

SAINT CLEMENT OF ROME



A Handbook for Those Preparing for Marriage

**Saint Clement of Rome
Romeo, Michigan
(586)752-9611**

A Word of Welcome

If you are like most engaged couples, you may have discovered by now that the joy, excitement and anticipation that accompanied the announcement of your engagement can quickly give way to anxiety, worry and tension as you prepare to enter into the covenant of marriage.

This booklet is designed to assist you as you prepare the most important aspect of your wedding day, the wedding liturgy. Please read it carefully and consult it often as your planning continues. The Guidelines for the Liturgical Celebration of Marriage are those which the bishops have approved for the dioceses of Michigan. If you have any questions, or desire assistance at any step of the way, do not hesitate to phone.

The phone number for the parish offices is (586)752-6911 and the fax number is (586)752-1601.

You are asking to celebrate marriage in the midst of the Church, the People of God. Be assured that we will do all that we can to enable you to celebrate well, and so enter into a blessed marriage.

Fr. Steve

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve". The letters are cursive and stylized, with a large, looping 'S' at the beginning.

Table of Contents
St. Clement of Rome Catholic Church
www.stclementromeo.com

Introduction	4
Sacramental Marriage	4
Where Marriage is Celebrated	5
Before a Date May be Set	5
Financial Stewardship	6
Setting the Date	6
Times and Seasons	6
Preparation for Marriage	7
The Celebration of Marriage	9
Where Marriage is Celebrated	9
Music	9
Parish Wedding Coordinator	10
Servers	10
Lectors	10
Gift Bearers	11
Ministers of Communion	11
Visiting Priests and Deacons	11
Ministers from Other Traditions	11
Decoration of the Space	11
Photography/Videography	12
After the Celebration	12
Appendix 1 - The Shape of the Liturgy	13
Appendix 2 - Diagram of St. Clement	15
Appendix 3 - Policy Agreement	16

By Way of Introduction

Those planning a wedding sometimes wonder why it can't take place in a garden or wedding chapel, or why certain music and customs are considered inappropriate. Here's something that will help: don't confuse "the wedding" with "the Marriage Liturgy".

The WEDDING is a large event that covers many months and includes many 'rituals'. Some are about family or cultural customs, some are social customs, and some are rituals of the Church. Think about it, all sorts of customs and rituals begin with the engagement and continue on through the wedding planning and preparations, the interfamily meetings, the shower(s), the rehearsal, the rehearsal dinner, the pre-wedding rituals on the day of the wedding, the Church's liturgy, the pictures, the reception, the breakfast/brunch for out-of-town guests on the day following. One part of all of this is the MARRIAGE LITURGY. Actually, it's the smallest part, but it has its own distinctive character.

In the course of all the other things surrounding the wedding event, the bride and groom come to the church and family, friends, and parishioners gather to celebrate the sacred ritual, by which the bride and groom are commissioned / ordained / consecrated and blessed as a couple, who by their life together, and by the raising of children, will make a difference in the community, and make more manifest the presence of Christ among us.

Brides and grooms are careful to learn the proper 'protocol' for invitations and showers, and the reception. They need also to learn the 'protocol' for the liturgy, and not to mix one with the other.

That's the heart of the matter. Everything we do in the marriage liturgy ~ this small part of the large wedding event ~ should fit what is taking place. There is nothing wrong with the rituals that take place elsewhere. It's simply a matter of what goes where. For instance, it really wouldn't be fitting to sing "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" during the reception, any more that it would be fitting to sing secular music when gathered at church.

The Church wants couples to have a wonderful wedding event that includes whatever cultural and societal rituals they wish ~ tuxedos and gowns, limousines or a horse and carriage, a receiving line, posed pictures in whatever setting they wish, the grand entrance of the bride and groom at the reception, the introduction of members of the wedding party, toasts, music and dancing, fine food and drink. The Church also wants there to be a small time during this large wedding event when we gather around the altar for a liturgy that is worship and prayer from beginning to end.

Sacramental Marriage

Because of your Baptism, your marriage is a sacrament, a sign of the presence of God in the world. This means that the marriage liturgy is a sacred moment in the midst of the whole wedding event. Celebrated in the midst of the People of God, your wedding should

not only be a sign of your love for each other, but also of your love of God and God's People. You are asking the Church to witness your entry into covenant of marriage, and so inviting the Lord to be at the very center of all that your future together may hold.

This means that your marriage is a concern for the whole Christian Community. To that end the Church, the Body of Christ, is concerned that you are as well prepared to accept the responsibilities of marriage as is humanly possible. The Church is also concerned that your wedding liturgy be a truly sacred time for the entire Community.

We pray that your life together will continue to be, for all of us, a visible presence of the God who loves us deeply and shares our life.

Where Marriage is Celebrated

Canon Law requires that Roman Catholics celebrate marriage in the parish church where they are registered members, and where they regularly celebrate Sunday Eucharist, unless permission to marry in another parish has been granted. They celebrate marriage in the presence of the parish priest, or another deacon or priest who has been granted delegation to witness the sacrament. In the case of the marriage of a Roman Catholic and someone of another religious tradition, the marriage, in order to be recognized as valid, must be celebrated according to the Rite of the Roman Catholic Church. If a Catholic wishes to marry a person outside of the Roman Catholic tradition, in another Church, Synagogue, or Mosque, the permission of the bishop must be granted before the celebration.

In the case of a person or persons who do not practice the faith, the decision to celebrate marriage at Saint Clement will be made by the pastor. Dates for wedding liturgies may not be set until this decision is made and communicated.

Marriage should be approached with an awareness of its sacramental nature, and with a genuine openness to comply in spirit.

Before a Date May be Set

Couples asking the Church to witness their marriage must be free to marry according to both civil and Canon (Church) Law. A divorced person seeking to enter into a valid marriage must obtain a decree of nullity from the tribunal in the diocese where the previous marriage was attempted, before a date may be set. The priest will be happy to assist with the necessary guidance and paperwork in this circumstance.

Men and woman seeking to enter into marriage must be at least eighteen (18) years of age. Canon Law and archdiocesan policy forbids marriage at an earlier age without counseling, participation in a program of preparation approved by the archdiocese, and the per-

mission of the bishop.

Before setting a date couples will have read this book carefully, and agreed to abide by provincial, diocesan, and parish policies regarding and celebration of marriage. If there are any questions about any aspects of preparation or the celebration at marriage, they must be resolved before a date is entered into the parish calendar.

Financial Stewardship

For registered, active member of the parish community, there is a \$425.00 donation to the parish for stewardship and those who care for it .

Couples who are free to marry, and properly prepared to celebrate the sacrament, though not members of this parish community may be permitted, for appropriate reasons, to use the parish church. A stipend of \$450.00 is required for stewardship of the space and those who care for it. The couple must also arrange for a priest or deacon to celebrate with them.

For all couples celebrating marriage at St. Clement, the Director of Music Ministry is to be compensated in the amount of \$200.00 for his/her ministry

Fees for the use of the church will be paid at the time the date is set for the wedding. There will be a 100% refund if the wedding does not take place.

Setting the Date

It is the policy of the Archdiocese of Detroit that couples engaged to be married spend six (6) months in prayer and preparation, in order to celebrate and enter into the sacrament. To be faithful to the expectation, couples must contact the parish offices no later than six months prior to the proposed date of marriage. This first contact should be made before making any arrangements for a reception hall, florist, photographer/videographer, limousine service, etc.

Times and Seasons

Weddings may be celebrated on any day of the week except for Sundays, Holy Days, and those few other days where the liturgical calendar prohibits the celebration. Friday afternoon or evening weddings may be scheduled at any reasonable time. Saturday weddings are celebrated at 12:30 p.m. or 2:30 p.m. Weddings are celebrated in the midst of the community of the Church, and the needs of the broader community must also be kept in mind and respected. Accordingly, there are no weddings scheduled after 2:30 p.m. on Saturday. Weddings also will not be scheduled for a time or date when another parish function has

previously been scheduled. As a courtesy to the community, your guests, and those planning liturgies, which may follow yours, please be sure that all is in order to start at the published time.

Normally weddings are not celebrated during the season of Advent (the four weeks before the Feast of Christmas). The character of the season is one of quiet preparation and waiting for the Lord. Weddings will only be celebrated during the Penitential Season of Lent for the gravest of reasons, which must be discussed with the priest before any decision can be made. Lent is a time when the entire community is called to acts of repentance, fasting and sharing with the poor.

It is never permitted to have flowers in church during the six weeks of Lent; festive music is not used in any formal prayer, and because of the call to fasting, it is inappropriate to consider the traditional wedding reception during this time. Bearing these things in mind prudent couples will choose a more appropriate time of the year in which to invite the People of God to celebrate with them.

Preparation for Marriage

Once people have announced their engagement the process of preparation begins in earnest. Here is a general order to the process of preparing to celebrate marriage:

1. The announcement of engagement.
2. Roman Catholic people obtain a newly issued certificate of baptism from the parish where the sacrament was celebrated. People baptized in another Christian tradition may bring either a copy of their baptismal certificate or a letter from the church of baptism, attesting to their own baptism. Those who have been married previously must also provide a decree of nullity or a death certificate attesting to their freedom to marry in the Church.
3. The couple calls the parish office to set a meeting with the priest or deacon.
4. The couple meets with the priest or deacon to complete the "A Form", providing information assuring freedom to marry, and other information necessary for the completion of the sacramental record. In the case of a Roman Catholic marrying a person of another religious tradition the application for dispensation to marry will be completed also at this time.

Brides and grooms will receive a copy of the book Together for Life, to assist them in preparing the scriptures and prayers for the wedding liturgy. They will also receive a brochure about the pre-marriage seminars. All couples are expected to complete.

Some couples avail themselves of the services of a counselor, whose expertise is helping

couples to discern strengths and weaknesses in relationships. These counselors may prove invaluable, particularly in the instance of a second marriage. Couples interested in a referral for a pre-marriage counselor are invited to ask the priest for a referral.

5. Liturgy planning also begins at this time as the bride and groom begin to read over, reflect on, and discuss the Scriptures which will be proclaimed at their wedding liturgy.

About three (3) months before the celebration, it is advantageous to meet with the priest to talk about the liturgy and to ask any questions which may have arisen. As you will have read at the beginning of this booklet, there are some things which, while perhaps traditional in the broader society, are not in accord with the Church in the celebration of marriage.

At about the same time brides and grooms will want to meet with the Director of Music Ministry to discuss music for the liturgy. More about appropriate liturgical music will be found in the section titled THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE.

No later than one (1) month before the wedding, the date and time of the wedding rehearsal should be set. This date may certainly be set at an earlier time, in order to arrange for the rehearsal dinner. Please call the parish offices to set the date and time

Well trained lay ministers coordinate all wedding rehearsals. They also assist the couple and their guests on the day of the wedding liturgy.

6. Couples wishing to have the parish staff prepare a worship aide for their wedding liturgy must provide all the necessary information for that side to the parish office at least one (1) month before the date of the wedding.

Those who wish to prepare their own worship aide, will find orders of celebration for the liturgy within a celebration of the Eucharist, and within a celebration of the Liturgy of the Word of God, in the appendix of this booklet.

When the bride and groom are both Catholic the celebration of marriage takes place within the celebration of the Eucharist. When a Catholic marries someone of another Christian tradition, marriage is normally celebrated within the Liturgy of the Word; through in some cases it may be appropriate to celebrate Eucharist.

When either the bride or groom is not baptized the Eucharist is not celebrated. Eucharist is the greatest sign of unity in the community of the Church. Where Eucharist cannot be shared it seems contradictory that we would celebrate unity in the sacrament of marriage, and then divide that unity by not being able to welcome everyone to the table of the Eucharist. Where there are questions as to the appropriate form of celebration, the priest will be happy to aid couples in their discernment.

7. The marriage license must be brought to the parish office at least one (1) week before

the wedding. The staff needs time to fill in the necessary information about the place, the witnesses and the priest. It is never good to leave this necessary task until the last minute. Without the correctly completed marriage license a wedding cannot be celebrated.

8. Within the last month of preparation, Catholics will most likely wish to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation. Reconciliation is celebrated on Saturday afternoons, at 3:30 p.m. or by appointment with the priest.

The Celebration of Marriage Where Marriage May be Celebrated

Roman Catholics are required, by Church law, to celebrate marriage in the parish church, in the presence of the Church's minister: a bishop, priest, or deacon. All weddings are celebrated at the altar, either in the main church or in the day chapel.

Music

Couples wishing musicians other than members of the parish music ministry must have the approval of the Director of Music Ministry. Any instrumental musician or cantor from outside of the parish must have a solid working knowledge of the Roman Catholic liturgy, and be proficient in providing such liturgical music which will enhance the prayer of the whole Assembly. Necessary to the appropriate liturgical celebration of the sacrament of marriage are an instrumentalist and a cantor to accompany and facilitate the sacred Assembly in sung prayer. Other musicians may be added for the sake of the festivity of the day. A schedule of fees is included in Appendix 3 at the back of this booklet.

Guest organists, in addition to knowledge of the liturgy, must possess the ability to properly register and play the church's pipe organ, and is required to abide by the expectation that only suitable liturgical music is acceptable. The wedding liturgy is not a venue for solo voice alone. For the most part, the music at the wedding liturgy will be that which the entire Assembly is able to take part. The parish Music Minister is available to answer any questions about the appropriateness of particular music.

Couples wishing to ask a vocal musician, other than one of the parish cantors, to be a part of their wedding liturgy are reminded that the musician must be able to act in the ministry of cantor, leading the Assembly in sung prayer. It should be understood that the vocalist at the nightclub or other such venue may not be an appropriate choice for the ministry of cantor at the liturgy. It is necessary that any vocal musician understand the sacred nature of the wedding liturgy. If the vocal musician is not regularly a cantor at liturgy, he or she may need to audition with the parish music minister, to assure that he or she is capa-

ble of exercising the ministry.

The selection of music for a Catholic wedding liturgy will be made in accord with the following principles:

1. Since celebrations within the life of the Church speak to the relationship between God and humanity, all music chosen to enhance liturgical prayer must also speak to that mystery. This is the vision and expectation of the bishops at the Second Vatican Council.

Thus, specifically excluded from the canon of music appropriate to the wedding liturgy are those works whose origin is totally or primarily secular in nature. This includes music from popular films, Broadway musicals, operatic excerpts, and the like. While these may indeed find a place at the reception, they are not fitting for giving glory and praise to God in liturgical prayer.

2. Vocal music is to be drawn from the huge repertoire available to the Church. Hymns, antiphonal music, psalm settings and canticles – both traditional and contemporary – make up the wealth of sung prayer in the Church. Again, the Director of Music Ministry will be able to provide suggestions as to appropriate music for cantor and Assembly.

Parish Wedding Coordinator

The Parish Wedding Coordinator is a member of the parish who is familiar with the service and traditions of the church. This person will be responsible for (1) managing and running the rehearsal (2) set up on the day of the wedding and (3) assist the bridal party with procession. The fee for the Parish Wedding Coordinator is \$100.00

Servers

Though altar servers are not necessary at the wedding liturgy, couples wishing to invite family members or friends to minister as altar servers are free to do so. If you wish to have servers provided by the parish, please contact the parish office. A stipend of \$20.00 is suggested for each server.

Lectors

Those chosen to proclaim the Word of God must be capable and rehearsed. It is an imposition to ask anyone to proclaim the sacred Scriptures when that person is not motivated by faith, does not have an adequate voice, or is not accustomed to speaking before a group. The person proclaiming the first reading, from the Hebrew Testament, may be anyone

from the Jewish, Christian, or Islamic tradition. The person who proclaims the second reading, from the Letters (Epistles), must be a Christian person. The gospel is always proclaimed by an ordained minister.

Gift Bearers

When the Eucharist is celebrated the bread and wine for Eucharist is always presented by baptized people.

Ministers of Communion

When Eucharist is celebrated the couple should ask 2(two) Roman Catholic people to minister the chalice of the Precious Blood to the Assembly. These people need not be commissioned as Ministers of Communion in a parish, but will be trained at the time of the rehearsal. If the Assembly is expected to be large – over 75 people – another minister, to assist the priest in administering the Eucharistic Bread, will also be necessary.

Visiting Priests or Deacons

Visiting priests and deacons are always welcome to celebrate with family and friends. They must receive delegation from the pastor, which will be readily granted.

Ministers from other Denominations/Traditions

If a bride or groom is an active member of another tradition, the minister of his or her community is more than welcome to take part in the wedding liturgy. Brides and grooms should consult with the priest about the parts of the liturgy which may be shared.

We are also happy to be present if someone from our Community celebrates marriage in the church of another tradition, provided that the proper dispensation from canonical form has been granted by the archdiocese. Again, please consult with the priest if this is desired.

Decoration of the Space

Marriage should be celebrated with great joy and thanksgiving. Flowers, banners, candles, ribbons – in short - anything that will help to provide a festive atmosphere is in order. All decorations, though, must be appropriate and tasteful, and should be properly incorporated into the symbols and environment of the worship space, and fitting to the litur-

gical season. No decoration should distract from the liturgical nature of the celebration. Lavish displays that speak of consumerism rather than Christian joy should be avoided.

Aisle runners are not permitted at St. Clement. The slope of the aisle makes the presence of a runner dangerous, especially for the elderly and the very young.

Photography/Videography

It is to be remembered that the wedding liturgy is sacred, communal prayer. First and foremost we are gathered to glorify God and to witness the covenant into which a bride and groom enter. Thus, persons taking pictures must always be inconspicuous and discreet. No photographer or videographer should ever be a distraction to prayer. They are to remain away from the altar area at all times, and are never permitted on the altar platform during the liturgy. Flash and floodlights are prohibited during the liturgy.

Photographers may stand half way down the main aisle for the procession, but not at the foot of the aisle, in front of the altar. Photographers are reminded that the procession is part of the prayer. Processions do not stop. Pictures are shot as members of the party come to the altar. Any other pictures may be posed afterward.

Video cameras should be on tripods toward the rear or sides of the Assembly, to capture the entire action of the liturgy. They do not move about the space.

A maximum of thirty (30) minutes is permitted, after the liturgy, for pictures at church. This is a matter of courtesy toward the wedding coordinators and those who must either prepare for another liturgy, or to close the building for the night.

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make this information available to photographers and videographers, as well as the diagram located in Appendix 2. This diagram shows appropriate placement of video cameras for capturing the entire action.

After the Celebration

The receiving line should not be formed at the church, but at the reception hall. On many occasions there are several wedding celebrations or other parish events scheduled for the same day. Having the receiving line at church causes undue delays in preparation for other events, and for the reordering of the space for the Parish Family.

NO RICE, CONFETTI, BIRD OR GRASS SEED are permitted at the church. Please do not even bring these items to the church. There is no weekend janitorial service available for the necessary cleaning after such things are thrown. Another issue to consider is safe-

ty, especially in the case of bird seed and rice. There is a real danger of someone slipping and being injured.

Please remember that all of us are stewards of the Church. The narthex, worship space, bride's room, and restrooms should be left as they are found. It may be wise to designate someone from among family or friends to collect things, and make sure that the space is neat, before everyone leaves.

There is no smoking anywhere in the building or on this campus.

Appendix 1

The Shape of the Liturgy within Eucharist

Processional Music

Gathering Song

Greeting and Opening Prayer

Reading 1: From the Hebrew Testament

Responsorial Psalm (always sung)

Reading 2: From the Christian Testament (the Letters)

Gospel Acclamation

Reading 3: From the Christian Testament (Gospels)

Gospel Acclamation

Homily

The Rite of Marriage

Exhortation

Declaration of Intent

Giving and Receiving of Consent

Blessing and Giving of Rings

Unity Candle (Optional)

Intercessory Prayer

Preparation of the Altar

Presentation of the Gifts

Eucharistic Prayer

Our Father

Nuptial Blessing

Greeting of Peace

Communion

Flowers for the Blessed Mother (optional)

Post Communion Prayer

Blessing and Sending Forth

Recessional Music

The Shape of the Liturgy outside Eucharist

Processional Music

Gathering Song

Greeting and Opening Prayer

Reading 1: From the Hebrew Testament

Responsorial Psalm (always sung)

Reading 2: From the Christian Testament (the Letters)

Gospel Acclamation

Reading 3: From the Christian Testament (Gospels)

Gospel Acclamation

Homily

The Rite of Marriage

Exhortation

Declaration of Intent

Giving and Receiving of Consent

Blessing and Giving of Rings

Unity Candle (Optional)

Intercessory Prayer

Our Father

Nuptial Blessing

Greeting of Peace

Flowers for the Blessed Mother (optional)

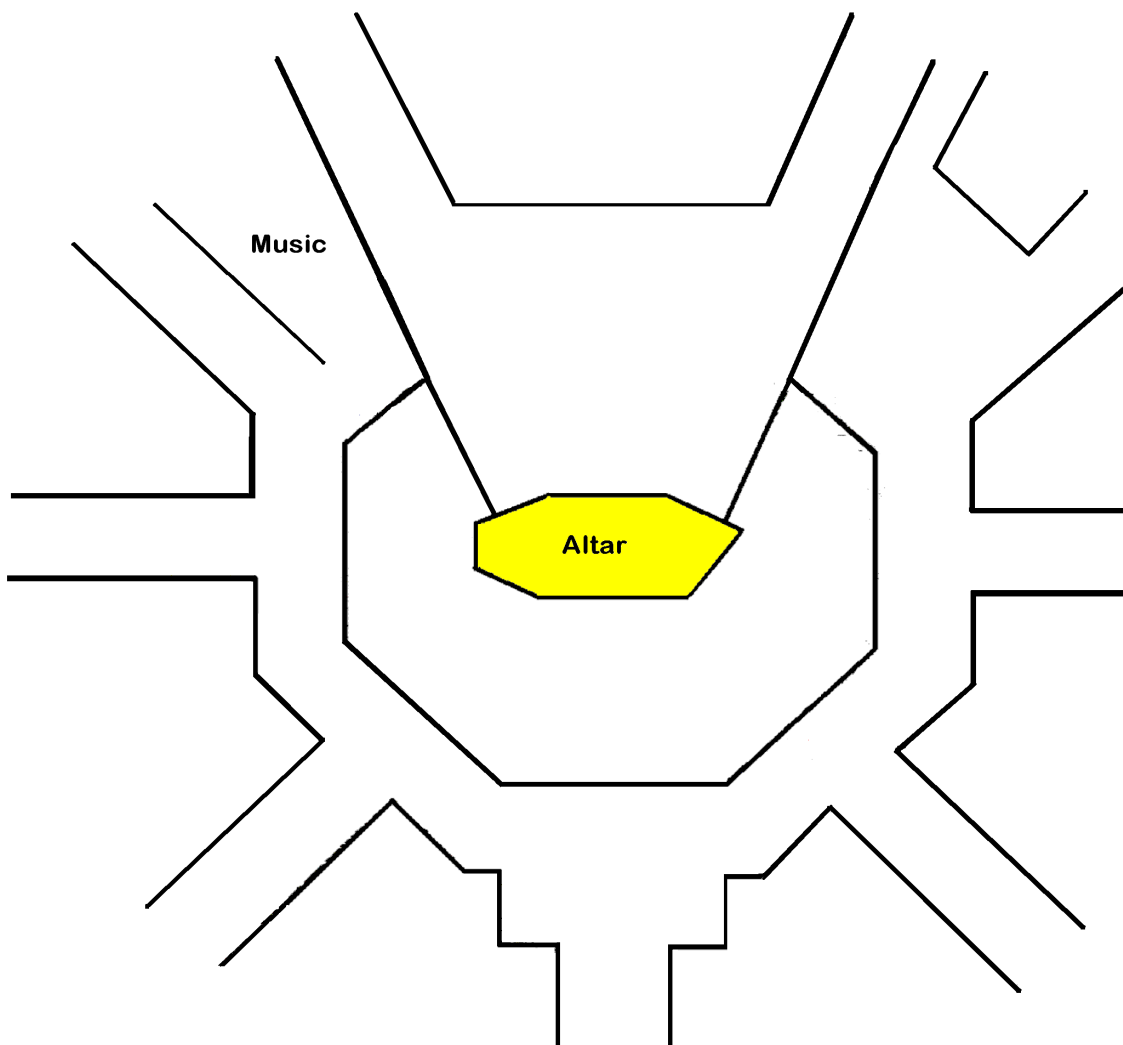
Closing Prayer

Blessing and Sending Forth

Recessional Music

Appendix 2

Diagram of St. Clement of Rome Worship Space



Appendix 3

Policy Agreement

Date: _____

Name of Bride: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Name of Groom: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

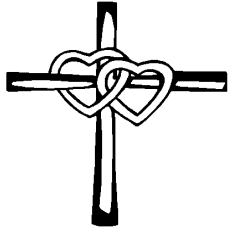
We have read the Marriage Policy for St. Clement of Rome Catholic Church and have agreed with the terms and conditions therein.

Bride's Signature

Groom's Signature

Please sign and return to Parish Office.
It can be dropped off, mailed, emailed or faxed.

St. Clement of Rome Catholic Church
343 S. Main Street
Romeo, MI 48065
Email: stclementromeo@comcast.net



*Wherever you shall go, I shall go,
wherever you shall live, so shall I live;
your people shall be my people,
your God shall be my God.
Wherever you die, I shall die,
and there will be buried beside you.
We shall be together forever,
and our love will be
the gifts of our lives.*

~ from the Book of Ruth (1:16-17)

*If I speak with human tongues and angelic
as well but do not have love,
I am a noisy gong, a clanging cymbal.
If I have the gift of prophecy and, with full
knowledge comprehend all mysteries, if I have
faith great enough to move mountains,
but have not love, I have nothing.
If I give everything I have to feed the poor
and hand over my body to be burned,
but have not love, I gain nothing.
Love is patient; love is kind.
Love is not jealous; it does not put on airs;
it is not snobbish.
Love is never rude; it is not self-seeking;
it is not prone to anger.
Neither does it brood over injuries.
Love does not rejoice in what is wrong but rejoices with truth.
There is no limit to love's forbearance,
to its trust, its hope, its power to endure.*

1 Corinthians 13: 1-7