

Planning Your Wedding Day
at Our Lady of Peace
Geneva, NY

*“Over all these virtues put on love, which binds the rest
together and makes them perfect.” Colossians 3:14*

revised March 2010

We are delighted that you have chosen to celebrate your marriage at Our Lady of Peace Parish, St. Stephen's or St. Francis deSales' Church.

The following guidelines will help you as you make your plans.

Contacts to schedule

- 1) Initial interview with priest or deacon: To get acquainted, fill out necessary preliminary paper-work, which includes determining your freedom to marry, and administering the pre-marital FOCCUS questionnaire (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study). Please call the church office at 315-789-1124 or 789-0930 to set up an appointment.
- 2) Before your second interview, as soon as your date is set, contact the Wedding Coordinator, Marie Milligan, 315-789-7811 (9am-12 noon).
- 3) Before your second interview, as soon as your date is set, contact the parish musician for consultation (Christine Sauter, 315-781-2058).
- 4) Second interview with priest or deacon: Discussing the FOCCUS questionnaire – this identifies the couple's strong points in the relationship as well as areas where there needs to be more discussion. At this time there will also be a preliminary discussion of your marriage ceremony.
- 5) Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter (here or elsewhere).
- 6) Meeting with presider to finalize plans for your Marriage liturgy - Call to set this date well ahead of your ceremony. If you have not yet done so, please plan to pay all church and personnel fees at this time.
- 7) Rehearsal - the entire wedding party should attend.

Handbook of Church Music for Weddings – Mary Beth Kunde-Anderson & David Anderson, LTP, 1992.

Interfaith Wedding Ceremonies: Samples and Sources – Dovetail Publishing

Jumping the Broom: The African American Wedding Planner – Harriette Cole, Henry Holt & Co, 1995

“Marriage as a Sacrament of the Church” – J. M. McMahon and Paul Covino, Pastoral Press, April-May 1996, p. 19-22.

“Marriage Celebrations in Mexican American Communities” – Tim Matovina, Liturgical Ministry, 5, 1996, p. 22-26.

“No Wonder They Choose the Music They Do!” – David Haas, Pastoral Music, April-May 1996, p. 26-35.

“Musicians: Offer Pastoral Care to the Engaged Couple” – Delores Clerico, SSJ, Pastoral Music, April-May 1996, p. 36-38.

The Nubian Wedding Book: Words and Rituals to Celebrate and Plan an African-American Wedding – Ingrid Sturgis.

Our Catholic Wedding – Video (28 min.) LTP, 2001

Primero Dios: Hispanic Liturgical Resource – Mark Francis and Arturo Perez-Rodriguez, LTP, 1997.

Scripture at Weddings: Choosing and Proclaiming the Word of God – Graciano and Marcheschi, LTP.

When Love Is Found: A Wedding Liturgy Preparation Resource for Couples, Music Ministers and Pastors – David Haas/Jeanne Cotter, GIA Publications, 1993.

Worship Across Cultures: A Handbook – Kathy Black, Abingdon Press, 1998.

To reach the major Catholic music publishers:

GIA Publications, Inc. Chicago IL 1-800-442-1358 website: www.giamusic.com

Publishes: Worship, Gather 1st & 2nd ed., Gather Comprehensive, Ritual Song, Lead Me Guide Me, African-American Heritage Hymnal

Oregon Catholic Press (OCP), Portland OR 1-800-548-8749 website: www.ocp.org

Publishes: Unidos en Christo, Today's Misal Music Issue, Glory & Praise, JourneySongs, Flor y Canto, Spirit & Song, The Heritage Missal, Breaking Bread, Misal del Dia

World Library Publications, Schiller Park, IL 1-800-566-6150 website: www.wlp.com

Publishes: Seasonal Missalette, We Celebrate, Voices As One, Word & Song, Cantos del Pueblos de Dios

Solos:

Bridal Prayer – Roger Copeland
 Come My Way, My Truth, My Life – Vaughan Williams
 Gift of Love – arr. Hopson
 God in the Planning – John Bell
 In Love We Choose to Live – Jeanne Cotter
 Love Is the Sunlight – David Haas
 Love One Another (various composers)
 Not For Tongues of Heaven’s Angels (various composers)
 Old Irish Blessing (various composers)
 Set Your Heart on Higher Gifts – Steve Warner
 Simple Gifts (Shaker)
 Song of Ruth (various composers)
 Ubi Caritas (various composers)
 We Will Serve the Lord (GIA)
 When Love Is Found (O WALY WALY)
 Where There Is Love – David Haas
 Wherever You Go (various composers)
 Where You Go – M.D. Callahan

Music Collections:

The Diane Bish Wedding Book – Gentry Publications, 1980
 Treasury of Early Organ Favorites – ed. By E. Power Biggs
 Wedding Music Vol I – IV – David Johnson, Augsburg Publishing House
 The Essential Wedding Book – Ed. Jerry Ray, Alfred Publishing, 1990
 Wedding Classics for Piano - ed. Chesterson, Lorenz Publishing, 1987
 The Classical Wedding – Wallace/Head, Hope Publishing
 The Joyous Wedding – Wallace/Head, Hope Publishing
 The Wedding Soloist – Hope Publishing

Planning Resources:

Celebrating Marriage: Preparing the Wedding Liturgy – A Workbook for Engaged Couples – Paul Covino, ed., with Larry Madden, Elaine Rendler & John Buscemi, Pastoral Press
Gift and Promise: Customs and Traditions in Hispanic Rites of Marriage – Raul Gomez, OCP, 1997.
Guidelines for Multicultural Celebrations – Mark Francis, FDLC, 1998.

Baptismal Information

Contact the parish community where you were baptized and ask for a **recently dated** copy of your Baptismal certificate. Parishes are used to providing this information and it is usually obtained by a simple phone call to the parish secretary.

If you do not know the location of the Church, the National Church Directory, which we have in our parish office, may be of help.

Pre-Cana

All couples preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage are required to participate in either Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter. Schedules for both of these forms of marriage preparation can be found on the diocese of Rochester website www.dor.org. You will be given a list of Pre-Cana dates at your initial interview. Pre-Cana should be completed at least 4 months before your wedding date.

If one or both of you have been married before you should participate in the diocesan **New Again** process. Please be sure you pick up this information at the rectory. **New Again** should be completed at least 3 months before your wedding date. Information is available on the diocesan website, <http://www.dor.org/DORhomepage/married.htm>

The preparatory workshops are very important. They can help detect unresolved issues, which may then be dealt with in adequate time, or if appropriate, a wedding can be postponed. Register early because sessions fill as much as 3 months before the date.

Planning Your Celebration

A Theology of Marriage and the Wedding Liturgy

In virtue of the sacrament of marriage, married Christians signify and Share in the mystery of the unity and fruitful love that exists between Christ and His Church.

(Rite of Marriage paragraph 1; Ephesians 5:32)

Marriage in the Catholic Church is the sacramental union of a man and woman. The groom gives himself freely to his wife, the bride gives herself freely to her husband, and together they ask God to be a part of their married life.

Through their wedding vows, spoken in the context of prayer, the bride and groom become the primary ministers of the marriage rite. The priest or deacon acts as the witness of the church while the assembly of friends and family assent to the union through their prayer and participation in the liturgy.

Unlike the “Hollywood” weddings of movies and TV, the Catholic Rite of Marriage emphasizes the equality of the bride and groom (the bride is no longer ‘given’ to her husband). Following the model of the Sunday Liturgy, the wedding liturgy calls for the full, active and conscious participation of the assembly through prayer, gesture and song.

Therefore, the key elements to consider when planning your liturgy should be **Sacrament** – planning scripture readings, music and prayers that reflect the holiness of marriage, and **Hospitality** – creating a sense of welcome that invites the full participation of the assembly.

Wedding Psalms:

Psalm 33:	Lord Let Your Mercy Be On Us (Dufford) The Lord Fills the Earth With His Love (Inwood)
Psalm 34:	I Will Always Thank the Lord (Soper) Taste and See (Dean) Taste and See (Talbot)
Psalm 89:	Forever I Will Sing (Schoenbachler)
Psalm 103:	Loving and Forgiving (Soper) The Lord Is Kind and Merciful (Dufford)
Psalm 118:	This Is the Day (Joncas) Give Thanks to the Lord (Smith) This Is the Day (Soper)
Psalm 128:	O Blessed Are Those (Inwood)
Psalm 145:	I Will Praise Your Name/The Hand of the Lord (Smith)
Psalm 146:	I Will Praise the Lord (Farrell)

Other appropriate psalms include Psalm 23, The Lord is My Shepherd (Shepherd Me, O God) and Psalm 91, On Eagles’ Wings.

Acclamations During the Vows:

Celtic Alleluia (Walker)
Love One Another (Dufford)
May God Bless You (Van Grieken)

Communion Processionals:

Amen, El Cuerpo De Christo
Eat This Bread
Gift of Finest Wheat
I Am the Bread of Life
On Eagles’ Wings
One Bread, One Body
Song of the Body of Christ
Supper of the Lord
Taste and See
Ubi Caritas
We Have Been Told

Additional Resources

*The following are some of the many possibilities for music at the wedding liturgy. Ask your parish music minister for suggestions about what is known and used in your parish community. **All suggestions for assembly song have been edited from the original Diocesan lists to include only OCP resources found at Our Lady of Peace.***

Processionals/Recessionals

Canon in D (Pachelbel; works better as a processional than recessional)
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (Bach; works better as a processional than recessional)
March Royale (Lully)
Ode to Joy (Beethoven)
Psalm XIX (Marcello)
Rigaudon (Campra)
Rondeau (Mouret)
Toccata from Symphony V (Widor)
Trumpet Tune in D Major (Johnson)
Trumpet Tune (Purcell)
Trumpet Voluntary (Clarke)
Tuba Tune (C.J. Lang)
Water Music (Handel; var. Movements incl Air, Rejoicing, Allegro Maestoso)
Trumpet Tune in E-flat (Johnson)

Hymns

(Choose something familiar!)
Joyful, Joyful We Adore You
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Simple Gifts (Shaker)
Where Charity and Love Are Found
When Love Is Found (O WALY WALY)
Only A Shadow (Landry)
Hear Us Now, Our God and Father (HYFRYDOL)

Ceremony

Couples may plan to be married at either a Nuptial Mass or a Nuptial Ceremony. Either celebration will be well planned by the couple, together with the presider.

If you have a relative or personal or family friend who is a priest or deacon whom you would like to preside at your marriage, mention this at the time of your wedding interview.

If your fiancé is of another faith and would like to have a minister or rabbi be part of the ceremony, mention this at the time of your initial planning.

Music

Following are some guidelines on the music that may be used at a Church wedding. Be sure to talk this over with our parish music director.

Ideally, you will plan some music which the congregation can sing so that all can praise God and pray together for you in song; therefore, using only instrumental music or only a soloist is discouraged at Catholic weddings. Using recorded music is also discouraged.

As you plan your music think of the following considerations: Does this music fit the context of this liturgical celebration? Is the music technically and esthetically good? Will it help this assembly to pray? Our parish musicians will be glad to help guide you in your selections.

Our Pastoral Musicians, Christine Sauter and Ronald Trunzo, are the usual music ministers at parish weddings. They will also recommend music and cantors. Contact the pastoral musician, at the parish office, as soon as your date is scheduled.

Rite for Celebrating Marriage During Mass

Gathering and Entrance

1. Gathering of the Assembly
2. Procession
3. Greeting
4. Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

5. Old Testament Reading
6. Responsorial Psalm
7. New Testament Reading
8. Gospel Acclamation
9. Gospel
10. Homily

Marriage Rite

11. Address and Statement of Intentions
12. Consent and Exchange of Vows
13. Blessing and Exchange of Rings
14. General Intercessions

Liturgy of the Eucharist

15. Preparation of Gifts
16. Eucharistic Prayer
17. The Lord's Prayer
18. Nuptial Blessing
19. Sign of Peace
20. Breaking of Bread (Lamb of God)
21. Communion
22. Prayer After Communion

Concluding Rites

23. Blessing
24. Dismissal
25. Recessional



(The Rite of Marriage during Mass follows the order of the Sunday Eucharist with the addition of the Marriage Rite, numbers 11-13.)

Faith Community

Having made the decision to be married in the Church, don't forget to follow through and register in your parish as a newly wed couple. This may mean the simple change of name and address if you are continuing to worship here in Geneva, or a new registration if you live elsewhere. Early and frequent communication with your pastor of your parish will make the process of getting married in the Church much easier.

Ongoing Support

The Catholic Church wants very much to be a presence in your lives as a couple. Please be attentive to parish activities, as there may be enrichment possibilities for you. Also, when you decide to start a family, please be in touch with the parish staff regarding baptism information and preparation.

Rite for Celebrating Marriage Outside Mass

Gathering and Entrance Rites

1. Gathering of the Assembly
2. Procession
3. Greeting
4. Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

5. Old Testament Reading
6. Responsorial Psalm
7. New Testament Reading
8. Gospel Acclamation
9. Gospel
10. Homily

Marriage Rite

11. Address and Statement of Intentions
12. Consent and Exchange of Vows
13. Blessing and Exchange of Rings
14. General Intercessions
15. Nuptial Blessing

Concluding Rites

16. The Lord's Prayer
17. Blessing
18. Dismissal
19. Recessional

Planning the Liturgy for your Marriage

At the time of your Pre-Cana, or when you meet with the parish musician, you will be given material which will help you to plan your wedding celebration. About four months before your wedding, make an appointment with our parish musician for help in planning your liturgy. About two months before your wedding, make an appointment with your priest or deacon to finalize plans for your liturgy. We very much want your celebration to reflect your choices of prayers, readings, and special participation.

Some of the ways in which family members and friends can participate in special ways are:

- * Proclaiming the Scripture readings
- * Reading the Prayer of the Faithful
- * Bringing up the gifts
- * Serving as Ministers of Communion

Each of these ministries presumes some training and experience. Please choose people who are experienced to serve as these special ministers.

We offer as a resource to help you choose appropriate readings and prayers:

Together For Life, by Joseph M. Champlin

Flowers

Flowers may be left in Church or taken to your reception. Let the Wedding Coordinator know ahead of time what your plan is. Be sure to let your florist know where you want them placed in the sanctuary. No flowers will be placed on the top of the altar.

Photography

Our churches are beautiful and we want your celebration to be beautiful also. Instruct your photographers to introduce themselves to both the presider and wedding coordinator before the service. You may remain in church after the ceremony for pictures, up to the end of your three-hour contractual period (starting one hour before the scheduled ceremony time).

Conclusion

These months of preparation for your marriage will be busy and exciting. If you find that there are ways in which the parish staff can be of help, please call.

While your engagement, showers, rehearsal, reception and honeymoon are all significant parts of the celebration of your marriage, the Marriage Ceremony is seen as the center of the Christian celebration.

The prayers, scripture readings, the vows, the giving and receiving of rings, the music, the nuptial blessing - all of these, for you, will be an expression of both faith in God and in each other. They will also express your confidence that the presence and love of God will strengthen and confirm your love for each other.

May these days of preparation hold many blessings!

Rehearsal

Your rehearsal will be planned for one or two days before your celebration. This must be scheduled at the time when the wedding is arranged to be sure that the Church will be available when you want it.

It is **very** important that you thoroughly plan out the wedding ceremony. Our Lady of Peace's wedding coordinator, Marie Milligan, will help with the wedding rehearsal and will also be there on the day of the wedding to assist you.

Ordinarily the rehearsal will last about one hour. All members of the wedding party must be present and on time, as another rehearsal may follow yours. Readers may also practice their readings on the microphone at this time. It is advisable not to invite additional guests to the rehearsal.

If you have carefully thought through how you want your wedding to proceed, the rehearsal should not take long.

There may be no consumption of any alcoholic beverage on the Church property at the time of the rehearsal or wedding.

Marriage License

Bring your marriage license to the rehearsal. Your witnesses will sign the papers then. The priest or deacon will sign on the day of your ceremony and send the papers in.

Fees

The Church fee, and fees for the parish musicians and wedding coordinator, should be paid in a single check to "Our Lady of Peace" at least 30 days before your wedding date.

Music Ministries at the Wedding Liturgy

- a. **The Assembly:** Everyone gathered at your wedding – priest/deacon, bridal party, guests, musicians – is first and foremost a member of the assembly. This gathered assembly is a symbol of Christ's presence among us and its members are the primary music ministers at any liturgy. Choosing music carefully will enable everyone to enter fully into this celebration. Certain members of the assembly are chosen for particular ministries: reader, greeter, cantor, altar server, gift bearer, instrumentalist, Communion Minister. Each ministry is important and generally no one exercises more than one ministry in the same liturgy.
- b. **The Cantor/Soloist:** A trained cantor is needed to sing the verses of the Responsorial Psalm and assist the assembly in their sung prayer. The Cantor can also serve as "soloist" but soloists are not always trained as cantors.
- c. **Instrumentalists:** The parish music minister, or their delegate, is considered to be the usual music minister at your wedding, but any number or combination of additional instruments might be used: organ, piano, guitar, strings, brass, folk ensembles, hand bells, harp, etc. The possibilities are endless! Consult with the parish music minister for names of additional musicians and ways to use them in the liturgy.
- d. **Choirs:** Choirs can add beauty to any wedding liturgy and assist in leading the song of the assembly. It is the usual practice that a stipend would be offered to the choir for this service.
- e. **Other:** In many cultures, it is traditional that extended family members, friends, perhaps elders in the community, play a prominent role in the wedding liturgy. These may include both musical (friends and family being a part of the choir) and non-musical roles (ex. *patrinos/matrinos* in the Latino community). Those assisting with the planning of the wedding liturgy need to be aware and sensitive to these needs.

Musical Decisions Needed For Your Wedding

Prelude: As guests are greeting one another or being seated, instrumental selections work best. One vocal solo during the seating of grandparents, just prior to the processional, might be effective. Parish musicians have a repertoire of appropriate prelude music already prepared. Often this is left to the discretion of the musicians.

Processional: One musical selection is chosen to accompany the entire procession, including the bride. The use of a separate processional for the bride interferes with the unity of the procession and emphasizes the importance of the bride over the equality of the couple. Modeled on the Sunday Liturgy, here is a suggested procession order: cross bearer, readers, priest/deacon, bridal party, bride and groom, perhaps with their parents. Cultural adaptations may include the use of a song or hymn rather than an instrumental processional.

Opening Hymn: Optional. Choose something that will guarantee participation by the assembly.

Responsorial Psalm: Verses sung by the cantor from the ambo with the assembly joining in the refrain. No reader is needed.

Gospel Acclamation: Always sung by all!

Acclamations during the Rite of Marriage: Recommended. Encourages assembly participation.

Intercession Response: Most often spoken, but can be sung.

9. What about the Unity Candle and other cultural adaptations?

The Unity Candle ceremony currently is not part of the official wedding liturgy but is sometimes included as an American adaptation to the rite. Issues to be considered include: who will light the candles in blended, divorced or remarried families. Our Lady of Peace does not discourage the use of the Unity Candle, but rather, encourages using the bride and groom's baptismal candles as the side tapers and encouraging families to light those tapers after the processional, so that the action may be fully incorporated into the Wedding Liturgy. Some couples effectively incorporate this ceremony into the meal blessing at the reception. Another choice might be to emphasize the exchange of vows and rings as they are the primary symbols of the rite.

10. Why does wedding music cost so much?

Music for the wedding liturgy actually costs a lot less than the dresses, cake, flowers, photographer, invitations, and limousine. Pastoral musicians are trained professionals who have studied many years to perfect their art and should be paid accordingly. Unless otherwise stated in parish wedding guidelines, fees typically include a consultation with the couple, preparation and practice time and often a warm-up with the cantor or instrumentalists right before the wedding. They range from \$125 - \$200, depending on skill, experience and locality. Musicians do not generally attend the wedding rehearsal, and if extra rehearsals are required, they average \$25 for each rehearsal. The presumed musician for your wedding is the parish's regular musician. Cantors are generally paid \$125 - \$150. If you request participation by an ensemble or choir, the group is given a stipend as well. Check with your parish musician for assistance with fees.

11. How will the wedding party and family be seated for the ceremony?

Our Lady of Peace fully supports the theology of the new couple in the presence of God; we encourage the seating of the wedding attendants in the front pews so that the assembly's focus may remain on the new couple. If you wish to seat family members in the front pew, your attendants may be seated in the second pew. In either instance, during the Declaration of Consent and Exchange of Vows, the attendants may come forward to stand as visible witness to the sacrament.

4. Who decides if we are having a Wedding Mass?

This decision is made by the couple in consultation with the priest, deacon or other person preparing them for marriage. Celebrating the Marriage Rite in the context of the Eucharist is most appropriate when both parties and their families regularly participate in the Eucharist. If many guests are non-Catholics or non-practicing Catholics, it might be better to celebrate the marriage in the context of the Liturgy of the Word. Both options include the reading of scripture, the marriage rite, intercessions, Lord's Prayer, etc. and take relatively the same amount of time.

5. Can non-scripture readings be used at the Wedding Liturgy?

Readings for the Liturgy of the Word must be taken from the Bible. Readings from other sources could be used on the program cover, incorporated into a thank-you at the end of the program, be read at the reception, or perhaps used as a communion meditation at the liturgy.

6. Is "Here Comes the Bride" forbidden?

The Church does not forbid the use of "Here Comes the Bride" (Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin) but it is strongly discouraged. Its very title limits the full meaning of the procession, putting the emphasis solely on the bride rather than the couple. There are many other effective processions.

7. Can the "Lord's Prayer" be sung at the wedding liturgy?

Yes, by the entire assembly. The Malotte Our Father is not appropriate in its solo form.

8. What if we want a string quartet, a brass ensemble, etc.?

Ask your parish musician for assistance in contacting additional musicians. Costs range anywhere from \$150 and up for individual players. Some instrumentalists such as brass and harp require higher fees. Remember:

- The song of the assembly must be supported and encouraged (acclamations, the Psalm, etc.)
- The parish musician must approve their selections according to parish guidelines.

Preparation of Gifts: A brief instrumental or vocal solo is appropriate here. Music needs to end when the action is completed (priest washing his hands).

Acclamations of the Eucharistic Prayer – Holy Holy, Memorial

Acclamation and Amen: As at the Sunday Liturgy, always sung by the assembly.

The Lord's Prayer: The Lord's Prayer is the prayer of all present. It is better recited if singing will exclude assembly participation. It should never be performed as a solo.

Nuptial Blessing: Usually spoken, but singing is an option.

Lamb of God: Either spoken or sung.

Communion Processional: The song of the Body of Christ as all come forward to receive the Body of Christ. This selection should be familiar and have a refrain for the assembly. Ask your parish musician for suggestions.

Final Blessing: Usually spoken but singing is an option, as is the active involvement of others, whether parents, grandparents, Godparents, children, or the entire community.

Recessional: Instrumental selection works best.

How to Engage the Assembly in the Wedding Liturgy

Try these suggestions to actively engage the assembly in the liturgy:

1. **Cantor in full view of the assembly:** Have the cantor lead the psalm and assist the assembly in full view of the assembly.
2. **Welcome the assembly:** Have someone welcome the assembly before the processional, explaining you have chosen all the prayers, readings and music for your wedding liturgy, and inviting everyone to participate fully.
3. **Rehearse:** Take a few minutes during the welcome, and before the processional, to briefly rehearse some of the music the assembly will be singing. Do the same thing at the wedding rehearsal.
4. **Participate:** Be sure that you and members of the bridal party are attentive to the scripture readings and actively participate in all prayers and songs.
5. **Use “Assembly Friendly” Music:** Choose music the assembly knows and can easily sing, ex. Celtic Alleluia, Mass of Creation. Select an opening hymn that is familiar and a communion processional with an easy, well-known refrain.
6. **Make the Assembly Integral to the Rite:** Encourage assembly participation during the vows by means of a sung acclamation or a statement of the assembly’s affirmation and support of your marriage.
7. **Provide Good Musical Leadership:** Musicians that are familiar with the rite are able to draw the assembly into the sung prayer. This is not a soloist’s job, but that of a good pastoral musician. Use your parish musician.
8. **Provide a Worship Aid:** Prepare a printed order of worship to help the assembly follow the liturgy. Include page numbers for music or print music notation for the psalm and service music. Copyright permissions may be needed and can easily be obtained. Ask your parish musician for assistance.

The Most Frequently Asked Questions about the Wedding Liturgy and Music

1. What constitutes “appropriate wedding music?”

- Plan music appropriate for ritual moments: gathering music, processional/recessional, Psalm, acclamations, communion processional, solos, etc.
- Plan music celebrating God’s love for God’s people rather than focusing on the love of this particular couple for each other.
- Plan music and text incorporating a variety of styles.
- Plan on using the suggestions in this booklet as a guide as well as the assistance of the parish music minister.
- Think holistically for the entire wedding celebration including the rehearsal dinner, wedding liturgy and reception. All the music doesn’t have to fit within the wedding liturgy.
- “Pre-recorded music should, as a general norm, never be used within the liturgy to replace the congregation, the choir, organist or other instrumentalists.” (Liturgical Music Today #60)

2. Can a family member or friend sing at the wedding?

If your friend or family member has a good voice, but is not trained and experienced as a cantor, perhaps she could sing one selection, for example, a solo before the processional as family and guests are being seated. This is especially true if she is from out of town and will have little opportunity to practice with the accompanist. A more experienced singer might sing more. Extra rehearsals may incur an additional fee.

3. I heard it at...?

Just because you heard it at another church or on television doesn’t make it appropriate. Parishes are asked to follow diocesan guidelines and have established their own guidelines as well. Sometimes people get confused between what they see on TV/movie weddings and what’s appropriate for a sacramental celebration.