

Saint Markella Greek Orthodox Church



A Formal Guideline for an Eastern Orthodox Wedding

For the union of a man and a woman to be recognized as sacramentally valid by the Orthodox Church, the following conditions must be met:

1. The Sacrament of Matrimony must be celebrated by an Orthodox Priest of a canonical Orthodox jurisdiction, according to the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church, in a canonical Orthodox Church, and with the authorization of the Archbishop or Metropolitan.
2. Before requesting permission from the Archbishop or his Metropolitan to perform the marriage, a Priest must verify that: **a)** neither of the parties in question is already married to another person, either in this country or elsewhere; **b)** the parties in question are not related to each other to a degree that would constitute an impediment; **c)** If either or both parties are widowed, they have presented the death certificate(s) of the deceased spouse(s); **d)** if either or both parties have been previously married in the Orthodox Church, they have obtained ecclesiastical as well as civil divorce(s); **e)** the party or parties who are members of a parish other than the one in which the marriage is to be performed have provided a certificate declaring them to be members in good standing with that parish for the current year; and **f)** a civil marriage license has been obtained from civil authorities.
3. No person may marry more than three times in the Church, with permission for a third marriage granted only with extreme oikonomia.
4. In cases involving the marriage of Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians, the latter must have been baptized, in water, in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Church cannot bless the marriage of an Orthodox Christian to a non-Christian.
5. The Sponsor (Koumbaros or Koumbara) must provide a current certificate of membership proving him or her to be an Orthodox Christian in good standing with the Church. A person who does not belong to a parish, or who belongs to a parish under the jurisdiction of a bishop who is not in communion with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, or who, if married, has not had his or her marriage blessed by the Orthodox Church, or, if divorced, has not received an ecclesiastical divorce, cannot be a sponsor. Non-Orthodox persons may be members of the wedding party, but may not exchange the rings or crowns.

Days When Marriage Is Not Permitted

Marriages are not performed on fast days or during fasting seasons or on the feasts of the Church, specifically: September 14 (Exaltation of The Holy Cross), December 13-25 (Nativity), January 5 and 6 (Theophany), Great Lent and Holy Week, Pascha (Easter) Pentecost, August 1-15) Dormition Fast and Feast), and August 29 (Beheading of John the Baptist). Exceptions can only be made with permission of the respective hierarch.

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 concords. Shared faith and traditions spare couples and their children, as well as 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 the 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.

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 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, following a period of instruction, by Chrismation.

Inter-religious Marriages

Canonical and theological reasons preclude the Orthodox Church from performing the Sacrament of Marriage for couples where one partner is Orthodox and the other partner is a non-Christian. As such, Orthodox Christians choosing to enter such marriages fall out of good standing with their Church and are unable to actively participate in the life of the Church. While this stance may seem confusing and rigid, it is guided by the Orthodox Church's love and concern for its member's religious and spiritual well-being.

Prohibited Marriages

The following types of relationships constitute impediments to marriage:

1. Parents with their own children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren.
2. Brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law.
3. Uncles and aunts with nieces and nephews.
4. First cousins with each other.
5. Foster parents with foster children or foster children with the children of foster parents.
6. Godparents with godchildren or god parents with parents of their godchildren.

Wedding Arrangements

The following information and requirements are intended to provide the prospective bride and groom with guidance on the road to Holy Matrimony. **The church office should be notified a year in advance in order to set the wedding date on the church calendar.** An appointment with the priest should be made 40 days prior to the wedding day. At this meeting the following should be made available:

1. The **Baptism** and **Birth** Certificates. (For both the bride and groom).
2. The **Wedding License from City Hall.** (30 Days Prior To the Wedding Date)
3. The Official Married Address.
4. The full names of the Best man and the Maid of honor if they are also the Koumbaroi.
The current residence of the best man (Koumbaros or Koumbara).
They must both be of the Orthodox faith. If married outside the church, Civilly, or Divorce without proper Archdiocese resolution they may not Participate in the Wedding.
5. Arrangements must be made for the wedding rehearsal.
6. Arrangements must be made if you would like to have a white runner to cover the center aisle.
7. Both of the fiancées must be members or become members of our church as a new family.
Stewardship cards must be filled out prior of the **Archdiocese Marriage Application.**
8. The Koumbaro or Koumbara must also be a current member(s). In the event they belong to another Church they must have a letter from the pastor attesting to their good standing.
9. If either the bride or groom is not of the Orthodox faith, but is a Christian of a different denomination, they must provide that Baptismal certificate, which must be approved by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese.
10. If one of the parties was ecclesiastically married in an Orthodox Church and obtained only a civil divorce then they must fill an application (Supplemental Marriage Form 165) **AND apply for an Ecclesiastical Divorce.** This application should be made at least four (4) months prior to the Wedding. The application and decision of the spiritual court takes approximately 2-3 months.
11. The following are required for the wedding ceremony:
 - a. Two large candles.
 - b. A silver tray with white Jordan almonds along with the wedding crowns.
 - c. The Wedding rings.
 - d. Rice to be distributed to the well wishers outside the church at the end of the Wedding ceremony.

- e. **At the end of the ceremony, and after the guests have offered their congratulations, the Koumbaro or Koumbara must sign the wedding license documents at the Pastors' office.**

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY MATRIMONY

At the Old Testament, the Marriage was affirmed with a religious ceremony. In the Gospel, the first recorded miracle of Jesus Christ after His Baptism was performed in the wedding in Cana in Galilee.

As Saint Paul says in his Epistle the Sacrament of Matrimony is a great mystery. The reason is that the two people from two different parents, from different backgrounds they become one. The matrimony of marriage is rich in symbols.

The Service of Matrimony is composed of two services. The first part is the Engagement service and blessing of the rings. The second part is the Wedding service and the blessing of the crowns.

The First part:

The Service of matrimony starts with petitions to God for the newly engaged servants of God. A prayer for the rings is read. The Priest blesses the rings on the Holy Gospel and after making three times the proclamation of the engagement on the newly engaged couple, he places the rings on their right hand. Then the Best man/woman exchanges by crossing his or her hand the rings on their right hand three times and at the end it places it on the right hand again. In the mean while the priest reads a great benediction including the prophets and saints of the Old Testament and New Testament and the first part concludes.

The Second Part

A start with the words blessed is the kingdom, which usually is the beginning of the Sacrament. Petitions again to God for the new life of the people who are getting married. In the prayers abundance of every good in their home is asked from God, also love and peace to be their companion etc. Then the priest unites their hand by reading a prayer and crowns them by blessing first the crowns on the Gospel and then on their head by crowning them. Then he takes the Common cup filled with wine, sign of fertility and blesses the cup and the couple sips three times the wine from the same cup, which represents that they are one, they are united. Then the priest takes them by holding on his right hand the Gospel and with his left hand their united hands and they go three times around the small table which is at front of the altar the part called Solea, where the wedding ceremony and all ceremonies take place.

The meaning is that they first walked as husband and wife in the Church and Jesus Christ guided their first steps. The Gospel that the priest holds on his right hand represents Jesus. Then the priest blesses with a special prayer their forehead and takes off the crowns and places them on the gospel. He splits their hands that he united earlier with the gospel and after some conclusion prayers the services finish. The bride and the groom leave the church together with the bridal party and guests.

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
Saint Markella Greek Orthodox Church

WEDDING APPLICATION FORM

Please Complete In PRINT and CAPS ONLY

NOTE: Your Wedding Date will be secure in our church calendar upon receiving this completed form.

Date of Wedding: _____ Time of Wedding: _____
Church: _____
CONTACT: Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

<u>Groom</u>	<u>Bride</u>
Full Name: _____	Full Name: _____
Address: _____	Address: _____

Phone Number: _____	Phone Number: _____
Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____	Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Place of Birth: _____	Place of Birth: _____
Date of Baptism: _____	Date of Baptism: _____
In What Religion: _____	in What Religion: _____
Date joined Orthodoxy by Chrismation: _____	Date joined Orthodoxy by Chrismation: _____
Usual Occupation: _____	Usual Occupation: _____
Father's Name: _____	Father's Name: _____
Father's Country of Birth: _____	Father's Country of Birth: _____
Father's Religion: _____	Father's Religion: _____
Mother's Name: _____	Mother's Name: _____
Mother's Country of Birth: _____	Mother's Country of Birth: _____
Mother's Religion: _____	Mother's Religion: _____
Have you ever been married? : _____	Have you ever been married? : _____
If yes: Civilly, Gr. Orth. Church or other? _____	If yes: Civilly, Gr. Orthodox. Church or Other? _____
If yes: Fill out Suppl. Form #165 _____	if yes: Fill out Suppl. Form #165 _____
At what age did you arrive in the USA or Canada? : _____	At what age did you arrive in the USA or Canada? : _____

Date of arrival: _____	Date of arrival: _____
Are you related to the Bride? Yes No	Are you related to the Groom?: Yes No
a. By Blood Yes No	a. By Blood Yes No
B. By marriage to one	b. By marriage to on
Of her relatives Yes No	of his relatives Yes No
Stewardship Number: _____	Stewardship Number: _____

Name of Koumbaro: _____	Name of Koumbara: _____
Address: _____	Address: _____
Cell Phone: _____	Cell Phone: _____
Stewardship or Archdiocese Number: _____	Stewardship or Archdiocese Number: _____

Name of 2nd witness

Stewardship must be paid in full at the time of the Application.
The Koumbaro/Koumbara must be of Greek Orthodox Faith, and if married, a Greek Orthodox Priest must have performed the ceremony. His/Her stewardship must be paid in full before your wedding can take place.

FINANCIAL CHURCH OBLIGATIONS

Two weeks prior to the Wedding – or sooner:

Couple’s Stewardship: Should be paid in full prior of the filling of the Wedding Application to The Archdiocese.

Koumbaros (oi, a) membership(s) Stewardship(s): Should be paid in full – or “Letter of Good Standing” (Not a paid Membership Card) needs to be received by our office (2 weeks before the sacrament **otherwise** He/She/They must become members of St. Markella)

At least 1: Either Godparent’s or Parent’s should be members of St. Markella Church of Wantagh.

Other Wedding Sacrament Fees – due two weeks prior to the Wedding – or sooner:

IMPORTANT NOTE

Other Wedding Personal Offerings:

***** (Traditionally, the above is the responsibility of the Koumbaro, but if the Koumbaro(s) does not fulfilled this obligation then it becomes the COUPLE’S responsibility).**

Fees Required:

- 1. For the Psalti (Cantor).....\$ 70.00**
- 2. For the Sexton/Neokoros.....\$ 50.00**

We Are Kindly Requesting That A Communication Between The Couple And Koumbaro(s) In Reference To This Matter Exist Prior To The Sacrament And Then Kindly Contact **The Church Office Manager at (516) 783-5760 during the church office hours or you may email at saintmarkellali@yahoo.com To Convey Your Will And To Inquire About the Personal Sacramental Offerings.**

Thank you for your cooperation.

**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
SUPPLEMENTAL MARRIAGE FORM 165**

**This form is to be completed by the priest for persons who have been widowed or
Previously married, either in an Orthodox Church, another Faith or civilly.**

APPLICANT'S NAME:

How many times has he/she been married? _____

SPOUSE(S)' NAME(S) 1.

2.

3.

Spouse(s)' Religion: 1.

2.

3.

Date of Marriage: 1.

2.

3.

Place of Marriage:

1 _____

[State] [Church/City Hall] [Religion] [City]

2.

3.

Performed by whom: 1.

[Name of Orthodox Priest, other Clergyman or City Official]

2.

3.

If the above marriage(s) has been dissolved, complete the information below. Attach a copy of the Death Certificate or the original Ecclesiastical Divorce Decree with the Marriage Affidavit for License to Marry.

MARRIAGE DISSOLVED BY:

Death: 1.

[Date]

[Place]

2.

3.

Civil Divorce: 1.

[Date]

[Place]

[Docket Number]

2.

3.

Ecclesiastical Divorce: 1.

[Diocese]

[Date]

[Protocol Number]

2.

3.

DIRECTIONS TO ST. MARKELLA

GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

1960 JONES AVENUE NORTH

WANTAGH, NY 11793

CORNER of JONES AVENUE AND BROOKLYN AVENUE

TEL: (516) 783-5760

Coming from NYC, Astoria, and Queens & Western Nassau.

Take the Long Island Expressway East or Grand Central Parkway to the Northern State Parkway or the Southern State Parkway to the Wantagh Parkway South.

Take exit W5E to Sunrise Highway. Make a right on Sunrise Highway going east **and** make left to the first traffic light, which Wantagh Avenue. Make another left immediately after the train underpass (Wantagh RR Station) unto Brooklyn Avenue. McDonald's restaurant is on the corner. The Church is on the right hand side, approximately 200 yards behind McDonalds Rest.

Coming from Eastern Nassau and Suffolk

Take LIE, Northern or Southern State Parkway West to Wantagh Parkway South. Wantagh Parkway South to exit W5E to Sunrise Highway. Make a right on Sunrise Highway going east **and** make left to the first traffic light, which Wantagh Avenue. Make another left immediately after the train underpass (Wantagh RR Station) unto Brooklyn Avenue. McDonald's restaurant is on the corner. The Church is on the right hand side, approximately 200 yards behind McDonalds Rest.

Thank you for your cooperation.

God Bless!

Your Notes