

CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE



QUEEN OF PEACE CHURCH

10 Franklin Place

North Arlington, NJ 07031

201-997-0700

Directions: www.qpcna.org

Rev. Anthony Di Stefano, Pastor

adistefano@qpcna.org

ext. 112

Rev. Jose Pablo Muralles, Parochial Vicar

jmuralles@qpcna.org

ext. 126

Welcome

The parish community of *Queen of Peace Church* shares in your excitement in desiring to receive the sacrament of Marriage. Our clergy and pastoral staff look forward to assisting you in your preparation.

We wholeheartedly believe that these coming months of preparation will provide you the opportunity to reflect, enrich, and prepare for the wonderful gift of the sacrament of Marriage. As a faith-filled Catholic community, we uphold the Church's teaching that this sacrament is a *life-long, indissoluble commitment* in which a man and a woman are *united in a sacred and loving bond*. So that this wonderful sacrament is thoughtfully entered into, we invite you to take part in our *Marriage Preparation Program* with an open mind and heart.

Introduction and General Preparations

The *Marriage Preparation Program* at *Queen of Peace Church* is designed to foster a fruitful and loving marriage rooted in the Catholic tradition. Initially the couple has an introductory meeting with our Pastor, Fr. Anthony Di Stefano. Thereafter, the program begins with an initial meeting with one of our priests who will both journey with you in the program and also serve as the celebrant in your wedding. This is then followed by the Pre-Marriage Inventory assessing the couple's compatibility, and then, as a couple you will follow with one to two additional follow-up sessions with the priest.

Additionally, we will provide you with information on scheduling a *Pre-Cana Program and God's Plan for a Joy Filled Marriage Program* as part of marriage instruction required in the *Archdiocese of Newark*.

In the months ahead as you plan for the reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony, we suggest that you spend some time each day in prayer, reading of the Bible or spiritual reading, and engaging in works of mercy. Often prayers in the days ahead, both alone and together, will deepen your personal relationship with God.

We also encourage all couples preparing to be married to attend Sunday Mass. Your presence is important not only for one another but also for this parish community. We also recommend that you make use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, particularly prior to your wedding, as this sacrament affords you the opportunity to experience the forgiveness and love of the Lord.

The marriage preparation concludes with a meeting with the celebrating priest and parish liturgical coordinators who will assist you in planning the nuptial Mass or ceremony.

Getting Started and Scheduling a Wedding

Your first step is to contact the Parish Secretary (201-997-0700 ext. 110) to check the availability of dates/times, along with providing some basic information about yourself and your future spouse (this inquiry and information can also be completed on our parish website QPCNA.ORG). Our pastor will then contact you to arrange for a brief introductory meeting.

The time for a wedding on a Friday or other weekday must be arranged with the pastor based on particular circumstances and on other ministries and activities scheduled in the church. Please keep in

mind that on Saturdays we must accommodate funeral and baptisms throughout the day, as well as confessions that take place at 1pm and Mass at 5pm. On Sunday, we have Masses throughout the morning and baptisms can also take place in the afternoon. Potential wedding times may be scheduled as follows:

Friday/Weekdays: From 2:00pm until 4:00pm

Saturday: From 1:00pm until 3:00pm

Sunday: From 2:00pm until 4:00pm

Following the introductory meeting, you will then receive an email from the pastor confirming the wedding date and time details.

Pre-Cana Sessions with the Priest

One of our priests will then contact you to arrange your first Pre-Cana marriage preparation meeting. The marriage preparation process includes several meetings (typically 3 sessions) with the priest. At these meetings your relationship with each other and with God will be discussed, as well as planning out your wedding ceremony.

Pre-Cana Conference & God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage

In addition to the individual sessions that you will have with the priest, all couples must complete programs offered and required by the Archdiocese of Newark:

Pre-Cana Conference: This program is an experience based on the process of listening and communication. Through a healthy expression of ideas, couples can reveal their own feelings about marriage, and with the guidance of trained married couples leading the program, internalize the basic concepts of Christian marriage.

God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage: This marriage preparation seminar offers married and engaged couples a compelling vision of God's glorious plan for marriage, love and human sexuality.

Registering to attend a scheduled session of both the Pre-Cana Conference & God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage may be done by visiting the Archdiocesan website at:

rcan.org/precana

Documents from the Church

The Church wants you to be prepared for life together, and so requires the completion of some paperwork in order for a couple to marry.

Persons not baptized in Queen of Peace Church must contact the church of their baptism to receive a copy of their baptismal certificate. This must be a new and updated copy dated within 6 months of the wedding. This copy is not returned and is kept in your marriage file in our church.

Documents from Civil Authority

In the State of New Jersey, a Marriage License is obtained from the municipal clerk's office/health department (usually in the town where the bride or groom resides). To obtain the license in NJ you do not need blood test results anymore. You should apply for the marriage license at least 3 weeks prior to your wedding. This marriage license is valid for 30 days after it is issued. One witness (over 18 years old) and some form of ID for both bride and groom will be needed when you apply for the license. The witness can be a parent or friend and does not have to be a member of your wedding party.

Please note that if neither you nor your fiancée reside in the State of New Jersey, the license must be obtained from the Health Department in North Arlington 201-991-6060 ext. 121.

The civil marriage license (together with all church fees) must be brought to the rehearsal and given to the priest.

The pink (last) copy of the marriage license, which you will receive from the priest after the wedding, is not a legally filed copy. About 2-3 weeks after your wedding, contact the Health Department in North Arlington (201-991-6060 ext. 121) to obtain a certified copy of the license for all legal purposes.

Preparing for Your Wedding

During the course of your marriage preparation, you will receive a booklet, *Together For Life*, which contains selections of readings and prayers that are used in the Nuptial Mass or Ceremony. The priest preparing you will go over the booklet with you on the options. We ask you to carefully choose the selections that resonate with you about the spirituality of your marriage.

Ceremony and Music Planning

It is best to meet with the priest on ceremony preparation and with Natasha Gonzalez, our Music Director, prior to your wedding date so that we can help you finalize the music and details of your wedding.

The couple should contact our Music Director shortly after their first meeting with the priest, just to establish contact. She can be reached by email at ngonzalez@qpcna.org or her office at 201-997-0700 ext. 115.

As you get closer, within 3 months of the wedding, the couple will work with the Music Director and select music which reflects the dignified worship of God. Secular music is not allowed.

It is expected that you will use the organist/cantor provided by Queen of Peace. Natasha Gonzalez must approve guest cantors, musicians etc. prior to your wedding day. If for some reason there is a guest organist/cantor, a bench fee of \$400.00 payable to the Music Director is still required. A \$100.00 rehearsal fee is applied if any guest cantors/musicians require a rehearsal with the Music Director.

Rehearsal

Rehearsals are scheduled with the priest who will celebrate your wedding at a time that is mutually agreeable and also confirmed by the pastor that the church is available. Please schedule the rehearsal with the parish secretary or with the priest when you arrange your wedding or meet for the first time (and no later than 2 months prior to your wedding day).

Because there may be a number of rehearsals or other church celebration scheduled on any given evening, you are asked to have your wedding party in the church at the scheduled time.

As your wedding date nears, the priest will contact you to discuss your rehearsal, remind you what to bring and to answer any questions you may have about your rehearsal and wedding.

Please bring the Marriage License with you to the rehearsal and give it to the priest.

On the day of the rehearsal, please bring with you the Marriage License, as well as the following stipend requirements for weddings at Queen of Peace that must be presented to the priest:

- Church Fee: \$500.00 (parishioner)
or \$750.00 (non-parishioner) Payable to: *Queen of Peace Church*
- Music Director's Fee: \$400.00 Payable to: *Natasha Gonzalez*
- Priest: Couple's discretion
- Altar Servers (if arranged): usually \$10 each

Guidelines for Your Wedding Day

Floral Decorations

The couple makes arrangements for all floral decorations. Please note the following important guidelines for florists and know that it is your responsibility to share these with your florist:

- All deliveries are to be made at least one-half hour before the start of the service. Please have your florist call several days in advance and speak with the parish secretary during Rectory Office business hours (201-997-0700 ext. 110) to check availability of the church so as to not interfere with other ceremonies or functions that may be taking place prior to your wedding.
- Respect the Sanctuary: Florists are not to move any of the flowers, candles or other liturgical items that are already in place in the sanctuary.
- No flower arrangements should ever be placed on or directly in front of the altar table.
- Please inform your florist that if pew decorations are used, they cannot be taped or tacked to the pew; instead, florists should use rubber bands or ribbons.
- Aisle runners are not permitted at Queen of Peace.
- It is customary to leave flowers in the church after the wedding as a gift to your parish for the decoration of the church during the weekend.

Photos and Video

A wedding is a sacred sacrament that takes place in a holy and sacred space. As such, proper decorum is expected of all attending. In choosing photographers and videographers please know that we require that they must not distract the priest, bride and groom, or those who attend the ceremony.

It is your responsibility to relay the Queen of Peace guidelines. This is important because a photographer/videographer, breaching the rules, will be asked to leave the premises during the wedding. Please inform your photographer/videographer of the following:

- Your photographer/videographer should introduce themselves to the priest before the wedding begins. This way the priest can inform them of the boundaries in which pictures may be taking during the wedding.
- No one is allowed in the sanctuary or near the altar or tabernacle for the purpose of taking pictures during the wedding.
- Flash photography is permitted but floodlights are not permitted during the service.
- While pictures are welcome throughout the Mass/Ceremony, the church is not a studio and thus pictures in the church afterwards, while permitted, is subject to time limitations as in most situations we are in need of re-setting the church after a wedding for another ceremony/Mass.

Printed Programs

Printed programs, if desired, are the responsibility of the couple. Prior to the final printing of your program, we strongly encourage you to have it reviewed by the priest and Music Director.

Presentation of Flowers to the Blessed Mother

If a devotion to Mary is part of your life, you may wish to make a presentation of flowers to the Blessed Mother. If you decide to include this in your Mass/Ceremony, it takes place before the concluding rite, and you should inform the priest and Music Director of this option in your planning session.

Unity Candle - In a Catholic Wedding, the exchange of vows and rings symbolizes the union of the couple. The lighting of a unity candle is not part of the Catholic wedding rite and is not permitted.

Rice – Birdseed – Confetti – Rose Pedals

To keep the church aisles and steps both clean and safe for all who come to Queen of Peace, and to avoid any question of liability to you and your guests, you are requested to inform those who attend your wedding that throwing rice, birdseed, confetti or rose pedals is not permitted inside or outside the church.

Limousine

Please inform your limousine service that the wedding procession will begin at the Church Place entrance of the church and the wedding recession will end either back at Church Place or at the main entrance of the church on Ridge Road depending upon the wishes of the wedding couple as arranged with the celebrating priest.

Alcohol Policy

Your wedding day is both special and sacred. Alcoholic beverages of any kind are not permitted on the church grounds before, during or after all rehearsal and weddings and we ask your wedding party and guests to abide by this policy.

Always on Time

- All people involved in a wedding rehearsal must be in the church 10 minutes prior to the scheduled time.
- On the day of the wedding, the full bridal party must be in the church 15 minutes before the time the wedding is scheduled to begin.

Plan ahead to leave early so that you may arrive early and on-time. It is your responsibility to arrive at the church by the designated time. Delays caused by the photographer or limousine driver are not acceptable excuses for arriving late. Queen of Peace Church reserves the right to shorten a Mass to a ceremony or a simple exchange of vows if any wedding begins more than 15 minutes late.

A Final Message

Our priests and the entire staff of Queen of Peace Church will do everything to make your wedding day service a reverent, dignified and memorable occasion. We wish you the very best with the preparation of your wedding day and remember we are here to assist you with any questions or concerns. *May God Bless You with a long and loving life together!*

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