



## The Sacrament of Marriage

Beloved in the Lord,

You have chosen to be married in the Orthodox Church. In the Orthodox wedding ceremony a man and a woman are joined as a couple through Christ. At the same time they are also joined to the community in which they are married. This means that you should get to know the Church that you are being married in, since it will be like a new family and a second home. Weddings require a good deal of preparation - such as preparing invitations, booking a caterer etc. At the same time it is greatly important to prepare spiritually for this mystery, the union of two people in a Christ centered Community. Here are some of the steps to becoming a closer member of our Community and while helping you prepare for your Marriage in Christ:

- **We must take the time needed.** The time and effort you put into getting ready for your wedding is never a waste. It is important that this period of preparation is never rushed but used effectively to build a strong road to your Marriage.
- **Participating in the Liturgical Life of the Church.** This means coming to Church Services often and preparation for Holy Communion. In the coming days you can get to know Fr. Costa and speak about how to involve yourself in the Church.
- **The Koumbari** (Sponsor – Best Man or Woman). The person(s) who will be involved in the wedding service, during the Ring Blessing and Crowing, must be Orthodox and in good standing. Ideally they should be members of the Church you will be married in and belong to. They will be a source of support during this time of preparation and afterwards in your daily life.
- **Preparatory Meetings.** It is important to get to know your Priest and feel comfortable to discuss any thoughts or concerns you may be feeling with him. This requires more time than just during the Sunday Coffee times. For this reason, weekday meetings will be planned with your convenience in mind so as to discuss the meaning of the Marriage Service and the Orthodox way of life. Also during this time the preparation of the wedding license and affidavit from the Metropolis will be completed.
- **It takes a Community to build a family.** It is the Christian teaching, that to join to Christ is inseparable to joining His Church. This means that, as we stated before, being married in a Church leads to being a member of that Church. Being a part of the family has both physical and spiritual benefits and responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to keep your membership current and up to date. Your contributions to the Community, through time and money, are what allow it to live and grow. In return you are joined by an entire group of like-minded persons all working for the same common goal, a loving relationship with each other in Christ.  
For information on membership please contact our Community Office at 604.266.7148.
  - Individual dues are: \$ 75; families: \$150.
- **Closer to the date** it is important to schedule a wedding rehearsal with Father Costa so that on your special day everything goes smoothly.

As a final note, all good things come with hard work and that usually means it is accompanied by stress. While difficulties, both spiritually and organizational are unavoidable when planning a wedding, don't forget you are not alone. If you need any help, to talk, or just have someone listen, please contact Father Costa at 604.266.7148. We are happy and excited to welcome your new family into our community.

Wishing you all the best and welcoming you to our Church Community,

**Rev. Fr. Constantinos Economos**  
Parish Priest – St. George Greek Orthodox Cathedral

## Sacrament of Marriage Checklist

### Before the Wedding:

- License to Wed & Affidavit to Wed from Metropolis
  - Fr. Costa will guide you in obtaining these two documents.
- Paid Community Membership
  - The Parents and Sponsor(s) (Godparent) are both required to pay their membership commitments.
- Paid Sacrament Fee
- Honorarium for the Chanter and Caretaker (Neokoro)
  - Traditionally given by the sponsor

### On the day of the wedding you will need the following items:

- 2 large white candles united by one white ribbon
- 2 candle for the table used during the Ceremony
- A silver platter (which can be decorated with rice and kouffetta)
- The wedding crowns. They should be white and united by one white ribbon.
- The rings (the can be placed on the silver platter)
  - The rings must be wedding bands made of silver or gold and must reflect the sanctity of marriage.
- A crystal glass or goblet
- A bottle wine for the service
- Wedding Programs (Fr. Costa can give you information to prepare these)

### **Important Notes:**

It is suggested that the couple being married and the sponsor(s) also participate in the Sacrament of Holy Confession and receive Holy Communion before the Marriage so as to also be prepared. Essentially a confession should include everything that a person may have done in their life up until this point that is not 'Christ-like'. Sometimes it is helpful to make a list so as to not forget anything. The couple is beginning a new chapter in their lives therefore it is important for the family to start this new life in Christ together completely prepared. It is important for the couple and sponsor(s) to attend Church together on a regular basis leading up to the Marriage but also as often as possible after the Marriage. The days before the Marriage should be devoted to prayer and preparation.