

# Our Lady of Sorrows Church

217 PROSPECT STREET

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## Wedding Policies

Congratulations on your engagement and your upcoming wedding! As the Pre-Cana ministry succinctly states, “A wedding is a day; a marriage is life-time!” May this be the spirit in which you approach and prepare for your wedding day and your married life together.

Following are policies that will aid you in your wedding planning:

1. **Pastoral Preparation:** This is done with the officiating minister (priest or deacon). If your wedding occurs within the celebration of a Mass, then a priest will accompany you through your preparation. If your wedding is simply a ceremony (i.e., without a Mass and the celebration of the Eucharist), then a deacon may be assigned to accompany you and preside at your ceremony. You will typically meet anywhere from 3-5 times with the clergy member who is preparing you.  
You may invite your own clergy member (priest or deacon) to preside over your wedding. If that is the case, you should check with him as to whether he will also do the preparation work with you and whether he will be completing all of the necessary paperwork. He would be expected to conduct the rehearsal. If you have your own clergy member, he should contact our parish office to make the proper arrangements. An outside priest or deacon must be in good standing in the Archdiocese of Newark and have proper ecclesiastical faculties.
2. **Premarital Inventory:** You will be asked to complete a “Premarital Inventory,” which is a survey that highlights areas of strength in your relationship as well as areas that you need to work on or talk through. This Inventory should be completed before you attend the mandatory Pre-Cana session offered by the Archdiocese of Newark.
3. You are required to attend the following programs (these are mandated by the Archdiocese and cannot be dispensed):
  - a. **Pre-Cana:** You will join with other engaged couples for a one-day session that offers practical insights and assistance in building a successful marriage. The registration fee is \$100 and you can register at: <https://www.rcan.org/welcome-pre-cana-registration>. *Be sure to give the certificate of completion to the priest or deacon preparing you.*
  - b. **God’s Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage:** this one-day session is designed to help engaged couples to understand and embrace a Catholic vision on married love and human sexuality. The registration fee is \$125 and you can register at: <https://www.rcan.org/gods-plan-joy-filled-marriage>. *Be sure to give the certificate of completion to the priest or deacon preparing you.*
4. **Natural Family Planning Seminary:** this is optional but highly recommended. Natural Family Planning (NFP) is an umbrella term for the natural, healthy, and morally-acceptable method of family planning approved by the Catholic Church. You can register at: <https://www.rcan.org/natural-family-planning>.
5. **Recently-issued Baptismal certificates:** Contact the church at which you were baptized and ask that you be sent a recent copy (no more than 6 months old) of your baptismal record, with any necessary notations on the back of it (of your confirmation or a previous marriage that ended in a Church annulment). A copy of your original certificate cannot be accepted. It must be a recently issued copy.

6. Marriage License: New Jersey residents may apply for a marriage license from the municipality in which either party resides. If neither party is from New Jersey, application can be made in South Orange. The License must be obtained within one month of the wedding but no later than 3 days before the wedding. Do not write anything on the License (the officiant will fill it in).
7. The Wedding Rite includes the exchange of vows and rings, as well as prayers, Scriptural readings, and a blessing. The average time of the ceremony is 25-30 minutes. If the ceremony includes the celebration of the Eucharist (a Nuptial Mass), allow for 45-50 minutes.
8. Weddings are scheduled as follows: Friday at 4:00 pm; Saturday at 11:00 am, 1:00 pm, and 3:00 pm; Sunday at 1:30 pm (ceremony only, i.e., no Nuptial Mass).
9. The rehearsal should be scheduled between you and the officiating minister. Ideally, anyone who is playing a role in the wedding (bridal party, readers, gift bearers, etc.) should be present for the rehearsal. ***The License as well as the fees for the Church, the organist, the cantor, and the altar serves are presented at this time.*** The fees are as follows: Church fee - \$800 (\$450 for *registered* parishioners); Organist - \$250; Cantor - \$150; Altar Servers (2) - \$10 each. If you are having only a ceremony and not a Nuptial Mass, then altar servers are not necessary.
10. Please note the following:
  - a. Unity Candles are not used at Our Lady of Sorrows. We believe that the lighting of a Unity Candle serves as a distraction to the powerful symbolism and reality of the exchange of vows and the exchange of rings. No other candles should be brought into the Church.
  - b. Balloons are not permitted in the Church.
  - c. Nothing may be thrown on the ground outside of the Church. The use of rice, confetti, rose petals, birdseed, etc. are strictly prohibited. Also note that the dropping of flower petals by flower girls is prohibited.
  - d. Aisle runners are not permitted.
11. Music: Music guidelines are established by Preston Dibble, the Director of Music and Organist. Please contact him at your earliest at 973-763-5454, ext. 234 or by email at [olsmusician@gmail.com](mailto:olsmusician@gmail.com). He will schedule a meeting with you to select musical pieces. Please note that wedding music must be of a sacred nature. Pop tunes, themes from operas, shows, etc. are not permitted before, during or after the ceremony. Recorded "track" tapes for vocalists will not be permitted.
12. Flowers: Our Lady of Sorrows is not responsible for providing flowers or their containers. Great care should be exercised in affixing bows to the pews or placing any other decorations in the Church. We do not permit tape, wiring, or tacks. Elastic or ribbons are a good substitute. Please be certain that your florist is informed of this.
  - No trellises, lanterns or non-Christian symbols (i.e., carts, wagons, animals, and banners) are permitted in the Church.
  - Flowers that have been provided for Advent, Christmas and Easter and are not to be moved or removed for your wedding. Please plan accordingly.
  - Also note that during Lent, a minimal amount of flowers, if any, is in keeping with that liturgical season.
13. Photography and videotaping: Please have your photographer check with the celebrant before the ceremony to avoid any issues. Photographers and videographers are not permitted in the Sanctuary or any area in the Church that will block the view of the congregation or distract from the sacred nature of the wedding.

The Pastoral Ministers and the parish musicians look forward to assisting you in planning your wedding day to be an occasion of beauty, dignity, and religious significance. Be assured of our prayerful support and blessings!