

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church
800 Portion Road
Lake Ronkonkoma, New York 11779
(631) 737-4388

Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations on your recent engagement and thank you for your interest in having a Sacramental Marriage through the Catholic Church. Parishioners both present and past are most welcome to be married here. Engaged couples living in the parish would also be welcomed to celebrate their marriage here.

We hope the various points of information contained in this link will assist you and answer many of your questions.

After reviewing the information, please give me a call at the Parish Office at 737-4388 ext. 103 (email:steas5@optonline.net) to check the availability of your date and to do the initial Wedding intake information. Once that conversation has taken place, I will discuss with you the next steps.

Once again, many blessings on your up coming marriage.

Faithfully,
Brother Ferdinand, OSF
Pastoral Associate

Getting Married at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton RC Church

(Catholic weddings need at least 6 months preparation)

Complete the Faith Survey and return to the Parish Office as soon as possible so you can be contacted for your Pre Nuptial Interview.

Wedding date will be confirmed at the time of your first meeting with a member of the parish clergy. (Pre Nuptial Interview)

Canonical/Civil Requirements

Both bride and groom must be at least 19 years of age. If either party is not 21 years of age, we are required to have signed permission from the couples Parents.

Documents

Both the bride and groom (if they are Catholic) must submit a NEW BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE dated within 6 months of the wedding. Original certificates may not be used. For someone baptized in another Christian tradition, an original or photocopy of their baptismal is sufficient.

If either party was married before, or if a Catholic is marrying someone of another faith, dispensations are required. Please bring these matters to the attention of the priest/deacon arranging your wedding immediately. In some cases, these matters need extra time to process, especially if an annulment is needed. In fact, we are not permitted to schedule a wedding until the entire annulment process has been completed.

License – apply at any town or city clerk’s office in the state of New York. Both applicants must apply in person. A New York state license is required and is valid only for this state. The license is valid for sixty (60) days. **Keep in mind that:** wedding ceremonies cannot be performed within twenty-four hours of the license being issued. ***Please***

bring the license to the Parish Office about two weeks before the wedding.

Times for Weddings

Fridays – Ceremonies only

No earlier than 4:30 PM

Saturdays – Nuptial Mass or Ceremony

11 AM, 12 N, 1PM, 2:30, 3 PM

(*2:30 is the latest for a Mass)

Sundays – Ceremonies only at 3 PM

Rehearsals

Usually take place on Thursday, early evening. Other times are handled on an individual basis.

Fees

\$400. for the Church (due two weeks before the wedding)

Music: These fees are handled directly with the Music Director. Organist and Soloist - \$250. **Checks should be made payable to: Carol Fox and Phyllis Benanti.** Fee is due when you meet with the Director to discuss your wedding music. You should call about **one year prior** to your wedding. Contact Phyllis Benanti at: (631)648-0460.

If you wish to bring in your own musicians, you must discuss that with the Music Director in advance. **Please note that the parish is obligated to the Parish Music Ministers and their fees must still be paid.** The Director will gladly be present at the wedding to assist the “guest” musicians with any questions or concerns about the organ or sound system.

Marriage Prep. and F.O.C.C.U.S. - \$50.

Complete the Pre Cana/Marriage Prep. **Form enclosed** and return it to the Coordinator via the mail.

If you decide to take advantage of Diocesan Pre Cana, please contact the Office of Faith Formation at 516-678-5800 for specific dates/times. Their website may also be helpful: www.drvc.org/faithformation

Interfaith Pre Cana is also available through the Diocese. Please refer to the information above for more specific assistance.

We also need you to submit a certificate that Marriage preparation has been completed, *if it was not taken at the parish*.

If you wish to have a relative or family friend who is a priest or a deacon preside over your wedding, please ask that person to write to our Pastor: Monsignor Daniel A. Picciano for delegation. We are always most happy to oblige.

Practical Issues for Weddings

Please always be considerate about being *on time* for your rehearsal and, especially, on your wedding day. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to communicate to their attendants and others about being on time.

The day/time of your rehearsal will be discussed with the presider of your wedding well in advance. Any questions, please call the Parish Office for assistance.

Floral Pieces/Decorations

It is always appreciated if you wish to leave any baskets for the Church. However, we need to know about this at least two weeks prior to your wedding. Please remind your florist that bows or pew decorations may not be taped to the pews. It is recommended that they use large rubber bands to secure these items. The florist may arrive at the Church *one hour before the ceremony to set up the pieces*.

Pictures

Make sure all release forms have been signed and returned to the Parish Office before the evening of the rehearsal. Please be sure to instruct all

photographers to check in with the **priest or deacon** before the ceremony. **They will be the final word in all matters.**

Runners

Aisle runners are **now prohibited** because they create a safety hazard.

Rice, etc.

The throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals and the releasing of balloons are prohibited inside or outside the Church. Not only does it create a serious hazard, our insurance insists these items cannot be used. We also do not have a maintenance person available for clean up and we need to be respectful and considerate about other events following your wedding at the Church. Bubbles seem to be the acceptable alternative, if you wish.

Unity Candle

Please be sure to have someone not involved in the wedding party take responsibility for taking the candles/holders after the ceremony. The parish cannot be responsible for items left after a wedding. Bring it to the rehearsal in a shopping bag with your name, date of wedding printed on the outside and leave it in the Sacristy.

Participation Program

Some couples wish to distribute a booklet outlining the ceremony and listing the names of those in the wedding party. A sample of one for a Nuptial Mass and one for a Wedding Ceremony are enclosed to assist you.

Directions to the Church

You can download them from the parish website at: www.steas.org

One final word.....

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to insure that they, as well as all the attendants in their wedding party be alcohol free before the ceremony. Even following the wedding, we must insist that no alcoholic beverages be served while the limos are on Church property.

The attire of those in the wedding and those participating as readers or gift bearers needs to be appropriate and in good taste for Church. Again, some direction from the bride and groom is necessary and expected in this regard.

After all that is said and done, “You both have come together in this Church so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love in the presence of the Church, its minister and this community.....”
with these words, the Church welcomes you on your wedding day and wants you both to know that we look forward to guiding you in preparing for your marriage.

All of the above details are based on an underlying perception of **marriage as a Sacrament, an event that is both a personal celebration and a Rite of the Church.**

May God bless you both as you enter into this most sacred union!

For questions/concerns, please contact Brother Ferdinand, Pastoral Associate, either by telephone (631)737-4388 ext 103 or by email at: steas5@optonline.net

Attachments:

F.O.C.C.U.S./Pre Cana registration form

F.O.C.C.U.S. brochure

Checklist for engaged couples

Survey – (2) – ***Re-examining My Faith***

FOCCUS is a self-diagnostic instrument designed to help couples learn more about themselves and their unique relationship. It is not a test nor meant as a predictor of success or failure in marriage. It is a tool to help couples name and work through issues before marriage.

FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study) provides individualized couple feedback on where each partner stands in regard to topic areas important to marriage. The results of the inventory point to issues and areas that may need to be addressed.

FOCCUS uses trained facilitator couples to guide the engaged as they look at patterns in their responses, discuss issues, and problem solve.

The content for discussion in FOCCUS reflects the current body of knowledge about the elements necessary for a successful marriage. There is also content on key contemporary and specialized needs of couples: couples who cohabit before marriage, dual career marriages, interchurch and second marriages.

FOCCUS was developed to reflect the values and ideals of marriage as sacred. The *Marriage Covenant* questions in FOCCUS deal with permanency, fidelity, unconditional love, openness to children and shared faith in God (From the Facilitator Notebook).

The newly issued "Marriage Preparation Policy" for the Diocese of Rockville Centre issued by the Bishop . . .
"The use of a pre-marital inventory (e.g., FOCCUS) is strongly urged. The Pontifical Council recommends that we make use of pedagogical and psychological aids that have a sound orientation in our efforts toward qualifying marriage preparation. We believe that all couples will benefit from beginning the process of marriage preparation with a pre-marital inventory such as FOCCUS...an instrument such as FOCCUS can help the engaged couple, together with the guidance of trained sponsor couples and clergy, identify the strengths and weaknesses of their relationship. FOCCUS also helps couples identify areas of agreement and disagreement, both with each other and with Church teaching."

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In keeping with the Diocesan Policy regarding Marriage Preparation, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton normally requires the use of FOCCUS by all couples preparing for marriage in our parish. See back of pamphlet for commonly asked questions.

How do you register for FOCCUS?
Upon receipt of this pamphlet, you have also received a FOCCUS schedule. Fill out the registration form and return it as soon as possible following the directions on the form.

What will happen next?
You will be notified by a FOCCUS coordinator confirming session choice, which will be the date you will fill out the FOCCUS inventory.

Is there a fee?
Yes, we are asking each couple to send a \$50 check with the FOCCUS registration form. This fee will cover your FOCCUS and Pre-Cana.

What happens after we fill out the FOCCUS instrument?
On the day you fill out your FOCCUS instrument you will schedule an evening within the following 2 weeks to meet with a facilitator couple at their home, to go over the areas you have raised by filling out the FOCCUS instrument.

What happens after we complete FOCCUS?
After completing FOCCUS you will attend Pre-Cana. On the day you fill out your FOCCUS instrument you will be asked to fill out your Pre-Cana registration form and choose a session for Pre-Cana. Approximately 6 weeks prior to the beginning of your Pre-Cana session you will receive a letter regarding your session.

1 **PLEASE SEND THIS FORM TO THE NAME NOTED BELOW.**
Marriage Preparation - FOCCUS Registration Form

Date: _____

Groom _____ Religion _____ Age _____

Address/Town/Zip _____

Hm.Phone# _____ Cell#: _____ Wedding Date _____

Parish _____ Occupation _____

Email: _____ (must not be same one as bride's)
+++++

Bride _____ Religion _____ Age _____

Address/Town/Zip _____

Hm. Phone# _____ Cell#: _____ Wedding Date _____

Parish _____ Occupation _____

Email: _____ (must not be same one as groom's)
+++++

Please complete form and return AS SOON AS POSSIBLE! There is a \$65.00 Fee which should accompany this form. **Please make the check payable to: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church. Return both the form and check to our Pre-Cana Coordinator:**

Jayne Rulli
2 Robert Drive
Centereach, NY 11720

Upon receipt of this form, Jayne Rulli will contact you by telephone. Any other questions can be directed to Jayne Rulli at (631) 737-4972. PLEASE SIGN UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. SESSIONS FILL UP QUICKLY.

PARISH SESSIONS FOR PRE CANA & FOCCUS

Marriage preparation consists of two parts: FOCCUS and Pre Cana sessions.

- 1. FOCCUS is a valuable tool used at the beginning of the Marriage preparation process to enhance communication between the couple preparing for marriage. Once you return your Registration form, you will be contacted by, Jayne Rulli, our Pre Cana Coordinator, to verify your information so that an online FOCCUS Inventory session can be arranged for the Bride and Groom.**

Once the session is arranged, you will each receive an email with a user name and password enabling you to complete your online inventory.

- 2. The Pre Cana sessions are offered at three different times during the year: Fall, Winter and Spring. These sessions are designed to support and guide couples throughout the most important transition of their lives. Couples are presented with the Catholic perspective on marriage as a Vocation and Sacrament. Couples are shown how to grow in their Faith while respecting each other's religious heritage. St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish has trained couples who lead the sessions and guide the engaged couples throughout the process.**

Winter Session:

Opening Mass – Sunday, Jan. 9, 2011 – 12 Noon Mass

Closing Mass – Sunday, Feb. 6, 2011 – 12 Noon Mass

Spring Session:

Opening Mass – Sunday, May 15, 2011 – 12 Noon Mass

Closing Mass – Sunday, June 12, 2011 – 12 Noon Mass

- We strongly suggest that engaged couples sign up for Marriage preparation as soon as possible. It is not advisable to wait until a few months before your wedding to enroll.**

For those with unusual work schedules, we recommend contacting the Diocese for other session options.

Engaged Couples Checklist

As soon As Possible:

- Return Wedding Packet with surveys and Marriage Reservation Form to the Parish Office.
- Complete FOCCUS registration form and mail to Jayne Rulli (see address on form) along with a \$50. Registration fee check. Be sure to register for the FOCCUS session at least one year before your wedding. At the time of the FOCCUS session, you will have the opportunity to enroll in Pre Cana, too.
- As soon as your Wedding Packet envelope is returned to the Parish Office with your surveys and Marriage Reservation form, you will be contacted by either: Fr. Dan Picciano (Pastor of the Parish) or Deacon Joe Maffeo or Deacon John Grebe to arrange the Pre-Nuptial Interview. The wedding date will be entered into the Wedding book after this meeting.

One Year Before:

- Contact the Music Director, Phyllis Benanti at 631-648-0460 to discuss the wedding music and any other special arrangements you may request.

Six Months Before:

- Secure original baptismal certificates (for Catholics) for yourselves and bring them to the Parish Office.
- Contact the clergy person performing your wedding for assistance with: setting date/time for rehearsal and for help in planning or choosing prayers, blessings and readings for your wedding ceremony.

One Month Before:

- Return the video/photographer/limo drivers Release Statements.
- Bring the wedding fee check to the Parish Office.

One Week Before:

- Bring the License to the Parish Office.
- Attend Wedding Rehearsal and clear up any last minute questions or concerns. Before the rehearsal, be sure to know the arrangement of your procession with the bridesmaids and ushers and, where applicable, flower girl or ring bearer.

This will save quite a bit of time if these details have already been addressed.

Re-Examining My Faith

for Engaged Couples (Bride's copy)

Name_____Age:_____

Please complete this survey fully. As you answer the multiple choice questions, put a check mark near the statements that best describe you.

- ★ **This instrument was designed to help engaged couples to reflect on their faith as they begin preparation for their wedding day and their future lives as married couples.**
- ★ **Re-Examining My Faith is an instrument whereby you can express your views on what is important to you about your future marriage and how we may be able to answer some of your questions about your relationship to God and to the Catholic Church.**
- ★ **Re-Examining My Faith is not a test; it is not about passing or failing. It is about reflecting on your marital relationship and your faith in God. We ask you to answer ALL the multiple choice questions. Put a check mark ✓ near the statements that best describe you and your views or write your own comments.**
- ★ **This will only take about ten minutes to complete. Please complete the survey alone. We are not looking for agreement. There are no right or wrong answers.**
- ★ **While this survey was designed for Catholics, people of other faiths are also asked to complete it. Since you are marrying a Catholic, your views on God, on the Church and on family life are very relevant to your partner and to us. Please do your best to answer each question.**
- ★ **Your answers to questions 10 and 11 are very important to the priest or deacon as he prepares to meet you for the first time. Requests for information will be ready and available to you at that first meeting. It is essential to return both questionnaires so an appointment may be made to schedule your wedding date on the Church calendar.**

Your Religious Experience

1. Religious Influence

The people who have most influenced me in coming to know God and having faith in God are:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Both My Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> a religion teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father | <input type="checkbox"/> a Catholic school teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother | <input type="checkbox"/> a religious person |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a family member | <input type="checkbox"/> other |

2. I consider myself:

- a good human being
- a Christian
- a Catholic
- all of the above
- none of the above

3. Religious Services

- I attend Mass
- I attend another type of religious service
 - weekly
 - occasionally
 - seldom

Your Perspective on Marriage

4. Which of the following statements best describes your understanding of the importance of marriage?

Check those statements which most nearly express what is important to you. The answers you give will form the basis for a discussion with your priest/deacon.

- Marriage should be celebrated as soon as possible after the couple gets engaged.
- Marriage is a life-long relationship.
- Marriage is a relationship based on loyalty and love.
- Marriage should not be celebrated until the couple receives proper preparation.
- other _____

5. What difference will it make to you in having your marriage blessed in the Church?
- I will be closer to my spouse.
 - I will be closer to God.
 - I will receive special graces to help me live my marriage.
 - I will have a solid foundation for our future together.
 - Other _____

Your Perspective on being a Catholic

6. What does it mean to belong to the Catholic Church?
- Belonging to the Church is a matter between God and myself. Once I have been baptized and know the fundamentals of the Faith, it is up to me to simply stay away from serious sin and go to Mass on Sunday.
 - Belonging to the Church is like belonging to my own family. It's an important part of my life.
 - Belonging to the Church includes being registered in the parish near where I live.
 - Belonging to the Church means accepting the teachings of Jesus and patterning our lives after them and becoming involved in my parish.
 - Other _____
7. What does it mean to raise children in the Catholic Faith?
- The Church is responsible for the education of the children. Once parents have baptized their children, their job is to send the children to Religious Education classes once they reach the first grade level in school and let someone else teach their children about their faith
 - Parents have the responsibility and privilege to share their values, including faith in God, with their children by words and by example.
 - Parents provide a positive and religious example in their homes for their children as well as in their parish by having their children participate in religious education classes and in Sunday worship.
 - Parents ensure that their children receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Communion and Confirmation as well as the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.
 - Other _____

Your Future Marriage

8. Noted below are the personal qualities I consider most important in the person that I wish to marry.

(Check those that apply to your future spouse)

- Responsible
- Loyal Mature
- Loving
- Dependable
- Shares My Faith
- Independent
- Other _____

Your Family of Origin

9. A. The two things I learned about married life from my parents' marriage that I want to make real in our marriage are:

B. The two things I learned about family life from my parents that I want to make real in our family are:

C. The two things I learned about God and my religious heritage from my parents that I will share with my spouse and children are:

Here is How We Can Help You

10. At the parish of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, we are a warm and welcoming community of people caring for each other. How can we help you to become a closer part of this parish family? Check the appropriate boxes below

- We will not be living in this area after our wedding but will register at another parish.
- Provide me with a copy of the parish bulletin containing the Mass schedule.
- Provide me with a census card so we may register as parishioners.

Other _____

11. How can we assist you in your faith life? Check the appropriate boxes below.

- Provide me with information about prayer.
- Provide me with information about Baptism for adults.
- Provide me with information about receiving First Communion and/or Confirmation for adults.
- Provide me with information on what it means to be a Catholic; have a strong faith in Jesus.
- Provide me with information on the Bible and what Catholics believe about Sacred Scripture.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Re-Examining My Faith

for the Groom

Name _____ Age: _____

Please complete this survey fully. As you answer the multiple choice questions, put a check mark near the statements that best describe you.

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