

# Wedding Guidelines and Policies for Fort Recovery Cluster of Parishes



Parishes of St. Joseph, St. Peter, St. Paul & Mary Help of Christians  
403 Sharpsburg Road Fort Recovery, Ohio 45846 Phone-(419) 375-4153  
E-mail ([pastor@fortrecoverycatholics.org](mailto:pastor@fortrecoverycatholics.org) or [vicar@fortrecoverycatholics.org](mailto:vicar@fortrecoverycatholics.org) )

## 1. Registration

- A. Receive the Wedding Policies for Fort Recovery Cluster (**read and sign & return** to the Mary Help of Christians offices) (this policy paper you are reading)
- B. Find out your baptismal status for the both of you. ( ie. Are you baptized? If so when? And if so Where? (Church, denomination, address) This information is vitally important and you will need it to fill out the online form. If you are baptized but not at one of the Church's within our cluster or at a non-Catholic, but Christian Church, then you will need to contact that particular church in which you were baptized and ask them to send us (the office of Mary Help of Christians, address and info is above) an official record (official baptismal certificate or letter) **confirming** this. You can readily find the contact information of parishes and churches on the internet. Call them and request this information to be sent ASAP to our office. **Wedding dates can be held but not confirmed** until we have this information and official documentation in hand.
- C. Fill out the Online Form for M-1 form. (official Chancellery wedding form) This can be sent to you via email by the secretary or Pastor. Or follow this link...  
**<http://goo.gl/forms/mk2MPkB4jW>**
- D. E-mail a current photo of yourselves in one picture as a couple. Send the email to the priest you are working with, either [pastor@fortrecoverycatholics.org](mailto:pastor@fortrecoverycatholics.org) or [vicar@fortrecoverycatholics.org](mailto:vicar@fortrecoverycatholics.org). Please put in the subject box of the email your names the word "photo" and your wedding date.
- E. If the engaged couple are not registered members of one of the Cluster Parishes AND **are** going to live in the area after they are married they must fill out the registration form for the proper Parish in the cluster AND **return that form** to the Mary Help of Christian offices. You can pick up a form from the office. You can call them and have them mail or email it to you as well.

## 1. Wedding Preparation

### **MEETINGS WITH a Priest from the Fort Recovery Cluster (Fr Ned or Fr Matt)**

The engaged couple **must meet with the priest or deacon 2 or 3 times or possibly more** if there are considerable issues to be resolved.

**1st Meeting.** General introduction and review of their requirements (**no later than 6 months before marriage**)

Fill out the online form of the **Assessment Questions (Personal, Spiritual and Canonical)** for bride and the groom. Follow this link to get the form.

**<http://goo.gl/forms/WjiaXhx1c>**

**2nd Meeting** This meeting is to take place **AFTER** the engaged couple schedule and attend their **Pre Cana Class (or pre-approved alternatives)** AND after they take and review the **FOCCUS Test** with their assigned FOCCUS couple facilitator. (**4 to 6 months before wedding date**)

**3rd Meeting** (liturgical planning and any follow up preparation for the Wedding couple) **(1 to 2 months before Wedding date)** You are required to have your Wedding Ceremony day worksheet filled out ahead of time or as much as possible so we can effectively make use of our time to answer any remaining questions.

a.

### **PRE-CANA COURSE**

The engaged couple are responsible to schedule and take the pre-Cana course offered by the diocese of Cincinnati or a Pre-Cana Alternative course. Once you schedule the date you are going to take this course, **please email [pastor@fortrecoverycatholics.org](mailto:pastor@fortrecoverycatholics.org) or [vicar@fortrecoverycatholics.org](mailto:vicar@fortrecoverycatholics.org)** telling Father this date so he can know you've taken care of this so he can arrange your **FOCCUS evaluation exam**. (see below) and begin finding you a FOCCUS facilitator couple that you will be needing also to meet with.

For Registration for **Pre-Cana** follow these links to obtain the brochure that gives the cost, location(s) and dates for this program.

<http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/2017-Pre-Cana-Brochure.pdf>

- After you complete your course you will receive a *Certificate of Completion* from the organizers of the course. You need to turn that into the office ASAP after your course is completed so we can add it to your wedding preparation file. You will need to also fill out a *short survey* of the course that you are also to give into the office for your file as well. You can get a copy of this from your Wedding prep folder or if you need another copy of it from the office.

**Cost is \$150.** If you sign up before deadlines.

This cost is payable to the organization sponsoring this program.

- For Couples entering a **2nd Marriage you are required to take Pre-Cana 2**. For Registration follow this link to obtain the brochure that gives the cost and dates for this program.

<http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/CANA-II-2017-Brochure1.pdf>

**Cost is \$150.** This cost is payable to the organization sponsoring this program if you sign up before deadlines.

- **Pre-Cana Alternatives** (the Archdiocese of Cincinnati also recognizes certain independent programs as fulfilling our Pre Cana requirements.)

- **ENGAGED ENCOUNTER** <http://www.cincinnatiengagedencounter.org/>

#### **2017 Weekend Registration for Cincinnati**

Cincinnati Community 2017 retreats are at Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center in Norwood, or Saint Anne's in Kentucky and are 3 days/2 nights (Frid night - Sun)

**Available 2-day/1 night retreat weekends for 2017:**

**Place:** [Saint Anne's Retreat Center and Moye Spiritual Life Center](#), 5300 St.

Anne Drive, Melbourne, Kentucky 41059

**Cost:** \$210 per couple. [Apply Now](#).

**Available 3-day/2 night retreat weekends for 2017:**

**Place:** Held at [Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Center](#) in Norwood, OH.

**Cost:** \$245 per couple. [Apply Now](#).

visit Engaged Encounter website <http://covingtonengagedencounter.org/>

to register and get more information about this program.

- **RUAH WOODS** ( <https://www.ruahwoods.org/learning/> )

see their web page (given above) for time and dates and registration.

This program costs \$150 for both courses that you are required to take.

Part One - God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage \$100

Part Two - Living a Joy-Filled Marriage \$50

### **FOCCUS**

Engaged couples will also need to take the **FOCCUS Evaluation inventory**, typically with their pastor or a facilitator couple from their home parish. **This is not a test, and there is no pass or fail.** Rather, it helps couples prepare to reflect and discuss various elements of marriage-readiness they may not have previously considered.

- This **FOCCUS inventory is to be taken on-line through the internet.** You will be sent an email with the passwords you will need to enter in order to take the test online. You will receive these from either your **Pastor** or your **facilitator couple**. Please **request the passwords via email** ( [pastor@fortrecoverycatholics.org](mailto:pastor@fortrecoverycatholics.org) or [vicar@fortrecoverycatholics.org](mailto:vicar@fortrecoverycatholics.org) )
- Ideally you will need to take this test just after your Pre- Cana course (or other pre-cana alternative program course). (about 6 months or more before your wedding)
- **This test costs \$25.** When you meet with your facilitator couple to go over your results you are to present them with a **check to pay for this test made out to “Mary Help of Christians”** They will in turn turn that into the parish with their evaluation of your test.

### **MARRIAGE LICENSE**

The State of Ohio marriage license **must** be given to the priest or deacon **prior** to the ceremony; otherwise no marriage can occur legally according to state law. the license can be purchased at ANY courthouse in the State of Ohio. If both live out of state, the marriage must occur in the county where they get their license. Therefore they must get their license from the Mercer county courthouse.

For your convenience you can follow this helpful **online guide to planning your wedding**.

<http://www.catholicweddinghelp.com/wedding-planning/wedding-planning.htm>

We also will give you a **folder** at your first meeting with your Pastor with similar booklets and pamphlets that will help you in your planning of and preparation for your wedding ceremony and day.

### **OTHER GENERAL NORMS**

- No alcoholic beverages are permitted on church grounds before or after the ceremony.
- No food or drink are permitted in the Church proper. Use the designated rooms for this and clean up after yourselves leaving no mess unless you want a cleaning fee added to your fees.
- Signs on wedding vehicles must be in good taste, not vulgar or sexually explicit.
- Do not throw birdseed, rice, confetti, or other items after the ceremony neither in the Church nor outside.

#### • **Music**

- All music played in Church must be sacred music, suitable to the theology of marriage, appropriate for a wedding Mass, and appropriate for the particular part of the wedding Mass. The principles used to judge the suitability of music for the Roman Catholic marriage rite are taken from Music in Catholic Worship, as well as the policies established by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Therefore, no secular music such as pop songs or show tunes are allowed.
- Music must be approved either by the organist, the priest or deacon one month prior to the wedding.

## ● Church Decorations

- Seasonal decorations in the church, especially during Advent, Christmas and Lent, must be incorporated into the wedding decorations, because seasonal decorations are not changed for weddings.

## ● Photography and Videography

- Professional photographers must speak to the priest or deacon prior to the wedding.
- Professional photographers must be as unobtrusive as possible. They may take flash pictures as the bridal party processes up the aisle, but not from the front of the church. Also, the pictures they take during the ceremony must be non-flash, and must be taken from the back of the church or from the choir loft, assuming they do not distract either the musicians nor the sacredness of the ceremony.

## ● Summary of fees

- Pre Cana Course or Pre-Cana Alternatives- **at least \$150** (see registration for alternative courses and their cost to get exact cost from their registration forms).
  - Paid to the program facilitators.
- You will need to turn into the office your **“certificate” of completion** that you will receive upon your completion of your program. As well you're asked to fill out the **“couples report to their Pastor”** about your experience with your Pre-Cana course. (This is found in your information packet from given to you in your 1st meeting with the pastor.)
- FOCCUS Evaluation inventory cost **\$25**
  - Paid by check which you are to give to your FOCCUS facilitators at your FOCCUS evaluation session with your facilitator couple. They will in turn turn this into the office with their paperwork about your session(s) with them
- Church Organist Fee. \$125
  - This is to be paid directly to the Church Organist directly by check either the day of the Wedding or at the rehearsal. Soloist fees or fees incurred by other musicians that our Church does not provide are to be dealt and negotiated with by you directly with them.
- Church Fee.
  - If you are a registered member of the Church **AND** have been giving to the collection (received envelopes) in the past year there is no fee.
  - IF you are not a registered member of the Church in the Cluster in which your being married **AND** will not be registered member after your marriage; there is a **\$150 fee** for use of the Church to help pay for the use of the building.
- This fee is to be paid by check and made out to the Parish Church in which you are going to be married in and is expected to be paid by the time or on the date of your rehearsal.
- IF you want to use the undercroft MHC or reception areas of the other Churches in the clusters for your rehearsal the normal fees apply accordingly. Please ask the office secretary for the current cost/fee for the use of these spaces and schedule their use through them.
- If a **deacon** or **visiting priest** presides at the wedding, he should receive a gratuity that you would give him at the rehearsal. (\$100 minimum is suggested)
- An additional donation **may** be given to the Church to help defray the Parish's cost or as a gratuity to the presiding Pastor. Please do not give cash, but rather write a check payable to the parish so it can be added to the collection. Cash donations received will also be added to the collection and not kept by the Pastor. His responsibility and monetary remuneration as Pastor are covered by his salary.

**OPTIONAL formation resources are available.**

You are **invited** to compliment your formation to prepare you for your marriage by taking advantage of our online courses concerning our faith as well as specifically in relation to your marriage by going to [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org). I would like to draw your attention to a program about marriage preparation called "**Beloved**". This is a valuable resource you can use both during your engagement as well as after you're married. Log in using our **parish code 87e81f**. You can access "Beloved" once you set up your access password(s) then using your passwords after you register with FORMED.org website. You are welcome to use all the other programs and resources available at the website as well. I pray it will be of great benefit to you.

## Summary Chart of your Wedding Prep Requirements

Checklist of Wedding Prep Requirements	Links and Info	CHECK IF DONE	
		HIS	HERS
Name of Couple			
Wedding Date			
Registered On-Line (pg 2 M-1 Sheet)	<a href="https://goo.gl/forms/c60c07FYdQ71bhTo2">https://goo.gl/forms/c60c07FYdQ71bhTo2</a>		
Baptism Certificates in File	very important to know the parish and town you were baptised in		
<b>Initial Meeting #1 ( 6 or more Months Before Wedding )</b>			
Pre Cana Date	date _____		
Pre Cana Certificate	Turn in Signed Certificate to Office after your PreCana Workshop		
FOCCUS Tests Taken	CONTACT FR NED OR FR MATT TO GET YOUR FOCCUS TEST PASSWORD EMAILED TO YOU AFTER YOU FINISH YOUR PRE-CANA CLASS		
FOCCUS Tests Facilitators	<a href="http://www.foccusinc.com/facilitators-find.asp">http://www.foccusinc.com/facilitators-find.asp</a> X		
FOCCUS Evaluation (from your FOCCUS facilitator)			
<b>Diocesan Assessment Question's Answered (Completed by Bride &amp; Groom Separately)</b>	<a href="https://goo.gl/forms/ILAoo14nhuCEX0mn1">https://goo.gl/forms/ILAoo14nhuCEX0mn1</a>		
<b>Follow Up Meeting #2 w/ Priest etc. ( +/- 4 months before Wedding )</b>			
Special Canonical permissions requested (if applicable)	if one spouse is not baptised		



**In signing below, I am stating I have read and understood what is required of me for my wedding to take place at one of the Fort Recovery Cluster Parishes. I will do my best to comply to these requirements and policies.**

**Signatures of Engaged Couple**

(Please sign, date and return to the parish office within 6 months of the wedding date or earlier)

**Bride** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Groom** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Wedding Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Church in which the Wedding Ceremony is to take place:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this last page of the form to  
Mary Help of Christians Parish and Cluster Office.  
403 Sharpsburg Road Fort Recovery, Ohio 45846 (419) 375-4153**