

Guide for Celebrating Weddings at Most Holy Trinity - St. Mary

Welcome

To be married at our church one of either the bride or groom must be Catholic. Catholics can readily get permission to marry persons who are not Catholic, whether Christians or not or people of no religion. It is also important that neither of the parties to the wedding be previously married. If there is a previous marriage of either the bride or groom, please **do not** pick a date. Allow for extra time for us to work with you to determine if there is any possibility of still being married in the Catholic Church.

Here are the most typical paths that people take to get married at our parish.

A. Most Holy Trinity - St. Mary is already my parish

This is where I worship on Sunday. I belong here because of proximity to the church or I have chosen to come here and have registered in the parish.

1. Meet with the friar for initial meeting and set a date for the ceremony and the rehearsal
2. Complete the Pre-Marriage Inquiry form
3. Receive the wedding planning book
4. Get **newly** issued baptismal certificate from the Church of your Baptism
5. Provide proof that the Catholic Parties are confirmed if this is not indicated on your baptism certificate.
6. Secure notarized Witnesses Testimony that the couple is free to marry. (We will provide the form)
7. Arrange to take a marriage preparation course. We require the Brooklyn Diocese in person 1 day workshop or something similar. We may also offer a marriage inventory.
8. Schedule appointments for instruction with the friar preparing you for marriage.
9. Meet with Presider of your wedding to plan the ceremony

B. I belong to another parish

1. Meet with the pastor of the church closest to you to get his permission in writing to get married at Most Holy Trinity - St. Mary.
2. Ask the pastor if he would like to do the "paperwork" there and transfer it to us for planning and holding the ceremony or whether he would prefer we do the paperwork here.
3. Once the initial paperwork is done, meet with the friar to set a date for the ceremony and the rehearsal.
4. If you would like your own parish priest to witness your marriage at Most Holy Trinity - St. Mary then you continue with him for the planning of the ceremony.
5. If you would like one of the friars here to celebrate the ceremony you would continue with us to plan the wedding.

C. I don't really have a parish yet

1. If you live in Williamsburg and you don't have a parish yet and would like to consider being part of Most Holy Trinity - St. Mary you would follow the instructions above for section A of this guide. We will be happy to work with you to both develop your faith life and help you prepare for marriage. We want to make sure that you understand the spiritual significance of a marriage in the Catholic Church.
2. If you live outside of Williamsburg and don't have a parish yet, the first step would be to find yourself a parish where you live and then follow the instructions above for section B.

D. I would like to have the wedding take place in another parish

1. If we are your legitimate parish, we will be happy to work with you to do the preparations necessary and delegate another priest or deacon at your preferred church to witness your wedding. Follow the path outlines above at section A.
2. If you are not in this parish you will need to ask the pastor of the parish where you live to grant permission for the wedding to take place at another location.

Civil Requirements

A New York City license is required for the wedding. These are valid for 60 days after it is issued. Contact the municipal clerk to obtain one. The license must be submitted to the parish 1 week before the wedding.

Day & Time of Weddings

Most weddings take place on Saturdays at anywhere between 11 AM and 3 PM. By Diocesan regulations, weddings are not held on Sundays. We also are available for weddings on some weekday afternoons and evenings. Additional cleaning costs may be required.

There are certain days during the year that weddings are not permitted such as Good Friday or Holy Thursday or on other special feasts. If you decide to get married on a special feast you may need to use the prayers, vestments and decorations associated with that feast or season.

We strongly discourage weddings during the Season of Lent.

Ceremony

We will work with you to create a meaningful celebration in keeping with the Church's tradition. You have a lot of choices to make and people to include in the ceremony. Please remember that the ceremony must begin on time. A few minutes of grace may be given in case of an urgent matter but otherwise parts of the wedding celebration will be cut and any delays of 30 minutes or more may result in the wedding being cancelled.

1. **Music:** You must use our organist and cantors. There is a fee for this. If you would prefer a different type of music like guitar please talk with the friar. The key is that the music must be liturgical music and must be done by professionals. The presider reserves the right to review the music. The "Here Comes the Bride" march is not used at Most Holy Trinity - St. Mary because of its origins and significance. Contact our Music Director, Mr. Darren Denman as soon as possible to prepare for the liturgy: darren@trinity-stmary.org
2. **The Entrance:** Well over 50 years ago the Church revised the way in which weddings are supposed to begin. Rather than focusing on the bride and her entrance the focus is on the couple, bride and groom. The liturgy ideally calls for them to be there to greet their guests and then process down the aisle together to begin their life together in presence of their parents, family, friends and God. However, the traditional option of the bride accompanied by her father or parents is acceptable. The celebrant will work with you to plan this and the rest of the Mass or ceremony.
3. **Non-Catholic Customs:** Often people have seen customs at weddings that do not reflect our Catholic ritual. We do not use the "unity candle" or such customs which were actually designed for the wedding reception. Ethnic customs which are approved by the bishops of that country, may also be used. We also do not allow for the throwing of confetti or rice in or outside the church.
4. **Wedding Planners:** If you have a wedding planner, they may help you in many things but not with the ceremony or be involved during the wedding itself.
5. **Photography:** We appreciate that you want to have nice pictures and/or video of your wedding day. Most professional photographers and videographers understand our Catholic worship. However, we have strict guidelines for them so that they do not distract. They cannot be in the way or noticeable. They must meet the presider at least 15 minutes before the wedding.
6. **Decorations:** Flowers are welcome. They cannot be artificial. If you would like to leave some at the church, please let us know ahead of time. We recommend that you use our parish florist who is familiar with our requirements and makes beautiful arrangements. She also knows how to make pew bows with flowers that do not damage our pews. Ask the friar working with you to share the contact information for the florist.

We do not allow any runners, carpets, lighting, scaffolding or other alterations to the church. We also do not allow any confetti, rice, flower petals or anything else that would be thrown on the floor or steps of the church that could be a slip hazard.

Please note that during special seasons such as Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter the church will already be decorated.

7. **LiveStream your wedding**

We have the ability to livestream your wedding. There is no cost for this. However it is a fixed "shot" of the sanctuary of the church with no alternative camera angles.

Offerings: No one will be denied a wedding in the Catholic Church because they cannot afford it. That being said, the offering for the use of the church should be consistent with other wedding expenses such as photographer, cake, flowers, reception, etc. If you can give more than the minimum requested offering than please be kind and help us maintain our church.

Minimum suggested offerings:

Church: \$500 – payable to Most Holy Trinity – St. Mary Church
\$200 Deposit due at first interview
\$300 Balance due at Wedding Rehearsal

Priest or Deacon: \$200 – Stipend in cash, due at rehearsal
Altar Server: \$50 – Stipend in cash, due at rehearsal

Organist: \$150 – arrange with the organist for payment method and due date of fee
Cantor: \$150 – arrange with the organist for payment method and due date of fee

Pre-nuptial Investigation ONLY (Wedding celebrated elsewhere)
\$250 payable to Most Holy Trinity – St. Mary Church and due before the transfer
\$50 Courier fee payable to Dioceses of Brooklyn for transfer within the USA
\$100 Courier fee payable to Diocese of Brooklyn for international transfers

8. Contact Information:

Friar Richard Riccioli, OFM Conv.	friarrick@trinity-stmary.org
Friar Louis Maximilian Smith, OFM Conv.	fr.louismax@trinity-stmary.org
Deacon Eric	deaconeric@trinity-stmary.org
Darren Denman, Music Director	darren@trinity-stmary.org
Adriana (florist/ Spanish speaking)	646-353-9983
Marriage Course	Pre-Cana link