



Our Lady of Good Counsel Church
10 Austin Place
Staten Island, NY 10304
(718) 447-1503
OLGCSI.org

WEDDING GUIDELINES

Congratulations on your engagement! It is an occasion of great joy for you, your relatives, friends and your parish community. It is also a time to begin plans for your wedding and for your life together. These parish guidelines will help to guide you through this process.

WHO MAY MARRY IN OUR PARISH CHURCH?

By custom, the wedding usually takes place in the bride's parish but this is not required. Either the bride or groom (or your parents) must be a registered parishioner of Our Lady of Good Counsel.

On occasion, couples from outside the parish (with no current connection to OLGC Parish) request to marry in our church. Although ideally a wedding should be celebrated within the parish community of one member of the couple, we can accommodate such requests on a case-by-case basis. We will need written permission from the pastor of the church where one member of the couple is a registered member.

SETTING THE DATE

Only a priest at OLGC may set a date with you. A date will be set only after the priest has personally met with both of you and determined that you are free to marry here.

It is the couple's responsibility to secure the date and time with a priest at OLGC before making other commitments (reception hall, etc.).

You will need to contact a priest at the **very least six months** before your projected wedding date in order to have sufficient time to complete all marriage preparation requirements.

SCHEDULING THE TIME

Friday	3:30 pm or 4:30 pm	Nuptial Mass or simple Wedding Ceremony
Saturday	1:00 pm or 2:30 pm	Nuptial Mass or simple Wedding Ceremony
Sunday	3:00 pm	Nuptial Mass or simple Wedding Ceremony

Other times are also possible if they do not conflict with scheduled events.

Please speak with a priest for details.

PREPARING FOR YOUR SACRAMENT

1. DOCUMENTATION

Certain documents must be obtained before your marriage may be celebrated. Please note: if either bride or groom has a previous marriage, we must be told immediately!

- a) Recent new copies of your baptismal certificates, issued WITHIN THE LAST SIX MONTHS by the Church where you were baptized.
- b) Certification of First Communion and Confirmation. (Photocopies of documents are acceptable for this. If you do not have documents, you must contact the Church where the Sacrament took place and ask them to issue a new document).
- c) The party who is not a member of OLGCC must contact their parish, inform them that you are getting married at OLGCC, and ask for a letter from your pastor that states that you are free to marry.
- d) You must have written permission from your parents if you are under 18 years.
- e) In ecumenical marriages (Catholic and non-Catholic), the Catholic person must make in writing two promises:
 - To remain a member of the Catholic Church.
 - To do everything possible to raise your child(ren) in the Catholic Faith.These promises must be understood and accepted by the non-Catholic person.
- f) A Marriage License issued by the State of New York.

2. PRE-CANA (Marriage Preparation Workshop)

Marriage Preparation prepares you for your life together after your wedding. The Archdiocese of New York requires that you participate in a Marriage Preparation course. Information, dates and locations for these courses are available at: <http://nyfamilylife.org/marriage-preparation/>

When you complete your Marriage Preparation course, you will receive a certificate. Please keep it with all of your documents. We also invite you to consider attending a course about Natural Family Planning. If used properly, it is as effective as any other method. It is the only family planning method accepted by the Catholic Church.

3. MEETINGS WITH PRIEST

At least three meetings should be held in order to prepare you for marriage. You are responsible for calling and making appointments.

- Meeting #1 — You and the priest will set date and time for your wedding and you will go through all the information in this document.
- Meeting #2 — discuss your experience at the Marriage Preparation Workshop. This should be done soon after you attend a program and no later than three months before your wedding.
- Meeting #3 — Bring all the required documents if you have not yet submitted them all. Complete the paperwork by filling out the PMI (Pre-Matrimonial Investigation). Bring the wedding planning booklet you received. This meeting should take place about one month before your wedding.

PLANNING THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

THE WEDDING LITURGY

We will provide you with wedding planning book. Please take the time to prayerfully read it together as a couple. Consider all the options for scripture readings and prayers. This is part of the spiritual preparation for your wedding. Bring it with you to your 3rd meeting. The priest will go over it with you and answer any questions you may have about the options presented in the book.

MASS OR SIMPLE CEREMONY?

Roman Catholics normally celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage during a Nuptial Mass. Your Sacrament may also be celebrated during a simple Wedding Ceremony. A Marriage between a Catholic and a Baptized Christian may be celebrated at Mass, however, those who are not Catholic may not receive Holy Communion. Instead, a blessing can be offered. A Marriage between a Catholic and a person who is not baptized is always celebrated in a simple Wedding Ceremony.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Our Director of Music Ministry (an organist) and a cantor provide the music for all weddings here at OLG. They are trained in Catholic Liturgy, and they will make it a special experience for you, your family and your friends.

On occasion, we receive requests for an outside organist and/or singer who have ties to the couple to sing or play at a wedding. We strongly discourage this practice, but they will be permitted to participate in the music for your wedding if they are trained professionals with experience at Catholic Weddings. The parish organist is paid whether or not he/she is needed at the wedding. This is the standard agreement between organists and churches.

Our Director of Music Ministry, Mr. Gusti Daija, can provide a list of hymns approved for use in Catholic Wedding Liturgies. Popular and secular songs are not appropriate for Catholic Weddings. No selections may be played/sung in our church without prior approval of Mr. Daija. To contact Mr. Daija, please call 718-447-1503 and leave a message.

FEE

The donation for a wedding at OLG is \$600. One half is due within 30 days of your first meeting with the priest. This deposit confirms your wedding date in our books. The second half is due 30 days before your wedding.

The fee includes the use of the church, the priest, our organist and cantor.

LATENESS

It is the custom in some places to be fashionably late for weddings. It is ***not*** the custom here.

We cannot stress enough that YOU MUST BE ON TIME! Your wedding is ***not*** the only activity going on in our parish on that day. We simply do not have the time to wait for you!

Please show consideration for your priests, our musicians and for all the guests you have invited.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

You should plan on celebrating this Sacrament sometime before your wedding. Marriage is the beginning of a new life together. The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance, or Confession) will help you to center your marriage in Christ. The Sacrament is celebrated at OLGc on Saturdays from 10:00 to 10:30 AM and from 4:00 to 4:30 PM. If this is not convenient, please call ahead and make an appointment. If you arrange it ahead of time, a priest may be available for confessions on the night of rehearsal.

THE REHEARSAL

Choose the date and time of your rehearsal at the same time you set the date for your wedding. ***PLEASE BE ON TIME FOR YOUR REHEARSAL!*** We are on a tight schedule here at OLGc and there are other activities going on in the parish! Please bring your New York State Marriage License.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

One, two or three bouquets are appropriate. We encourage you to choose colorful arrangements. Flowers should be left in church as a gift to God. For weddings taking place during the penitential seasons of Advent or Lent, please do remove flowers after the wedding. Flower girls may not drop petals in Church.

If a Unity Candle is desired, we suggested you plan a short ceremony within your rehearsal dinner celebration. The Catholic Rite of Marriage already includes abundant symbols of unity.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Your photographer must be a professional. He/she may take flash pictures during the wedding. Photographers are NEVER permitted in the sanctuary (the area with red carpet). A video photographer is welcome. Make sure he/she understands that NO LIGHTS ARE PERMITTED in Church. This is an ARCHDIOCESAN POLICY. He/she must be prepared to use existing Church lighting throughout the wedding.

Photographers must never impede the view of the guests in the pews.

If these guidelines are not followed, the wedding will stop and we will politely ask your photographer(s) to leave the Church.

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

The throwing of rice, birdseed, paper confetti or any other such materials is not permitted due to liability concerns. Please make sure your guests are aware of this.

A FINAL WORD

We hope that you will find these guidelines helpful. They are intended to ensure a reverent and joyful celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. It is our conviction that time and effort spent preparing now for your Sacrament will help to ensure a lifetime together! We look forward to celebrating your Sacrament with you!

May Christ abundantly bless your love for each other, and fill you with His peace!

Father Liam O'Doherty, OSA

Pastor