



COPTIC ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE
CHURCHES OF CHICAGO AND AFFILIATED MIDWEST REGIONS

Πατριάρχης ἰερώνυμοι ἰορθόδοξος
Ἡεκκλήσιᾶ ἰτε ὄικασο νεμ Ἡιωψ ἰθμῆτ εμεντ ετε ἰπκωτ

Marriage Requirements

Vision: Having husbands and wives fulfilling their role according to biblical teachings and other Christian sources. To then model this marriage to their children so they can form a godly home.

Mission: To educate, inform, advise, and equip couples in understanding marriage the way God designed it.

Any couple wishing to marry within the Churches of Chicago and the Affiliated Midwest Regions, need to fulfill the following 5 prerequisites.

1. **Sponsor Priest:** A couple is to select a sponsor priest as early as possible in the relationship. The purpose of the sponsor priest is to be the spiritual guide for the couple and to help the couple fulfill their mission. It is encouraged that couples meet with their sponsor priest at least three times before the crowning ceremony (wedding). The sponsor priest is to do the following:
 - a. Educate what a godly marriage is all about.
 - b. Encourage the couple to understand and fulfill their roles.
 - c. Arrange confessions before the wedding.
 - d. Assure minimum civil and state requirements are met.
 - e. Prearrange follow-up visits after the couple is married.
 - f. Before scheduling the wedding, assure a plan is in place to meet remaining prerequisites.
2. **Baptism and/or Chrismation:** If one of the partners are not members of the Oriental Orthodox Church (OOC), that partner needs to be catechized under the supervision of the sponsor priest, and then be baptized and/or chrismated.
3. **Pre-Marital Course:** The couple is to attend an approved, pre-marital workshop preferably six months to one year prior to the wedding date. Certification of completion is required to be married. For your convenience, multiple workshops are available throughout the year. Approved workshops are described below:



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Location	Frequency	Contact	Supplemental Information:
St. Paul - Chicago	Spring & Fall	Fr. James Mikhail	frjames@stpaulchicago.org
St. Mark - Chicago	By appointment	Fr. James Mikhail	frjames@stpaulchicago.org
St. Mary/St. George - Minnesota	By appointment	Fr. Jacob Zaki	fr.jacobzaki@gmail.com
Southern Diocese	(see website)	Sponsor Priest	http://www.suscopts.org/programs/pre-marital/

Any other course will need approval from the sponsor priest.

4. **Engagement:** Provided both partners are members of the OOC, the couple should be officially engaged at least forty days prior to the crowning ceremony. The sponsor priest will ensure that proper documentation is provided, namely the “Recommendation for Marriage” (if required) and “Engagement Certificate.”

5. **Acknowledgment of Faith:** The couple is to sign and agree with the “[Acknowledgement of Faith](#)” document.

Failure to comply with the any of the above prerequisites can lead to a delay in the wedding.