

## Wedding Date & Time

From our experience celebrating literally hundreds of weddings, we know that at this point setting your wedding date and time is foremost on your mind. Father or Deacon will set the date with you at the end of your first meeting.

Weddings at Holy Trinity are typically celebrated on Saturdays at 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. But these times are not exclusive. It is possible to celebrate a wedding on another day of the week.

As you're thinking about days and times, come to your initial meeting with several options available. And if getting married at Holy Trinity is important to you, please meet with your celebrant and set the date before you make a deposit on a reception venue.

## Rehearsals

Rehearsals are scheduled and directed by the parish Wedding Coordinator. Your Wedding Coordinator will schedule the rehearsal. Most often, rehearsals are scheduled later afternoon or early evening a day or two before your wedding.

Depending on the size of your wedding and wedding party, a rehearsal might not be necessary. If your wedding party is Bride, Groom and 2 witnesses, and only 8 people are attending, then a rehearsal isn't necessary. But if your bridal party includes 32 bridesmaids, 9 groomsmen, 4 ring-bearers (including 1 that "barks"), 7 flower-girls, an Elvis impersonator, and 4 camels, then a rehearsal is a pretty good idea. If there are clowns involved, we all need a rehearsal and maybe a chat about the profound nature of the commitment you're making on your wedding day.

A chat with your Coordinator and the celebrant of your wedding will help determine if a rehearsal is necessary.

## Mass or No Mass?

The Rite of Matrimony may take place within a Mass or without a Mass. "Within a Mass" means that there is a celebration of the Eucharist along with the Rite of Matrimony.

“Without a Mass” means there is not a celebration of Eucharist. Both are valid and beautiful in their own rite, and celebrating a marriage without a Mass is no less “Catholic”.

Considering that, and as directed by the Diocese of Orange, if one of the parties is non-baptized, the wedding will be celebrated without a Mass.

If one of the parties is a baptized Christian (though not Catholic), the couple must discuss with their priest as to whether it would be appropriate to have the wedding with a Mass or without.

If the celebrant of your wedding is a Deacon, it will be a Rite of Matrimony without Mass, since a Deacon, by the nature of his office, can't celebrate Mass.

## Who Can Be Married

As Catholic Christians, we believe that marriage celebrates the unbreakable commitment between a man and a woman who are free to make this mature decision.

If you have previous marriages, celebrated through a Church, or civilly, please let your celebrant know. Father or Deacon will work with you to make sure that you are free to marry.

## Your Intentions

As you make your wedding vows to each other you are promising that you intend to have a permanent, life-long marriage. You are stating your intention to be faithful to each other, loving and honoring each other. And you are also stating your intention to be open to having kids and a family.

## Documents

Particular documents are required to establish your sacramental status with the Church, your freedom from any previous unions, as well as sworn statements attesting

to your clear understanding of the nature and responsibilities of Christian marriage.

- **Baptismal Certificate**

Catholics must present a *new copy* (obtained within the last six months) of their baptismal record. Simply call up the parish where you were baptized and request a copy. Parishes get these requests every day. Usually, it's a simple thing to request.

For a baptized, non-Catholic Christian please see if you have a baptismal record. If you do, please bring a copy and give it to your celebrant. A copy of a family record will suffice. Some non-Catholic Christian Churches keep records (i.e. Anglicans, Lutherans, some Presbyterians). Other Churches don't (i.e. Baptists, Non-Denominational, Pentecostal). You can call the Church in which you were baptized and see if they have a record that they can send.

- **First Communion and Confirmation Certificates**

Catholics are to present copies of the certificates that were given at the time of reception of these sacraments. The sacrament of marriage is *not* denied because of the lack of Communion or Confirmation.

- **Freedom to Marry Forms**

Each party is to have two (2) notarized "freedom to marry" forms. These forms are to be signed by two witnesses. Your celebrant will more fully explain this document when you meet, giving you the forms.

- **Certificates of Marriage Preparation**

Pre-marriage preparation programs and classes are sponsored by the Diocese of Orange. Upon completion of the program you will be given a certificate, which must be presented to the priest or deacon.

- **Liturgical Preparation: Together for Life**

At one of your meetings with the priest or deacon, he will give you a booklet titled *Together for Life*. This will help you plan your wedding liturgy.

## Civil Marriage License

This is obtained from the County Court and is valid for 90 days from the date of issue. This license, along with the return envelope, for civil marriage certificate must be on file at the parish 30 days prior to the wedding.

South County Branch Office

Laguna Hills Civic Center

24031 El Toro Rd., Ste 150

Laguna Hills, CA 92653

(714) 834-2500

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Monday through Friday

County Clerk Recorder's Office

211 West Santa Ana Blvd.

Santa Ana, CA 92701

(714) 834-2500

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Monday through Friday

## Fees & Donations

There is no charge for the Sacrament of Marriage. As Church law states, Sacraments are freely given to the baptized faithful. But we would ask you to consider financial support of the parish. It takes money to run the parish, pay the bills, keep the lights on, etc. As Church, we rely on the generosity of the faithful. And the faithful are required by Church law to support the mission of the parish. So with these provisions in mind we suggest the following amount of donations.

- ☐ \$1050 for couples where one or the other is a registered parishioner of Holy Trinity
- ☐ \$1150 for non-registered couples who live in the Diocese of Orange
- ☐ \$1500 for couples who live outside the Diocese of Orange

With these donations, the parish will provide a time, place and celebrant for your wedding, simple music— an instrumentalist and cantor— and the services of a wedding coordinator.

The priest or deacon does not profit by these donations. It's not going into Father's pocket. This is for the benefit of our parish community and aids in the Catholic Christian mission of Holy Trinity.

If you would like to express your gratitude by being more generous- a designated gift to a ministry of the parish, to your celebrant specifically, to an outside charity that the parish supports like Family Assistance Ministry or Mercy House- that is greatly appreciated.

If your wedding is simple and these suggested donations aren't possible, please talk to your priest or deacon. As stated above, this is about your own sense of gratitude and generosity.

Ultimately, we leave these considerations up to your own conscience. But if you ask for understanding due to inability to make a donation, but then show up to the Church on your wedding day in 6 limousines, and are having a plated dinner for 300 at the Ritz or the Montage as your reception, don't be surprised if Father or Deacon questions you a little bit. This becomes a sign of insincerity and selfish disrespect of the Church and the Sacrament.

## Other Considerations

Many Brides and some grooms have been planning their wedding day with great anticipation for years. And while some components- dresses, flowers, pictures, videos, reception food and bar menus, and anything else "special"- might seem terribly important, everyone at Holy Trinity hopes that you focus on your intentions and the simple beauty of the vows you're making to each other. That is what is truly important. And that is what can't be marketed, or sold to you to make the day special. You each make the day and the ceremony special by your intentions. So keep that in mind as you consider the "add-ons".

## Music

The parish Music Director will provide an instrumentalist and a cantor for your

ceremony. If you'd like to add other musicians – a harpist, a string quartet, a bag-piper- you can work with the Music Director who will hire extra musicians. You will cover the expense.

If you would like to bring in your own musicians – friends or family- also please confer with the Music Director.

Musical selections are all liturgical in nature, and Catholic Christian in content. Other musical selections from popular repertoire are best left for your reception.

## Flowers and Other Decorations

Holy Trinity Church was conceived with the idea that “Simplicity is beauty”. We'd ask you to consider that as you anticipate the use of flowers or other decoration. Bouquets for the bride and bridesmaids are possible. And a floral spray in front of the Altar on the floor is lovely. Any more than that isn't necessary. And depending on size of floral arrangements, they might not be allowed.

Pew bows aren't allowed because they tend to damage the pews. Runners in the aisles are a liability, thus they're also not allowed. Flower petals, real or not, aren't to be tossed.

Ultimately, realize that our Church is a sacred and holy space meant for liturgical prayer. Your reception space is where you can demonstrate your decorating skills and imagination.

## Photographers and Videographers

Most certainly, it is possible to capture images of this holy day. And the very best photographers and videographers understand that the ceremony is more important than the “shot”. But with a talented eye, know-how, and the right set-up of cameras and lenses a good photographer can get the shot without being noticed. If they are noticed or disruptive, then your celebrant might stop the ceremony and ask for the photographer to leave. The celebrant has every right to do so, since he is most concerned about the sanctity of vows you're making.

Please inform your photographer of this “don’t be noticed” practice.

If you desire there can be a 30 minutes window, scheduled either before or after your ceremony, for posed pictures in the Church building.

Your wedding coordinator will be working with your photographer and videographer to make sure that they understand the policies of the Church and the correct etiquette that your holy liturgy requires.

## Cultural Inclusions Finally...

If there is a request for arras or coins, or veil, or lasso or cord, we’re happy to include these in the liturgy. It is also possible to arrange for liturgy in a language other than English, or include an appropriate song in another language as well. Please talk to your celebrant about these elements.

## Finally...

We’re happy to serve you both and you families and friend on your wedding day. We hope it marks a point of grace and growth for you both. God bless you and yours.