

Introduction

You are about to celebrate one of the most important and beautiful events of your life. We at St. Luke's want your experience, as a member of our community, to be a special time of joy that you will always remember with happiness. We want you to know that we are here to help you in any way that we can with the personal preparation necessary for such a step, and the sacramental and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.

We have prepared this wedding booklet to help you in the planning of your celebration and have included guidelines concerning the sacrament itself, the use of the church, decorations, music, and the various facilities and services available.

Please take time to look over all the information in this booklet. If there are questions you have that are not answered by it, please feel free to contact your assigned Wedding Coordinating Team Member, our office of Liturgy, or the Deacon or Priest with whom you are consulting.

All of us at St. Luke's want your wedding day to be very special and will do whatever we can to assist you in your preparations.

The following Staff and Volunteers are ready to assist you at any time:

ST. LUKE'S WEDDING TEAM:

Patti Nanni (Coordinator) 281-484-0342

PARISH STAFF:

Rev. James Burkart (Pastor) - 281-481-6816 ext. 222

Rev. Thomas Puthusseril (Parochial Vicar) - 281-481-6816 ext. 223

Deacon Al Birsinger - 281-992-4625

Deacon Reinaldo Egusquiza - 281-484-4384

Deacon Jim Sharpless - 281-481-0731

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Marriage Guidelines

THE REQUIREMENT OF BEING A MEMBER

In seeking to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage at St. Luke's, at least one member of the couple and/or their family must be a registered member of the parish celebrating the Eucharist here regularly, and, hopefully, involved in the support of the ministries of the community through the sharing of their time talent and treasure.

THE ASPECTS OF CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Catholics believe that Christian marriage is a union of life and love between a man and a woman in the community of the people of God, the Church, and is an indissoluble covenant that they enter into in faith before God and his people. In this Sacrament, they become a sacred and living sign to the whole Church of the presence of God's love among us and how He loves us as His own family. As they work their way through the struggles of life, they witness to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit at work in all our lives. Their love is a sacred symbol of the love and union of Christ and the Church, His people, and is a fountain of love to the whole community.

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

The covenant of marriage requires the most serious considerations and fore-thought of the couple. It must be accompanied by the couple's complete freedom to enter into it, sufficient understanding and maturity to make such a commitment in faith, and the acceptance of the responsibilities that such a covenant carries. This includes the intention to be husband and wife for life, caring for new lives through procreation, and the example and source of love they are to be to the whole Church.

At least one member of the couple must be a member of the Catholic Church in good standing. Both members should have no situations in their lives which could constitute an impediment to marriage according to the laws of the Church. The Deacon or Priest preparing the couple for marriage will go into this with them, explaining what this means, and help them resolve, if possible, any difficulties or impediments that may be present.

A Catholic may marry someone who is not a member of the Catholic Church. This requires the permission of the Bishop of the Diocese. This permission requires two promises from the Catholic party:

1. That he/she intends to continue to live his/her faith as a Catholic.
2. That he/she will do everything in his/her power to see to it that all children born of the marriage are baptized and reared in the Catholic Faith.

These two promises are asked in a concern for the gift of faith that God has given the Catholic party, and a concern that the opportunity for faith in Christ and His salvation not be withheld from his or her children. This is a very important issue and one that the couple should discuss seriously with each other. The priest or deacon they are seeing will be glad to help them in this matter should they so wish.

The couple must have the freedom to marry. This means that if either one has some impediment (obstacle) to that freedom, a resolution to that impediment must be found before the Church may witness the intended marriage. Such impediments include lack of Faith (not practicing the faith or having left the Church by a deliberate act); lack of sufficient maturity; lack of due discretion (rushing into marriage); mental or physical impairments; lack of intent of permanence; lack of intent of fidelity; having a scandalous public notoriety; or having been married previously. The most frequently encountered impediments usually concern maturity, due discretion, or a previous marriage.

Marriage guidelines for the Church AND for the State of Texas discourage marriage for persons under the age of 18. Couples must be at least 18 years of age and six months out of high-school before marriage preparation can be sought. The seriousness of such a commitment and the maturity required take time to develop. The final steps into adulthood that occur at graduation time and coming of legal age, including the responsibility for self and one's own life, are not things that can be rushed and are things that are critically necessary in light of the adjustments that must be made upon entering into marriage. Young couples between 18 and 21, or sometimes even later, may be asked to participate in special counseling to help them during this difficult time of life to make wise and well-informed decisions and commitments. Growth toward establishing a permanent union of life and love takes time and requires a person to be free to make decisions and develop values that will help him or her know what it takes to truly make such a commitment. Lack of such maturity can constitute an impediment or obstacle to the marriage covenant.

A person must be free to marry. This means that they must not be operating under the imposing influence of another, or out of force, fear or coercion. Marriages brought about by family pressures or the pressure of an unexpected pregnancy, or marriages of convenience or economic gain are not acceptable by the Church. Also, marriages in which one or both parties have a diminished mental capacity, either from mental illnesses or the influence of alcohol or drugs, are not acceptable. None of these constitute a valid reason for marriage in the Church because in these situations, the purpose and intent of the covenant is not fulfilled or the freedom of one or both of the parties is seriously diminished.

Freedom to marry also means that neither party has previously entered into marriage. The Catholic Church regards all marriages as permanent. For its own members, the Catholic Church recognizes as valid those marriages which have been entered into before a duly appointed representative of the Catholic Church and two witnesses, according to the rites and laws of the Church. Thus if either of the parties in a couple seeking marriage has ever made such a bond of marriage previously, it is necessary for him or her to consult a priest or deacon. They can assist in seeing if there was some impediment present that would render that bond invalid according to the requirements and definition of marriage as recognized by the Church.

The Marriage Preparation Process

The focus of marriage preparation is not centered on planning the wedding ceremony. This may be the main preoccupation of the bride, groom and their families, but the ceremony is only for a day, whereas the marriage is for life! The focus is preparation to live out a life-long covenant of love in Christ. Thus couples should make arrangements to begin marriage preparation six to twelve months prior to the proposed date of the wedding. The further ahead the better, as this allows time for thought, reflection, and discernment prior to all the hustle and bustle that arises in the last month or two ahead of the wedding. ***No wedding date will be set with the Parish Office until Phase I as detailed below has been completed.***

The marriage preparation process is divided into three phases:

PHASE I - ASSESSMENT

The couple should meet with the deacon or priest for an initial interview to become acquainted and go over the details of the process. After this meeting the deacon or priest will conduct a pre-marital inventory with the couple. This usually takes the form of a written set of statements which each reads separately and responds to by agreeing or disagreeing with the statements contained in it. The results will give an outline of the areas of strength in the couple's relationship, and the areas which might need attention. If at this time it becomes apparent that the couple has some particularly pressing needs, a plan of action can be determined to help the couple grow to the point of being able to make the necessary life long commitment.

PHASE II - PREPARATION

The preparation process usually takes the form of one of two programs that are available in the parish and from the diocese. One is the *Sponsor Couple* program and the other is the *Engaged Encounter Weekend*. The sponsor couple program is a series of meetings (4) with a married couple who have been trained in marriage preparation. These sessions are set up between the sponsor couple and the engaged couple at their mutual convenience in the home of the sponsor couple and consist of a series of exercises in which the engaged couple shares their answers and views with each other and the married couple on many issues involved in living out the commitment of marriage. The engaged encounter weekend covers most of the same topics but is conducted in a retreat setting over a weekend, where the couple, together with about 25 other couples, share in a series of talks, activities and exercises with trained married couples and a priest to explore the many aspects and needs of the marital commitment. Where extenuating circumstances exist that prevent the couple from attending either of these programs, special preparation agendas may be set up to meet those circumstances; the couple should contact the priest or deacon even further in advance for time to accommodate those special needs.

PHASE III - PLANNING

The wedding ceremony is a public celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage in which the Church witnesses the couple's commitment to each other and their giving of the sacramental covenant to each other. It also presents this union to the entire Church as a sign of the covenant of Christ with all His people, the church. The union of the two individuals *in one flesh* is a symbol of the unity of the whole church as one in the body of Christ. The ceremony follows the ritual of the Church for the celebration of this Sacrament. The deacon or priest will assist the couple in making appropriate selections for scripture readings, prayers, etc. which are part of the ceremony, and explain elements of the ceremony and assist in planning the events of it. The Director of Music and Liturgy will be available to help the couple in selecting appropriate music for the occasion and assist them in finding needed musicians and/or singers. It must be remembered that the wedding is not only the celebration of the couple but also of the whole Church and is a celebration of the ritual of the Sacrament of Marriage. Couples must keep this in mind when making plans. Adding events, activities, and music that is inappropriate to such a Sacred Rite and which may detract from or confuse its meaning must be avoided. In essence there are THREE participants in the wedding...the Bride; the Groom; and Christ with His people, the Church. All three must be considered in planning the ceremony. The Wedding Coordinating Team will be available to assist the couple and the priest or deacon in any way that is needed.

Scheduling the Wedding

At the very minimum, a couple should contact the Church six months prior to the desired wedding date and meet with the deacon or priest to begin the preparation process. A couple should never announce a date or begin making arrangements, especially those which will require monetary outlays (such as hall reservations, caterers, invitations), before having gone through the initial Assessment Phase of the preparation process. No firm date may be set with the Church until this phase is completed. Further, the couple should realize that in a large suburban parish there are many celebrations that people seek to schedule which might conflict with the date they have in mind and should be prepared to be flexible.

TIMES FOR WEDDINGS

Weddings may be scheduled in the Church on Saturdays at 10:00 a.m., 12 noon, and 2:00 p.m. Marriage *outside of Mass* may be celebrated on Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m. On Saturday afternoons, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated in the Church from 4:00 p.m. till 5:00 p.m., and the Saturday Vigil Mass for Sunday begins at 5:30 p.m. Thus the Church is unavailable for weddings during those times. Weddings are rarely held on Sundays for several reasons: the usual schedule of Sunday Masses and the activities that are involved with them take up much of the day; many times other devotions and prayer groups meet on Sundays in the afternoon and evening; and the solemnity of Sunday takes precedence over all other celebrations. If a couple decides to have a wedding on Sunday, the Scripture readings and prayers of the Sunday must be used in the liturgy and not those that are germane to weddings.

There are certain times of the year that weddings are not to be scheduled, and others wherein they are discouraged. NO wedding masses may be scheduled on the Sundays of Advent and Lent, Easter Sunday through the weekend following, on solemnities, on the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day), on Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week (the week before Easter). During the Easter octave (the eight days that follow Easter Sunday), weddings outside Mass only may be celebrated, and you must use the readings and prayers of the day, not those of the wedding liturgy. Weddings are strongly discouraged during the Lenten Season (the time from Ash Wednesday to Holy Thursday). Lent is a somber time of penance and preparation for Easter, and during such a penitential season, having festive celebrations is inappropriate and violates the spirit of the season. For very good pastoral reasons a wedding *may* be scheduled during Lent, but the celebration should be kept subdued with a minimum of festivity and very few if any decorations in the Church. Weddings will not usually be scheduled on national holidays or special Holy Days such as Christmas, New Years, Easter, Thanksgiving, The 4th of July, etc. Too many other activities could conflict.

Weddings may be scheduled *ONLY* in the Church or its chapel. The Church building represents the temple of God, His house among His people wherein sacrifice is offered, and to which the people are called to assemble and give Him praise. It is a Sacred place and as such is the proper place for the communal celebrations of all the Sacraments. The seriousness of the regard for the House of God as the assembly place for God's people and its role in the lives of the members of the community is greatly stressed by the Catholic Church. Thus garden weddings, weddings in parks and gazebos, and other such places, are forbidden. To have such as wedding, very serious and extenuating circumstances must prevail and permission directly from the Bishop must be obtained by the couple in the form of a written request from them which delineates those reasons. The Bishop will then consider the request, and may or may not grant such permission.

Wedding Personnel

THE BRIDE, GROOM AND ASSEMBLY

Understanding the importance for participation of the wedding party and the assembly, (your family and friends who have come to share the special occasion with you) is critical in your preparation of the wedding liturgy. You are not there to have something done 'to you', and they are not an audience. All are present to celebrate **with you**. Through your own active participation, you encourage the assembly to sing and respond to the acclamations, and especially to recite the prayers of the liturgy. The bride and groom are the primary ministers of the celebration and should also be conscious of hospitality to people as they arrive. Have someone there to greet and welcome everyone, someone who can promote a relaxed and happy mood. A worship aide is another way of helping everyone to be comfortable and able to participate, especially when many guests are not Catholic, and is strongly encouraged. It should be more than personal information. It should have an order of the service that outlines the various prayers and songs in which they will be invited to participate. Scripture readings should not be included. The Liturgy/Music Director can assist you in putting together an appropriate worship aide. The tradition of people seated on the groom's side or the bride's side is not necessary. Have your ushers (ministers of hospitality) invite the people to sit wherever and with whomever they wish. It is important to realize that the two of you are giving yourself to each other in the covenant of love. As primary ministers of this sacrament, the two of you proclaim and witness God's love. Your own rigorous participation will contribute greatly to the prayer experience of the assembly.

THE PRESIDER

The priest or deacon who assisted the couple in their preparation, and who will be the celebrant of the ceremony, is solely in charge of all affairs concerning the preparation and wedding ceremony. All formal plans and arrangements must be approved by him or those whom he appoints. Where the celebrant may be a visiting clergyman, the arrangements for the ceremony are made through the priest or deacon preparing the couple. The visiting clergyman may work together with him regarding the celebration and its aspects. Occasionally, in a marriage where the parties are of different faiths, permission is readily granted for a minister of a different faith to participate in the ceremony by offering prayers, reflections, or blessings for the couple; additional permissions may be granted for such a minister to conduct the exchange of vows as the prime witness in the name of the Church. These permissions are obtained from the Bishop in writing during the preparation phase of the wedding planning. Sufficient time for this to be done should be allowed by the couple. Once in awhile, a couple may petition the bishop to allow their wedding to take place in a church of another denomination where extenuating circumstances may be present, such as family harmony or traditions. The celebrant may be a priest or deacon, or the minister of that church may be designated by the Bishop to witness the wedding in the name of the Catholic Church.

THE WEDDING TEAMS

Teams have been established in our parish to assist wedding couples and extend a hand of hospitality to you, your family and friends and guests. The team members will be available to you to answer questions about the parish facilities, guidelines for marriage in the Church, and other questions that may arise. The members of this team are *not* wedding coordinators who assist you in planning flowers, catering, etc. They will be present at the rehearsal and the Wedding to assist the couple and the priest or deacon.

OTHER MINISTERS

The couple may wish to invite friends and family members to participate in the wedding liturgy as proclaimers of the Word, ministers of hospitality, or extra-ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Care should be given to the selection of these ministers to ensure that the person being called upon is up to the task being asked of them. Those chosen to proclaim God's holy word must be comfortable reading in front of a large group of people and be willing to put in the time required for effective proclamation through practice and prayer. Ushers and ministers of hospitality should be friendly and outgoing. Special guidelines exist for those who may be chosen to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion. The Director of Liturgy, the priest, or deacon can assist you in making sure they meet the requirements, along with other questions you have about obtaining the necessary ministers for the celebration.

FLORISTS & FLOWERS

The use of flowers and other decorations greatly enhance a wedding by adding beauty to the event and inspiring those present. The environment of the Church must be treated with the reverence and respect due such a sacred place. Parish regulations for decorations are designed to preserve the integrity and character of the Church as a Sacred Place, and to protect the facilities themselves. The priest or deacon preparing the couple, as well as the Wedding Coordinating Team members, and the Director of Liturgy and Music are available to couples who have questions concerning the selection of decorations, flowers, etc. that would be deemed appropriate or inappropriate.

Some guidelines that may help in selecting decorations and floral displays include: No decoration should be used that would obstruct a clear view of the Altar, the Pulpit, and worship symbols used in the Sanctuary. Also, the ornaments and appointments of the sanctuary, including Seasonal hangings, banners, and decorations, are part of the liturgical seasonal environment of the church and may not be altered.

Prohibited is any activity that would damage the building or its furnishings such as tacks or nails driven into pews, tape and adhesives that would remove paint, varnish or finishes or leave a sticky residue, and clamps that are not properly padded and would scar finishes. If extra candles are desired they should be of a drip-less variety to avoid wax stains on carpets and upholstery.

Also prohibited is the use of a unity candle. In the Catholic liturgy, the light of the candle is always Christ, not individuals. At baptism a candle is lit from the Paschal Candle (the Christ candle) and handed to the person who was baptized (or the family) and told, "Receive the Light of Christ." At the Easter Vigil when the fire and the Paschal candle are blessed the people receive the Light of Christ, "a flame divided but undimmed." Thus the unity candle (a secular phenomenon created only in the last 30 years or so) in the context of a Church service is not only redundant; it works against the symbolism of the rite.

The amount of time the florist will have to decorate will be dictated by the schedule of the church on the wedding day. The florist or bride should consult the Director of Liturgy to inquire about the amount of time that can be allowed. Any decorations they erected should be removed immediately after the wedding due to the use of the Church for other celebrations. All flowers and arrangements should be removed, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director of Liturgy. We have, for your convenience, enclosed a packet of guidelines you may give to your florist to assist them in decorating the church appropriately.

Artificial flowers or plants are not permitted when adorning the Church. The environment of the church should reflect the authenticity of ourselves and the God we worship, and should never be "fake."

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS

Since a wedding is such a special and once-in-a-lifetime event, the couple and their family and friends may wish to have it recorded in photographs or on tape. Taking pictures and video taping during the ceremony is not forbidden. However, the Wedding Ceremony is a solemn religious Celebration of the Sacrament and should not be disturbed, interrupted or detracted from by obtrusive equipment and personnel. Flash pictures should be avoided during the ceremony. Rather, pictures using available light should be taken. Also photographers and videographers should remain as unobtrusive as possible and not be continually wandering about the sanctuary and church. They should conduct themselves in a quiet and reverent manner so as not to draw attention away from the celebration at hand.

Facilities

Two areas of the Church are available for weddings. The main body of the church seats about 700 people and has a grand piano and pipe organ and sound amplification and mixing equipment. There is also a music area where other musicians may be accommodated. If a couple is having a small wedding and would prefer a more intimate setting, there is a chapel attached to the main body of the church, which has a piano for music. It will seat about 50 people.

Air Conditioning or Heating will be provided for both the celebration and the rehearsal. The Wedding Coordinating Team members will be on hand to open and set up the church, its lights and equipment, and make sure the facilities are at a comfortable temperature.

There is a *Bride's Dressing Room* at the back of the church. It has a bathroom in it as well as mirrors. However, it is not large. So it is advised that it be used primarily by the bride. Bride's maids should arrive dressed for the wedding.

Our parish is equipped with facilities for receptions and dances. Our parish hall (*Social Hall*) is located behind the Church and contains a stage, a kitchen, and restroom facilities. Reasonable rental rates have been established to make this a convenient place for receptions. Couples may wish to tour these facilities with their Wedding Coordinating Team members. Reservations and rental rates may be obtained through our parish office. Any questions about the facilities should be directed to the Wedding Coordinating Team.

Some of the rules regarding our facilities & weddings include:

No rice, birdseed, flower petals, confetti, or balloons are to be used at the wedding. This is for the protection of the couple and their guests, the birds around the church, and the ease of clean-up after the celebration. Couples should please inform their guests of this request.

Smoking is permitted outside the church only; public ashtrays are present at the entrance. Chewing gum is also most inappropriate in the church and may be disposed of in the receptacles under the ashtrays at the entrances of the church.

No alcoholic beverages or food are permitted in the church building, including before the wedding or at the rehearsal.

Because there are often other events that follow weddings, all wedding decorations, flower boxes, clothes and hangars, and other items should be removed as quickly as possible after the wedding. The Wedding Coordinating Team members will be available to assist couples with this also.

Wedding Music

THE MUSIC

Music chosen for weddings should reflect the sacred and sacramental quality of the celebration and should therefore be of a sacred nature. There is an ample supply of extremely beautiful and appropriate Church Music for weddings. Romantic music, love songs, and other forms of music are more appropriately reserved to the wedding reception. Couples should also bear in mind that, by its nature, the wedding liturgy invites the active participation of those assembled. Planning of the Liturgy and Music should enable all present to feel welcome and to participate in the celebration.

The Director of Liturgy and Music will assist you in the selection of appropriate music for the liturgy, and can offer suggestions as to how to enable the assembly to participate in the liturgy as fully as possible. Couples should contact him to set up a meeting as soon as possible after their wedding date is scheduled. This allows ample time to secure the desired music and musicians.

Pre-recorded music (from CDs or tapes) is NEVER allowed at Liturgical celebrations. Like the environment, the music of the celebration should reflect the authenticity of ourselves and the God we worship. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

PERSONNEL

Couples who will be wed at St. Luke's MUST plan their music in coordination with the Director of Liturgy and Music. It is important to the integrity of the Catholic liturgy that the music be provided by those trained in the proper use of Liturgical Music. Our parish has been blessed with many talented musicians and singers who are available to provide music for the liturgies of the parish. Couples must use the services of musicians and singers from an approved list available from the Office of Liturgy and Music of the parish. Couples who are celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage within the Mass must use a Parish Cantor to lead the appropriate singing at mass. Guest vocalists and instrumentalists will be allowed to perform other incidental music such as during the prelude or a special song during the Rite of Marriage.

Depending upon availability, the parish can also assist in securing additional musical accompaniment such as trumpet, flute, violin, or other instruments.

The range of fees is:

Organist / Pianist	\$200
Vocalists	\$125
Trumpet / Flute/ or Other	\$125

Payment of fees MUST be made 2 weeks prior to the wedding date.

The Rehearsal & Wedding Day

THE REHEARSAL

The time of the rehearsal as well as that of the wedding must be reserved on the master church calendar in the Parish Office. This should be handled by your deacon or priest.

Those who should attend the wedding rehearsal include all those who will participate in any way in the ceremony, including the entire wedding party (bridesmaids & groomsmen), parents, ushers, readers, flower girls, ring bearers, and musicians. Participants should be informed of this responsibility to attend so as to know what to do and when. Because the church is very often booked for many events on any given day, it is very important that the couple instruct those attending the rehearsal to arrive at least 10 minutes before the scheduled time. **Members of the wedding party and guests should also be reminded of the sacredness of the Church building, and the dress and decorum appropriate for use of this space, even during the rehearsal.**

THE WEDDING DAY

Ushers should be at the church at least one hour before the wedding. Parents, family members and other special friends who need special seating should arrive about 45 minutes before the wedding. If there is anyone who needs special care because of physical difficulties, inform your Wedding Coordinating Team members ahead of time, so that appropriate arrangements may be made for them. Groomsmen should arrive already dressed for the wedding and meet in the Priest's sacristy where they may get their boutonniere and wait for the photographer. The bride and her attendants should arrive one hour before the wedding with make-up and hair done. Limited time and space prevents fully dressing here in the church. Brides and bridesmaids should not leave valuable personal possessions in the bride's room. Anyone may come in during the confusion of the wedding. The church does not assume responsibility for the safety for lost or stolen items. Afterward, all boxes, tissue, hangars, and other items must be removed from the premises. Food, beverages, and smoking are not permitted in the brides' room at any time.

Wedding apparel or other items will not be accepted for delivery to the church office. If a couple wishes deliveries to be made to the church, someone must be there to accept them and be responsible for them prior to the ceremony.

Bridal consultants, who assist couples, are welcome. However, the bridal consultant functions as a guest of the parish and is under the direction of the deacon or priest, the Wedding Coordinating Team, and the Director of Liturgy and music and must work in total cooperation with them.



Wedding Preparation Time-Line

6 TO 24 MONTHS AHEAD

Visit the church and consult the Priest or Deacon.
Determine your budget and what kind of wedding (formal, informal, etc.)
Choose your attendants.
Draw up your invitation list.
Shop for dresses, tuxedos, accessories, etc.
Interview photographers, florists, caterers, videographers, etc.
Determine your guest list.

4 TO 6 MONTHS AHEAD

After wedding date has been set, order invitations, personal stationary and note paper.
After the wedding date has been set, plan your reception.
Plan your honeymoon.
Make sure you are keeping up the required Marriage Preparation. Consult your priest or deacon to ensure you are up to date.

2 TO 4 MONTHS AHEAD

Plan accommodations for out-of-town guests.
Plan how to handle traffic, parking, etc.
Finalize your guest list and mail your invitations.
Schedule meeting with Music Director to plan music for the wedding.

1 TO 2 MONTHS AHEAD

Plan your rehearsal dinner.

2 TO 4 WEEKS AHEAD

Get your marriage license. (In the state of Texas, you must get married within 30 days of the date of the license, or it is no longer valid.)
Send your wedding announcement to the newspaper.
Plan seating for reception.
Contact the necessary offices for the bride to change name on Social Security Card, Drivers License, bank accounts, credit cards and obtain the necessary forms.
Take care of any last minute items.

1 WEEK AHEAD

Have final consultation with wedding personnel, confirm number of guests with caterer, etc.
Confirm rehearsal plans with clergy and attendants.
Bring the payment for the musicians to the Parish Office.