

Marriage Preparation Guidelines



St. Thomas More Newman Center

The Roman Catholic Campus Ministry
for The Ohio State University

The Sacrament of Matrimony

Congratulations!

We are thankful that God has brought you together and that you are planning to be married in the Catholic Church. This brochure is offered to couples who are part of the St. Thomas More Newman Center and The Ohio State University community who will be celebrating their wedding at a church or religious house of worship other than the St. Thomas More Newman Center.

Married couples live their sacrament of married love by the way they care for one another, love one another, and are enthusiastic for one another as husband and wife. In their daily love of each other, their children, and the larger community, a married couple becomes a living sign (a sacrament) of how much Jesus loves us and wishes to embrace us as His brothers and sisters. As they work their way through marital and family times of happiness as well as crises and struggles, they witness the power of the Holy Spirit at work in all our lives.

To assist you in your long range planning for this great event in your life, we offer this vital information.

We look forward to walking with you on this new aspect of your journey of life and faith!

-The Staff of St. Thomas More Newman Center



Marriage Guidelines

Preliminary Planning

About **nine to twelve months** before the tentative wedding date, the engaged couple should arrange to meet with the priest at the Catholic Church at which the wedding will take place or the parish of the Catholic party. Often, the priest will recommend that you take care of all of your marriage preparation at the Catholic Church you attend in Columbus because they (your home Catholic parish) are responsible for your sacramental well-being. If you are associated with The Ohio State University that local Catholic Church affiliation is, more often than not, the Newman Center. We can assist you in the Catholic Church's formal marriage preparation process. For contact information, please go to the last page of this brochure.

Often, only tentative wedding arrangements will be made until the priest at your home parish hears from us that you have begun the marriage preparation process. After your second meeting with a priest, a letter will be sent to your parish church stating that:

1. The Newman Center is doing the preparation only;
2. You are free to marry in the Catholic Church;
3. You are participating in the marriage preparation process;
4. That permission is given for the wedding to take place and that the necessary paperwork will be sent at the appropriate time.

If the wedding is at a Church or house of worship of the faith of your intended spouse, you must be prepared for your marriage by your local parish priest or a member of the Newman Center pastoral staff in order for the marriage to be considered valid by the Catholic Church, completing the same requirements as for a wedding in a Catholic church. Again, about **nine to twelve months** are recommended to complete the preparation process. The marriage preparation process involves a series of meetings with a priest (the conversations are based on a communications/assessment tool), a Pre-Cana workshop, as well as

taking care of the necessary paperwork for a wedding to take place in another church or house of worship and be recognized by the Catholic Church. You will also be expected to have a couple of meetings with the clergy who will be officiating at your wedding.

To help offset our costs (salaries, utilities, etc.), the fee for the marriage preparation process is \$125.

Requirements to be married in the Catholic Church

Freedom to Marry Both parties need to be free to marry under the law of the Catholic Church. If either of you has been married before, please tell the priest or a pastoral staff member during your first meeting.

A Formal Time of Marriage Preparation While the diocese may recommend a minimum of six months, given the vagaries of schedules and dates of available programs, we strongly suggest that you plan on **nine to twelve months** for the time of preparation prior to your wedding. During this time you will meet with a priest on a regular basis, as well as participate in a Pre-Cana workshop, which involves two separate Saturdays.

Proof of Baptism Baptized Christians (Catholic and non-Catholic) must present proof of baptism to the priest. For Catholics, this is a certificate issued by the parish church in which they were baptized. This baptismal certificate, with notation of other sacraments received, must be issued within **six months** of the wedding date. For non-Catholic Christians, a copy of the certificate received when they were baptized or a letter from the church of baptism, verifying their baptism, will suffice.

Pre-Cana Workshop Participation in a Pre-Cana Marriage Preparation Workshop is one of the requirements of the marriage preparation process. The Diocese of Columbus sponsors Pre-Cana workshops and the alternative Engaged Encounter Weekend at various times and locations. For more information, please contact the Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Office at (614) 241-2560 or visit their website: familylife.coldsdioc.org.

Civil Requirements In the United States, a civil marriage and church marriage can take place during the same ceremony. A civil license issued by the State of Ohio, or proof of civil marriage, is required for a member of the clergy to witness a marriage. The Ohio civil marriage license must be in the hands of the priest no later than the time of the rehearsal. Marriage licenses may be obtained as much as 60 days prior to the wedding date, but may take as long as five days to be issued. For more information, please contact the Franklin County Marriage License office at (614)462-3898 or visit www.franklincountyohio.gov/probate/departments/marriage.

Fees

Marriage Preparation: \$125

Fee includes FOCCUS instrument and other materials

Please fill out and return the completed pink Marriage Preparation Information Sheet

OR

Complete the Marriage Preparation Registration and pay online with the link provided by the priest with whom you are working

Special Circumstances

Pregnancy

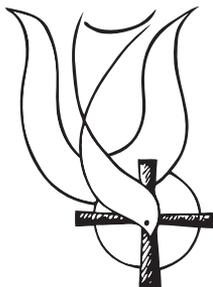
If the couple had not planned to marry, pregnancy, of itself, will not be considered sufficient reason to enter marriage or shorten the marriage preparation process.

Validation

If the couple has entered a marriage contrary to the laws of the Catholic Church, a validation of the marriage is permitted after the couple has completed the appropriate preparation and paperwork. Please speak with one of the priests on the Newman Center staff for more information.

Previous Marriage

Any previous marriage (Catholic or non-Catholic) is a potential obstacle to marriage in the Catholic Church. No date of marriage in the Catholic Church can be set until both parties are free to marry in the eyes of the Catholic Church. Please speak with one of the priests on the Newman Center staff for more information.



St. Thomas More Newman Center

Contact Information

64 West Lane Avenue
Columbus, OH 43201

Office: (614) 291-4674

Fax: (614) 291-2065

BuckeyeCatholic.com/sacraments

Clergy at the Newman Center

Fr. Joe Ciccone, C.S.P., Director
(614) 291-4674 x102
jciccone@buckeyecatholic.com

Fr. Ed Nowak, C.S.P., Pastoral Associate
(614) 291-4674 x114
enowak@buckeyecatholic.com

Fr. Stu Wilson-Smith, C.S.P., Pastoral Associate
(614) 291-4674 x103
swilsonsmith@buckeyecatholic.com

Fr. Vinny McKiernan, C.S.P., Pastoral Associate
(614) 291-4674 x106
vmckiernan@buckeyecatholic.com