

ST DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

MARRIAGE PREPARATION FORM

WHAT YOU MUST KNOW BEFORE CONSIDERING MARRIAGE AND BOOKING A WEDDING DATE

Each party must fill out a copy of this form and meet with the priest **AT LEAST** six months prior to the wedding date.

A WEDDING DATE WILL NOT BE CONFIRMED until the bride and groom have met with the priest, have gone over the marriage preparation sessions, and the priest feels comfortable performing the wedding, **regardless if a wedding reception venue has already been booked.**

At your first appointment with the priest, along with this form, please bring with you your baptismal certificates (if you weren't baptized at St. Demetrios), letters of freedom to marry from your parish priest (if not from St. Demetrios) and, if applicable, your final divorce decree from your last previous marriage (civil and ecclesiastical).

Because marriage is a sacrament, weddings cannot be celebrated in a spiritual vacuum. This, therefore, presupposes that:

1. At least one of the couple to be married is an Orthodox Christian, baptized and /or Chrismated in the Church, committed to Christ and His Church and an active steward for at least a year prior to the date of the wedding; and
2. The intended spouse, if not Orthodox, be a Christian baptized in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as commanded by the Lord (Matthew 28:19). **Because of the sacramental nature of the marriage bond (in which a couple not only pledge their love for each other but also their love for Christ) a wedding between an Orthodox Christian and a non-Christian may not be celebrated in the Church.**

Inter-Christian Marriages: It is a fact that the more a couple has in common, the more likely they are to live together in peace and concord. Shared faith and traditions spare couples, their children, and their extended families many serious problems, and help to strengthen the bonds between them. Even so, the Orthodox Church will bless marriages between Orthodox and non-Orthodox partners, provided that:

1. **The non-Orthodox partner is a Christian who has been baptized, in water, in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; and**
2. **The couple should be willing to baptize their children in the Orthodox Church and raise and nurture them in accordance with the Orthodox Faith.**

A baptized Orthodox Christian whose wedding has not been blessed by the Orthodox Church is no longer in good standing with the Church, and may not receive the Sacraments of the Church, including Holy Communion, or become a Sponsor of an Orthodox Marriage, Baptism or Chrismation, or receive an Orthodox funeral.

A non-Orthodox Christian who marries an Orthodox Christian does not thereby become a member of the Orthodox Church, and may not receive the Sacraments, including Holy Communion, or be buried by the Church, serve on the Parish Council, or vote in parish general assemblies or elections. To participate in the Church's life, one must be received into the Church by the Sacrament of Baptism or, in the case of persons baptized with water, in the Holy Trinity, (after a period of instruction) by Chrismation.

Music for the wedding is restricted to the church's cantor or classical instrumental music (live vocalists or instruments are not permitted in the Orthodox Church).

YOUR ANSWERS ARE CONFIDENTIAL; only the person performing your marriage preparation sessions will see them. The purpose of this questionnaire is to help you have a clear understanding of your responsibilities and commitments by getting married in the Orthodox Church. Please be honest and don't answer the way you think the priest wants you to.

Anticipated Date of Marriage: _____

Baptismal Name: _____ Age: _____

In what religion were you baptized? _____ What religion are you now? _____

Do you actively practice your faith? YES / NO Are you in good standing with the Church? YES / NO

Name of Parish you intend to attend after marriage: _____

MARRIAGE PREPARATION FORM (continued)

How long have you known each other? _____

Have you done marriage preparation classes before? YES / NO

If yes, where? Please provide letter from the person that did the course. _____

Do you know the Church's teaching on the permanence of marriage? YES / NO

Have you discussed with each other the Church's teaching on the permanence of marriage? YES / NO

Do you know the Church's teaching on fidelity? YES / NO

Have you discussed with each other the Church's teaching on fidelity? YES / NO

If only one party is Orthodox, has there been discussion of the varied religious convictions, teachings, and practices involved in marriage and Orthodox life in general? YES / NO

Will your children be baptized Orthodox? YES / NO

Will you ensure your children receive a proper spiritual education in the Orthodox Church through the proper selection of Godparents and through the parish's Sunday school program? YES / NO

COMMON IMPEDIMENTS OR PASTORAL CONCERNS

Have you been married before, even in civil union (If yes, please fill out Form 165, provided by the priest at your first meeting)? YES / NO

Do your parents/relatives/friends have reservations regarding your marriage? YES / NO

Have you made a vow inconsistent with marriage (ordination, profession, etc)? YES / NO

Are you related to your fiancée by blood or marriage? YES / NO

Are you having or have you ever had counselling for personal-emotional problems? YES / NO

Do you believe this marriage commits you to Christ? YES / NO

Do you believe this marriage binds you and your spouse together for the rest of your life? YES / NO

Do you promise to be faithful to your future spouse until death? YES / NO

Christ is the Truth. We are therefore obligated to teach the Truth to our children and to guide them on the path to salvation. An Orthodox Christian must be committed to his/her faith, as well as the spiritual formation and education of his/her children. This includes the proper selection of Godparents. We ask the Orthodox Party/Parties sign below as a reminder of their commitment to Christ and His Church.

AFFIRMATION OF THE ORTHODOX PARTY IN A MARRIAGE BETWEEN ORTHODOX AND NON-ORTHODOX

I, _____ intend to marry _____.
I reaffirm my faith in Jesus Christ, and intend to continue living that faith in the Orthodox Church, removing any dangers of defecting from the Faith. I acknowledge the respect I owe to the conscience of my future spouse. I promise to do all that I can to share the faith I have received with all our children by having them baptized, reared, and educated as Orthodox Christians. My future spouse is aware of my convictions and supports me in them. I am reasonably confident that I shall be able to live up to them.

Date: _____ Signature of Orthodox Party: _____