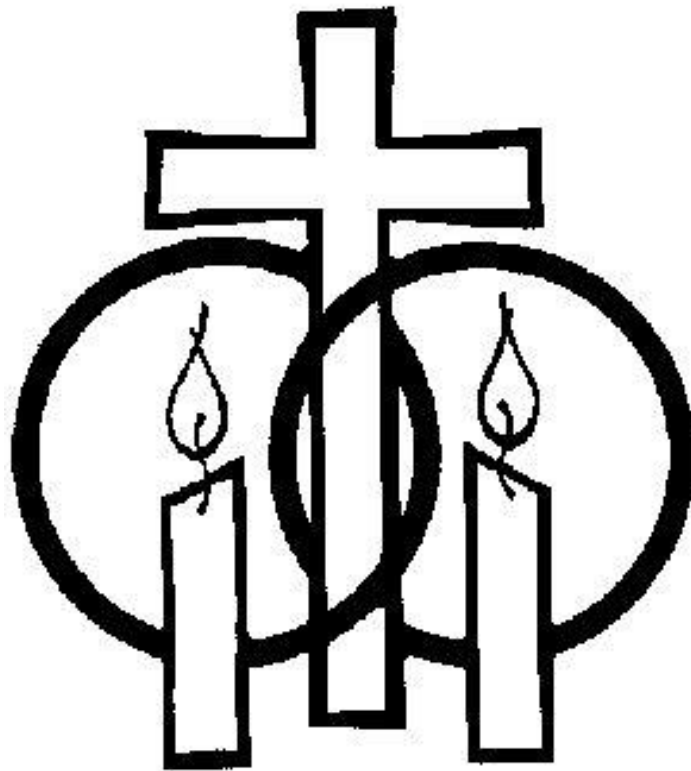


Church of St. Mary
Marriage Preparation and
Wedding Guidelines



CHURCH OF ST. MARY
175 E. Illinois Road Lake Forest, IL 60045 847-234-0205
(Parish Office - 201 E. Illinois Road, Lake Forest)
www.churchofstmary.com

Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations on your engagement and decision to be married at the Church of St. Mary. You have found someone you love and who loves you. You are looking forward to a lifetime of love and happiness. You are preparing to share with each other the *Sacrament of Marriage*. We hope that the preparation for your marriage will be a special time of joy for you as you prepare for your future together.

This packet of information is provided to help assist you in your marriage preparation. The following information has been prepared for you as an aid in helping to understand the expectations of the Archdiocese of Chicago as well as our Parish policy in regard to the details of your wedding preparations.

Marriage for Christians is a sacramental celebration – a sign of God’s love and fidelity for His people. As married people you accept the responsibility of being a sign of Christ’s love for His Church. The liturgy of your wedding therefore reflects the celebration of your faith. We would like to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage with all of its beauty and splendor but more importantly, remembering the religious significance that it contains.

The celebration of the sacraments, marriage included, is rooted in listening to the Sacred Scriptures so that we can be nourished and strengthened by God’s word. We always celebrate the sacraments as a community. We gather our sisters and brothers in faith and ask for their prayerful support. These celebrations are incomplete unless they are filled with song, prayerful gestures and silence in which we hear the voice of God in our lives.

The Parish Priest or Deacon will assist you with the details of your marriage preparation.

As you begin to make your marriage arrangements, you will need to consider the following in your preparation for your wedding at the Church of St. Mary.

Fr. Michael Nacius – Pastor

Fr. Radley Alcantara – Associate Pastor



MARRIAGE PREPARATION STEPS

Schedule an Introductory Meeting with Your Priest or Deacon

Couples should contact the Church of St. Mary Parish Office, 847-234-0205, and speak to a Priest or Deacon as soon as they become engaged, but no less than four months before their planned wedding day. No date should be set (especially in reserving a reception venue) for your wedding until you have spoken to a Priest or Deacon. Only the Priest or Deacon can confirm the date and time. This way you will not be disappointed if the church has been previously reserved for another couple preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage at St. Mary's. *It is not possible to set a date for a wedding if either of you are pursuing an annulment or have been previously married.* The final notification that the annulment has been granted must be received before a date can be finalized.

Non-Parishioners are welcome to be married at St. Mary's however, you, the couple, must first obtain a letter of permission from your parish allowing you to be married at St. Mary's.

Marriages at St. Mary's are celebrated at the following times:

FRIDAY: 5:00 PM
SATURDAY: 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM

Rehearsals at St. Mary's take place the day before your wedding usually on Thursday or Friday.

Attend a Marriage Preparation Class (Pre-Cana)

As a Parish community, we are deeply interested in your marriage and not just your wedding. We feel a responsibility to be of as much help and support to you as we can. The Archdiocese also has given each Parish the responsibility to make sure that couples who plan to be married have attended a significant and meaningful marriage preparation program. The name "Pre-Cana" comes from the Wedding Feast at Cana, where Jesus performed His first public miracle, changing water into wine. Pre means before, so before your personal Wedding Feast at Cana, your own wedding day, we help you prepare for the sacrament and start on your journey to a happy, healthy, and holy lifelong marriage.

In order to explore the dimensions of the Sacrament of Marriage, the Priest or Deacon you contact will meet with you two or three times before your wedding. These sessions will be used to fill out the legal forms necessary for a Church marriage; to explore your understanding and expectations of marriage, to explore the Church's support for and commitment to your relationship, and to plan your wedding liturgy.

When you meet with the Priest or the Deacon, you will be encouraged to use the Catholic Couple Checkup which is an instrument used for marriage preparation. This Checkup is a helpful aid to study, understand and communicate openly about the many things that are important to your relationship. It is designed to help target the topics you need and want to talk about as a couple.

You can register and complete the Catholic Couple Checkup online through the Archdiocese Family Ministries Office at www.familyministries.org. Once you complete the Checkup, you can email a copy of your results to the Priest or Deacon working with you in preparing for your marriage.

The Archdiocese has set basic guidelines for marriage preparation which include the sessions with the Parish Priest or Deacon and attendance at an approved preparation program: Archdiocesan Pre-Cana, or Engaged Encounter. There are also special programs for Spanish speaking, inter-faith couples, and older couples or for those couples entering a second marriage.

Pre-Cana is a one-day class held on a Saturday and led by a trained married couple at a variety of parishes. Through short talks, sharing of the facilitators' own experiences', group exercises, and personal reflection, couples are guided through topics useful for a successful future marriage. Some of the topics presented are: the Sacrament of Marriage, couple prayer, family of origin, couple adjustment and growth, Catholic faith, natural family planning, conflict management, finances, and children.

Class starts at 9 AM and ends at 4:30 PM with a one hour lunch break. You will receive a certificate of attendance at the end of the day which fulfills the marriage preparation requirement in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

The fee for Pre-Cana is \$195 per couple. This covers the cost of the program, continental breakfast, handouts, workbooks, resources, and site rental.

If you are separated by distance and unable to attend a gathered Pre-Cana, you may get permission from your Priest or Deacon to take the class online at catholicmarriageprepclass.com.

We encourage you to make your reservation as soon as possible in order to avoid any last minute disappointment. Scheduling your conference early in your engagement helps in making thoughtful plans for your future life together. The reservation/information number for the Archdiocese's Pre-Cana office is (312) 534-8201. All information is available via the website, www.familyministries.org.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

At your initial meeting with a Priest or Deacon, basic information will be gathered to begin your wedding file. This file includes basic personal information, basic questions for the bride and groom for individual response and Sacramental Records which all will remain confidential.

Baptism Certificate and Confirmation Certificate - A certificated copy of your Baptism and Confirmation Certificate dated within the last six months is required as part of the preparatory process. Copies of originals are not permitted. These certificates can be obtained by calling the church in which you received these sacraments. Baptized non-Catholics must also present their certificate of Baptism.

Marriage License (Civil Requirement) – Couples being married in Lake County, IL must obtain an Illinois Marriage License from the Office of the County Clerk. The Marriage License must be obtained within sixty days prior to your wedding and cannot be obtained on the date of your wedding. Without a timely license, the Priest or Deacon cannot witness a marriage in Illinois. Your Marriage License must be presented to the parish office at least 2 weeks prior to the date of your wedding. Click below to see requirements for obtaining your license and hours of operation. <http://countyclerk.lakecountyil.gov/vitalrecords/pages/marriage-licenses.aspx>

Affidavits: - In most situations, two witness affidavits are required. The affidavits ask several questions and must be completed in the Parishes where the witnesses reside, and in the presence of a Priest or Deacon. Acceptable witnesses are people who have known you for a long time. Parents, brothers/sisters or good friends are best witness candidates. These forms are available from the Parish Priest or Deacon.

Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire – Will be filled out by the Priest or Deacon when you meet with them.

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING LITURGY

Meeting with the Priest or Deacon - The Priest or Deacon will primarily plan your wedding liturgy with you along with the Director of Music. The Priest/Deacon will give you a booklet titled “Together for Life,” which is an excellent source and contains guidelines for planning Catholic weddings that are liturgically appropriate, and walks you through the process. The Priest or Deacon working with you will help plan the wedding by offering a variety of options for the liturgy.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATION

If you choose to have a wedding Mass or a wedding ceremony, there are numerous decisions that you can make. You may choose the songs, prayers, readings and elements of the ritual. You will be advised about these options. You are encouraged to become involved in the planning of the ceremony to the extent you desire.

It is expected that the entire wedding party join the bride and groom in the wedding procession. Attendants will be seated in the front pew.

Since liturgy is to reach the hearts and minds of all the people present at your marriage, your choice of music and other aspects of the ceremony need to be planned accordingly.

The wedding party is expected to be on time for both the rehearsal and the wedding. A rehearsal for the “entire wedding party” is required. The time should be arranged with the officiating Priest or Deacon.

Our parish priests or deacons generally perform all marriages for our parishioners. Visiting clergy are welcome to witness the marriage with pastoral permission and delegation. The visiting clergy should assist the couple in preparing their liturgy. He should also direct the rehearsal. However, the parish Priest or Deacon may complete the required paperwork if the visiting clergy is unable to do so.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE LITURGY

Should our marriage take place at a Mass or a Ceremony/Liturgy of the Word?

First, let’s understand the difference. The celebration of the Mass includes the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

When a wedding is celebrated at Mass, the Rite of Marriage takes place after the homily and before the Prayer of the Faithful. When a wedding Ceremony/Liturgy of the Word takes place, it is celebrated in a Liturgy of the Word in which the Rite of Marriage takes place after the homily and before the Prayer of the Faithful. The ceremony concludes with prayers and a blessing.

You should make your decision in consultation with the Priest or Deacon who is assisting in the preparation of your marriage. You may want to consider the following:

What is *our* relationship to the Sunday Eucharist? Are *we* faithful to the Church’s Sunday prayer? Have *we* been away from the sacraments? If so, have we committed ourselves to returning? In light of your answers to these questions: Is Mass or a Ceremony/Liturgy of the Word the more appropriate context for the celebration of your marriage? If one of you is not in communion with the Roman Catholic Church (and so will be unable to share Holy Communion if the wedding is celebrated during Mass), you may want to consider what this means. Do you want to include something in your wedding day that only one of you will be able to take part? Who will your guests be? Is the celebration of the Eucharist the best way to help them be with you and pray with you at your wedding? If many of your guests are from outside the Catholic community, you may want to consider a wedding Ceremony/Liturgy of the Word.

Some people seem to think that a couple is not really married unless the wedding takes place at a Mass. This is simply not true. Be open and honest with the Priest or Deacon with whom you are preparing your wedding and make the decision that will provide the best context for your prayer and celebration.

Who decides what will happen at our wedding?

A wedding, like any sacrament the Church celebrates, is a public celebration. It is celebrated both for the particular person or persons receiving the sacrament and in the context of the Parish community.

We encourage full, active participation of all those assembled. This includes making sure the readings are proclaimed for all to hear clearly, the music is familiar to those assembled, and the entire liturgy is respectful, dignified and reverent.

That is the starting point of all wedding celebration planning. As you join in the regular prayer on Sunday, you will begin to notice music you prefer, the way certain readings are proclaimed and the variety of available prayer texts.

As you reflect upon these different aspects of the liturgy, you will begin to formulate in your own minds what you would like to have your wedding look and feel like. Once this begins to happen, you are ready to begin consideration of the particulars of your own wedding celebration.

Are most of those assembled going to be from the Catholic tradition, or are many from other Christian or non-Christian traditions?

Because most of those assembled are your guests, it is very important that they feel comfortable in joining in the prayer of this joyous occasion. You may want to include touches from another tradition if a sizeable number of your guests are from that tradition. If one of you is from another faith tradition, you may want to have your own Minister present at your celebration. We welcome the participation of your Minister and would like to welcome him or her.

Will those assembled need a worship aid in order to best join in the prayer?

Some couples find it helpful to provide a booklet outlining the order of service. Some couples also prefer to place all the musical responses for the congregation in the booklet.

If you choose to provide a worship aid for your guests, please remember that copyright notices are required for the printing of most music and texts for the participation of the assembly. Check with the Director of Music for more information on this part of your program preparation. It is relatively easy to produce something quite reasonable without great expense.

MARRIAGES OF MIXED RELIGIONS

There are options for the celebration of marriage between couples of different faiths. The ceremony may take place in the church of the non-Catholic provided that permission is obtained from the Archbishop and the Protestant Minister or Pastor prior to the wedding. If you are entering into such a marriage, the Priest will talk to you about Ecumenical guidelines. The Catholic is expected to remain true to the faith and share it with their children by having them Baptized and raised Catholic. For interfaith marriages celebrated in the Catholic Church, a wedding ceremony is suggested. For marriages where one party is not baptized, a wedding ceremony is required.

MUSIC

When we celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage, we celebrate a faith union of the wedding couple and the Parish community, a replica of the bonds of unity that exist between Jesus and His people. A wedding is the bridal couple's personal act of faith in God, made in and to the Church, the faith community. "Personal" in this context does not mean "private", as in the sense of intimate or exclusive. Marriage in the Church is always a public act of the Church, a commonly recognized and officially approved expression of the realities the ceremonies symbolize and express. Marriage is the acceptance of a vocation, a call, a witness to Christian living and loving. It is this that we celebrate.

With this in mind, music plays an important role in the celebration of the liturgy. All music chosen must coincide with the liturgy which expresses the Christian nature of love, faith and marriage. Generally, secular music is not acceptable. All arrangements for music must be made with Mr. John Chapman the Director of Music. He can be contacted at (847) 582-2520. It is his responsibility to suggest music, to approve all music and texts of music to be used, as well as to determine the appropriateness and suitability of its use for worship.

Other instrumentalists, string players, brass, hand bells, etc., are available upon request made to the Director of Music. Organists and instrumentalist's fees should be discussed with the Director of Music.

A cantor or soloist is required for weddings to lead the congregation in singing.

Singers for the wedding should be experience vocally and knowledgeable of the liturgy and music for Catholic worship. There are professional singers, who make themselves available for our Parish weddings as soloist, cantor or leader of song. Their roles, their availability, and their fees should be discussed with the Director of Music.

Musicians for the weddings need not be present at the rehearsal. Their preparation is coordinated directly with the Director of Music in advance of the wedding and in advance of the wedding rehearsal.



CHURCH OF ST. MARY WEDDING MINISTRY

The primary mission of this ministry is to assist our Priests, Deacons and visiting clergy at the wedding rehearsal and on the day of your wedding, and to offer assistance to the wedding couple and their families as needed. The Wedding Ministers are a group of trained volunteers

Six weeks ahead of your wedding one of the coordinators from St. Mary's Wedding Ministry will contact the bride and introduce/review the details of the Wedding Ministry and answer questions, and email the Wedding Ministry form to the bride and groom. When the form is returned prior to the wedding, a copy is forwarded to the Wedding Ministry coordinators and to the Priest or Deacon. The coordinator will also answer any questions about programs or any non-ceremony questions.

At the rehearsal, Wedding Minister Coordinators greet the couple, bridal party members, and families and following the lead of the Priest or Deacon, coordinate the wedding procession rehearsal.

On the day of the wedding, they escort the bride and her attendants to the bride's room, pin on boutonnieres and distribute flowers, and line-up the procession. Then, in coordination with the Music Director, they set in motion the bridal procession. They then remain during the ceremony to handle any issues that might arise and in case of an emergency they are there to assist the guests, the Priest or the Deacon.

Please contact CeCee Reagan our Wedding Ministry Coordinator at ceceereagan@gmail.com for questions at any time during your wedding preparation.



FLORISTS*

Arrangements for flowers, runner, candelabra and Unity candles are to be made by the bride and groom with their own florist. Florists are expected to respect church property in setting up their arrangements. They are expected to pick up their items used for the ceremony immediately after the wedding is ended. We are not responsible for items left in the church. If candelabra are used, we ask that drip cloths or clear plastic be used to protect the flooring in the sanctuary. Candles may **NOT** be used along aisles due to the possible danger.

No confetti, rice, birdseed, rose petals and other objects are allowed inside or outside of the church as well as balloons, doves, or butterflies. Sparklers and fireworks are also not allowed due to city ordinance. Bubbles or bells are allowed.

Pew attachment, i.e., bows, flowers, etc., must be applied in the manner which will not damage the wood. Therefore, metal attachments must be vinyl coated. Adhesive tape and wire are not allowed. There are 19 rows of pews.

At certain times seasonal flowers will already be in the church. You may add additional arrangements to them, but the florist is not to remove or relocate the seasonal flowers.

If you plan on using an aisle runner, our main church aisle is approximately 73 feet long. Runners must be installed by the Florist.

Florists should check in with the Parish Office, 847-234-0205, on the availability of the church with regard to a set-up time.

*(See separate Florist sheets)



PHOTOGRAPHERS & VIDEOGRAPHERS*

We permit a pictorial record of your marriage, but special lights and photoflash bulbs cannot be used. Videotaping of the wedding is permitted. Your photographer should see the Priest, Deacon or member of St. Mary's Wedding Ministry before the wedding to determine what is and what is not allowed during the wedding. *The photographer **is not** allowed in the Sanctuary and should never stop the bridal party walking up or down the aisle.* Discuss with the photographer just what they plan to do and offer some suggestions yourself. Couples need to be aware that the time for pictures will be reduced if the wedding fails to start on time. Pictures need to be concluded by 4:15 PM at the latest (for 3:00 pm weddings on Saturday as we celebrate Mass each Saturday at 5:00 PM). *(See separate Photographers sheets)

ALTAR SERVERS

The Parish will assign two servers for each wedding. They will help set-up, serve, and clean-up for the wedding. If there is a special request of altar servers, please contact the Parish Office. If you have a relative from another Parish that you would like to serve the wedding, please notify the Priest and make arrangements with him. It is customary to offer the servers a stipend of your choosing, usually around \$10-\$20 for each server.

ALCOHOL & TOBACCO

Alcoholic beverages of any kind are inappropriate for a Church wedding and are not allowed in the church, sacristy or anywhere on our campus before, during or after a rehearsal and wedding. These beverages are also not allowed in and around the limousine and include champagne, beer, wine and illegal drugs. Infractions of this nature may result in the cancellation of the wedding.

Additionally, no bride or groom may arrive for the ceremony under the influence of any substance and be permitted to marry. Smoking and chewing gum are prohibited in the church building. Accepted norms of Church etiquette must prevail at all times.

LIMOUSINES, COACHES & BUSES

We ask that these vehicles used for the bridal party be parked in the parking lot and not in front of church.

CHURCH FEES

It is customary to make an offering to the church on the occasion of the celebration of marriage. This offering is for the cost associated with the operation of the church building and the salaries of the office staff members who assist in scheduling and routine paperwork associated with your wedding. Keep in mind the total cost of your wedding. A minimum offering of \$500.00 is requested for Parishioners celebrating their marriage at St. Mary's. The Church fee for non-parishioners is to be discussed with the Pastor. If you are able to give more than the suggested offering, it would be appreciated. We ask that you present your check, along with your Marriage License at least two weeks prior to your wedding. This offering must be made to the Parish regardless of whether or not a visiting Priest will be celebrating the marriage.

You may want to make a separate offering to the Priest or Deacon who has helped you prepare for your wedding. Any fee for a visiting Priest or Deacon is mutually agreed upon by them and the bridal couple and not part of the church fee.

All checks for church fees are to be made out to ***Church of St. Mary***

GIFTS TO CHARITY

While preparing for your wedding and your life together, you are aware of the many blessings in your life: blessings of faith, health, family, love, friendship and many other blessings. In gratitude to God for all He has done and is doing for you, you are encouraged to make a donation to a charity of your choice as an act of love and generosity to assist people in need. There are many wonderful groups and agencies that help people in need in our own community as well as around the world. The Priest or Deacon working with you would be happy to give you some ideas as to where you can make a donation.



AND FINALLY

The Parish community is happy and eager to serve you as you prepare for marriage. Your cooperation in attending programs, keeping appointments and obtaining documents in a timely manner is expected. Days and weeks go by quickly. Churches, in addition to printers and caterers, all need time to help make the wedding a wonderful celebration of love. If you delay in the beginning, you may run into disappointments and problems as the days dwindle down to a precious few.

There is excitement and tension, even with careful planning. Without planning, insignificant things can lead to crises. Sometimes individuals experience doubts or extraordinary family tension. Maybe we can provide some objective counsel. Be sure to take time, keep calm, and plan some regular time together to be with one another, apart from the planning for the wedding. Taking some time in prayer at home or in the Parish Church might help to provide some refreshment and be a precious reminder of where your priorities are... just what this is all about. Please let us know if we can be of any help.

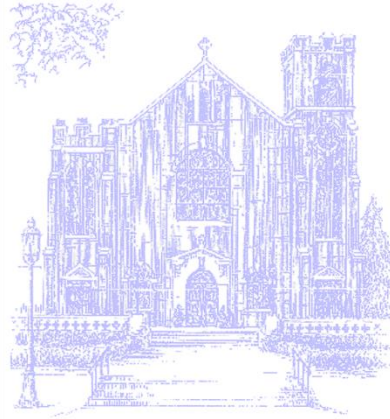
God bless you and your future happiness, love and growth as a couple. Know that the Church is here for you, not only before and on the day of the wedding, but always in the years ahead.

We look forward to sharing this time of celebration and preparation with you. We are very grateful that you have chosen to be married at St. Mary's and we will try to help you in any way possible. Please feel free to call us at any time (847) 234-0205 if you have any questions that need to be answered.

Peace,

The Parish Staff of the Church of St. Mary





Presiding Priest/Deacon _____

Date/Time of Marriage _____

Date/Time of Rehearsal _____

CHECK LIST

Marriage License _____

Paperwork:

Baptismal Certificate _____

Confirmation Certificate _____

Pre-Cana Certificate _____

Gratuities:

Church Fee _____

Priest/Deacon _____

Altar Servers (2) _____

Organist Fee _____

Soloist/Musician _____

St. Mary's Guidelines for Videographers

- ◆Videographers may record the ceremony from the front corner of the church on the "Groom's side."
- ◆They may not record the ceremony from either the sanctuary (marble floor area) or the choir loft.
- ◆They are able to move about the church provided that they do not distract from the ceremony itself.
- ◆Please do not place/tape microphones anywhere. Only a wireless mic on the groom will be allowed.
- ◆All the rules stated for the photographer will apply to the videographer as well.
- ◆Videographers are asked to check in with a member of the Wedding Ministry prior to the ceremony.

[Please give this sheet to your videographer]

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- ◆ If candelabra are used, we ask that drip cloths or clear plastic be used to protect the flooring in the sanctuary. Candles may NOT be used along aisles due to the possible danger. Because they can be bumped and knocked over or catch someone's clothing on fire, they may not be in the aisles at all.

- ◆ Pew attachments, i.e. bows, flowers, etc., must be applied in a manner which will not damage the wood. Therefore, metal attachments must be vinyl coated. Adhesive tape and wire are not allowed. No confetti, rice, birdseed, rose petals and other objects are allowed inside or outside of the church as well as balloons, doves, or butterflies. Sparklers and fireworks are also not allowed due to city ordinance. Bubbles or bells are allowed.

- ◆ At certain times seasonal flowers will already be in the church. You may add additional arrangements to them, but the florist is not to remove the seasonal flowers.

- ◆ If you plan on using an aisle runner, our main church aisle is approximately 73 feet long. Another measurement that might be helpful to note is the measurement for a "pre-set" runner. This is 60 feet. (it only goes to the back of the last pew and is secured with pins and then blocked off for seating of guests) Many florists recommend pre-set since it eliminates the pulling of the runner which can occasionally go astray. We ask that the runner be picked up immediately after the ceremony.

- ◆ Florist are not to move church items. (e.g. candlesticks)

- ◆ Florists should check in with the church office on the availability of the church with regard to a set-up time.

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