

Celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony at St. Peter Chanel



June 2021

CONGRATULATIONS

We are honored to have a part in both your preparation and celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony. While it is certainly a milestone in your lives and a most serious decision, it is also a time for much happiness and joy. We look forward to working with you to make your wedding day a great celebration and the perfect start for your life together.

STEP ONE: PHONE FOR AN APPOINTMENT

Contact Mary Ann Plachta in the Parish Office (678-832-1222) to set an appointment with a priest or deacon. This process should begin at least six months prior to your contemplated wedding date and before you reserve a reception venue or other services. We know that you have many questions and during this initial phone call you will have the opportunity to receive the answers to many of the basic questions.

STEP TWO: INITIAL MEETING WITH PRIEST OR DEACON

- **EXPLANATION OF PREPARATION**
- **COMPLETE INITIAL PAPERWORK**
- **TENTATIVELY SET WEDDING DATE AND TIME**

During this first meeting, the priest or deacon will explain the sacramental formation for marriage as well as complete some preliminary paperwork, and tentatively set your wedding date/time. Your wedding date will be formally confirmed once you return some additional paperwork listed below.

- **AFFIDAVIT OF FREEDOM TO MARRY**
- **CURRENT COPY OF BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE with current Pastor's signature**
- **ANNULMENT DECREE OR DEATH CERTIFICATE (if applicable)**
- **CHURCH RESERVATION FORM**

You will be given two (2) copies, each, of the **Affidavit of Freedom to Marry**. Both the bride-to-be and the groom-to-be need to have the forms completed by parents or other relatives or close friends, notarized by a priest, or deacon, or notary public, and returned to the Parish Office.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: All previous marriages – civil, non-Catholic, and Catholic are presumed to be valid by the Catholic Church. A previously married person is free to marry in the Catholic Church if the former spouse has died or if the previous marriage has been granted an annulment. Please be sure to discuss this with your priest or deacon.

If either party was married before, please bring to the initial meeting with the priest or deacon a copy of the **Annulment Decree** or a copy of the **Death Certificate**.

Catholic parties must obtain a new copy of your **Baptismal Certificate**. This is obtained by requesting a copy from the parish in which you were baptized. It is important to indicate that you are requesting a

baptismal certificate “with all notations.” A copy of the Baptismal Certificate for a non-Catholic party is helpful, but not required.

Permission is given for a Catholic to marry a person of another faith tradition when the Catholic party indicates that the Catholic faith is a value in his/her own life, and one which he or she intends to hand on to their children. The Catholic party will be asked to promise: *“I reaffirm my faith in Jesus Christ and, with God’s help, intend to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church. I promise to do all in my power to share that faith with our children by having them baptized and reared as Catholics.”* This promise is only made by the Catholic party.

NOTE: Catholics ordinarily celebrate their wedding in the parish church of the bride or groom, or where their family is a member. In some special circumstances, such as the wedding of a Catholic and a member of another faith community, permission is given by the Archbishop for the wedding to take place in another church or house of worship. Because marriage is a sacrament of the Church, Catholic weddings never take place in secular venues or outdoors.

CHURCH RESERVATION FORM

At your first meeting with the priest or deacon, you will receive a Church Reservation form which shows the TENTATIVE date and time reserved for your wedding. This date/time is not formally confirmed (don’t reserve a reception venue until you receive this confirmation) until all the additional paperwork is returned including the Church Reservation Form which is signed by both bride and groom. Signing this form indicates that you will follow all of our parish guidelines for the celebration of weddings at St. Peter Chanel.

WEDDING and REHEARSAL TIMES

If your wedding is:

Friday – 2 PM

Friday – 7 PM

Saturday – 11 AM

Saturday – 2 PM

Saturday – 7:00 PM

Your rehearsal is:

Thursday – 4:45 PM

Thursday – 5:30 PM

Friday – 4:00 PM

Friday – 4:45 PM

Friday – 5:30 PM

VISITING PRIEST/DEACON

If you are working with a Priest or Deacon outside of our parish, please let us know so that we may furnish him with the appropriate forms to be able to confirm your wedding date/time here at St. Peter Chanel.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

- **FOCCUS SURVEY – Pre Marital Inventory**
- **MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM**

The priest or deacon you are working with will direct you to the programs that best suit your needs. It is required that you take part in one of these programs and present a certificate of participation to the Pastoral Office (Barb Donnelly) to be placed in your file. In addition, we normally ask each couple to complete FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study), a pre-marital inventory that will provide a basis for future discussion and preparation.

There are several Marriage Preparation program options available in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. You will have a discussion with the priest or deacon as to what program, in addition to FOCCUS, they think would serve you best. When you have completed the Marriage preparation program selected by your priest or deacon for you, please contact the office to schedule a final appointment to review your Wedding Liturgy and receive the Together for Life planning guide. Additionally, we can furnish you with certification for a discount on your Marriage License. You receive this discount on the basis of your participation in a Marriage Preparation Program.

If you are working with a priest or deacon outside of our parish, either for your preparation or as your presider, please let us know so that we can provide him and you with all the important information.

STEP THREE: WEDDING PLANNING INFORMATION MEETING

You have many choices that you can select that will make your Nuptial Mass (Wedding Mass) or Wedding Ceremony reflective of you both. From the entrance procession to the prayers of the faithful, you have the opportunity to personalize your Sacramental celebration. You can, obviously, discuss many of these options with the priest or deacon at your initial meeting, but at St. Peter Chanel we also provide a Wedding Coordinator (required) who can assist with your questions. Once you have received formal confirmation of your wedding date, you will be contacted by your Wedding Coordinator within two weeks. Your Wedding Coordinator is an indispensable resource for you to help assist with your planning your Wedding celebration including the rehearsal as well as the actual Wedding.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- **MARRIAGE LICENSE:** A civil Marriage License is obtained at any County Probate Court in the State of Georgia. **Note:** If neither applicant are residents of Georgia you must then apply for the marriage license in the county where the ceremony is to be held. The license is valid anywhere in the State of Georgia until it is used or destroyed. License fees may vary, and you may be eligible for a discount once you have completed your marriage preparation program. A form letter for

the discount can be obtained from the Priest or Deacon with whom you are working. You can obtain specifics on fees and requirements by contacting one of the following offices:

- Fulton County Probate Court 770-551-7638
- Cherokee County Probate Court 678-493-6160
- Cobb County Probate Court 770-528-1931

The Marriage License, along with the return envelope furnished by the County should be given to Barb Donnelly (678.832.1227) in the Pastoral Office no later than one month prior to the Wedding.

- **MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE:** On your wedding day, you will receive a Marriage Certificate which states that you have been married at St. Peter Chanel Catholic Church. This is not a legal document. After your wedding, we mail your marriage license back to the county of issuance. To obtain a certified copy of your Civil Marriage Certificate, contact the Probate Court in the county where you received your Marriage License.



PARISH POLICIES FOR WEDDINGS

To enable a joyful and reverent celebration of your wedding, the following requirements must be met for reasons of safety as well as preservation and maintenance of our church facilities.

- We ask that you please keep the Bride's Room as well as the Groom's room neat as well as the entire Church facility.
- Due to safety and trip hazards, white aisle runners are NOT ALLOWED.
- All flowers for the wedding such as bouquets and boutonniere are to be provided by the bride and groom through the florist of their own choice. Should the bride and groom wish to provide floral arrangements for the Church Sanctuary, they should contact Doni Strok in the Parish Office. Selection of any other Church decorations should be discussed with your Wedding Coordinator prior to any purchase. Please read the Florist Agreement and give it to the florist you have hired asking that they sign the Agreement. NOTE: Sanctuary furnishings, coverings, flags, seasonal (Easter/Christmas) decorations may not be moved.
- Arrangements for photographs are to be made by the bride and groom with the photography studio of their choice. Please read the Photographer/Videographer Agreement and give it to the photography and/or videography you have hired asking that they each sign the Agreement.

ALCOHOL and SMOKING

- There is to be NO alcohol consumed in the church or on the church grounds before, during or after the wedding. This includes the parking lot.
- Any member of the wedding party (the bride and the bridal party, the groom and his groomsmen, readers, and ushers) who comes for the wedding and appears to have been drinking will not participate in the wedding.
- No smoking is allowed anywhere in the Church building.



CHECKLIST FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION

At Least 6 Months Prior (and following your initial appointment with Priest/Deacon)

- Obtain a new copy of your Baptismal Certificate with notations (signed by the current Pastor) for both Bride and Groom and forward to Pastoral Office.
- Forward all applicable additional paperwork such as your Freedom to Marry Affidavits and if relevant, an Annulment Decree and/or Death Certificate, along with your Baptismal Certificate, to the Pastoral Office. Once we receive all the paperwork in the Pastoral Office you will receive formal confirmation of your Wedding Date/Time.
- Complete all assigned Marriage Preparation programs assigned by your Priest or Deacon.
 - FOCCUS Assessment Test and review
 - Sponsor Couple, Engaged Encounter, or other Archdiocesan approved preparatory program, as assigned by your Priest or Deacon.
 - Submit complete certificates to the Pastoral Office.
- The Wedding Coordinator assigned to you will contact the Bride within 2 weeks of the formal confirmation of your Wedding Date.
- You are asked to make initial contact with the Music Director within 2 week of receiving your Wedding Date Confirmation Letter. Contact Information: jjackson@stpeterchanel.org or 678-832-1247.

At least 2 months prior

- Collect the completed Vendor Agreements from your Florist, Photographer, and Videographer and return them to the Pastoral Office.
- Schedule your follow-up appointment with your Priest or Deacon. You will receive your copy of Together For Life Wedding Planning Booklet. At this point we will confirm that all paperwork is in your file.

At least 1 month prior

- Submit your Marriage License to Barb Donnelly in the Pastoral Office. Please keep a copy of the license for your records.
- Complete and submit the Wedding Planning Form found in the Together For Life Liturgy Planning Booklet, indicating your selections for Music, Readings, and Prayers of the Faithful to Barb Donnelly in the Pastoral Office.
- This is the time for any additional final questions in anticipation of your Wedding Day.

Remember that we are here to assist you in this most important occasion and Sacramental celebration. Please call us if you have any questions or concerns as you prepare.