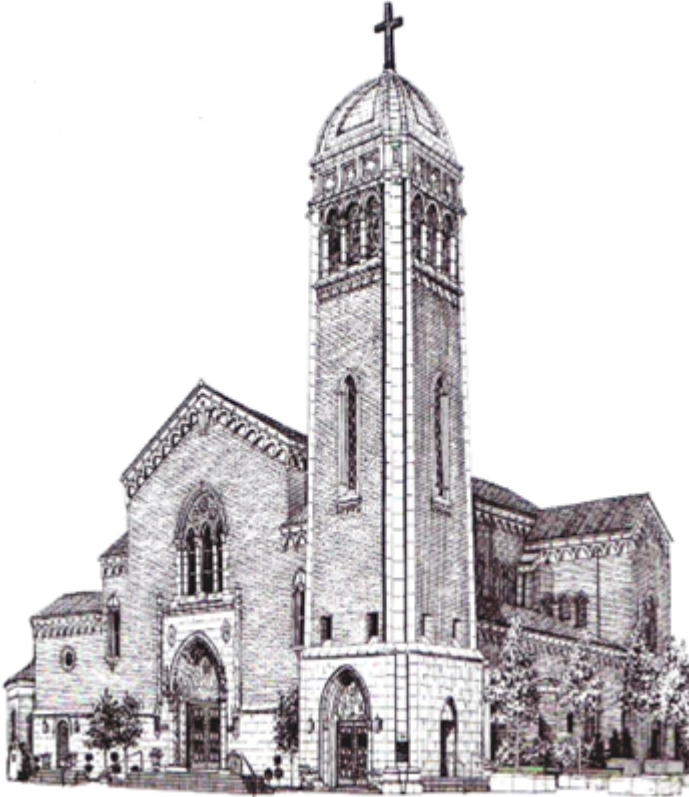


*The two shall become one*

*Mark 10:6-9*



# **2025 Guidelines for the Sacrament of Matrimony**

Church of the Holy Ghost

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## Your Engagement

This time of your engagement is a privileged moment, one that will not come again. It is a time to prepare for the celebration of your wedding day, and even more importantly a time to deepen your relationship with one another and with God.

Now is a time to grow in love, mutual respect and self-control that will allow you to give yourself freely to your beloved and to receive the gift of your beloved in integrity and joy.

*God himself is the author of marriage.*

*The vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator.*

*—Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1603*

**Pray together.** Make a commitment to attend Sunday Mass each week as a couple. The Lord's Prayer, grace at meals, reading the Bible together or praying the Rosary are other great ways to start praying together.

**Practice chaste love.** The virtue of chastity is essential to preserving marital fidelity. Commit to abstain from sexual relations and resist the temptation to move in together prior to your wedding. Invite your family

or friends to help you adjust your living arrangements to preserve the integrity of your engagement.

**Ask and offer forgiveness.** Receive the Sacrament of Confession regularly during the time of engagement.

Encourage your relatives, and entire wedding party to prepare for your wedding by making a good confession.

**Be generous in love.** As you plan your wedding, pay attention to the amount of time and resources you are spending on

clothes, food, flowers, music, etc. Consider tithing—giving a percentage of that total cost to assist those less fortunate than yourselves. While you can certainly use all the help you can get as you start your own life together, let your love also be a source of support for others. God won't be outdone in generosity!

## **Can I be married at Holy Ghost Church?**

Either the bride or the groom must be a baptized Catholic in order to celebrate their marriage at Holy Ghost. Couples or individuals can register through the website or in person at the Parish Office.

**If you are not a member of this parish**, you must simply obtain permission from your own pastor to be married at Holy Ghost.

Couples may choose to be prepared here for marriage in another parish. This needs to be arranged and documented at the time the wedding is scheduled. Cost: \$250 only.

**All marriage documentation prepared in any other parish must be received by Holy Ghost one month prior to the wedding.**

**If either party has been married previously**, whether in a church or a civil ceremony, a Defect of Form Dissolution or a Declaration of Nullity must be obtained for all previous unions before a date may be scheduled for the wedding. In the case of widows and widowers, we only need an official certificate of the death of the deceased spouse.

## When can I get married?

You must contact our parish at least **eight months prior to the date of the wedding**. It is best to reserve your wedding date one year in advance.

Weddings are celebrated on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. Weddings are not celebrated at Holy Ghost in Advent or Lent. A marriage between two Catholics, or between a Catholic and a baptized Christian, may be celebrated within a nuptial Mass. If one of the parties is not baptized, the marriage is always celebrated as a Ceremony not during Mass.

***Do not reserve a reception hall or other services until you have set a date at the church.***

These three items are needed before a wedding is scheduled:

1. Holy Ghost Marriage Form
2. Pre-Marriage File (a comprehensive checklist)
3. Wedding Fee Deposit (\$250, non-refundable)

## What does it cost to be married at Holy Ghost?

A wedding stipend of \$1,000 provides for the use of the Church, free parking, and security personnel. An additional stipend for the celebrant can be given at the discretion of the couple. The costs associated with any other personnel, including musicians, are your responsibility.

Online payments may be made through our website “Online Donation” page at [www.holyghostchurch.org](http://www.holyghostchurch.org)

A **non-refundable** deposit of \$250 is required to reserve the date for your wedding.

Any changes to the schedule will require payment of an additional \$100.

**Final payment for your wedding must be made one month prior to your marriage.**

## Marriage Preparation

Marriage preparation begins with the priest. You will meet several times during the engagement period to complete the following requirements. The priest will also track the associated documentation and assemble the wedding file.

### Survey (FOCCUS or Prepare/Enrich)

This is a survey that becomes a conversation starter, which helps you assess your strengths and areas for growth as a couple. A trained facilitator will help you have these conversations together. You are asked to cover the small fee when you take the survey online.

## Marriage Preparation

This will cover both the spiritual foundation of the sacrament of marriage and practical life skills for a healthy marriage. There are various ways to fulfill this component of your preparation:

“God’s Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage”, a one-day workshop that covers the spiritual aspect of marriage, plus a Catholic Engaged Encounter weekend which addresses life skills for marriage. Visit <https://archden.org/marriage/newly-engaged/> and view the Marriage Preparation section.

Another option is [www.catholicmarriageprep.com](http://www.catholicmarriageprep.com) which provides an excellent 4-part preparation at various churches in the Denver area throughout the year.

You can always work directly with a priest, deacon, or mentor couple trained to provide comprehensive marriage preparation. Get in touch with us to arrange this.

In-person meetings are best!

## **Retreat (Pre-Cana)**

Visit <https://archden.org/marriage/newly-engaged/> and view the Retreats section. The in-person retreat is best!

## **Natural Family Planning**

NFP is the only morally acceptable method for limiting family size or spacing births of children. The knowledge that it gives a couple about their fertility also aids in achieving a pregnancy.

Holy Ghost parishioners Adrian and Stacey Nagle facilitate a 3-session class that meets once a month and satisfies this requirement. Contact them at (303) 464-9754. You can also visit <https://archden.org/eflm/nfp/>. In-person class is best!

## **Documents Needed**

### **Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire**

This is an official diocesan document that records some basic information about the couple's family of origin and the couple's understanding of Marriage.

## Sacramental Records

We will request your sacramental records from the church where you were baptized. We will ask for (at least) the approximate date of your baptism in order to obtain a current copy of your baptismal certificate. After your wedding, we will send notice of your marriage to be recorded in your baptismal record. If either bride or groom was baptized in another Christian church, we would also like a copy of that baptismal certificate, as far as possible.

## Marriage Preparation Certificates

After finishing a formal marriage preparation program, and a course in Natural Family Planning, you will be given certificates of completion. These certificates will be placed in your marriage file.

*Man cannot live without love. He remains a being incomprehensible to himself; his life is senseless, if he does not encounter love, if he does not experience it and make it his own, if he does not participate intimately in LOVE.*  
—Pope St. John Paul II

## Civil Marriage License

You must obtain a marriage license from the State of Colorado one month before your wedding (from any county in Colorado).

**Bring your marriage license to the rehearsal**, the day before your wedding. After the wedding, we will send the signed marriage license to be recorded at the county.



## **Witness Forms**

Both the Bride and the Groom will need to have a close relative (parent preferred) attest to their respective freedom to marry. This attestation must be accomplished through a Catholic church.

## **Bridesmaids, Groomsmen, etc.**

### **Attire**

Your wedding attire and that of your attendants should express the beauty of spousal love and the virtue of modesty. Everyone's appearance should reinforce the goodness and sanctity of marriage, nothing contrary to Catholic sensibilities.

## **Bride's and Groom's Rooms**

A complete bride's room is located in the basement level of the church.

The groom's room is located in the Eastern end of the vestibule of the church.

## **Decorum**

Your bridal party is meant to help you prepare for the exchange of faithful love. Yet some bachelor and bachelorette parties are offensive to the dignity of Holy Matrimony. Let your attendants know that you do not want anything to detract from that integral and honest gift of chaste, self-sacrificial love to your spouse.

***No drugs or alcohol are permitted on the premises before or after the rehearsal or the wedding.***

## Music

Music is a beautiful and important aspect of your wedding. Malou Stirman, our Wedding Music Coordinator at Holy Ghost will contact you three to four months before your wedding to speak with you about our organist, cantors, and the selections of hymns and music for your wedding. She can help you with any questions about the music for the wedding Mass or ceremony. Here are a few things to remember:

- The music during the celebration of the wedding must be sacred. The most important purpose of music in the ceremony is to help your guests pray. Some music heard at weddings elsewhere may not be acceptable here. Please reserve any favorite popular songs for the reception.
- All decisions regarding the appropriateness of the musicians, instruments, and songs are to be made in consultation with the Holy Ghost Music Department.
- Visiting organists are generally not allowed to play the organ at Holy Ghost Church. Our organist, Richard Robertson, must specifically approve them.
- We have Spanish-speaking musicians in our network.

## Fees

- Organist fee for wedding — \$300 (paid directly)
- Cantor fee for wedding — \$300 (paid directly)
- Additional cantors and musicians may be brought in at their own rates.

## Decorations

There are 22 pews on each side of the center aisle. Any decorations attached to the pews must be easily removable. Do not use duct tape, staples or tacks. Florists can use pew clips, ribbon, wire, or any other non-adhesive means.

## Flowers

The church provides fresh flower arrangements on the high altar each week. You may choose to order additional arrangements for your wedding, but these should be removed immediately (flowers placed in honor of Mary stay in church).

## Photography

Photos may be taken in the church before or after your wedding, during the allotted time frame (from 90 minutes before to 90 minutes after your wedding time). During the wedding ceremony, photographers and videographers should remain behind the guests or to the sides. There should be no flash photography from the end of the bridal procession until the final blessing. Video cameras may be set up in the choir loft, and to the sides of the church.

Holy Ghost cannot offer live streaming services.

## Planning the Ceremony

You will work with the priest or deacon to plan the details of your wedding ceremony, including the procession, prayers, readings, lectors, and gift-bearers. We can accommodate well-established Catholic cultural traditions based on your ethnic heritage, such as the *arras* and *lazo*.

## The Wedding Rehearsal

A one-hour rehearsal will take place the evening before your wedding. Please ask your wedding party to arrive on time. Normally, rehearsals are scheduled as follows:

- Saturday 11AM weddings: rehearsal at 4PM Friday
- Saturday 2PM weddings: rehearsal at 5PM Friday
- Saturday 6PM weddings: rehearsal at 6PM Friday

Please remember to bring your marriage license to the rehearsal.

## The Day of Your Wedding

**NO DRUGS OR ALCOHOL** are permitted on the premises or to be consumed prior to arriving. A violation of this policy may result in the cancellation of your wedding.

**Starting 90 minutes before your wedding** (9:30am; 12:30pm; and 4:30pm): the bride's and groom's rooms open to you, and you may decorate the church, and take any photos inside or outside. The bride's and groom's rooms are to be left in the same condition in which they were found. Holy Ghost is not liable for lost or stolen items, but does provide a security attendant.

The receiving line and reception of guests should take place at your reception, not at the Church. **You have until 90 minutes after your start time** (12:30pm; 3:30pm; and 7:30pm) for the ceremony, photos, and removal of your decorations.

**Do not throw** flower petals, rice, confetti, balloons, or birdseed either inside or outside of the Church. Artificial flower petals may be used inside the church, but you are responsible for

removing them. Bubbles may be used outside the church only (please no bubble machines, just handheld bottles or wands).

## Parking

Please inform your wedding party and guests that free parking for the Church is available in the open-air lot on the northwest corner of 19th and Welton Streets. Refer to the current bulletin or the Holy Ghost website for the proper procedure and obtain the code from the office. License plate readers are in use at this lot, and citations may be mailed to the address of record. Holy Ghost may be able to waive tickets issued to those who have done their best to follow our instructions.

*We hope that the beauty and dignity of your wedding  
will be an expression of the beauty of your love  
for each other and for God.  
Be assured of our prayers and support  
now and in the years to come.*

If you have any questions not answered in this booklet, please contact the parish office at 303-292-1556 or write to us at [office@holyghostchurch.org](mailto:office@holyghostchurch.org).

*O God, ... by fulfillment of the sacramental sign,  
the mystical marriage of Christ with his Church  
might become manifest  
in the union of husband and wife  
among your faithful.  
—Nuptial Blessing, Form B*

## Checklist

- Holy Ghost Marriage Form
- Pre-Marriage File
- Marriage Questionnaire (MA) for Bride
- Marriage Questionnaire (MA) for Groom
- Freedom to Marry Witness Form (MB) for Bride
- Freedom to Marry Witness Form (MB) for Groom
- Sacramental Records for Bride (recent)
- Sacramental Records for Groom (recent)
- Marriage Preparation Certificate (FOCCUS or Prepare/Enrich)
- NFP Class Certificate
- Marriage License (within 35 days of wedding, from any county in Colorado)
- Music and Musicians
- Readings and Prayers
- Lectors
- Gift-bearers
- Payments (check, money order, or on our website)
- If applicable, paperwork pertaining to prior unions
- Any additional forms requested by the priest or diocese

## Notes

**PREPARE**  
not just for a wedding,  
but for  
**MARRIAGE**

*The very preparation for Christian marriage  
is itself a journey of faith.  
It is a special opportunity  
for the engaged to rediscover and deepen  
the faith received in Baptism  
and nourished by their Christian upbringing.  
In this way they come to recognize and freely accept  
their vocation to follow Christ  
and to serve the Kingdom of God in the married state.*  
—Pope John Paul II