

# Celebration of Matrimony

Job Aid

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



In conjunction with:

Diocese of Rockford

Diocese of Joliet

Diocese of Peoria

Diocese of Springfield

Diocese of Belleville



Please check with your local Diocese for any changes to this document

These guidelines for a celebration of matrimony in a Church reflect the updated guidance by government officials, healthcare professionals, and Church authorities.

These guidelines are based on current requirements for groups no greater than 10 in the church at any time. This is exclusive of all ministers and an usher or greeter.

Parishes should adapt only as necessary, *however, being careful not to violate social distancing, face covering, and disinfecting practices.*

Parishes or pastors may **NOT** alter number of allowed worshippers, social distancing, face covering, or disinfecting guidelines contained here.

# Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles are required to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved in the Order of Matrimony:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Greeter</b>	All attendees are to be greeted outside of the physical church building by a greeter. This greeter's responsibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcoming attendees back to the church</li><li>• Ensuring each attendee is on the attendee list</li><li>• Asking each attendee the COVID-19 screening questions</li><li>• Ensuring all attendees are wearing masks or face covers</li><li>• Providing masks to attendees who do not already have a mask or face covering</li><li>• Sending each attendee to a predesignated point where he or she will be queued to be seated by an usher</li><li>• Sending those who pass into the vestibule</li><li>• Managing any issues that may arise from the attendee's lack being on the attendee list</li></ul>
<b>Usher</b>	Ushers are stationed within the church to assist attendees in finding social-distance appropriate seats and for leading a careful, socially distant exit from the church after the rite has concluded. He or she is responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disinfecting all attendees' hands prior to entering the church.</li><li>• Escorting each attendee/party to the next appropriate open pew (while following social distancing standards)</li><li>• Explaining where to sit in the pew to the attendees</li><li>• Ensuring that social distancing guidelines are being followed throughout the rite</li><li>• At the end of the rite, coordinating a careful, controlled exit from the church, following all social distancing standards</li></ul>
<b>Cleaner</b>	Cleaners are the people who disinfect the church and surrounding areas following completion of the rite.
<b>Priest/Deacon</b>	The Priest/Deacon is the person who conducts the rite.

# Step by Step

## Celebration of Matrimony

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### General Notes:

- Notify family/attendees at least 5 days in advance of the Wedding, about safety procedures for participating in any Church service during this pandemic. Include request to provide their own masks or face coverings, checking temperatures on the day of the Wedding, encouraging vulnerable individuals not to attend, alerting the pastor to anyone who is ill, etc. Include specific instructions about your parish procedures for entry into the church. Include specific instructions about your parish procedures for entry into the church.
- All participants must wear face masks or face coverings the entire time they are in the church. Per IDPH and CDC guidelines, those with breathing difficulties can be exempted from this requirement, but those individuals must observe the strictest of social distancing from anyone not living in their domicile.
- In addition, all pews and seating are to be clearly marked or designated such that there is a six-foot perimeter in all directions for every individual seat. One pew or row of seating is to be left vacant between pews or rows used for seating congregants such that six feet of distance can be maintained in all directions. Seating should also be offset or staggered by row such that no two people sit directly in line with each other in adjacent seating areas. Family units who are domiciled together may sit together or the parish may designate certain pews as “family pews.”
- Worship aids are not allowed.
- The floor of the church should have tape marks all observing proper social distance, designating where the faithful are to stand during any procession (e.g., Communion).
- If there is a photographer, he or she is to strictly maintain proper social distance from all other participants throughout the liturgy. The photographer must be masked at all times.

# Preparing the Church for a Wedding

## TASK #1

### Setting up the Supply Table

#### Step 1: Place the table

A table should be set at the front of the church to hold all needed supplies, including:

- Holy water
- A plate with the rings
- A plate with the arras (if being used)

*To allow for ongoing disinfection, it is recommended that a glass top be placed on the tabletop.*



#### Step 2: Safety Equipment

To protect the safety of priest and all attendees, the following items must be placed on the table:

- A **face shield** for use by the priest
- **Hand disinfectant for use by the priest and all attendees**

## TASK #2

### Setting up the Church

#### Step 1: Place Social Distancing Markers:

Place tape marks on the floor to indicate where celebrant and bride and groom should stand to observe appropriate social distancing. Note: Bride and Groom do not need to observe social distancing from each other.



#### Step 2: Prepare the Pews

The first or second row of pews (depending on distance from where the Order of Matrimony is celebrated) should be marked for the couple and the witnesses. Marks should be placed at least 6–8 feet apart for guests indicating where they should sit. Further, there needs to be 6–8 feet distance in front of and behind guests if multiple pews need to be used.



## Entering the Building

### TASK #1

#### Greeting Attendees (Outside of Church)

**Step 1:** Welcome attendees to the celebration!

*Enthusiastically welcome worshipers to the wedding.*

#### Step 2: Symptom/Temperature Self-Check

*On the day of the Wedding, all attendees are strongly encouraged to take their temperatures and complete a self-check for symptoms.*

*The pastor must immediately be alerted if anyone is displaying any symptoms or running a fever.*

#### Step 3: Check for attendee list

- Check the attendee list to validate the attendee is to attend the wedding

Note: If an attendee is not on the attendee list, refer to the De-escalation worksheet as needed.

**Step 4:** Ensure everyone is wearing a mask or face covering.

**Masks should be provided to any attendees who do not bring their own.**

**Step 5:** Verify that all attendees are symptom-free.

Ask:

- Is anyone feeling ill today?
- Does anyone have a temperature today?
- Has anyone been directly exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

**Anyone who responds “Yes” to any of these questions should not be admitted into the church.  
Consult with the pastor/deacon before taking this step**

**Step 6:** Once attendees are screened for symptoms and their attendance is confirmed, direct attendees to predesignated socially distanced areas of the vestibule to await instructions from the Usher.

# Entering the Church

## TASK #1

### Greeting Attendees in the Vestibule

**Step 1:** Welcome attendees to the celebration!

*Enthusiastically welcome worshipers back to church.*

**Step 2:** Disinfect the hands of all attendees.

- Explain to each attendee the need to disinfect everyone's hands.
- Spray each attendee's hands with hand disinfectant.



**Step 3:** Direct attendees to stay at their designated space until the Usher directs them to their designated seat.

## TASK #2

### Seating Attendees

**Step 1:** Usher summons attendee to next available open pew.

**Step 2:** Usher instructs attendee where to sit in the pew (while maintaining proper social distancing).

**Note:** Ushers must use predesignated seating markers to guide the seating process. Social distancing requires six feet between each attendee or group of attendees (i.e., families, couples, etc.).

Celebration of the Liturgy: Only elements or tasks adjusted for safe practices are outlined here. All other elements of the rite are performed as already known.

## TASK #1

### Opening Procession

#### Step 1: Wedding party enters the church

Proper social distancing must be maintained throughout the celebration. For the procession, floor markings should be used to ensure compliance.



#### Step 2: Direct bride, groom, parents, and two witnesses to appropriate spots.

- Bride (and parents if desired) proceed to front to meet the priest and the groom
- Witnesses are directed to their places in the front-most pew (where they are to remain for the entire celebration)

## TASK #2

### Celebration of Matrimony

#### Step 1: Liturgy of the Word

*Priest may remove his mask for the Liturgy of the Word.*

*The person announcing the petitions in the Universal Prayer / Prayer of the Faithful may also remove his or her mask or face covering while doing so.*



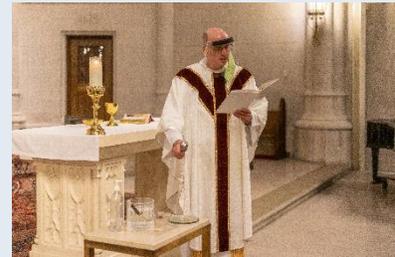
#### Step 2: Priest directs bride and groom to predesignated positions.



**Step 3:** Priest puts on face shield and disinfects his hands.



**Step 4:** Priest completes blessing of the rings at the supply table.  
Face shield must remain in place.



**Step 5:** Priest presents the plate with the rings to bride and groom, without any physical contact.

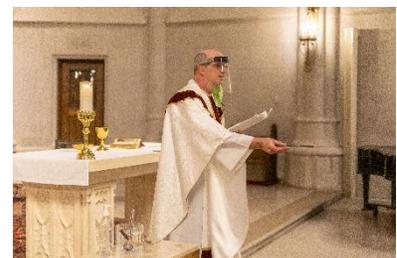


Step 6: If an arras is used, priest completes blessing of arras at the supply table.  
Face shield must remain in place.



Step 7: If an arras is used, priest presents plate with arras to bride and groom, without any physical contact.

Face shield must remain in place.



Note: The procession with gifts is omitted.

Priest (or Deacon if there is one) may bring the gifts to the altar.

Note: The blessing and placing of the *lazo* or veil is not to be included.

**Step 8:** Priest completes nuptial blessing, while maintaining appropriate social distancing.



**Step 9:** Distribute Holy Communion according to the process outlined in the Receiving the Eucharist Job Aid.



## Procession from the Church

### TASK #1

#### Procession from the Church

**Step 1:** Priest/Deacon reminds the attendees that they must remain seated until the Ushers call them to exit the pew and that gathering in the church for photographs is not allowed.

**Step 2:** Starting at the last pew, the Ushers thank the participants for coming and direct the attendees to exit the church.

**Note: Social distancing requires six feet between each attendee or group of attendees (i.e., families, couples, etc.) as they exit.**

**Step 3:** Greeter (in Vestibule) directs the attendees outside of the Church so that there is no gathering within the Vestibule.

**Note: Attendees will be excited, and will want to congratulate the bride and groom.**

#### **Step 4: Photographs**

If photographs are to be taken after the service inside the church, it is recommended that all but the bride and groom wear masks. Minimally, if the priest/deacon is to be photographed with the wedding party, he must keep his mask on. A recommendation to take the pictures outside the church where more space is available should be made to the wedding party before the service.

## Disinfecting the Church

### TASK #1

#### Disinfecting the Church

**Step 1:** Remove any debris left behind by attendees and dispose of properly.

**Step 2:** All pews and kneelers must be disinfected using the procedures in the Disinfecting Job Aid.

**Step 3:** Church door handles and plates must be disinfected using the procedures in the Disinfecting Job Aid.

**Step 4:** Once all attendees have left the building, all church restrooms and common areas must be disinfected using the procedures in the Disinfecting Job Aid.

# Disinfecting Instruments and Materials

## TASK #1

Disinfecting the instruments and materials used during the rite

**Step 1:** Disinfect the plate that held the rings.

**Step 2:** If used, disinfect the plate that held the arras.

**Step 3:** Disinfect the supply table.

**Step 4:** Disinfect the outside covers and bindings of any worship books that were used.

**Step 5:** Disinfect the face shield worn by the priest/deacon.