

## Getting Married at Incarnation

Congratulations on your engagement. We look forward to preparing for your wedding with you. If you would like to marry here, we promise you a lovely celebration.

### Some Preliminary Notes

We do not insist that you be parish members – although we hope one or both of you will become active in our faith community. We do not charge for our preparation time or for the wedding celebration (paying for the services of our excellent musicians is a different question – see below). If you are able to make a donation to Incarnation before you are married, we will be most grateful. As members of the parish, please plan to support all of the work of Incarnation through regular contributions.

We can help you prepare for marriage in another Catholic church, in or outside the USA. For such weddings – and for couples who have only recently moved to the Twin Cities – some special permissions will be needed, and we will help you obtain them.

If one of you has been previously married to another person (either in a religious ceremony or in a civil marriage), we will need to work with you to establish your freedom to be married in a Roman Catholic ceremony. Please do not commit yourselves to a wedding date (for example – do not rent your reception place!) until you have spoken with one of our parish clergy. We will give you a straightforward assessment of whether we are going to be able to celebrate with you, and we will initiate the steps to make that possible.

### Marriage Preparation

Marriage preparation here (or in any Catholic community) usually involves four steps. They are:

1. A Premarriage Inventory: Some very fine questionnaires have been created to help couples assess, celebrate and strengthen their communication. You will fill out your separate answer sheets at home and return them to the church. We will correlate your responses and then meet with you to review your strengths and challenges in couple communication. You may be meeting with a specially trained mentor couple or with one of the parish clergy.
2. A Retreat or Class: The Twin Cities Catholic community offers excellent weekend or evening experiences to help you learn more about a successful marriage. They are usually led by lay people who have decades of thoughtful married life. We will share the contact information for these retreats with you – you attend as your calendar permits you to do.
3. The Prenuptial Questionnaire: You and a member of the clergy will fill out the “official papers” for the Catholic Church. The Questionnaire (sometimes called “Form 1”) helps us to record your marriage. It also gives us a chance to ask all the questions someone should ask you before you marry for life. We usually fill out these “papers” after talking with you about what our Church believes the marriage vows mean – this is the informed consent part of the preparation process.
4. Planning your Ceremony: Weddings can take place in the context of a Mass or in a Liturgy of the Word. We will help you sort out the right format for you. And weddings can seem

complex. But we ask your patience – let us help you focus on the most important elements of the ceremony. Then the planning will become easy and lovely!

And a final note about preparation: this is not a “one size fits all” process. Talk with us about accommodations we can make if one of you lives elsewhere, if you are raising young children, or if you have already been together for many years. And if one of you is from a different faith, we can also coordinate nearly all of the above with your pastor, rabbi, imam, or other religious leader.

### **Scheduling Your Wedding Ceremony**

We have a wonderful “problem” at Incarnation: we have too many ceremonies going on! That means that our Saturdays are fairly tightly scheduled. Usual Saturday wedding times are: 9:00 or 11:00 AM and 1:00 or 3:00 PM. Friday afternoons and evenings are often more easily available than are Saturday times. Consider scheduling then. We can also marry you on any other day of the week except Sunday (and on a few church holidays). Feel free to call the church office (612-822-2101 or 612-874-7169) to check about the availability of a particular date or time. We can even put a “hold” on that date or time for you – but we cannot promise you a wedding here until you have spoken with one of our clergy.

### **Wedding Music**

We have excellent musicians available, and they offer wide repertoires in English and on Spanish. Although there is no parish or clergy fee for your wedding, please compensate our musicians for their time, training, and skill. They will let you know what their fees are. You may also bring in other musicians, but we ask you not to commit to anyone else before you have spoken with one of our clergy.