



ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΟΣ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΓ. ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ
MANITOBA HELLENIC CULTURAL CENTRE • ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΤΙΚΟ ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΜΑΝΙΤΟΜΠΑΣ
GREEK COMMUNITY OF WINNIPEG • ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΚΟΙΝΟΤΗΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΓΟΥΙΝΙΠΕΓΚ

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PETITION FOR MARRIAGE

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We as a parish rejoice in the love that you, as a couple, share for one another and the commitment that has been made to bring you to this day in preparation for your marriage.

Your decision to be married in the Church is an indication that the Christian faith and the sacramental life of the Church are important to you. In the eyes of the Church, marriage is the sacramental union between a man and a woman that is used in the Bible as the image of God's faithful love for ancient Israel (Isaiah 54; Jeremiah 3; Ezekiel 16) and Christ's sacrificial relationship to the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33). Jesus Himself, together with His mother the Theotokos and the disciples attended and blessed a wedding in Cana of Galilee, performing His first miracle, which assisted in the celebration of that event (John 2:1-11). When we say that Christian marriage is a sacrament, we use that word to convey the depths of the bond you are about to enter into: a sacramentum in the ancient Roman Empire was the oath of loyalty unto death that a Roman soldier took to the emperor when entering the military. As Christians, the sacrament of marriage is your oath of loyalty unto death to each other and - as a couple - your oath of loyalty unto death to our Lord Jesus Christ. Christian marriage is intended to be a sign of God's presence and love in this fallen and broken world.

There is no fee for the Sacrament, however those who would like to have a wedding in our Parish must meet certain financial obligations. These obligations have been set by our Parish Council and are intended to help meet the financial needs of our Church and to encourage regular and consistent membership in our Community from year to year.

**WHAT YOU MUST KNOW BEFORE CONSIDERING MARRIAGE
AND BOOKING A WEDDING DATE**

Each party must fill out a copy of this form (pages 4 & 5) and meet with the priest AT LEAST six months prior to the wedding date.

A WEDDING DATE WILL NOT BE CONFIRMED until the bride and groom have met with the priest, have gone over the marriage preparation sessions, and the priest feels comfortable performing the wedding, regardless if a wedding reception venue has already been booked.

At your first appointment with the priest, along with this form, please bring with you your baptismal certificates (if you weren't baptized at St. Demetrios), letters of freedom to marry from your parish priest (if not from St. Demetrios) and, if applicable, your final divorce decree from your last previous marriage (civil and ecclesiastical).

Because marriage is a sacrament, weddings cannot be celebrated in a spiritual vacuum. This, therefore, presupposes that:

1. At least one of the couple to be married is an Orthodox Christian, baptized and /or Chrismated in the Church, committed to Christ and His Church and an active steward for at least a year prior to the date of the wedding; and
2. The intended spouse, if not Orthodox, be a Christian baptized in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as commanded by the Lord (Matthew 28:19).

Because of the sacramental nature of the marriage bond (in which a couple not only pledge their love for each other but also their love for Christ) a wedding between an Orthodox Christian and a non-Christian may not be celebrated in the Church.

Inter-Christian Marriages: It is a fact that the more a couple has in common, the more likely they are to live together in peace and concord. Shared faith and traditions spare couples, their children, and their extended families many serious problems, and help to strengthen the bonds between them. Even so, the Orthodox Church will bless marriages between Orthodox and non-Orthodox partners, provided that:

1. The non-Orthodox partner is a Christian who has been baptized, in water, in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; and
2. The couple should be willing to baptize their children in the Orthodox Church and raise and nurture them in accordance with the Orthodox Faith.

A baptized Orthodox Christian whose wedding has not been blessed by the Orthodox Church is no longer in good standing with the Church, and may not receive the Sacraments of the Church, including Holy Communion, or become a Sponsor of an Orthodox Marriage, Baptism or Chrismation, or receive an Orthodox funeral.

A non-Orthodox Christian who marries an Orthodox Christian does not thereby become a member of the Orthodox Church, and may not receive the Sacraments, including Holy Communion, or be buried by the Church, serve on the Parish Council, or vote in parish general assemblies or elections. To participate in the Church's life, one must be received into the Church by the Sacrament of Baptism or, in the case of persons baptized with water, in the Holy Trinity, (after a period of instruction) by Chrismation. Music for the wedding is restricted to the church's cantor (live vocalists or instruments are not permitted in the Orthodox Church).

YOUR ANSWERS ARE CONFIDENTIAL; only the person performing your marriage preparation sessions will see them. The purpose of this questionnaire is to help you have a clear understanding of your responsibilities and commitments by getting married in the Orthodox Church. Please be honest and do not answer the way you think the priest wants you to.

FOR THE COUPLE

ANTICIPATED DATE OF WEDDING: _____ TIME: _____

FOR THE GROOM

BAPTISMAL NAME (FIRST, LAST): _____.

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΙ: _____

PLACE OF RESIDENCE: _____

AGE: _____. DATE OF BIRTH: _____

PLACE OF BIRTH (city, province, country): _____

DATE OF BAPTISM: _____. IN WHAT RELIGION? _____

AGE AT WHICH YOU JOINED ORTHODOXY BY CHRISMATION: _____

OCCUPATION: _____

FATHER'S NAME: _____

FATHER'S COUNTRY OF BIRTH: _____

FATHER'S RELIGION: _____

MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: _____

MOTHER'S COUNTRY OF BIRTH: _____

MOTHER'S RELIGION: _____

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN MARRIED BEFORE (Orthodox Church, any other church, civilly)? YES / NO

If "yes", then fill out Supplementary Form #165

AT WHAT AGE DID YOU ARRIVE IN CANADA? _____

DATE OF ARRIVAL _____

ARE YOU RELATED TO THE INTENDED BRIDE: BY BLOOD? YES / NO

BY MARRIAGE TO ONE OF HER RELATIVES? YES / NO

What religion are you now? _____

Do you actively practice your faith? YES / NO

Are you in good standing with the church? YES / NO

Name of parish you intend to attend after marriage _____

How long have you known each other?

Have you done marriage preparation classes before? YES / NO

If yes, where? Please provide letter from the person that did the course _____

Do you know the Church's teaching on the permanence of marriage? YES / NO

Have you discussed with each other the Church's teaching on the permanence of marriage? YES / NO

Do you know the Church's teaching on fidelity? YES / NO

Have you discussed with each other the Church's teaching on fidelity? YES / NO

If only one party is Orthodox, has there been discussion of the varied religious convictions, teachings, and practices involved in marriage and Orthodox life in general? YES / NO

Will your children be baptized Orthodox? YES / NO

Will you ensure your children receive a proper spiritual education in the Orthodox Church through the proper selection of Godparents and through the parish's Sunday school program?
YES / NO

COMMON IMPEDIMENTS OR PASTORAL CONCERNS

Have you been married before, even in civil union (If yes, please fill out Form 165, provided by the priest at your first meeting)? YES / NO

Do your parents/relatives/friends have reservations regarding your marriage? YES / NO

Have you made a vow inconsistent with marriage (ordination, profession, etc)? YES / NO

Are you related to your fiancée by blood or marriage? YES / NO

Are you having or have you ever had counselling for personal-emotional problems? YES / NO

Do you believe this marriage commits you to Christ? YES / NO

Do you believe this marriage binds you and your spouse together for the rest of your life? YES / NO

Do you promise to be faithful to your future spouse until death? YES / NO

Christ is the Truth. We are therefore obligated to teach the Truth to our children and to guide them on the path to salvation. An Orthodox Christian must be committed to his/her faith, as well as the spiritual formation and education of his/her children. This includes the proper selection of Godparents. We ask the Orthodox Party/Parties sign below as a reminder of their commitment to Christ and His Church.

**AFFIRMATION OF THE ORTHODOX PARTY IN A MARRIAGE
BETWEEN ORTHODOX AND NON-ORTHODOX**

I, _____ intend to marry _____.

I reaffirm my faith in Jesus Christ, and intend to continue living that faith in the Orthodox Church, removing any dangers of defecting from the Faith. I acknowledge the respect I owe to the conscience of my future spouse. I promise to do all that I can to share the faith I have received with all our children by having them baptized, reared, and educated as Orthodox Christians. My future spouse is aware of my convictions and supports me in them. I am reasonably confident that I shall be able to live up to them.

Date: _____. Signature of Orthodox Party: _____

FOR THE BRIDE

BAPTISMAL NAME (FIRST, LAST): _____.

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΙ: _____

PLACE OF RESIDENCE: _____

AGE: _____. DATE OF BIRTH: _____

PLACE OF BIRTH (city, province, country): _____

DATE OF BAPTISM: _____. IN WHAT RELIGION? _____

AGE AT WHICH YOU JOINED ORTHODOXY BY CHRISMATION: _____

OCCUPATION: _____

FATHER'S NAME: _____

FATHER'S COUNTRY OF BIRTH: _____

FATHER'S RELIGION: _____

MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME: _____

MOTHER'S COUNTRY OF BIRTH: _____

MOTHER'S RELIGION: _____

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN MARRIED BEFORE (Orthodox Church, any other church, civilly)? YES / NO

If "yes", then fill out Supplementary Form #165

AT WHAT AGE DID YOU ARRIVE IN CANADA? _____

DATE OF ARRIVAL _____

ARE YOU RELATED TO THE INTENDED BRIDE: BY BLOOD? YES / NO

BY MARRIAGE TO ONE OF HER RELATIVES? YES / NO

What religion are you now? _____

Do you actively practice your faith? YES / NO

Are you in good standing with the church? YES / NO

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Are you related to your fiancé? By blood or marriage? YES / NO

Are you having or have you ever had counselling for personal-emotional problems? YES / NO

Do you believe this marriage commits you to Christ? YES / NO

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Date:_____. Signature of Orthodox Party:_____

FOR THE SPONSOR (Koumbaro/Koumbara)

Sponsors: You must be Orthodox Christians in Good Standing and if married, must be married in the Orthodox Church. If not members of this church, a letter of canonical Good Standing is required from your priest, along with proof of membership in your church. You must also be committed to attend Church on a regular basis and have at least a basic understanding of the Orthodox Faith. Make it a priority to speak to Fr. Nikolaos before you choose your Sponsor.

NAME (FIRST, LAST): _____ . ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΤΙ: _____ .

PLACE OF RESIDENCE: _____ .

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ .

FAITH: _____ .

DATE OF BAPTISM IN ORTHODOX CHURCH: _____ .

Please provide Baptism Certificate or Letter of Baptism and Good Standing from your priest, if Baptism did not take place at St. Demetrios.

DATE OF CHRISMATION IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH: _____ .

CHURCH IN WHICH YOU WERE BAPTIZED/CHRISMATED: _____ .

SINGLE MARRIED SEPARATED DIVORCED

CHURCH IN WHICH YOU WERE MARRIED: _____ .

Provide Orthodox Marriage Certificate if Marriage did not take place at St. Demetrios.

MEMBER OF WHICH ORTHODOX CHURCH: _____ .

CITY AND PROVINCE OF ORTHODOX CHURCH: _____ .

Please Note: You cannot serve as Sponsor if you:

- Are not of an Eastern Orthodox Faith.
- Are not Baptized in an Eastern Orthodox Church.
- Are not Married in an Eastern Orthodox Church.
- Are not Ecclesiastically Divorced from a previous Eastern Orthodox marriage.
- Are not a member in good standing of the Eastern Orthodox Church (see Fr. Nik).

HAVE YOU INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING COPIES?

1. Birth Certificates of the bride and groom.
2. Baptismal Certificate of the Sponsor (If not married).
3. Marriage Certificate of Sponsor.

Financial Obligations - Wedding

Bride, Groom and Sponsor(s):

Each Orthodox person must be a member in “good standing” at our Parish or at their Eastern Orthodox Parish. Members in “good standing” are those who have paid their membership dues in the current year. Currently, the membership due at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church is according to the following table:

Family Membership	\$325
Senior Family Membership	\$225
Individual Membership	\$250
Senior Individual Membership	\$150
Young Adult Membership	\$50

If the Bride, Groom and/or Sponsor(s) are members at another Orthodox Church, they must provide proof of “good standing”. A letter from the local Parish Priest indicating membership in “good standing” is required. If there is more than one Sponsor both must become members in “good standing”.

In addition, for every Wedding there is a fee of \$475 to cover church maintenance and operating costs (\$50 of the Wedding fee goes as a gratuity to the Cantor).

For booking and payment of financial obligations, please contact:

Sharon McDonald, Secretary
Monday – Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm
(204) 889-8723

COORDINATING YOUR WEDDING

Fr. Nikolaos will assist you with the necessary forms, and will work with you in all matters pertaining to your wedding, including: setting the date, scheduling meetings, preparing the necessary church documents. Please feel free to ask him any questions you may have regarding your marriage here at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church.

SETTING THE DATE

A couple desiring to be married should first contact Fr. Nikolaos to schedule a meeting with him. It is preferable to schedule both your wedding date and meetings with Fr. Nikolaos at least six months prior to the desired date so that scheduling conflicts can be avoided. According to the official policies of our Archdiocese, weddings may not be celebrated during the fasting seasons or the major feast days of our Church:

- December 13-25 (The Advent and Christmas season)
- January 5-6 (Epiphany)
- February 2 (the Presentation of the Lord to the Temple)
- Great Lent and Holy Week (usually mid-February, the entire month of March and part of April)
- August 1-15 (the fast of the Theotokos)
- August 29 (the beheading of John the Baptist)
- September 14 (the Exaltation of the Cross)
- The Ascension
- Pentecost

This is in keeping with our ancient way of celebrating the Christian mystery in worship and exceptions can be made only rarely, in extreme circumstances, with the permission of the Archbishop.

NECESSARY PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS

The following documentation is needed to insure that your wedding will meet the criteria established by the Church and local civil authorities: verification of the baptism and stewardship/membership commitment of the Orthodox spouse(s); verification of the baptism of the non-Orthodox spouse in a Christian community that baptizes in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (for example, the Roman Catholic and mainline Protestant churches such as the Lutheran and Episcopalian communities); an ecclesiastical marriage license; and a civil marriage license.

Please note that because of the separation of Church and state, two marriage licenses are necessary, one for the Church and one for the state. Also, please note that because a civil license carries a time limit of 90 days in Manitoba, your civil license should be secured less than three months prior to the desired date of the wedding.

IN CASE OF PRIOR MARRIAGES

If either of the parties has been previously married, the death certificate of the deceased spouse or the civil divorce decree issued by the state must be presented to the parish priest. If the prior marriage was celebrated in the Orthodox Church and ended in divorce, then an ecclesiastical divorce decree must also be presented.

THE WEDDING PARTY

The “koumbaro” or “koumbara” - the Sponsor who will participate sacramentally in the service by exchanging the rings and the crowns that form an integral part of the marriage rite - must be an Orthodox Christian "In Good Standing" and a steward/member of his/her parish. "In Good Standing" means *that they are not married outside the church or participated in any foreign sacraments, as this would excommunicate them from the Orthodox Church.*

In addition, the Sponsor serves to guide, teach, and counsel the couple in the Orthodox faith. The Church requires the Sponsor be an Orthodox Christian in good standing; there are no exceptions to this rule. Fr. Nikolaos can help couples in the selection of Sponsors if needed. The “koumbaro” or koumbara”, if from another Orthodox parish, must provide proof from his/her parish priest certifying his/her active stewardship/membership in the Church. Other members of the wedding party need not be Orthodox.

THE BRIDAL DRESS AND ATTENDANTS' GOWNS

Care should be taken in selecting the bride's dress. The bridal gown and attendant's dresses should also exercise a decorum befitting a Church ceremony.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE WEDDING

For Orthodox Christian betrothal and crowning services, several items are used liturgically:

- 2 decorated candles; rings for both the bride and groom, for the betrothal;
- Wedding Crowns –The crowns may be Greek-style flower or pearl wreaths linked by a long, white ribbon (called 'stefana').

Flower wreaths may be ordered from the florist with the other flowers (bouquets, corsages, reception-table centerpieces) or from a specialty supplier, and may be live or silk.

If your wedding is on a Sunday or on a weekday when a Divine Liturgy is served, don't forget to pack some snacks in the box of items going to the church building, especially if you have very little time between Divine Liturgy and the betrothal and crowning services. Do not let a rumbling stomach or light head disrupt your wedding because you fasted for Communion and didn't have time to eat.

MUSIC

The music chanted or played must honor the Orthodox Christian faith and be drawn from the hymns of the Church. Please consult Fr. Nikolaos if you have any questions concerning this.

Fees for the services of the organist are your responsibility. The fee for the chanter is **included** in the \$475 Wedding fee (\$50).

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPING

Photographs of your wedding are permitted but should not in any way impede or distract from the celebration of the sacrament. Photographers should be quiet and respectful; the use of a flash is allowed. If you are planning on professional photography and videography, please ask that your photographer arrive early at the Church so that guidelines can be laid out. Also, please ask guests to be respectful of the professional's space, for your benefit.

VISITING CLERGY

Guest clergy, in Communion with the Orthodox Church, may participate in a wedding at Holy Trinity. Canonically, it is the responsibility of the priest where the wedding is taking place to extend an invitation to any and all visiting clergy. Orthodox Christian clergymen in communion with the Archdiocese are welcome to participate in the celebration of sacraments at St. Demetrios with the blessings of our priest.

Non-Orthodox clergymen from other Christian communities may not take part in the celebration of the sacrament of marriage.

PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

In your meetings with the priest, he will discuss the sacramental nature of the marriage bond, the Christian understanding of marriage as it is expressed in the Scriptures and the marriage service itself. In cases where one of the spouses is not Orthodox, the couple should plan to meet with Fr. Nikolaos, to have any questions answered. Further, the couple should try to attend bible study where available.

A NOTE TO THE BRIDE AND GROOM

To those spouses who are Orthodox: there is no substitute for Jesus Christ in maintaining the dignity and sanctity of the marriage bond. For the celebration of your marriage in the Church to be real, you must live out, in subsequent years, the Christian commitment that you will make on the day of your wedding. To those spouses who are not Orthodox: you are always welcome here at St. Demetrios. Please note that your marriage in the Church does not automatically grant you membership in the Orthodox Church. If you desire to become an Orthodox Christian this must be your decision, made after much prayer and thought, in consultation with the parish priest, and never for the sake of convenience. To both of you: the Lord and this parish are here to help, support and sustain you in your marriage bond and the life of faith to which we are called as Christians. May the Lord grant you both many years together in peace and oneness of mind and heart.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How long is the Service?

The Wedding service is approximately 60 minutes long.

What items does the Sponsor need to bring for the Wedding?

Amongst the many items the bride and groom will want to bring to the wedding ceremony, from a religious standpoint the following are required:

1. Stefana (Crowns of Marriage)
2. Rings for the Bride and the Groom
3. Two white candles
4. Civil marriage license

When can I print the Wedding invitations?

The printing of invitations should not be done until the date and time for the Wedding has been confirmed with Fr. Nikolaos and all financial obligations have been paid to the Treasurer.

Can we take pictures?

To ensure the proper dignity of the Wedding, pictures should be limited as much as possible. Please have your photographer consult with Fr. Nikolaos on proper etiquette during the service.

My fiancé and I live in Saskatchewan. I'm Greek Orthodox and she is not. I'm a member in good standing at my Greek Orthodox Church. The Sponsor is also from Saskatchewan and a member in good standing at his Greek Orthodox Church. We want to hold the Wedding at your parish. What fees can we expect?

You and the Sponsor must submit a letter from your Parish Priest indicting membership in "good standing". If you and the Sponsor are members in "good standing" at your parish, only the Church Fee of **\$475** would only apply.

My fiancé and I live in Winnipeg. We are both Greek Orthodox but not members in "good standing". The Godparent is from Toronto and also not a member in "good standing". We want to hold the Wedding at St. Demetrios here in Winnipeg. What fees can we expect?

Both the Bride and Groom must become members in good standing in our parish. The same holds true for the Sponsor. In this case, **the couple** must pay their Family Membership dues (\$300); the Sponsor (if he is not a member in a Toronto parish) must also pay their Individual Membership due of \$250 in addition to the Church Fee of \$475. In summary, $325 + 250 + 475 = \$1,050$ is payable prior to setting a Wedding Date.

Are there any other Wedding fees?

No. A free will offering of \$50 is suggested for the Sexton/Neokoro on the day of the Wedding. The gratuity for the Psalti/Chanter (\$50) is included in the \$475 Wedding fee. Keep in mind that it is the responsibility of the bride and groom to choose and inform the chanter of their choice for the wedding.

We would like to rent the Church Hall for our Wedding. Can you accommodate us and are there any fees attached to renting the Church Hall.

Yes, we can accommodate you. Please refer to the "Use of St. Demetrios and Greek Community Facilities" in the Community Bulletin for further information.