

### **Prayer of Blessing at Reception**

Let us Pray...

Lord God, we thank you for all of your many gifts  
to us today, especially the gift of  
Married love and family and friends.

We ask you to send down your  
blessing upon us gathered here together.  
In a special way, bless (Bride) and (Groom),  
who today have been married.  
Keep them always in your care.

Bless the food we eat, the conversation we share,  
and bless our lives with your grace.

We ask this in the Name of the Father and of the  
Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.



*These guidelines were reviewed and approved  
as of June 1st, 2017*

## *The Celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage*



*The greatest of these is love*

### **Marriage Preparation Guidelines for:**

**St. Brigid &  
Gate of Heaven Parishes**

*841 East Broadway  
South Boston, MA 02127  
617-268-2122, 617-268-3344*

# About Our Parishes

## Telephone numbers:

St Brigid Parish: 617-268-2122

Gate of Heaven Parish: 617-268-3344

Parish Office Address: 841 East Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127

## **Directions to the Gate of Heaven Church**

**CHURCH ADDRESS: 615 East Fourth Street, South Boston, MA 02127**

### **From Mass Pike**

Follow signs to the Ted Williams Tunnel—Route 90. Take Exit 25 off this new extension road. Follow to D Street, taking a left onto Summer Street, which then turns into L Street. On L Street take a right onto East Broadway. Follow East Broadway about 1/2 mile and take a left onto H Street. Take the first left onto East Fourth Street. Church is on the right-hand side.

### **From Rte 93 heading South**

Exit at Purchase Street Exit. At top of exit take a left at set of lights. Follow to Seaport Hotel area, taking right onto D Street. Follow directions above from D Street.

### **From Rte 93 heading North**

Take Morrissey Blvd Exit, South Boston. Follow signs to Day Blvd, South Boston. State Police and beach will be on your right. Keeping beach to your right follow to I street. Take a left onto I street and follow for five blocks. Church is on the left-hand side at corner of East Fourth Street.

## **Directions to St Brigid Church**

**CHURCH ADDRESS: 845 East Broadway, South Boston, MA 02127**

### **From Mass Pike**

Follow signs to the Ted Williams Tunnel. Take Exit 25 off this extension road. Follow to D Street, taking a left onto Summer Street, which then turns into L Street. On L Street take a left onto East Broadway. Follow East Broadway to N Street. Church is on right.

### **From Rte 93 South**

Exit at Purchase Street Exit. At top of exit take a left at set of lights. Follow directions above from D St.

### **From Rte 93 North**

Take Morrissey Blvd Exit, South Boston. Follow signs to Day Blvd, South Boston. State Police and Beach will be on your right. Keeping beach to your right follow to L Street (L Street Bathhouse is on your right.) Take a left at lights onto L Street. Follow L Street to East Broadway and take a right. Saint Brigid is on East Broadway at N Street, two blocks up on your right.

## 10. Timing/Parking/Transportation

**Be on time!** Weddings are scheduled for a 1½ hour period (2pm Wedding: 1:30-3pm, 5:30 Wedding: 5pm-6:30pm). It is important to be aware of the time constraints that the Church has in scheduling Weddings, Masses, and other liturgical celebrations, as well as building, operational, and personnel costs.

Musicians, the priest, and ministers may have other engagements following your Wedding Ceremony. If you are late, these people may have to leave your wedding before its completion or you may incur additional fees.

Additionally, if there is a Mass or other celebration scheduled after your Wedding and you are late, it may be necessary to shorten your celebration so that the Church will be available for the next Mass.

Remember that your guests are usually present 20 minutes prior to the start of your Wedding.

**Parking/Shuttle Buses:** Parking is available near each Church, in a lot or on the street. Shuttle buses carrying guests should arrive no later than 10 minutes before the Wedding so that everyone can be seated for the start of the Ceremony. Be sure to factor in traffic and travel time.

**Be on time!** and keep everyone happy on this joyous occasion. Please make sure that your photographer, limo/bus/shuttle drivers are made aware of these strict time constraints. To avoid all these problems, and more so, to ensure a smooth, relaxing, and prayerful day, we ask that you adhere **strictly** to these important instructions.



Dear Friends,

Congratulations on your engagement and seeking a new life together in God. Marriage at St. Brigid & Gate of Heaven Parishes is more than the celebration of a couple's love for each other. While the Church rejoices with you in your love for one another, the celebration of Marriage is about glorifying God for what He is doing in your life. Your Marriage is built upon your faith in God and His Church. The Sacrament of Marriage in the Church solemnizes Marriage in the context of prayer. Great care is taken to see that the prayer for this special moment is reverent, graceful, beautiful, and open to the movement of God's Spirit among us. The dignity of the Sacrament of Marriage calls for a celebration that is filled with song, with prayerful gestures, and with silence in which we hear the voice of God in our lives. It is for this end that our parishes provide the following guidelines so that the celebration of the sacraments is one filled with faith and gratitude for God in whose love we have been created.



## Preparation for Marriage

### 1. Meetings with Priest:

This first contact and meeting will enable the Priest and couple to get acquainted. Subsequent meetings are part of the preparation for marriage. As the Wedding date draws near, attention will shift to planning the Wedding Liturgy.

### 2. Marriage Preparation (Pre-Cana) Program:

For your Pre-Cana program you may attend a program sponsored by the Archdiocese of Boston. A list of these programs can be obtained from the Priest with whom you are speaking or on the internet at [www.BostonCatholic.org](http://www.BostonCatholic.org) under **Marriage Preparation**.

It is required that you attend one of the Marriage Preparation programs before being married. It is suggested that you register early to be sure a spot is reserved for you.

## Planning Your Wedding

### 1. Mass or Ceremony?

A Nuptial Mass is the most appropriate celebration as you begin your married life. We highly recommend this form of marriage celebration for all engaged Catholic couples. There are certain circumstances, however, when a ceremony would be more appropriate. You should make your decision in consultation with the Priest who is assisting in the preparation for your Marriage.

#### **You might want to consider the following:**

- a. What is our relationship to the Sunday Eucharist? Have we been away from the community's prayer? Have we committed ourselves to returning?
- b. If one of you is not in communion with the Roman Catholic Church (and so will be unable to share Holy Communion if the wedding is celebrated during Mass), you may want to consider what this means for you and your families. Do you want to include something in this celebration in which only one of you will be able to take part?
- c. Who will your guests be? If many of your guests are from outside the Catholic community, you may want to consider celebrating your Wedding within a ceremony. If many are weekly participants in the Eucharist, a ceremony may cause confusion with their interpretation of the usual celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage.

Above all, be open and honest with the Priest with whom you are preparing your Wedding and make the decision which will provide the best context for prayer and celebration.

E. Gift Bearers: The gifts of bread and wine which will be consecrated at Mass are sometimes offered by the Congregation. If you wish, two relatives or friends may bring forward the gifts of bread and wine at offertory time.

F. Confetti, Rice, Bubbles, Flower Petals: We must insist that you request your guests to refrain from the throwing of rice, confetti, bird seed, & blowing bubbles in church or on the steps of the church, etc. Flower girls should carry a bouquet or basket of flowers, but must not throw them in the aisle. There is no maintenance staff on duty on the weekends and there may be a Mass or another wedding scheduled after yours.

G. Unity Candles: While the unity candle is a beautiful way for the newly married couple to express their union in Marriage, it has not traditionally been part of the Catholic ceremony. It can be a fire hazard and has resulted in injury and property damage in the past. For these reasons, *unity candles may not be used in the church*. Those couples who would like to make the unity candle part of their Wedding day are encouraged to incorporate it into the reception.

H. Receiving Line: Receiving lines are permitted after your Wedding ceremony when there is no conflicting Mass or Wedding ceremony immediately following. Please inquire with the Priest handling your Wedding for further instructions on this matter.

I. Preparation for the Sacrament of Matrimony & Communion: All Catholics should be properly disposed to receive the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony and the Eucharist by availing themselves of the Sacrament of Reconciliation before their Wedding day. Please consider the Sacrament of Penance before your scheduled Wedding date. At our parish, they are offered on Saturdays from 3:30-3:50 at both Churches or by appointment. Parishes throughout the Archdiocese also have regularly scheduled times for Confession.

J. Prayer at the Reception: In these days of fewer Priests, the Priest who celebrates your Wedding might very well not be able to lead you in prayer before the meal. The grace prayer at the end of this booklet may be used at your reception. We suggest that you might ask a family member to lead the grace before the meal when a Priest is unavailable.

## 8. Wedding Rehearsal:

Your Wedding rehearsal should be held one or two days before the date of the wedding. These are usually held between 5:00-7:00 p.m. **Please schedule this with the priest** at least two months before your wedding date. Rehearsals are scheduled every hour, please be certain that everyone attending the rehearsal is on time. Due to time constraints, all rehearsals will begin at the scheduled time, even if all the participants are not present.

The following are asked to be present at the wedding rehearsal: Bride, Groom, Best Man, Maid/Matron of Honor, Ushers, Bridesmaids, Bride and Grooms parents, and any others who will take part in the ceremony (readers, etc.). Our Wedding Coordinator will be present for your rehearsal and will also be at the Church for the start of your Wedding.

## 9. The Day of the Wedding Mass/Ceremony:

*A. Ushers:* Ushers are asked to arrive at the Church 1/2 hour before the Wedding is scheduled to begin. Ushers will be seating your guests during this time period.

*B. Groom/Best Man:* The Groom and Best Man are asked to arrive at the Church 1/2 hour before the Wedding is to begin. They will remain in the sacristy until the Wedding begins.

*C. Bride/Maid of Honor/Bridesmaids:* The Bride, Maid of Honor, and Bridesmaids should arrive outside the Church at least **10 minutes before the ceremony.** The Bride will be brought inside the Church at least **5 minutes before the Wedding is scheduled** to begin. It is **extremely important** that your Wedding begins at the scheduled time. Priests & Ministers often have other appointments or engagements immediately following your Wedding. When making arrangements for transportation (guest shuttles), be aware of the time involved and allot for extra time.

*D. Readers:* We encourage the participation of relatives and friends as readers during your ceremony. You may choose someone to proclaim The first reading (Old Testament), second reading (New Testament), and prayers of the faithful. Readers of OT and NT should be persons who believe what the Sacred Scripture professes. We highly recommend that you choose someone who is comfortable reading in public and has had some experience in public speaking. Please be sure that your readers know the meaning behind the words, have practiced, and will speak clearly and loudly.

## 2. Scheduling the time of the Celebration:

Weddings are scheduled with respect to the couple's wishes and the availability of the church building and parish ministers. Weddings are usually scheduled on Saturdays from 12:00pm through 2:00p.m. and at 5:30 p.m. Weddings are scheduled to start on Sundays from 2:00 p.m. through 4:00 p.m.

## 3. Music:

Music is an integral part of the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. The music you select must be prayerful and in keeping with the liturgy of the occasion. The choice must always be consistent with the Church's understanding of worship. Popular songs, even those with great sentimental value for the couple, have their rightful place at the reception and not at the celebration of the Sacrament. The Priest can assist you in choosing appropriate music for your Wedding. Our Parish Music Director/Organist is available to assist in the planning of your celebration. Please contact the Music Director regarding your music and to select a soloist to sing at your Wedding. These Soloists sing at the Masses on the weekends, so you can arrange to listen to them at that time. Guest musicians (trumpeter, violinist, etc.) are welcome, but arrangements must be made through the Music Director.

## 4. Flowers/Florist:

Flowers may be placed in the sanctuary on the back altar area. Flowers are not placed on the altar itself. An aisle runner is not necessary for the celebration of your marriage, but if you choose to use one, the florist usually provides one. Often times, the aisle runner can pose a risk to your guests walking back and forth.

The Gate of Heaven Church aisle is 120 feet. The St. Brigid Church aisle is 80 feet. The florist is responsible for placing the flowers in the sanctuary and setting up the aisle runner.

The florist should prepare the Church 45 minutes before the celebration.\* We do ask that you leave the flowers on the altar for the continued enrichment of our sanctuary and the enjoyment of your fellow parishioners. In keeping with the norms of the Universal Church, flowers are not permitted on the altar during the season of Lent.

*\*For 5:30 Weddings on Saturday, a florist cannot prepare the Church until 5pm because of the Parish 4pm Mass.*

## **5. Photography:**

The Liturgy during which you celebrate your Marriage is a sacred moment of rejoicing in prayer, song, and gesture. While we understand your desire to record this moment, we ask that you observe the following guidelines so that the sacred joy of this day will be preserved.

**A more detailed set of these guidelines will be provided to you and must be signed and given to your photographers.**

1. Both professional photographers and video technicians are welcome at our parish. We ask that only one photographer and one videographer be employed during the ceremony. Any relatives or friends taking pictures should remain in their seats.
2. Videographers are not permitted to roam about the Church once the liturgy has begun. Video cameras must remain on a tripod in one of the side aisles once the bride reaches the altar until the final blessing. A video camera may be placed in the choir loft as well.
3. Only the lighting already available in the Church may be used. No additional lighting may be brought into the Church or used with a video camera. Flash photography is permitted.
4. Photographers and video photographers should consult with the Priest or Wedding Coordinator before the service begins concerning any questions or clarifications.
5. These policies provide for ample time to take photos during the ceremony. If you think that additional time for pictures inside the church is needed following the ceremony, please speak with the Priest prior to your Wedding date.

Additional time may be limited due to other parish Masses, celebrations, or engagements planned following your Wedding. We also suggest using our beautifully landscaped grounds to take your Wedding photos.

**Under no circumstances are videographers or photographers allowed in the altar sanctuary or altar doorways during the ceremony.**

## **6. Together for Life Booklet:**

The priest will provide you with a booklet *Together for Life* by Joseph M. Champlin to help you plan your Wedding Mass/Ceremony. Within this booklet you will find a number of choices of prayers, readings, vows, etc. that you may select for your Wedding. A handy pull-out selection sheet is found at the end of the booklet to be filled out with your choices and presented at the parish office no later than 10 days before your wedding date. These readings are also found on our website at [www.GateofHeavenStBrigid.org/Marriage](http://www.GateofHeavenStBrigid.org/Marriage)



## **7. Documents Needed:**

### ***A. Church Documents***

If you are a Catholic: you will need a copy of your Baptismal certificate and Confirmation certificate. These should be newly furnished (**dated within six months of your Marriage**) by the parish in which the Sacrament was celebrated. If you were baptized & confirmed in our parishes, we will have these documents for you.

If you are a non-Catholic Christian: you will need a copy of your Baptismal certificate. This should be a newly furnished document by the Church in which you were baptized.

Our Parish Mailing Address:  
St. Brigid & Gate of Heaven Parish Office  
841 East Broadway  
South Boston, MA 02127

### ***B. Civil Documents:***

You must obtain a Marriage license at any town or city hall in Massachusetts before the celebration of your Marriage. You can apply for this license beginning 60 days before your Wedding date. Please present your license to the parish office no later than 15 days prior to your Wedding date. Please make sure that the self-addressed envelope from the city or town is with the license.