

Priest says cold feet is a good thing

Most couples preparing themselves for marriage begin to have doubts as the wedding date nears and it's a state of mind St. Matthew, Northwood Pastor Father Joseph L. Muth believes is a good sign.

"I would be worried if they didn't get cold feet," said Father Muth, who officiates at about 15 weddings a year. "It means they are taking the commitment seriously."

Most Catholic couples go through the basic stages of courtship, a proposal of marriage is made and accepted and then comes the wedding planning stage.

By the time they meet with their priest to begin planning their ceremony and going over what the vows mean, the reality of the union's obligation begins to settle in, Father Muth said.

"That is when they realize, this is serious," he said. "That's when they usually say, 'oh wow, this is an important thing we're doing!'"

Pre-wedding angst is natural for both men and women, the Baltimore priest said, and it's not a sensation he even tries to help engaged couples overcome.

"I don't want them to think that marriage is a synch, because it's not only one of the most important steps they'll make, it's one of the most difficult," Father Muth said. "They should know going into this that a partnership like this can be as fragile as life itself."

With a national divorce rate of about 50 percent in the United States, couples entering into matrimony should be aware that life-long commitments require a great deal of hard work, patience, understanding, perseverance, and the wherewithal to weather the inevitable times of trouble, he said.

These fears don't seem to affect men more than women, the priest said. "The women tend to talk more about it, because the wedding tends to be their day and the event they have dreamed about. But, if they are both committed to making this relationship work, they will both have their share of concerns as the wedding date

gets closer.”

During his decades of performing weddings, Father Muth has never had a couple so anxious about their upcoming nuptials they canceled their marriage ceremony at the last minute.

“But I do like to think I give them something to think about,” he said. “If I contribute to their pre-wedding jitters, then I feel like I’m doing my job.”