

Wedding Guide



**Our Lady of Fatima
Roman Catholic Church**

Dear Couple,

On behalf of the entire parish community at Our Lady Fatima, congratulations! You have chosen to be married in our community. We welcome you and are very happy for you. Our response to the love you share with one another and with us is to commit ourselves to providing you with the encouragement and support you will need for a beautiful wedding liturgy and a lifetime of happiness with each other.

Liturgy is very important to us. Liturgy is our communal prayer at Our Lady of Fatima. We take it seriously. As we look forward to your wedding liturgy we do so with a spirit of faith-filled festivity. Our joy at the marriage of a man and a woman calls us to ritualize this "symbol of Christ's love for the church" in a ceremony that is all-at-once community oriented, as well as highly personal for you, your family and the friends that you will invite to share in the celebration.

This communal focus does not mean that you will be unable to make the celebration "your own." In addition to choosing the members of your wedding party, you are also encouraged to decide who will participate as lay liturgical ministers in the celebration and to select the scripture readings, prayers and music that will constitute the liturgy.

We are eager to help you prepare your ceremony well. To this end we have developed a set of guidelines to assist you in your liturgy planning. These are intended to familiarize you with both the norms of the Roman Catholic Rite of Marriage and with the customs of our parish community.

This handbook also will answer some of the most often asked questions by couples who have preceded you. You may have others. Please do not hesitate to ask for clarification. We want to do all we can to help make your wedding celebration a truly memorable occasion.

Again, thank you for choosing our community in which to share your married love. We look forward to getting to know you in a special way during your coming months of preparation. Be assured of our prayers.

Sincerely,

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Congratulations

Congratulations on your engagement! You have made the initial step in preparation for your marriage at Our Lady Fatima Church by contacting the Parish Office and booking the date and time for your wedding. You will be contacted soon to setup your first appointment with the priest/deacon that will be marrying you.

Welcoming Session

At your first session with the priest/deacon he will discuss the preparation process with you and answer any questions you may have. Several items are covered in the Welcoming Session. You will complete the Pre-Nuptial Investigation (P.N.I.). This questionnaire determines your canonical freedom to marry. You will also complete a survey of values and attitudes called FOCCUS, this is not a test, but rather a tool to help you identify the strengths of your relationship, as well as areas of needed growth. The results of the FOCCUS questionnaire are confidential and will prove to be an important part of your preparation.

During this session, the priest/deacon will also discuss eligibility requirements for marriage in the Catholic Church and inform you of the documents you will need to gather.



Contact Information

Parish Office: 973-764-4457 E-Mail: olftima@warwick.net

Necessary Documents

Church Documents

Please obtain a baptismal certificate from the church of your baptism. It can be issued no earlier than six months prior to your planned wedding date. (If you were baptized at Our Lady Fatima, inform the priest/deacon and he will obtain this document for you.)

Civil Documents

A civil license is required for a marriage. You must apply for a civil license in the city hall of the township of the bride's legal residence. **Please note**, Civil authorities DO NOT work weekends, so your license must be applied for at least 72 hours before the time of the wedding. If you are marrying on the weekend, this means 72 hours before 3:00 PM Friday. (That's Tuesday!)

Meeting with the Priest /Deacon

This step is your first meeting with the priest/deacon who will officiate at your marriage. He will discuss the Pre-Nuptial Investigation with you to obtain your background information and determine that there are no impediments to your marriage. He will then review the results of your FOCCUS.

Normally, you will receive the book, *Together For Life*, at the Wedding Preparation Evening. If you have not received a copy, your priest/deacon celebrant may supply the book at your first meeting with him.

Non-Catholic ministers are welcome to participate in marriages in the church. Generally, the details of such celebrations are worked out with the couple, priest and minister/rabbi during the year of preparation. It is permissible, with a dispensation, for the marriage to be celebrated in the church of the non-Catholic partner. If this is the case, please let the priest/deacon know early on in the time of preparation.

Pre-Cana

Pre-Cana is a requirement for marriage in the Catholic Church. It provides an opportunity for you to meet with other engaged couples as well as married couples to share experiences and information on some of the issues that you will face as partners in your marriage.

Pre-Cana consists of presentations and discussion of these important issues followed by a private sharing time between you and your future spouse. We recommend that you attend Pre-Cana at least six to nine months before your wedding. These sessions are intended to be helpful, interesting and informative as you prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage. Please contact the Parish Office for further information.

Wedding Rehearsals

A rehearsal for the ceremony will be scheduled at the same time you schedule your wedding. You are asked to contact the priest/deacon four to six weeks before the wedding to finalize the liturgy. At this meeting the priest or deacon will complete a wedding rehearsal form with you.

It is extremely important that you bring your civil marriage license to your rehearsal.

Rice, Confetti, Bird Seed, Balloons, etc.

Due to our commitment to safety and the environment, we cannot permit the use of rice, confetti, bird seed or balloons at any time on Our Lady of Fatima grounds. Your cooperation is most appreciated!

Flowers

It is recommended that there be no more than two (2) floral arrangements for use in the sanctuary. No flowers are to be placed on the altar. There are liturgical reasons for which flowers and other special arrangements are used in the church. These items may not be moved or changed (e.g. Christmas, Lent, Easter, November). If you order floral arrangements, please ask your florist for stands. We do not provide stands. They will be removed immediately after your wedding. Florists are responsible for their property.

Decorations or flowers of any kind are not permitted on the ends of

the pews.

Aisle Runner/Rose Petals

As per a directive from the Paterson Diocese, due to insurance regulations, aisle runners are not permitted under any circumstances. Tossing of rose petals (real or fake), or any other objects, in the aisle is not permitted.

Unity Candle

Some couples choose to include the a unity candle in their ritual. Inform the priest/deacon if you wish to include this in your ceremony.

Punctuality

Our Lady of Fatima Church is a very vibrant and active community, with many liturgical services each week. Therefore, it is very important that your wedding begin on time. While some in the wedding industry may actually encourage one to be "fashionably" late, lateness is, in fact, not fashionable, but inconsiderate of your guests and those who minister here. In order to ensure a prompt wedding, both bride and groom should arrive at the church **no later than thirty minutes prior to the scheduled start of the wedding.**

Photography

Professional photographers are welcome at Our Lady Fatima Church. In hiring them, please advise them that flash equipment may not be used during the ceremony, that is, once the wedding party has made its entrance into the church. Please ask your photographer to consult with the wedding assistants at least one-half hour before the ceremony begins. If another wedding is scheduled at Our Lady of Fatima following your wedding, the wedding party and the photographer should plan to be completely finished in the church one hour after the start of the wedding (i.e., a 2:30 p.m. wedding should exit the church no later than 3:30 p.m.). Due to the sacredness of the liturgy, it is the policy of Our Lady of Fatima Church that any and all photography be limited to those professionals hired by you for the day. Your full cooperation is appreciated.

Videography

Professional videographers are also welcome at Our Lady of Fatima. You should inform them that floodlights and mobile cameras are not permitted in the church. Stationary tripods must be used. Your videographer should also be told to meet with the wedding assistants at least one-half hour before the ceremony begins. The center aisle must be kept clean of tripods at all times. As with still photography, we ask that any videography be limited to those professionals hired by you for the day, in order to preserve the sacredness of the liturgy. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Etiquette

At Our Lady of Fatima Church, we take very seriously the sacredness of your wedding liturgy. Therefore, we remind all present of the importance of reverence, and ask that all present refrain from practices such as eating, gum chewing, conversing, etc. during the liturgy, and that all take the opportunity to become fully engaged in prayer and worship by participating fully in the prayers, responses and music of the liturgy.

Directions and Notes



Directions

Our Lady Fatima **Church**
184 Breakneck Road
Highland Lakes, NJ 07422
Website: olfatimaparish.net
Phone: 973-764-4457

From Paramus:

- Merge onto State Route 17/NJ-17.
- Take the NJ-4 W ramp.
- Merge onto NJ-4 via the ramp on the left.
- Stay straight to go onto State Route 208/NJ-208 N. Continue to follow NJ-208 N.
- Merge onto I-287 S via the exit on the left toward Oakland/Morristown.
- Take the NJ-23 exit, EXIT 52A-B, toward Butler/Riverdale/Wayne.
- Merge onto State Route 23/NJ-23 N via EXIT 52B toward Butler.
- Turn right onto Canistear Rd.
- Canistear Rd becomes Breakneck Rd.
184 BREAKNECK RD is on the left.

From Morristown:

- Merge onto I-287 N via the ramp on the left.
- Merge onto State Route 23/NJ-23 N via EXIT 52B toward Butler.
- Turn right onto Canistear Rd.
- Canistear Rd becomes Breakneck Rd.
184 BREAKNECK RD is on the left.

From Pennsylvania:

- Turn onto US Highway 206/US-206 S (Portions toll) (Crossing into New Jersey).
- Turn slight left onto Deckertown Turnpike/County Hwy-650. Continue to follow County Hwy-650.
- Turn right onto State Route 23/NJ-23. Continue to follow NJ-23.
- Turn left onto Glenwood Rd/County Hwy-565. Continue to follow County Hwy-565.
- Turn right onto Lake Pochung Rd.
- Turn left onto McAfee Glenwood Rd/County Hwy-517.
- Take the 1st right onto Mcpeek Rd.
- Take the 2nd right onto Sand Hill Rd.
- Turn left onto State Route 94/NJ-94.
- Turn right onto County Route 515/County Hwy-515.
- Turn slight left onto Breakneck Rd.
184 BREAKNECK RD is on the right.

Check List

Wedding Date: _____

Rehearsal Date:

Checklist

Date Completed

- Meetings with Priest/Deacon:

- _ Pre-Cana:

- Meeting with Music Director:

NOTES:

Congratulations!

