



Catholic Wedding Guide 2023

Our Lady of Hope Roman Catholic Church
Potomac Falls, Virginia

:

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Congratulations on your upcoming wedding. We at Our Lady of Hope look forward to celebrating your day. To get started please speak to Melisa Ryan. Melisa Ryan will assist you in the start / preparation in scheduling your day. If you're a member of the parish all we will need is a verification of your prior sacraments, both for the Bride and Groom. Following verification from Father Killian, our Pastor, or Father Willard, our Parochial Vicar, abilities to celebrate the wedding on the day selected. Once verified we have a \$300 refundable security deposit for scheduling your day.

If you're a visiting couple, and using your own celebrant, we need verification from the priest that they're willing and have knowledge of your wedding. This letter should be on official church letterhead sent to the attention: Melisa Ryan Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church.

Once the day is scheduled our Wedding Coordinator, Linda Zuccari, will reach out to you with further assistance. Again, we thank you for allowing us at Our Lady of Hope to be a part of your special day!

-God Bless

To reserve your date: All wedding dates must be contacted six months in advance of their intended date of the wedding ceremony.

1. Security Deposit:

\$300 check accompanied by Wedding Couple Info Sheet

Payable to: Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church Memo line: wedding deposit & date of wedding

Submit to: Parish Office Manager *Must be submitted prior to setting the date for the wedding.

2. Signed Acknowledgement Form:

Submit to the Parish Office Prior to setting the date for the wedding

3. Confirmation by celebrant

Priests from within the diocese may confirm by calling the Pastor Priests from another diocese must both call the pastor of OLOH and provide a letter of suitability

90 days prior to the wedding date the following must be provided:

1. Wedding license

Submit to: Parish Office Manager, **Three weeks prior to the date of the wedding.** The license should be in an envelope marked with the name of the celebrant.

2. Fee for flowers:

\$300 check Payable to: Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church Memo line: wedding flowers & date of wedding Submit to: Parish Office Manager

3. Donation:

Payable to: Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church Memo line: Wedding Offering & date of wedding

Submit to: Parish Office Manager

4. Stipend for Altar Servers

\$30 each (cash) submit to: Parish Office Manager, with wedding license

5. Fees for Musicians

Payable to: individual musicians coordinate with Director of Music Submit to: Director of Music

Fees: \$300 bench fee, Singer \$225, additional musician \$150 each

6. Wedding Ceremony Information

Submit to: Parish Wedding Coordinator (linda.s.zuccari@gmail.com)

All documents, fees, and donations must be provided to the Church **60 days before** the wedding can take place.

Our mailing address is:

46639 Algonkian Parkway Potomac Falls, VA 20165

Your Wedding

When asked about marriage, Jesus said, “Have you not read that at the beginning the Creator made them male and female and declared, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and the two shall become one’? Thus, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, let no man separate what God has joined.” (Matthew 19:3-7) Our Lord speaks of a beautiful, grace-filled unity between a husband and wife, built on a foundation of a permanent, faithful, and sacrificial love.

Therefore, the Diocese of Arlington strives to help couples have the best preparation for marriage possible.

The Catholic Church believes that marriage is a sacrament and an indissoluble union. The priests who administer the preparation programs will do their best to help an engaged couple enter wholeheartedly into this sacrament.

Marriage Preparation

The Diocese of Arlington requires that a couple contact a priest at least six months in advance of their intended date for the ceremony

Moreover, the bride or the groom, or their parents must be registered and active members of Our Lady of Hope Parish to begin marriage preparation. Non-parishioners who would like to celebrate their marriage at Our Lady of Hope should begin preparation by meeting with a priest or deacon in the parish where they are registered.

The couple will meet at least five times with the priest to discuss various aspects of married life. *A date may not be set until after the couple’s second meeting with the priest. This will usually follow the completion of the prenuptial investigation and the FOCCUS survey.* These sessions will cover not only the teachings of the Church and the spirituality of marriage, but also address issues of a more practical nature, like communication and finance. The couple will also attend a formal marriage preparation program.

Required Church Documents

For both the bride and the groom, the following Church documents must be provided to the priest:

Baptismal Certificate: For Catholics, a new copy of the Baptismal Certificate must be issued from the Church of Baptism no earlier than the date of the initial meeting with the priest. The certificate must include sacramental notations and the seal of the parish.

Confirmation Certificate: A copy of the original certificate is acceptable.

Certificate of Attendance from the formal marriage preparation program

Prenuptial Investigation: The priest will complete with the couple a short questionnaire, entitled The Prenuptial Investigation. This questionnaire elicits basic background information from the couple, but also asks questions to make sure there is no impediment to enter into marriage.

FOCCUS: The couple will answer an extensive survey entitled, “Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding, and Study.” This survey covers a broad range of areas, like religion, finance, communication, sexuality, and parenting. It is a helpful instrument for guiding discussions during sessions with the priest.

Affidavits of Freedom: The bride and the groom must each submit two Affidavits of Freedom. These forms should be completed preferably by relatives (especially parents) or others who have known the bride or groom since the age of 16. These affidavits attest that no impediment exists which would prevent the marriage from taking place. The witnesses must sign the affidavits in the presence of a priest, deacon, minister, or notary public.

Declaration of Nullity: If either party has been previously married, proof of a Declaration of Nullity must be supplied. If the prior spouse is deceased, a death certificate must be submitted.

Retreat: In addition to your preparations with the priest, couples must also attend one of the Diocesan-approved marriage education weekends. The priest you are working with will discuss these programs with you. Additional information may also be found in your Marriage Prep folder.

The Wedding Ceremony

The parish clergy of Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church are the regular witnesses for all marriages in the parish. However, other priests who are relatives or friends are welcome to assist or officiate at the wedding. If the couple would like to have a priest other than one of the parish clergy officiate, that priest must present a letter from his Bishop stating that he is in good standing. He also must be licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Such licensing may be obtained from any Circuit Courthouse. Any visiting priest must contact the pastor to confirm his intent to officiate before a date may be reserved.

For a couple of different religious backgrounds, a minister from another church is welcome to participate in the ceremony. However, this issue needs to be discussed with the priest before any invitation is made. If agreeable to all parties, the priest will contact the minister to invite him to participate and to discuss what parts each will have.

The Ceremony

A Nuptial Mass should be celebrated when both parties are practicing Catholics.

When a couple is of different religious backgrounds, the Rite of Marriage Outside of Mass is conducted. This Rite consists of the Liturgy of the Word (a selection of readings from Sacred Scripture), the statement of intention, the exchange of vows and rings, and the special nuptial blessings.

Lectors

Couples may have individuals serve as lectors. They must be Catholics who are comfortable with public speaking.

Wedding Rehearsal

If your wedding takes place on a Friday your rehearsal will be held on Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. If your wedding takes place on a Saturday your rehearsal will be held on Friday at 5:00 p.m.

Wedding Times

Weddings normally take place on Fridays at 4:00 p.m. & Saturdays at either 11:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. OLOH does not do Sunday weddings. Members of the wedding party should arrive at the church 45 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony. Once the wedding begins the doors will be locked from entry.

Wedding Attire

The couple and wedding party are asked to be properly attired upon arrival at the Church. While they may wait downstairs before the ceremony, there is no dressing room at the Church. The bride and bridesmaids may occupy the Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Room prior to the wedding ceremony.

Please note: All wedding attire must reflect the virtue of modesty and be appropriate to the respect due to God's house. The Brides and Bridesmaids dressed shall at no time have any bare shoulders, bare back or low cut front exposed. In addition, shorter than knee length dresses are not permitted. All dresses must be modest & conservative in nature. The Wedding Coordinator must approve the dress no later than **90 days** prior to the date of the ceremony. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in the postponement of the wedding ceremony or subjected to full cancellation.

(Weddings Capes are available upon request if the dress is strapless)

Flowers

Flower arrangements, consisting of roses and greenery, will be coordinated by Our Lady of Hope, and remain in the church after the wedding. The cost is \$300, which includes one arrangement for either side of the tabernacle reredos and one in front of the altar. You may choose between white, yellow, pink, or red roses. Once your choice has been made, please contact the Facility Manager, Alfonso Pena at 703-433-6566 or at apena@ourladyofhope.net. If more than one wedding is taking place on a certain day, we recommend that the couples contact each other and agree on a color for the roses. If there is difficulty reaching an agreement, or you do not make a request, the arrangements will be yellow.

Our Lady of Hope's preferred florist is Blooms Reston Floral. Naturally, you may choose any florist for your *other* floral needs.

For weddings at Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church, the additional regulations apply:

1. **Candelabra other than those provided by the Church are not permitted.**
2. **NO DECORATIONS, (e.g. pedestals, plants, drapery) are permitted in the sanctuary or the main body of the church. Couples are to make that clear to their wedding coordinator.**
3. **The “wedding candle” or “unity candle” is not part of the Marriage Rite and therefore is not permitted.**
4. **The use of flowers, petals, seed, confetti, or bubbles to be thrown, scattered or blown in or outside of the Church is not permitted. Any violation of this regulation will result in a forfeiting from the security deposit.**
5. **All boxes for corsages, or other trash, and the wedding runner (if used) must be removed at the end of the ceremony. Failure to do so will result in a fee taken from the security deposit.**
6. **No additional outside pew decorations are allowed**

Photography

All couples want to have pictures to remember this very important day in their lives. Pictures may be taken throughout the ceremony; however, use of a flash is at the discretion of the celebrant. The photographer is never permitted to enter into the sanctuary area.

For maintaining proper decorum in church, it is recommended that only the professional photographer take pictures during the ceremony.

After the ceremony, the photographer may take pictures for about 15 minutes. It is never permitted to move or rearrange church furnishings.

Videography

Filming of the ceremony is permitted. However, the person doing the filming should be discrete and as inconspicuous as possible, setting up the video equipment in a suitable place agreeable to the celebrant. The video equipment may not enter into the sanctuary area, and the use of a floodlight is not permitted.

** Please remind the photographer and/or videographer to dress appropriately, preferably in formal business attire. Polo shirts, jeans, etc. are not acceptable.*

Music

All music, instrumental and vocal, must be coordinated with the parish Director of Music and must comply with the regulations of the Diocese of Arlington. Only sacred music may be used for the liturgy. The couple should contact Mrs. Suzanne Yerks, the Director of Music, at least four months before the wedding for assistance with the wedding music. She may be reached at 703- 433-6567 or syerks@ourladyofhope.net. If the couple desires to have a singer or soloist

they will make arrangements through Mrs. Yerks. Mrs. Yerks will also discuss all fees for musicians, since they may vary according to the musician.

If the couple desires to use another musician, Mrs. Yerks must first give her approval. Since Mrs. Yerks will be coordinating music, a bench fee will be charged in these cases.

Altar Servers

Generally, the celebrant requires the assistance of one or two altar servers: one for a simple ceremony, and two for a Nuptial Mass. A \$30 cash stipend should be given to each server for his services. Stipends should be submitted to the priest 30 days in advance.

Wedding License

The couple must obtain a wedding license. (Circuit Court of Loudoun County, 703-777- 0270) The license is valid for 60 days. Please note that the wedding cannot take place without a valid license.

Church Fee

There is no fee associated with the sacrament of Marriage. However, it is customary for the couple to make a donation to the parish according to the following guidelines.

Parishioners: **\$800.00** This must be paid in full prior at least **60 days prior** to the date of the wedding. Checks may be made payable to “Our Lady of Hope”.

Non-Parishioners: For those who are not a member of Our Lady of Hope, there is a fixed offering is **\$1,500.00**. This must be paid in full prior at least **60 days prior** to the date of the wedding. Checks may be made payable to “Our Lady of Hope”.

Church Fee Break Down

Parishioners: \$800 [60 days] –Suggested Fee

Non-Parishioners: \$1500 [60 days] –Suggested Fee

Security Deposit: \$300 [Due Prior to setting the date]

Flowers: \$300 [60 days]

Bench Music Fee: \$300 Bench [60 days]

Singer: \$225 [60 days]

Additional Musician: \$150 each.[60 days]

Altar Servers: \$30 each in cash in separate envelopes [Same day]

Security Deposit

Security Deposit: A **\$300** security deposit is also required **prior to confirmation** of your requested date. This deposit amount will be deposited upon receipt and returned within three weeks after the ceremony. However, costs for disposal of trash left behind (e.g. Flower boxes) or repair of damage to church property will be deducted from this deposit fee. This security deposit does not limit damages.

The Rehearsal

The rehearsal generally takes place the night before the wedding ceremony; however for Friday weddings your rehearsal takes place on Wednesday at 5:00 pm. The entire wedding party is asked to be on time. Please alert members of the wedding party about the traffic congestion in the Washington area. Since a time limit is set for each rehearsal, a substantial delay could necessitate the canceling of the rehearsal.

Acknowledgement

We have received a copy of the Wedding Policy document "Your Wedding" outlining the policies and requirements for a wedding at Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church. We have read and understand the policies contained in the document and agree to abide by them. We further understand that failure to do so may result in the postponement and/or cancellation of the wedding and/or forfeiture of the security deposit.

Date: _____ Requested Wedding _____

Bride's Signature

Printed Name

Date

Groom's Signature

Printed Name

Date

For Office Use Only **DOCUMENT MUST BE RETURNED SAME DAY AS DEPOSIT**

Acknowledgement : _____ Security Deposit: _____

Celebrant: _____