

Use of the Parish Center Now Reflects Love of Mothers, Babies, and Family

This Mother's Day weekend, as a people of life and love, we should celebrate and rejoice in motherhood, in marriage, and in newborn lives. The church should not add a burden to young couples getting married, to families celebrating the birth of a child, and baptisms as the child is immersed in waters in which he or she receives sanctifying life. A couple from our parish was recently married in another diocese because the bride was originally from there. For their wedding, they were required to pay the wedding coordinator, the priest (for performing the ceremony), the use of the hall, the use of the church, the organist, the cantor, and the altar servers. I believe their total cost for "church" things was well over \$1500. This does not include the cost of the meal, the cake, the tuxes and dresses, the flowers, the DJ, etc... What if they had no money? What if they were poor? While it is customary to pay for these things in many churches, the cost can be staggering for a wedding. In my opinion this is ridiculous and takes advantage of others. When they start their marriage, they certainly don't need a financial burden. At Sacred Heart we don't want the church to be seen as a burden, but rather we should rejoice in family life. Some organists and cantors go out of their way to practice their music and singing, and they may have to take time off of work to do a wedding, so they deserve something. With regard to Altar Servers they enjoy serving weddings and funerals and are not disappointed when they don't receive money from them. In fact, after a funeral, one server put his money in the collection. He told me, "*I served the funeral out of stewardship.*" The Stewardship Way of Life, by giving our time and talent for others is most praiseworthy. The usual donation for Altar Servers is \$10. It's really a sign of affection for their help and not for their "labor". The cost of electricity and gas for the church and hall is worth celebrating the joy of it all. It's the church's donation to the couple or to the new born baby shower or the baptism celebration. The priest already gets a salary. Before taxes, he's paid \$2,400 a month and he also receives Mass stipends for offering Mass (about \$300 a month). He does not need nor does he want to take money for these events. A deposit is still required for wedding receptions, baptism celebrations and baby showers. This is to be sure the hall is cleaned well and if there is any accidental damage, the cost will be covered. If there is a couple who would like to adopt, but can't afford it, the church can help in some way. Or if you have adopted and it has become a burden to you, let the pastor know. With the recent anonymous donation, I am certain the donor would love to see some of his or her money spent to help families. We are family. We celebrate life. We celebrate love. We love children. We want to help married couples or single mothers in any way we can. We love and appreciate motherhood and fatherhood. The Catholic Church is our mother. What would a mother want for her children, but to help them in any way possible? We have a mother in heaven, who is always interceding for us. The Virgin Mary is our spiritual mother. If we turn to Her, She will help all of us to stay close to Her Son and She will rejoice with us, because a mother would rejoice over the celebration of life.

Fr. Edmond Kline, pastor