

Our Lady of Soledad

El Señor de la Misericordia • San José

Since you want to get married

Congratulations and thank you for having welcomed the greatest gift that God bestows, the gift of love. This love that you share is momentous enough for all of creation to rejoice in thanksgiving. You will be the sacrament of divine love; the light of Christ that we need today and always. As registered members of our parish of Our Lady of Soledad, it is a blessing to accompany you in this most sacred event.

A few important items need to be kept in focus. The first has to do with the fact that it is a Wedding in the Catholic Church. It may be possible to say that everyone has the right to establish a relationship and marry, however a marriage in the Catholic Church is a response to a call, to a vocation that needs to be discerned. It is important for the couple to recognize that God has called them to celebrate the sacrament and carry out a particular mission in the world. This is why discernment and a preparation not just for a wedding, but for marriage is necessary. Given the need for this preparation as well as the fact that we celebrate a good number of weddings, it is important for the couple to anticipate their wedding by at least eight months.

A first step, with the office staff, has to do with gathering of pertinent documents. These include, but are not limited, to the following:

- ☐ Recent Baptismal certificate. This needs to be recently issued by the church of Baptism within the last six months.
- ☐ Confirmation certificate.
- ☐ First Communion.
- ☐ For the wedding, the principal witnesses need to be married in the Catholic church, their wedding certificate will be needed.
- ☐ Marriage License is needed approximately a month before the wedding. If already married civilly, that marriage certificate is turned in.

Once the office has received the corresponding documents, an appointment will be made with one of the priests or parish delegate. He will be your guide in the process. Please note, the date of the wedding will not be confirmed until the priest or delegate has made that determination.

Next, what needs important consideration, is the wedding ceremony itself. In the Catholic Church, particularly in the Diocese of San Bernardino, the place for the wedding is ordinarily the parish where the bride or the groom is a registered member, where they celebrate the Eucharist with their community and where they live other aspects of their faith as Catholics. In passing, it is important to mention that weddings are not celebrated outside of a church building.



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In terms of the wedding celebration, it is important to remember that the essential elements are persons: Two persons who are ready, willing and able to marry, two persons who are called to be the main witnesses and the person duly delegated by the Church. Marriage will be recognized once the couple has exchanged their vows.

There are other elements in the wedding that are especially important. First among them is the celebration of the Eucharist. This is an extraordinary expression of our Faith. It is important that those who attend the ceremony be mindful of the fact that they will find themselves in the midst of what is most sacred and in a sacred place. Everyone is called to participate in the worship experience. For Catholics, to receive Communion is especially significant. Some may need to celebrate the Sacrament of Confession. The parish has a schedule for confessions, and certainly you can celebrate Confession in another parish.

Some of items that the “padrinos” and the couple may give due consideration:

- ☐ What Scripture readings will be used at the wedding?
- ☐ Will there be rings, what do they signify?
- ☐ Will there be arras, what do they signify?
- ☐ Will there be a lazo, what does it signify?
- ☐ Will there be flowers for Our Lady, what do they signify?
- ☐ Will there be cushions for the kneelers, what do they signify?
- ☐ When will the wedding practice take place?
- ☐ Any other detail?

It is especially important to be punctual the day of the wedding. It has happened that the wedding be postponed if the couple is not on time.

Practical Details

The expected fee is \$700.00. This will cover the cost of flower arrangements, but not music. The office staff can offer recommendations in this regard. An initial deposit is non refundable.

Once again, thank you for having accepted love in your lives.

Love one another as I have loved you



Office Address: 52525 Oasis Palm Ave, Coachella, CA 92236 Ph: 760.398.5577

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Pastoral Norms Regarding Celebration of Weddings

It is the most profound desire, in the celebration of a wedding, to protect this single most important and sacred moment in the life of a couple and the parish community. Therefore, the emphasis will always be on the sacred nature of a Sacrament of the Church that can not be confused with a social event.

With this in mind, everything possible is done in order to accompany the couple beyond the wedding to a marriage. Certainly, each couple is different and merits that their wedding have their own personal touch. However, the personal is placed within the parameters of a wedding in the Catholic Church. At this time, this also includes the Covid protocols that have been established at Our Lady of Soledad.

Some of the directives that have become very important, particularly in light of the pandemic, are as follows:

1. Flowers are allowed in front of the altar, but not on the isle.
2. The bride may bring the flowers that will be placed in front of the image of the virgin, but the maids of honor are not allowed bouquets of fresh flowers at this time.
3. No decorations are allowed on the pews or on the isles.
4. The distribution of memorabilia, programs, etc. may not be distributed in Church.
5. At the beginning of the celebration, everyone needs to be to be in their respective places, at their pews, including maids of honor, etc.
6. Before the ceremony begins, rings, arras, lazo, bible, rosary, etc. are placed in a tray by the altar. The corresponding “padrinos” will be called at the appropriate moment.
7. Everyone remains in place throughout the entire ceremony.
8. Bride and Groom may enter in procession accompanied by their parents, if so desired.
9. Everyone, with the exception, of the bride and groom, are required to use face covering.
10. Music has some limitations. Please check with the office staff for recommendations.
11. Mariachis are not allowed, inside or outside of the Church building.
12. Please follow the instruction of ushers needs to be followed, they will guide persons to their seats, etc.
13. Video and photographs are allowed, but the integrity of the ceremony is most important. The use of flash and other artificial lighting should not be used. Social distance and face covering must be used at all times.
14. Respect is necessary, the altar in particular, as well as the rest of the Church must not be confused with a studio setting. At the end of the Mass, a few minutes may be allowed for photos.

I hear by acknowledge reception of these guidelines: _____



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