



HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH of INDIANAPOLIS

WEDDING ARRANGEMENT GUIDE

PARISH MEMBERSHIP – Prospective Orthodox Brides and/or Orthodox Grooms are to be active stewards of our Parish. Obvious exceptions are those who reside in and are stewards of another Parish. In this case, a letter from that Parish, stating that he/she is in good standing in his/her Parish, is to be sent to Holy Trinity Church. Couples who are not members of Holy Trinity will offer a donation for use of the Church.

SPONSOR – An adult sponsor (*koumbaros/koumbara*) who is an active Orthodox Christian in good standing is to be chosen. Preferably, he or she should serve as 'best man' or 'maid/matron of honor'. If he/she belongs to another Parish, he/she is to ensure that a letter of good standing from his/her Parish Priest is sent. This letter is to be received by our Parish Office, no later than one month prior to wedding.

SETTING OF DATE – To set the date, please contact the Church Office at least 3 months prior to the desired wedding date. The earlier that the date is finalized obviously increases the availability of the desired date. First, finalize the date with the Church Office before any other wedding arrangements are made. This will ensure proper planning and avoid any conflict with schedules. The ecclesiastical marriage license application must be requested and other arrangements discussed, so a meeting with the Priest is needed. Each person may be asked to produce the following documentation at this meeting:

- A Baptismal certificate.
- If divorced, a notarized copy of civil divorce decree.
- If divorced in the Greek Orthodox Church, the letter of verification of the ecclesiastical divorce decree.
- If born outside US and entered US after 15th birthday, a certificate of "Freedom to Marry" is required from the Orthodox jurisdiction of your native country.

PROGRAMS – Upon request, samples of past wedding programs are available for your perusal. The required text may be downloaded at <http://holytrinityindy.org/sacraments>.

The program may be produced at a print shop or on a personal computer. If the text from the Holy Trinity website is altered, please submit a proof to the Priest one week **before** it is printed. Otherwise, it may not be approved for use at the wedding.

MUSIC – Our Parish Chanter, Dean Maniakas, will chant and otherwise assist with the wedding. An honorarium for his services is to be offered. The minimum of \$150.00 is expected. Please send your honorarium check made payable to Dean Maniakas no later than one month prior to your wedding. Dean can offer guidance in choosing music. Traditional music is permitted.

Vocalists and/or instrumentalists are not customarily a part of Orthodox weddings. They are allowed before or after the actual service on a case by case basis. This should be discussed with the Priest prior to the review of the Program.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO – Ensuring that the record of the Service is preserved in a clear and coherent manner is important. Thus, the photographer and/or videographer should meet with the Priest at the rehearsal. If this is not possible, then the photographer and/or videographer should be with the Priest within two weeks prior to the wedding. This is especially important, as some of these professionals have limited experience with the Orthodox Christian Marriage Service. The Priest will instruct them about proper Church etiquette, camera locations, and particular parts of the Service which are expected to be captured. Guests are requested to remain in the pews. Guests should also be cognizant of the professional photographer. If the photographer wishes to take photos of the party before the wedding, the Parish Office should be notified in advance as to what time access to the facilities will be requested.

VISITING CLERGY – Orthodox clergy from other Parishes may participate in the wedding. However, Orthodox clergy are aware of proper protocol in seeking permission from Metropolitan Nicholas and also informing Father Bill. He is the Presiding Priest of the Parish and has the sole responsibility for leading the wedding. Non-Orthodox clergy are welcome as honored guests, praying and witnessing along with the guests in the pews. **ALL** Orthodox clergy are to communicate directly with Father Bill before the wedding.

GRATUITIES – A wedding obligates our Custodian to put extra time and effort into preparation and clean-up. While not *required*, setting aside a gratuity for him is a way of showing appreciation for his role. The Priest will be glad to convey it to him.

CLERGY INVITATION – Couples should not assume that the Priest will automatically attend and/or offer a prayer at the rehearsal dinner and/or wedding reception. If his presence at these events is desired, he should receive an invitation.

REHEARSAL – The rehearsal customarily takes place on the evening before the wedding and usually requires an hour. Promptness is appreciated. The rehearsal is relaxed. Please do not confuse this informality as permission for late arrival to the Church or casual attitude/behavior in the Church. Appropriate behavior and dress in the Church setting are requested by everyone. The Bride and Groom should come to the rehearsal prepared to communicate to the Priest which female will be paired with which male attendant. The following items should be brought to the church at the rehearsal:

- ✓ **Two 7/8", hand-held, decorated wedding candles with self-fitting base to be purchased from the Holy Trinity Church (\$15 for the two candles)**
- ✓ **CD of the music that will be used**
- ✓ **Wedding rings**
- ✓ **Wedding crowns (*stefana*)**
- ✓ **Civil marriage license** (*The wedding is not legally recognized without this. Before the rehearsal, the Bride and Groom must complete the portion of the license which requires personal information about them.*)
- ✓ **Silver tray on which crowns are placed**
- ✓ **White candied Jordan almonds to be scattered on the tray**
- ✓ **Wedding programs**

YOUR WEDDING DAY – The cry room at the front of the building is available as a dressing space for the Bride and her party. Food, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages are prohibited in this area. Throwing of rice is prohibited anywhere on Church grounds. Please consult with the Priest about alternatives to this custom.

Please complete the following and return to the Holy Trinity Parish Office one month prior to the wedding. *Please type OR print clearly.*

Wedding Date:

Bride's Phone Number:

Groom's Phone Number:

Additional Phone Number (to reach you on the day of your wedding):

Address of Bride & Groom after wedding:

Will there be a surname change? YES NO

Sponsor (Koumbaro / Koumbara):

Names of couples of bridesmaids and groomsmen:

Other participants

Ring Bearer & Flower Girl (suggested not younger than four years old):

Mother and Father of the Bride attending the wedding:

Mother and Father of the Groom attending the wedding:

Grandparents of the Groom attending the wedding:

Grandparents of the Bride attending the wedding:

Is there any family situation or special people I should know about to make sure the Priest addresses everyone correctly? (deaths, divorces, etc)

Any special details?

Will the Bride and Groom plan on taking photos before the Marriage Service?

Are there any special traditions that I should know about?