

## OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CATHOLIC CHURCH

1718 San Jorge Ave.  
Laredo, TX 78040  
Tel: (956) 723-6954

# WEDDING POLICIES & GUIDELINES

### 1. WEDDING DATE

Contact the parish office at least six months in advance of the planned date. Please do not print announcements or make any other preparations before the date has been confirmed by the priest.

*(Catholics who have not received First Communion and/or Confirmation first should make arrangements for instructions. Those instructions take at least 1-2 years.)*

After an initial meeting with the priest who will be witnessing your marriage, you will set up an appointment in order to fill out the necessary papers. All paperwork **MUST** be completed thirty days before the date of the wedding. ***It is your responsibility to schedule these appointments.*** Call the parish office for appointment.

### 2. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS *(see other side for details)*

For Catholics, you will need proof of your *Baptism, Confirmation* and *First Holy Communion*. The Baptismal Certificate must be recent - issued within six months of the wedding date. Contact the Church of your Baptism for the updated copy of your Baptismal Certificate.

*Pre-nuptial Questionnaire* must be filled out in the presence of the Priest.

*Freedom to Marry* form provided by the parish, must be filled out and signed by the parents of the couple or by a close relative or friend in the presence of the Priest or his delegate.

*Marriage License or Certificate of Civil Marriage*

In cases of special situations (one of the parties awaiting an annulment, e.g.), a definite date for the wedding will not be set until the situation is resolved.

### 3. MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Each couple is required to attend one of the preparation programs (e.g. *Pre-Cana and Natural Planning Program, Sponsor Couple Program*). Please turn in certificates of participation to the parish office.

### 4. WITNESSES

The two witnesses (Best Man and Maid of Honor - one man, one woman) who will stand with the couple in the sanctuary are an essential part of the wedding ceremony.

### 5. MUSIC

It is the responsibility of the couple to contact a choir leader, preferable from our Church, to arrange for the music. The music at the wedding Mass must be appropriate for a Catholic Church and religious ceremony.

**6. CHURCH USE FEE** The fee is \$300.00 for parishioners and \$500.00 for others. Please, pay at the parish office at least 30 days prior to the wedding date.

**7. WEDDING REHEARSAL** (optional) The purpose of the rehearsal is to familiarize all participants with the liturgy and their involvement in it.

### 8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

**Readers** will be provided by the Parish.

**Flower and Pew Decorations** Simplicity and good taste are expected. No thumbtacks are allowed on the pews. Arches are not allowed. Flower petals, rice, confetti or bird seed **ARE PROHIBITED** in and around the church building. Save them for the reception.

**Photographers / Video** Please consult with the priest who will witness your wedding as to his desires in this regard.

**Church etiquette** The church should receive respect. Loud talking should be avoided. Ask your guests to turn off all cell phones. No chewing gum in church, please!

#### **Confessions**

Please encourage all Catholics in your wedding party to go to confession, if necessary, in order that all may receive Holy Communion at the wedding Mass.

# MARRIAGE PREPARATION CHECK LIST

## DOCUMENTS

### 1. BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE

*(These must be copies issued by the Church of Baptism within 6 months of the wedding date)*

- Groom's Baptismal Certificate                       Bride's Baptismal Certificate

### 2. FIRST COMMUNION CERTIFICATE

*(You can bring the originals from home)*

- Groom's First Communion Certificate                       Bride's First Communion Certificate

### 3. CONFIRMATION CERTIFICATE

*(Confirmation information is usually found on the back of the Baptismal Certificate)*

- Groom's Confirmation Certificate                       Bride's Confirmation Certificate

### 4. PRE-NUPTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

*(With a Priest)*

- Groom's Questionnaire     Bride's Questionnaire

### 5. AFFIDAVIT OF FREE STATUS

*(With a Priest or his delegate)*

- Groom's Affidavit of Free Status Certificate                       Bride's Affidavit of Free Status Certificate

### 6. PREPARATION PROGRAMS:

*(With the Diocese of Laredo or with Parish Sponsor Couple Program)*

- Pre-Cana Certificate     Engaged Encounter Certificate  
 Natural Family Planning Certificate                       Sponsor Couple Certificate

### 7A. MARRIAGE LICENSE

*(From Webb County Courthouse no earlier than 90 days and no later than 3 days [72 hours] before the wedding celebration [Texas State Law])*

or

### 7B. CERTIFICATE OF CIVIL MARRIAGE

*(in case of validation)*

### 8. OTHERS

*(if applicable)*

- Decree(s) of civil divorce     Previous marriage certificate(s)  
 Decree(s) of nullity     "Lack of Form" Petition