

## Concerning Holy Matrimony at The Church of the Cross

The Church of the Cross affirms the historic position of the Christian Church: that God has ordained two states of life for His people, singleness or Holy Matrimony – the joining together of one man and one woman into a holy union. By affirming this position, we stand firmly under the authority of Holy Scripture, in continuity with the two thousand year history of the church, and in accord with the vast majority of Christians around the world. While the government may have changed the civil definition of marriage, we believe it has no authority over Holy Matrimony and the Church's blessing of the union between husband and wife. So as to erase any potential for misunderstanding of this parish's stance, clergy serving on the staff of The Church of the Cross do not function as civil officials in signing state-issued marriage licenses. **The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony and the Church's blessing of the union between one man and one woman will, therefore, be offered at the Rector's sole discretion only to those who affirm by word, deed and signature the parish's position on this matter and whose marriage license has been signed by a Notary Public the day before blessing at the latest.** Additionally, either the husband or the wife must have been an active member of The Church of the Cross for at least one year preceding the setting of a date. Those desiring this sacrament must complete and return an application form, meet with the Rector and conclude premarital counseling before the proposed date for the sacrament is set and announced.

Children or grandchildren of active members of The Church of the Cross may also have their civil marriages blessed with the following provisions: 1) they must be active members of a Christian congregation where they reside which affirms the position held by this parish on Holy Matrimony; 2) they must receive Biblically-based premarital counseling from their home priest/pastor; and 3) the Rector must receive a letter from their priest/pastor indicating that counseling has been completed and that he/she recommends the administering of the sacrament of Holy Matrimony and the Church's blessing of the union between the husband and wife. A minimum of three months is required between the initial application and intended date of the service. **Civil marriages may not be conducted on property owned or leased by The Church of the Cross.**

