Photographers should discuss the ceremony with the Priest or Deacon prior to the liturgy. Video cameras may be used, but are not allowed in the Sanctuary area. Picture taking after the ceremony is permitted in church, if done reverently and within your allotted time. Please observe proper respect and behavior in the church during the picture taking.
10. The throwing of rice or confetti is not permitted, nor is the releasing of balloons, birds, or butterflies. Bubbles are only permitted outside, but beyond the area of the front steps, for safety and liability reasons.
11. Rehearsal time will be arranged with the Priest or Deacon witnessing the Sacrament. The marriage license must be presented to the Priest or Deacon **no later than the evening of the rehearsal**.
12. We trust that spiritual preparation for the Sacrament of Matrimony has been taking place all during your courtship. Please arrange with the priest for the Sacrament of Penance before your wedding date.
13. The fee to the parish is \$900. Checks should be made payable to The Parish of Our Lady of Hope. You will be asked to present a \$300 check for your first meeting with the minister, another \$300 check during the second meeting and the balance on your third meeting. It is also recommended to give a personal donation of at least a \$100 to the minister performing the wedding, which can be presented on the evening of the rehearsal.

In witness whereof, we have read and agree to the wedding guidelines stated above in preparation for our wedding and we attest our signatures in compliance with the policy.

Bride:
Date:

Groom:
Date:

Pastoral Minister:
Date: