

# Wedding Process

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Deacon Greg will discuss with you your situation and how Immaculate might be of service . He will help to determine if you are parishioners, where you will prepare for your marriage, who will preside at your ceremony, the date and time of your ceremony, and answer general questions about weddings at Immaculate. Once a date has been chosen you will be asked to sign an agreement and make a deposit to hold the date.

## Parishioners

If you have been a member of Immaculate for 6 months or longer, parish staff will work with you to prepare for your wedding. In particular, there are a certain set of activities you will need to complete.

- Testimonies for your freedom to marry
  - Each member of the couple will be interviewed
  - One person who has known each member of the couple for 5 or more years will be interviewed
  - Each Christian member of the couple will provide a copy of their baptismal record produced by the parish of their baptism within 6 months of the wedding date. A copy of your original certificate will not suffice.
- Theological Preparation
  - Fr Maurice holds a two session class that examines the church's teachings on marriage.
- Communication Preparation
  - Couples will participate in an Engaged Encounter. The EE is a weekend long opportunity to explore the typical issues experienced by married couples and to assist you in beginning your marriage having the ability to work through these or other issues.
- Liturgical Preparation
  - The priest or deacon who will be witnessing your vows will work with you on planning your ceremony. This preparation will consist of at least two meetings where your ceremony will be discussed, readings chosen, and music reviewed.
  - Roughly 4 weeks prior to your ceremony you will be contacted by Immaculate's wedding coordinator who will serve as your host for the ceremony. She has many years of experience and will be able to answer many of your questions regarding your ceremony.
  - We will share with you contact information for local musicians who may be contracted to assist you with music during your wedding ceremony.
  - A rehearsal will take place a day or two in advance of the ceremony.

## Non-Parishioners

If you are not part of the Immaculate community, you may still hold your ceremony at Immaculate. Many couples find the beauty of the building or the proximity to downtown venues make Immaculate a prime choice for their wedding ceremony. However, the preparation will need to take place at your home parish.

- Your home parish is often the parish closest to you, or the one you attend most frequently. Each parish and diocese may have different requirements for marriage preparation. The details above may serve as a comparison for what your parish may ask of you.
- The parish preparing you will need to send documentation of their preparation to Immaculate prior to the ceremony. If your parish is not in the Archdiocese of Seattle, the documentation is sent first to their diocesan office, then to our diocesan office, and then to Immaculate. It is important to allow 3-4 weeks for the transfer of paperwork to take place.
- Liturgical Preparation
  - The priest or deacon who will be witnessing your vows will work with you on planning your ceremony. This preparation will consist of at least two meetings where your ceremony will be discussed, readings chosen, and music reviewed.
  - Roughly 4 weeks prior to your ceremony you will be contacted by Immaculate's wedding coordinator who will serve as your host for the ceremony. She has many years of experience and will be able to answer many of your questions regarding your ceremony.
  - We will share with you contact information for local musicians who may be contracted to assist you with music during your wedding ceremony.
  - A rehearsal will take place a day or two in advance of the ceremony.
- The pastor of the parish preparing you for marriage would also send a letter delegating the pastor of Immaculate to hold the ceremony and witness your vows. Immaculate's pastor can then delegate someone else (a deacon or priest) to witness your vows.

### **Witness (Presiders)**

Any Catholic priest or deacon may witness your vows. If they are currently serving in the Seattle diocese the process is relatively simple. If they are serving in another diocese they will need to provide a letter of good standing prior to the ceremony. This letter is sent from their bishop or provincial to Archbishop Sartain and should be sent at least 4 weeks prior to the ceremony. It is traditional to offer the presider a gift or stipend for their service. If you are asking them to travel to Seattle, you should consider paying for their travel expenses.