

INFORMATIONAL GUIDE FOR THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY IN THE PARISH OF SAINT RITA & SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF FRESNO

**GOD CREATED MAN AND
WOMAN OUT OF LOVE AND
COMMANDED THEM TO
IMITATE HIS LOVE WITH EACH
OTHER. MAN AND WOMAN
WERE CREATED FOR EACH
OTHER... WOMAN AND MAN
ARE EQUAL IN HUMAN
DIGNITY, AND IN MARRIAGE
BOTH ARE UNITED IN AN
UNBREAKABLE BOND.**

**(UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CATECHISM
FOR
ADULTS, CH. 21, P. 279)**



**MAIN OFFICE
ST. RITA'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
OFFICE & MAILING ADDRESS:
954 S. "O" ST., TULARE CA
NEW CHURCH: 1051 S MORRISON ST., TULARE
CA
OFFICE: (559)686-3847
INFO@STRITACATHOLICCHURCH.COM**

**ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST PARISH
232 ADAMS ROAD, TIPTON CA 93272
(559)752-4544
STJOHNTIPTON@DIOCESEOFFRESNO.ORG**

GREETINGS



When getting married in the Catholic Church, the high point of the wedding day is the wedding liturgy, where bride and groom become husband and wife in the life-long covenant of marriage.

St. Rita and St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church invites you to enter into a thoughtful, prayerful planning and preparation period to ensure that your day is truly joyful. One that brings the hope of a faithful and loving journey for you and your loved ones who represent the whole community of faith. The priest and staff are happy to help you with your plans for a successful and beautiful Matrimony.

We ask all couples to personally contact the parish office no later than 6 months prior to the matrimony date.

Questions or information will be answered directly to the Wedding couple. Please inform any parent, relatives or friends that any questions in regards to your marriage will only be addressed with the wedding couple.

APPOINTMENT & RESERVING MATRIMONY

The **following documentation** must be turned in by the couple to create a pending file and schedule their First Appointment with the parish office.

The couple may be able to reserve an appointment even if the documentations are not in order and/or incomplete. For more information please call the parish office.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS



FOR YOUR FIRST APPOINTMENT

1. An updated Baptismal certificate from **EACH of the contracting parties** (if catholic). This certificate **MUST** be dated within the last six months before the desired wedding date. This may be obtained by contacting the church of your baptism.

- IF ALL SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION IS LISTED ON THE UPDATED BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE, NO OTHER CERTIFICATES ARE NECESSARY. HOWEVER, IF SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION IS MISSING FROM THE CERTIFICATE, THEN YOU MUST REQUEST CERTIFICATES FROM THE PARISHES WHERE THE SACRAMENTS WERE GIVEN.

2. Certificate of First Communion from **EACH of the contracting parties**.

3. Certificate of Confirmation from **EACH of the contracting parties**.

4. Certificate of Death, if either party is a widow or a widower.

5. Certificate of marriage from the county, if the couple is already married civilly. (If couple is married civilly we need the original certificate)

6. The certificate of annulment, if the person was previously married by the Catholic church.

7. If the bride or groom belongs to a Catholic Church/Parish other than St. Rita and St. John Catholic Church, then she or he is to ask his/her pastor for a letter of permission to be married outside their parish boundary.

*See attachment form for General Wedding Requirements

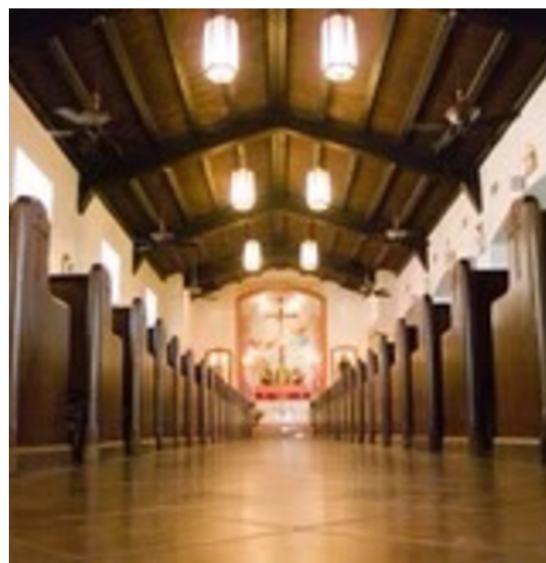
CHURCH COST



The church has to meet the cost of utilities (heating, cooling, salaries) to provide a comfortable atmosphere for your ceremony, therefore there may be a non-refundable/non-taxable down payment amount of \$250.00 reserve your date. **We accept Cash, Checks, and Card payments(St. Rita's only).** The remainder balance (\$400.00 Old Church, \$700.00 New Church, \$200.00 St John) is due 1 month before the wedding is to be performed. Total is (\$550.00 Old Church, \$950.00 New Church, \$300.00 St. John) ceremony on the weekend.

If you decide to cancel your Matrimony you may lose your down payment.

In case of financial hardship please ask the parish office for more info.



WEDDING TIME SLOTS



Here at St. Rita and St. John Catholic Church you will need to contact the parish office to learn the times that may be available.

Here are some examples:

St. Rita

**Saturday - 10:30am, 12:30pm,
2:30pm**

St. John

**Saturday - 10:00am, 12:00pm
2:00 pm**

MATRIMONY PREPARATION

All couples wanting to get married in the Diocese of Fresno are required to attend a catholic pre-marital preparation program of some kind. Here at St. Rita and St. John Catholic Church the couples have the option to attend any of the following courses:

1) Attend the premarital classes offered at our Catholic Church/Parish.

2) Attend Pre-marital classes offered at any Catholic Parish and also have 8 hours of Pre-marital online preparation through [formed.org](https://www.formed.org) (Beloved: Free of Charge). For more info see attached sheet.

Couples are responsible for any fees associated with any of the listed above places. Couples are required to fulfill the requirements of the program and our policy. Refusal to comply with any of the points in this Matrimony policy may result in the cancellation of your matrimony ceremony here at St. Rita and St. John Catholic Church.



PRIEST OR DEACON

A priest or a deacon of the Roman Catholic Church will be assigned to witness/bless your marriage. You are welcome to invite any other Catholic minister to do your Matrimony.

However, please make sure that the priest/celebrant contacts the office for delegation and submitting of his paperwork, at least two months in advance.

TYPE OF CEREMONIES



THE PRIEST IN DIALOGUE WITH THE COUPLE WILL CHOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:

Nuptial Mass:

A matrimonial ceremony performed during the celebration of Mass. If you are thinking about a Nuptial Mass, please keep in mind the sensitivity of your guests and, in particular, if your fiancé and if his/her family are not Catholics. A Nuptial Mass requires participation in prayers, responses, and reception of Holy Communion for both bride and groom. The reception of communion for non-Catholics is not permitted. Nuptial Masses are approximately 45 minutes long.

Solemn Ceremony:

A ceremony performed with prayers, scripture readings, and instructions, without Mass. Couples who are civilly married and/or living together will dialogue with the priest regarding the options of how the con-validation will take place within the context of a simple ceremony or Mass. Solemn ceremonies are approximately 30 minutes long.

Simple Ceremony: May also be celebrated after a regularly scheduled weekday Liturgy. This choice of ceremony does have readings, the exchange of vows and rings. This ceremony may take 20 minutes approx. (no fees apply to this type of ceremony) any donations to the Church are graciously received. Please see staff for more information.

- If you would like a rehearsal days prior to the ceremony, there will be a cost of \$100. In case you would not like one, the ceremony coordinator will give you a brief rehearsal half an hour before the ceremony as well as instructions during.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession) is obligated for Catholics. Specifically before the Sacrament of Matrimony. This is especially true for those who have been away from the Church for a while, or who have been living in a marriage outside of the Church.

WEDDING DAY & ARRIVAL TIME

The Parish is on a strict schedule with many other obligations, responsibilities and Masses. It is most important that your Matrimony starts promptly at the scheduled time.

If running late and the Matrimony starts 10 minutes after the agreed time, then there will be **NO MASS** and you will be married in a Solemn Ceremony (please see page 5 *Solemn Ceremony*).

Your Matrimony party, parents and anyone else participating in the Matrimony ceremony should be notified that they are to be in attendance 30 minutes prior to the Matrimony ceremony.

The Church is the house of God, all should maintain a respectful presence.

CHEWING GUM, DRINKING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, OR SMOKING ARE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN AT ALL TIMES ON CHURCH PREMISES.

Any member of the Matrimony party that seems to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked not to participate in the Matrimony ceremony.



BRIDE AND BRIDAL PARTY DRESS CODE

In maintaining the milieu of sacredness and prayer, the bride, bridesmaids and bridal party are asked to dress appropriately in the house of God. When choosing Matrimonial attire, your choice must reflect the dignity of Christian marriage.

NO (3" - 4") spaghetti strap dresses
NO backless, low bare backs, low necklines, one shoulder dresses
NO strapless dresses or high slits

If you decide to wear a dress that does not cover your shoulders, then you **MUST** wear a shawl or bolero (jacket) at all times while you are in the church and during picture time.

This also applies for the bridesmaids, and/or anyone who will be entering the sanctuary area if they are wearing shoulder-less dresses.

A long veil or long hair does not replace a shawl or bolero (jacket). If members of the Matrimony party are not dressed accordingly based on the norms given, they will not be able to participate in the Matrimony.



SHAWL NEEDED

NO SHAWL NECESSARY

Piercings: We respectfully ask that all facial and mouth piercings be removed at least until the end of the religious ceremony.

- If bride does not want to use a shawl the ceremony may not begin.

CHURCH DECORATIONS



Please make sure that the florist knows the exact time of the Matrimony. Please arrange with them to arrive at least 20 minutes before the ceremony and 5 minutes to immediately remove any flowers or decorations after the ceremony has concluded. However, please let our parish staff know if you would like to donate your ceremony flowers.

We are not responsible for any items left behind.

Please take note of items that are Not permitted.

- No aisle runners.
- No floral arches.
- No tape, glue or any kind of adhesive is allowed for flowers, ribbons/bows to be attached to the wooden pews.
- ONLY PLASTIC FLOWER HOLDERS ARE PERMITTED FOR AISLE PEW DECORATION. (Your florist will supply you with this information).
- No flower petals/rice/birdseeds/confetti are to be thrown inside or outside of the church.
- NO UNITY CANDLES. (Can be blessed)
- NO FLOWER GIRLS OR CHILDREN IN MATRIMONIAL PROCESSION UNDER THE AGE OF 8.

PHOTO / VIDEO GRAPHERS



Matrimony is taking place in a house of worship. Respectful conduct must be observed at all times. Photographers must not interfere with the liturgy nor become a distraction to the people. The church is not the photographers' private studio. Therefore total respect is expected during the ceremony and in the church. Photo/Videographers are expected to be in the Church at least 15 minutes prior to the ceremony.

Only your designated photographer - videographer are allowed to take pictures during the ceremony. After the ceremony has ended the photographer has up to 15 minutes to take pictures.

The photographer must sign an agreement stating that he\she is aware of the policy regarding photography and will abide by what is written in these policies. The policy must be returned with signatures and business card no later than one month prior to the ceremony. Failure to submit this document, the photographer will not be allowed to take any pictures.

NO EXCEPTIONS MADE!

If the photographer does not abide with the policies, the priest or matrimony coordinator will ask the photographer to refrain from taking photos or videos in the church.

It is not the responsibility of the parish if the photographer does not follow the policies of the Church.

NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO LIGHTS ARE PERMITTED.

You will be allowed to take your formal pictures after the Matrimonial ceremony. Your photographer is not allowed to use the church as his/her studio. This means screens/special lighting are not permitted in the church building.

No photographers/videographer person is allowed to move around in the sanctuary area. Not complying with this policy will result in the direct dismissal of the photographer from the church building and/or church premises. Please advise your photographer regarding this policy.

The photographer must be properly to come in to the church.

NO EXCEPTIONS MADE

MUSIC

Please contact the parish office for a recommended list of Musicians or Mariachi who are familiar with appropriate liturgical music for a Wedding.

These musicians are independent contractors, independent from the parish, they have their own fees and contracts.

Please be aware that secular music, (i.e. "hip-hop, pop rock, etc.") or pre-recorded music (i.e. CD's and other digital audio media) is not allowed.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

No church Matrimony will be performed without first obtaining a civil marriage license, or certificate, which is issued by any legit State. A couple must obtain a valid marriage license from the County Courthouse. A marriage license is valid for 90 days from the date issued. The marriage license must be brought into the office a month prior to your marriage date.

- **DO NOT OBTAIN A MARRIAGE LICENSE BEFORE YOU TALK TO THE PRIEST.**

When obtaining marriage license please notify the Clerk (Elections Office) that you will be getting married in a Catholic church. With this license you will also be married civilly on the date of your Matrimony. If you are already married civilly, there is no need to acquire a new license. However, we would need to make a copy of your original marriage certificate.

NON U.S.A MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE ARE ACCEPTED.

PERSONAL EXPENSES



Please understand that the parish does not provide or pay for the florist, musicians, singers, soloist, organist, photographers, etc...All of the above are the responsibility of the persons to be married.

FAMILY & FRIENDS



The priest will ONLY speak with the couple that is asking to be married in the Church.

Suggestions from parents, relatives or friends will not be taken into consideration unless they are brought forth by the couple themselves.

INVITATIONS



The correct information for your Matrimony invitations is:

St. Rita's Old Church:
954 S. "O" St
Tulre, CA. 93274

St. Rita's New Church:
1051 S Morrison St.
Tulare, Ca. 93274

St. John the Evangelist Church:
232 Adams Rd. Tipton, CA.
93272

Please Note: All payments made are non-refundable and non-taxable. In the event you need to cancel your wedding at St. Rita or St. John Catholic Church for any reason, the \$250.00 deposit may be forfeited. To officially cancel your ceremony, you must visit the parish office in person and complete a cancellation form. Please be advised that a \$100.00 administrative fee applies to process a date change.

GENERAL WEDDING REQUIREMENTS

1. THE BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE FROM **EACH PERSON TO BE MARRIED**. THIS CERTIFICATE MUST BE DATED WITHIN THE LAST 6 MONTHS. THIS MAY BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE CHURCH WHERE YOU WERE BAPTIZED.

*IF ALL SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION IS LISTED ON THE UPDATED BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE, NO OTHER CERTIFICATES ARE NECESSARY. HOWEVER, IF SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION IS MISSING FROM THE CERTIFICATE, THEN YOU MUST REQUEST CERTIFICATES FROM THE PARISHES WHERE YOU RECEIVED THE SACRAMENTS.

2. THE FIRST COMMUNION CERTIFICATE FROM **EACH** PERSON TO BE MARRIED.

3. THE CONFIRMATION CERTIFICATE FROM **EACH** PERSON TO BE MARRIED.

4. THE DEATH CERTIFICATE, IF EITHER PARTY IS A WIDOW OR A WIDOWER.

5. THE MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE FROM THE COUNTY, IF THE COUPLE IS ALREADY MARRIED CIVILLY. *(YOU MAY CHOOSE TO GET MARRIED BOTH BY THE CHURCH AND CIVILLY THE DAY OF YOUR WEDDING.)*

6. THE CERTIFICATE OF ANNULMENT, IF THE PERSON WAS PREVIOUSLY MARRIED BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

7. **2 WITNESS AFFIDAVITS FOR EACH PERSON TO BE MARRIED (SEE THE FREEDOM TO MARRY AFFIDAVIT FORMS).**

8. A PHOTO IDENTIFICATION FOR **EACH** PERSON TO BE MARRIED.

9. ATTEND A PRE-MARITAL RETREAT (8 HOUR MINIMUM).

10. IF YOU NEED AN APPLICATION THROUGH THE TRIBUNAL OF THE DIOCESE OF FRESNO, THEN YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED WHAT TO DO AND HOW TO PAY THE FEES.

11. **THE PROXIMATE PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE CONSISTS OF THREE STEPS:**

1. ONE INITIAL SESSION WITH THE PARISH PRIEST.

2. PARTICIPATION IN ONE OF THE AVAILABLE MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS.

3. FINAL SESSION WITH THE PRIEST (IF NEEDED).

A MINIMUM OF 8 HOURS IS TO BE SPENT IN THE FORMAL PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE. COUPLES WHO SEEK TO VALIDATE THEIR MARRIAGE OR WHO SEEK ENTERING A SECOND MARRIAGE SHOULD FOLLOW THE PREPARATION.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL US. THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS INFORMATIVE WEDDING GUIDE, MAY GOD BLESS YOU.

DOCUMENT CHECK LIST

Please review the required documents before scheduling an appointment with the parish office. Pay special attention to the baptismal certificate. If the date printed on the certificate is more than six months old from the data you received it, you will most likely need to request an update one. This applies only to the baptismal certificate.

- ☐ Baptismal Certificate (Updated within 6 months)
- ☐ First Communion Certificate
- ☐ Confirmation Certificate
- ☐ If widow/widower, please provide death certificate of deceased
- ☐ If Married civilly, please provide "civil marriage certificate"
- ☐ If you received an annulment from a previous marriage, please provide letter with case number.
- ☐ If the bride or groom belongs to a Catholic Church/Parish other than St. Rita or St. John Catholic Church, then she or he are to ask their pastor/priest for a letter of permission to be married outside their parish boundary.
- ☐ Fee of \$650.00 Old Church, \$950.00 New Church, \$550.00 St. John, cash, checks, and online payments (Weekend) (If you are unable to pay, please contact the office). Thank you!

PLEASE *SEE ATTACHMENT FORM FOR GENERAL WEDDING REQUIREMENTS (PAGE11) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

CHECK LIST:

STEP #1: BEFORE APPOINTMENT WITH THE PRIEST

IN THE PARISH OFFICE

- ☐ RECIEVE COUPLE
INFORMATIONAL GUIDE (13
PAGES)
- ☐ REGISTER INFORMATION
(INCLUDES NAME, NUMBER, & DATE)
- ☐ SET UP APPOINTMENT WITH
FATHER/PRIEST THROUGH
THE OFFICE

STEP #2: AT THE APPOINTMENT WITH FATHER

IN THE PARISH OFFICE

- ☐ BRING COMPLETED PAPERWORK
TO APPOINTMENT
- ☐ FILLOUT MARRIAGE COVER
SHEET
- ☐ WITNESS FORMS WITH FATHER
- ☐ MAKE SECOND APPOINTMENT
WITH FATHER (IF APROVED)
- ☐ MAKE FIRST DEPOSIT

STEP #3: MARRIAGE/SPIRITUAL PREPARATION CHECKLIST:

AFTER APPOINTMENT WITH THE PRIEST

- ☐ COMPLETE MARRAIGE PREPARATION
- ☐ GO TO CONFESSION