

Acclamations During the Vows:

Celtic Alleluia (or any other well-known alleluia)

No Longer Two - Haas (GIA)

Who Calls you By Name (also known as Blessed Be God) – David Haas (GIA)

Communion Processionals:

Amen, El Cuerpo de Christo – Schiavone (OCP)

Eat This Bread – Berthier (GIA)

Gift of Finest Wheat/You Satisfy the Hungry Heart (most resources)

One Bread, One Body – Foley (most resources)

Pan de Vida – Hurd (most resources)

Supper of the Lord - Farrell (OCP)

Taste and See (various settings including Moore, Haugen)

Ubi Caritas (Taize, Hurd, other settings)

We Have Been Told – Haas

Sung Blessings:

A Nuptial Blessing (May God Bless You) – Joncas (GIA; GC#870)

God Be With You - arr. Haas (uses Day Is Done tune)

May the Lord Bless You - Grayson Warren Brown

Solos

Bridal Prayer - Roger Copeland

Come My Way, My Truth, My Life (The Call) - Vaughan Williams

Gift of Love - arr. Hopson (Early American; solo/duet)

God In The Planning (SLANE; text by John Bell)

In Love We Choose To Live (Love is patient, love is kind) - Jeanne Cotter

Love Is the Sunlight - Haas (also can be sung to “Morning Is Broken; ” solo or hymn)

Love One Another (various composers)

Not For Tongues of Heaven’s Angels (various composers)

Old Irish Blessing - Denes Agay (WB Music)

Set Your Heart on the Higher Gifts (1 Cor) - Steve Warner (WLP We Celebrate)

Simple Gifts (Shaker)

Song of Ruth (various composers)

Ubi Caritas (Taize, Hurd, others)

We Will Serve the Lord (GIA)

When Love Is Found (O WALY WALY; text: Brian Wren)

Where There Is Love - Haas

Wherever You Go (various settings)

Where You Go - Mary David Callahan (Benedictine Sisters of Erie, PA)

Music Collections:

The Diane Bish Wedding Book - Gentry Publications, 1980 (organ collection, not too bad but some arrangements are awkward)

Treasury of Early Organ Favorites - ed. by E. Power Biggs

Wedding Music Vol. I – IV - David N. Johnson, 1970 (Augsburg Publishing House, MN, organ collection but includes some trumpet parts)

The Essential Wedding Book - ed. Jerry Ray, Alfred Publishing, 1990 (piano collection. Not bad arrangement of Ode to Joy, some trumpet parts, piano arr. of the two Ave Maria’s which are not great but at least in the same book.)

Wedding Classics for Piano Bk. 1 - ed. Chesterton, Lorenz, 1987 (decent arrangements of basic trumpet tunes; Chopin, Satie, etc.; prelude filler; Book II is less useful)

Wedding Music Vol. I-IV - David N Johnson, Augsburg Publishing (Preludes, processions and recessions, contains instrumental parts too)

The Classical Wedding - Sue Mitchell Wallace/John Head, Hope Publishing (For Solo Trumpet and Organ)

The Joyous Wedding - Sue Mitchell Wallace/John Head, Hope Publishing (For Solo Trumpet and Organ)

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 (good theology, info on readings, sample programs)

Gift and Promise: Customs and Traditions in Hispanic Rites of Marriage – Raul Gomez, OCP, 1997.

Guidelines for Multicultural Celebrations – Mark Francis, FDLC 1998. (Suggestions for multicultural worship which may be helpful including assistance with the spoken word and music.)

Handbook of Church Music for Weddings – Mary Beth Kunde-Anderson & David Anderson, LTP, 1992 (fuller version of “Your Wedding Music,” current guidelines distributed to diocesan musicians)

Interfaith Wedding Ceremonies: Samples and Sources - Dovetail Publishing, Kalamazoo, Michigan

Jumping the Broom: The African American Wedding Planner – Harriette Cole, Henry Holt & Co., NY, 1995. (Much of this resource is very secular but Chapter 1 *Marriage Via the Ancestors* is an excellent resource.)

“Marriage As a Sacrament of the Church” – J. Michael McMahon and Paul Covino, Pastoral Music, 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” – Dolores 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. (A collection of historical writings, rituals, celebrations, vows, toasts, and wedding ideas for using African traditions in your wedding.)

Our Catholic Wedding - Video (28 min.) LTP, 2001 (Excellent resource!)

Primero Dios: Hispanic Liturgical resource – Mark Francis and Arturo Perez-Rodriguez, LTP, 1997. (Hispanic popular religious customs in inculturated celebrations)

Scripture at Weddings: Choosing and proclaiming the Word of God - Graziano and Nancy Marcheschi LTP

When Love Is Found: A Wedding Liturgy Preparation Resource for Couples, Music Ministers and Pastors - David Haas/JeanneCotter, GIA Publications, 1993. (Excellent resource; incl. music tapes, and piano/guitar/vocal; includes planning sheet, sample programs, excellent source of psalmody.)

Worship Across Cultures: A Handbook - Kathy Black, Abingdon Press, 1998. (A valuable resource offering a “roadmap” of actual worship practices of twenty different ethnic and cultural groups including Filipino, Hispanic, Korean, Chinese, Haitian, Vietnamese, and Native American. Each section includes information on the liturgical space, prayer forms, readings, preaching and sacramental practices including weddings).

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 Cristo, Today’s Missal Music Issue, Glory & Praise 2nd ed., JourneySongs, Flor y Canto, Spirit & Song, The Heritage Missal, Breaking Bread, Misal del Día

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 Pueblo de Dios

Wedding Psalms:

- Psalm 33: Happy the People You Have Chosen, Rory Cooney (OCP)
 Let Your Mercy Be On Us, Marty Haugen. (GIA. GC)
 Lord, Let Your Mercy Be On Us, Joseph Gelineau (GIA)
 Lord, Let Your mercy, Bob Dufford (OCP)
 Lord, Let Your Mercy, Steve Warner (WLP)
 The Lord Fills the Earth With His Love, Paul Inwood (OCP)
- Psalm 34: Abres Tu a Mano, Carlos Rosas (OCP)
 Gusten y Veán, Eleazar Cortes (OCP)
 I Will Give Thanks to You, Eugene Englert (WLP)
 I Will Always Thank the Lord, Scott Soper (OCP)
 Que Dios Nos Bendiga, Armida Grajeda (OCP)
 Taste and See, settings by Dean, Gelineau, Hurd, Haugen, Moore, Hommerding and others (all publishers)
- Psalm 103: Bless the Lord, My Soul, Lucien Deiss (WLP)
 Loving and Forgiving, Scott Soper (OCP)
 The Lord is Kind and Merciful, Proulx/Gelineau, Cotter, Haugen, Dufford, Bolduc (all publishers)
 The Lord is Rich in Kindness/El Señor Es Compasivo, Peter Kolar (WLP)
- Psalm 112: A Light Rises in the Darkness, Michel Guimont (GIA)
 God’s Command, David Haas (GIA, only in “When Love Is Found”)
 The Just Man, Gelineau (GIA)
- Psalm 128: Blessed Are Those Who Love You, Marty Haugen (GIA and WLP)
 O Blessed Are Those, Paul Inwood (OCP)
 O Happy Are Those Who Fear the Lord, Gelineau (GIA)
- Psalm 145: I Will Praise Your Name, David Haas (OCP, GIA. and WLP)
 I Will Praise Your Name, Gelineau (GIA)
 I Will Praise Your Name/The Hand of God, Timothy Smith (OCP)
 I Will Praise Your Name, Leon Roberts (WLP, only in We Celebrate)
 Our God is Compassion, Jeanne Cotter (GIA)
- Psalm 148: Praise the Lord From the Heavens, Howard Hughes (GIA)

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

7. Wedding Music Suggestions

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.

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 (David N. Johnson)
Trumpet Tune (Purcell)
Trumpet voluntary (Clarke)
Tuba Tune (C.J. Lang)
Water Music (Handel; various movements including:
 Air, The Rejoicing, Hornpipe (also titled Allegro Maestoso,)
Trumpet Tune in E flat (David N. Johnson) Augsburg Publishing

Hymns:

(Choose something familiar. Check your music resource.)
Blessing the Marriage (John Bell, Gather Comp. #871)
God In The Planning (SLANE; text by John Bell, GC#868)
Joyful, Joyful We Adore You (all hymnals)
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (all hymnals)
Not For Tongues of Heaven's Angels (BRIDEGROOM GC#623; Worship #589)
O Father All Creation AURELIA Worship #744)
Simple Gifts (Shaker; many hymnals)
Where Charity and Love Are Found (many settings in various hymnals)
When Love Is Found (O WALY WALY; text: Brian Wren; Hope Pub; various hymnals)
We Will Serve the Lord (various settings)

8. The Most Frequently Asked Questions about the Wedding Liturgy and Music!

1. What constitutes "appropriate wedding music?"

"Great care should be taken, especially at marriages, that all the people are involved at the important moments of the celebration, that the same general principles of planning worship and judging music are employed as other liturgies, and above all, that the liturgy is prayer for all present – not a theatrical production."

(Music in Catholic Worship #82)

- Plan music appropriate for ritual moments: gathering music, processional/recessional, Psalm, acclamations, communion processional, solos, etc. (see pg. 7-8).
- 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 cousin Susie sing at the wedding?

Translate this into: play an instrument etc. If cousin Susie 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 the parents 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 the right to establish 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.

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 many parishes choose not to allow it. 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 Mallotte Our Father is not appropriate in its solo form.

6. How to Engage the Assembly in the Wedding Liturgy

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

- **Cantor in full view of the assembly:** Have the cantor lead the psalm and assist the assembly in full view of the assembly.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Do not try to do this alone!** Use this resource, parish wedding guidelines and the assistance of your parish's music minister to help you prepare a wedding liturgy that is beautiful, meaningful and invites assembly participation.

Intercession Response: Most often spoken but can be sung.

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.

8. 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, and the inappropriateness of long solos during this very brief action. Some couples effectively incorporate this ceremony into the meal blessing at the reception. A better choice might be to emphasize the exchange of vows and rings as they are the primary symbols of the rite.

Music ministers, wedding coordinators and other pastoral ministers, need to be aware of the various cultural groups involved in the wedding planning process and be sensitive to possible cultural adaptations. Here are some examples:

In the Hispanic Community:

It is important to remember that there is not one Hispanic culture but many (Puerto Rican, Mexican, Cuban, Columbian, etc.) and that a great diversity of practice exists so what is written here may or may not apply to the families you are assisting. The following are generally customs you may encounter:

- Large wedding parties are common, with important role played by extended family and friends.
- Traditional wedding attendants – *damas and chambelanes* – are chosen from among the couple's unmarried siblings, cousins and friends. In the Cuban culture, only women and children would serve as attendants. In the Puerto Rican tradition, the term *caballeros* would be used for the groom's attendants and *the dama de honor*, similar to our American maid of honor, would give special attention to the bride.
- *Passar las arras*: from the Greek, "pledge." Originally the giving of coins by the husband to the wife as the sealing of the marriage contract and a sign of the husband's ability to support his family. In contemporary times, this may reflect the reality that the couple's economic security is dependent on both incomes or even the couple's responsibility of service to the larger community as a living out of the gospel (see: *Primer Dios*, chap. 4)

- *Libro y rosario*: prayer book (or bible) and rosary blessed and traditionally presented to the bride as a sign of her duty to pray for the family but may more appropriately be presented to the couple as a sign of their desire to form their marriage around prayer and devotions to Mary.
- *Lazo*: a ribbon, rope, double rosary, or in some countries, an extra veil (*vela ciones*), that binds the couple together. It is placed over their shoulders after the “Holy Holy” and remains until the nuptial blessing. This would be the role of the *madrinas de velaciones* – a great honor.
- *El ramo de la Virgen*: This taking of flowers to Mary takes place after communion. Traditionally, this was a solo visit by the bride, but now may include the groom and even the bridal attendants as a sign the couple does not walk their faith journey alone, but rather accompanied and supported by family and friends. Another variation has the young woman who catches the bridal bouquet at the reception taking this bouquet to *la Virgen* afterwards. As in Anglo weddings, this may entail the bride having two bouquets – one for the presentation to Mary and other to take to the wedding reception.
- In Latin America, there is a diversity of practice regarding the relationship between civil and religious ceremonies. Care should be taken to avoid misunderstanding of the legal requirements for marriage in the United States which may differ from that in the country of origin.

The following customs are more specific to a particular country/culture:

- A more extensive system of *padrinos/madrinas* (godfathers and godmothers) who not only offer advice and guidance but also help pay for various wedding expenses is common in Mexico. In this way the broader community assists the couple as they begin their new life. These might include:
 - < The *padrinos de iglesia* – serve as the official witnesses and perhaps pay the church fees.
 - < Other church related *padrinos* may pay for the rings, arras (coins), *cojines* (cushions), *libro y rosario* (prayer book and rosary), *ramo de la Virgen* (flowers to the Virgin). Church *padrinos/madrinas* need to sit in the front pews so they can carry out their duties and are often included in the procession.

5. 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 parents/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 recommended 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, 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.

4. 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, handbells, 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. *padrinos/ matrin*os in the Latino community). Those assisting with the planning of the wedding liturgy need to be aware and sensitive to these needs. (see also: section 8 #8).

< “wedding feast” *padrinos* (may be several couples) who sponsor and help pay for the reception or various aspects of the reception.

< Other *padrinos* would be invited to participate by paying for the wedding dress, the band, the honeymoon, etc. (Mexican).

< In families from Nicaragua and other Central American countries, the *padrinos* provide advice and guidance but it is the responsibility of the groom to pay all the wedding expenses.

- Prominence is given to the bride’s father (or closest male relative) and the groom’s mother (or closest female relative) – *padrinos de boda* – who sit next to the bridal couple during the wedding liturgy (not Puerto Rican).
- The bride is escorted down the aisle by her father, but in special circumstances may be escorted by both parents (Puerto Rican).
- *Cojines*: cushions – are placed on the kneelers of the bride and groom during the entrance procession by the designated *padrinos* who need to be the first couple in procession (Mexican). *Cojines* in other Hispanic cultures refer to pillows with rings carried by the *pajes* (ring bearer).
- Nuptial blessing: may include parents or their substitutes who are invited to bless their children with the presider (Mexico).
- For Hispanic weddings in our diocese, a diversity of music may be included: American style processional, Spanish hymns, service music, hymns to Mary (possibly the “Ave Maria”), depending on the particular culture and the length of time the family has been in the United States.
- In Puerto Rican weddings, while there are not various *padrinos* who assist in paying the various wedding expenses, the godparents would always pay for the wedding cake.
- In Cuba, Panamá, and Puerto Rico, it is customary for the parents of the bride to pay for all the wedding expenses with assistance sometimes by the parents of the groom, or the couple themselves if they are working.
- In the islands themselves, celebrations are usually at the bride’s home and consist of wedding cake, hors d’oeuvres and beverages. If the bride’s home is too small, an aunt or her baptismal godmother may offer her home. In the Islands, only the extremely rich families would have the reception in a party house or club. In the United States, many Hispanics are adopting the American wedding customs.

In the African-American Community:

The Catholic African-American community in our diocese is not a homogeneous group. Diversity ranges from those families who are long-time Catholics, to those who are new to Catholicism, unchurched, or in the process of evangelization. The couple may or may not have an experience of, or interest in, the Black church experience.

Some general considerations:

- Weddings may have a strong ecumenical flavor since many faith traditions may be represented in the same family.
- The use of an outside wedding consultant, often a non-Catholic, is becoming more common. Early communication is needed between consultant, presider and musician.
- Musical resources: There may be more familiarity with secular and gospel style resources. Music which accompanies the liturgical action and which also speaks to the African-American experience is in the developmental stage and may be more difficult to find. As with all our parish communities, parishes which develop strong resources for the Sunday liturgy can use the Sunday experience as a model, offering couples resources from which to draw for their wedding liturgy. African-American music resources include: Lead Me Guide Me and The African-American Heritage Hymnal (GIA), This Far By Faith (Augsburg Press), Lift Every Voice (Episcopal) and the Baptist hymnal.
- In some communities, it would be customary for the parish choir to be asked to lead the music at the wedding liturgy.
- A guest musician, or even several, may be asked to sing a solo. If the style of the music is unfamiliar, or the music unpublished, an outside instrumentalists may be needed.
- In some instances, the wedding may take place in the context of the Sunday Eucharist, using a modified procession (incorporating the wedding party into the usual liturgical procession) and connecting the wedding nuptials to the readings and music of the Sunday celebration.

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

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

3. Order of the Rite

Rite for Celebrating Marriage During 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

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

Some couples have an interest in exploring the wedding rituals and traditions their parents and ancestors followed. These traditions, from Africa, the Caribbean or the United States, include:

- Permission from both sets of parents to wed and the counsel of family elders on the art of homemaking and providing for the family.
- The pouring of a libation for a toast and a prayer asking the grace of those family members who have passed on.
- The tradition of “*jumping the broom*” a creative ritual during the days of slavery when slaves were not allowed legally to marry. The broom was the symbol of the beginning of homemaking for the couple. A custom of the Kgatla people of southern Africa involved the bride helping other women in the family to sweep the courtyard clean on the day after her wedding, symbolizing her willingness and obligation to assist in housework at her in-laws’ until the couple moved into their own home. During the time of slavery, couples would literally “*jump over a broom*” after pledging their devotion to each other. With the master’s permission, this was allowed to take place before witnesses. This is well known and made popular by Alex Haley’s, “*Roots*.” (see: [Jumping the Broom: The African American Wedding Planner](#)).
- The *Sweeping Ceremony* to purify the space before the liturgy begins.
- *Drumming*: a call to worship, invoking the ancestors who have gone before (we are the custodians of today as they were of yesterday) and calling the couple to the sacredness of marriage
- Some examples of other traditions which may not be as popular:
 - Crossing sticks: At the turn of the century, couples crossed sticks, a sign of the strength and vitality of trees, to signify their commitment to one another and to honor and bless their new life about to begin. (Among the Samburu of Kenya, sticks were also used during the wedding ceremony to brand cattle the groom would give his wife to finalize their vows.)
 - West Indian Black Cake and pound cake, a remnant of the Caribbean and African traditions.
 - Decorating of hair with vibrant dyes of burnished red and braids adorned with cowrie shells: a centuries old tradition to encourage fertility.

In the Vietnamese Community:

- The Engagement Ceremony officially begins the period of wedding preparation. Pastoral ministers need to be aware that in the US, this sometimes takes place the day before the wedding or even right before the wedding liturgy itself, if there are out-of-town guests who would otherwise not be present for it.
 - At the bride's parents' home, the bride's family lines up, sometimes even beginning outside the house, to greet members of the groom's family who process into the house carrying trays covered in red cloth, the traditional color for weddings and symbolizing happiness and new life.
 - Trays are placed on a table in the center of the room where the groom's family stands to the left and the bride's family to the right.
 - Words of greeting are spoken, which may include a prayer or a hymn. Traditionally, the father of the groom, then the father of the bride speaks.
 - An older female relative (sister, aunt, godmother) then presents the bride-to-be dressed in "ao dai" (traditional Vietnamese dress) to acclamation of all those present.
 - Parents of the groom and the groom himself remove the red cloths from the trays revealing traditional gifts of fruit, beverage, a roast pig, tea, rice cakes, and jewelry for the bride. Mothers of the bride and groom place the jewelry on the bride and the groom places the engagement ring on the finger of his bride-to-be. Family members are introduced to one another and the feast begins.

The Wedding Liturgy

- The entrance procession: besides the traditional American attendants, the entrance procession at a Vietnamese wedding includes the parents and immediate families of the couple. Traditionally, the bride and groom would enter together. In our diocese, the procession is usually accompanied by the singing of a hymn although an instrumental piece moving into the hymn might be used if the procession was very long.

2. 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.

1. Introduction

This booklet has been prepared for music ministers and parish wedding coordinators in the Diocese of Rochester, as well as couples preparing their wedding liturgy.

For Music Ministers and Parish Wedding Coordinators –

We hope this resource will be helpful to you as you minister with those about to be married:

- Serving as a liturgical/musical resource for you as you work with couples.
- Serving as a model, perhaps, as your parish determines parish policy and prepares its own wedding music guidelines.

For Couples Preparing Their Wedding Liturgy –

We hope this will be helpful to you during this exciting time:

- Serving as an explanation of liturgical principles and needs.
- Serving as a resource of possible options and suggestions.
- Encouraging and enabling your active participation in planning the Wedding Liturgy in cooperation with your parish musician.
- Encouraging and supporting the active participation of the assembly at your Wedding Liturgy.

We are pleased and excited to offer these guidelines. Please contact your parish musician as soon as possible after your engagement to become familiar with parish guidelines and the planning process.

Diocesan Music Committee
Office of Liturgy
Spring 2002

- The choir: It is customary that a choir would be present to lead the community's singing at the liturgy. This might be the parish choir or a special choir made up of the family and friends of the couple.
- The unity candle: If this ceremony is used, the original candles would be lit by the couple themselves rather than the parents.
- Devotions to Mary: It is customary for the couple to offer themselves to Mary, presenting flowers and asking the guidance and assistance of the Mother of Jesus as they begin their new life together. This would be accompanied by special music or spoken prayer and takes place after communion.
- While the bride would wear the traditional white gown for the wedding liturgy, it is not unusual for her to change into Vietnamese dress at the wedding reception. Sometimes she changes clothes more than once.
- Depending on which part of Vietnam the family has come from, there may be other rituals adjacent to the wedding liturgy, for example:
 - Ritual before leaving for church is similar to the engagement ceremony. Once again the bride's family lines up at her house to greet the groom's family. The groom carries a bouquet of flowers for the bride and the groomsmen may carry nosegays for the bride's attendants. Again there are gifts from the groom's family, covered with a red cloth. The groom's mother unveils the gifts (fruit, tea, beverage) and asks permission to escort the bride to the church for the wedding. The father of the bride then speaks and the bride is presented wearing traditional Vietnamese dress. Next the mother of the bride speaks to her daughter and the bride is presented with wedding gifts from her parents and siblings. The mother of the groom then presents the bride with a necklace and places it on her. After this, the bride's father invites all present to the church. The bride then changes into her wedding gown and is escorted by the groom's family to the church for the wedding liturgy. This ceremony may be accompanied by prayers and hymns.
 - After the wedding liturgy – A visit to the parent's home to pay respects to the ancestors – acknowledging and giving thanks for those who have gone before them. This would also be the occasion for the immediate family to give the couple their wedding gifts.

9. Why does wedding music cost so much?

Music for the wedding liturgy actually costs a lot less than the dresses, cake, flowers, photographer, invitations, 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 \$50-\$150, depending on skill, experience and locality. Musicians do not generally attend the wedding rehearsal and if extra rehearsals are required, they should be paid accordingly. The presumed musician for your wedding is the parish’s regular musician. Cantors are generally paid between \$30-125. 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.

10. 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 \$50 and up for individual players. Some instrumentalists such as brass and harp, require higher fees. Remember:

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

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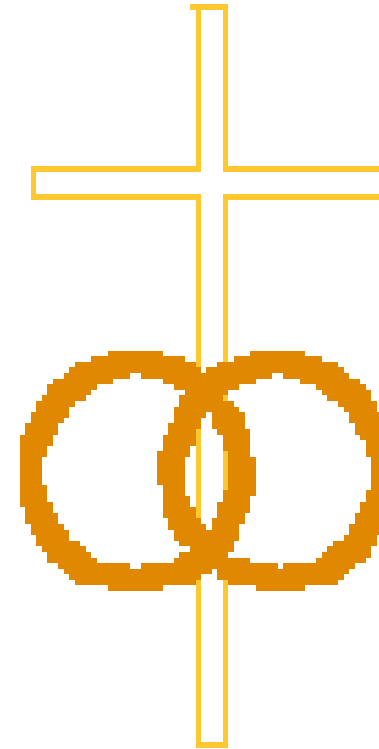
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7. Can the Lord’s Prayer be sung?
8. What about the Unity Candle and other cultural adaptations?
9. Why does wedding music cost so much?
10. What if we want a string quartet, brass ensemble, etc?

Diocese of Rochester Wedding Music Guidelines



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Additional copies of the 2002 Wedding Music Guidelines
can be obtained at a cost of \$1 per copy by contacting:

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This document can also be e-mailed to you. It requires legal
size paper, two-sided printing and a printer with the memory
to handle the document.

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