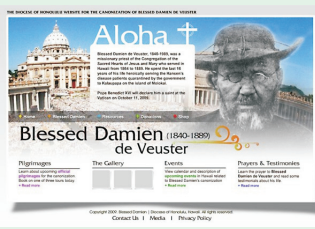




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# Hawaii Catholic Herald

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 encountered,  
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Donna Lyn Rabe and James Baguio on an Engaged Encounter Weekend April 25.



# Engaged, encountered, enlightened

*A Catholic couple finds the path to marriage is a three-lane street, with God taking the center*

*This is the first in a series of stories following a Catholic couple as they go through the marriage preparation process in the Diocese of Honolulu.*

By Anna Weaver  
Hawaii Catholic Herald

**T**wenty-three couples stand around the edges of the auditorium floor at St. Stephen Diocesan Center on the second day of an Engaged Encounter Weekend in late April. There's nervous laughter as they move from one part of the room to the other as they decide if they're on the "Agree" or "Disagree" side of statements being made by a retreat leader during a mid-afternoon icebreaker.

"I won't mind if my spouse gains weight," the leader calls out, which elicits chuckles as the pairs glance around before shuffling about. "How about, 'The husband will pay the bills.?'"

Hanging from the wall above the auditorium stage are felt and cloth banners extolling wisdom in catchy phrases, such as, "A wedding is for a day. A marriage is for a lifetime," "Not 50-50 but 100-100," and "It takes 3: God, husband, wife."

Among the retreatants are James Baguio and Donna Lyn Rabe of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Ewa Beach. The active Hawaii Catholics are getting married this fall, and Engaged Encounter is part of the preparation process.

According to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' National Pastoral Initiative on Marriage, nearly every American diocese requires some sort of marriage preparation. In Hawaii that includes: meeting with a parish priest, deacon or minister at least six months prior to a wedding; three to five couple sessions; taking a "premarital inventory," or marriage questionnaire such as FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study); and attending an Engaged Encounter weekend. All are designed to help the couple evaluate their readiness for marriage.

## Meet Donna and James

James, 32, is a well-built Filipino with a cueball do who initially comes across as more reserved than his Filipina fiancée. Donna, 29, has a mischievous laugh, a ready smile and talkative manner. There's a playfulness and obvious affection as they talk about how they came to be a couple.

James, a cradle Catholic, received his sacraments of Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation at the typical ages. He attended Our Lady of Perpetual Help Grade School and Damien Memorial High School. James went on to Leeward and Kapiolani Community Colleges before getting his food science and human nutrition administration degree from the University of Hawaii. He now works as a dietary clerk at Kuakini Medical Center.



Donna Lyn Rabe and James Baguio take a break on the grounds of St. Stephen Diocesan Center April 25 during an Engaged Encounter weekend.

Donna was baptized a Catholic as an infant but wasn't a regular churchgoer growing up. She went to public schools and then Hawaii Pacific University. She has her master's in secondary education and is an English teacher at Waipahu Intermediate School.

It wasn't until Donna was 19 and coming out of a long-term relationship that she thought, "I really want to be more Catholic." She received her First Communion and Confirmation at St. Joseph Parish in 1999.

After starting a Bible study at Teo and Mason Matsuda's home (the Matsudas write the "Ask Mason & Teo" column for the Hawaii Catholic Herald) in Ewa Beach, Donna decided to switch to Our

Lady of Perpetual Help Parish. That's where she and James met in 2003 while both were helping with a Life Teen retreat.

Donna giggles as she remembers her first impression of James, who plays the drums and is a member of the parish's music ministry.

"I like drummers," she says with a sly smile. She also thought James was funny when they struck up a conversation about "Chappelle's Show" and he reenacted some of Dave Chappelle's sketches.

"I guess I made her laugh," James says. He recalls listening to Donna during a pre-retreat liturgy planning discussion and being impressed with her knowl-

edge of the Catholic faith. "She'd be a good lawyer."

The two saw each other at church events, but James had no idea that Donna had developed an interest in him until she had a mutual friend pass along her number in 2005.

"She was chasing me," he chuckles, to which Donna jabs back with a smile, "I hate you." They debate whether attending a penance service together could count as their first "date." But they liked each other enough to officially become boyfriend and girlfriend a few months later.

Things didn't go smoothly however. James had never been in a serious relationship before, and Donna still had baggage

from her last boyfriend. They fought a lot, and on top of it all, James' parents didn't approve of Donna.

"My mom is the type that wanted to arrange me meeting someone," James says. "My mom claims it's her being an old school Filipino Catholic." He however believes in choosing whom he wants to date.

Because of the fighting and other issues, the two decided to break up in June 2006. For awhile, Donna started attending St. Elizabeth in Aiea, and when she and James would see each other at church it was awkward. James focused on playing in a band he was a member of at the time.

Donna had a renewed dedication to her faith and started participating in Eucharistic adoration, going to Mass on Wednesdays and becoming a regular at her Basic Christian Community Bible study.

"I had to work things out within myself and strengthen my relationship with God before I could have another relationship," she says. "I didn't know who it was at that point. I didn't really think I was going to get back together with James."

However James kept thinking about Donna and says he missed "her hugs and her smile." This time it was James who told mutual friends about missing her. Word got back to Donna, and by June 2008 they were back together.

This time things are different with God now at the center of their relationship. Where before there was lust in their relationship, now there was affection and love. And when they first dated, Donna says, "We were serving at church, but I think we were just doing it for appearances and not doing it for devotion."

Now they attend adoration together and go to Our Lady of Perpetual Help's Saturday night Mass in addition to serving at the Life Teen Mass on Sunday. They also participate in the parish's garden ministry, help with BCC retreat planning, and make it a habit to regularly attend confession together. James has also taken a liking to the Divine Mercy chapel.

"Ever since I went back to her, I think I've grown more in my faith. And because I've grown, it's made me love her more," he says.

## Wedding bells

Dating again, they soon fell back in love. James admires how Donna isn't materialistic and how "she puts God first in her life." Donna loves that James is "a really humble guy."

"When I see James drum, he's not doing it because he likes the sound of his own drumming," she says. "He drums because he wants to be a part of that band or group. He truly loves to serve in that way."

After a few months back together, talk of marriage quickly arose. "The breakup helped to

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Photo by Anna Weaver

Couples listen to an Engaged Encounter speaker.

## Engaged Encounter

*Continued from page 3*

change the way we were so that we would be ready to make that decision to get married," Donna says.

It seemed that God offered signs affirming their decision. A relative of James offered the couple the use of her studio apartment in Kalihi for their first home. And while James' parents are still opposed to their son marrying someone not of their selection, he and Donna say it encouraged them to choose marriage for themselves.

"Although something like this would break up a couple, it's really made us stronger," Donna says. "We had to let our parents know that marriage is what we wanted together."

There has been no formal proposal. Instead the two signed up in March for Engaged Encounter and later started ring shopping.

The Engaged Encounter weekend was an intense but enriching three days. The retreat's theme is "Write. Exchange. Discuss." Following that format, presenters who are married couples give about 20 talks on different topics. The participants then reflect on what they heard and put their thoughts in writing. The engaged couples then review with each other what they wrote.

Engaged Encounter leaders Deacon Ron and Eunice Paglinawan say that they've seen couples decide by the end of the weekend that they're not ready to get married after all.

Deacon Paglinawan says, "If you decide to make this lifetime commitment, everyone better be ready." His wife adds, "God has to be part of the marriage to insure a lifelong relationship, to get through the bad times and the good times."

They both say that many couples also come away with an even deeper commitment to each other. That's the case with James and Donna.

"It gave us some time to really sit down and talk," James says. "It made us feel a sense of peace and there were no distractions to get in the way of us."

He's recommended the retreat to his non-Catholic coworkers because of the opportunity the weekend offers for dedicated couple time. The Paglinawans say that there are often non-Catholic couples on Engaged Encounter for that reason.

While many of the weekend's topics were things both had al-

ready discussed, Donna says the Engaged Encounter "reaffirmed our goals for our married life together."

One thing they didn't know much about was natural family planning, a church-approved form of "fertility regulation." Donna says that after hearing a speaker give an overview of the method, she's considering taking a class.

For her a highlight of the weekend was when she and James wrote betrothal letters to each other asking for God's blessing on their marriage and saying what they intend to do to keep God at the center of their relationship. They then read them aloud before the Paglinawans as a public declaration of their commitment.

### Looking ahead

After the retreat, they picked out an engagement ring at Ben Bridge. Donna teased James that it was not as "bling bling" of a sparkler as he might have expected her to pick out.

They had originally planned to get married in August at Our Lady of Perpetual Help's Saturday 5 p.m. Mass. But a change in the reception venue and time constraints recently led them to delay the wedding until the fall and decide to have a separate wedding Mass.

The important thing for both is to keep the sacramental aspect of a marriage in focus rather than getting wrapped up in wedding planning details. They plan to keep things simple.

"You have to put more of your energy, time and resources towards preparing for the sacrament," Donna says, rather than toward the more secular aspects of a wedding.

Both are looking beyond the wedding day to their life together.

"I feel like God sent me to James so that he would love his life," Donna says. "It's beautiful to share a life with somebody within the sacrament of marriage."

"What did I say to you yesterday?" Donna says to James.

"Marriage is to help each other get to heaven," he responds.

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*Future stories about James and Donna will focus on couple-to-couple marriage preparation counseling sessions and planning their wedding Mass.*



## Ask Mason & Teo



### Are deacons supposed to be celibate, or not?

Hi Mason & Teo,

I was reading an article regarding the celibacy of deacons. I am a little confused. Is there a difference between a deacon and a permanent deacon? The article mentioned that "most Catholics are aware that celibacy is not demanded from the nature of the priesthood or the diaconate." I thought otherwise. Aren't they supposed to be celibates? (Baffled)

Dear Baffled,  
The ministry of a deacon is similar to, but different from, that of a priest or bishop. A deacon is ordained and commissioned by Christ through the bishop to minister to the needy and the poor and to be a minister of Word and sacrament, working in obedience to his bishop and in close brotherhood collaboration with priests.

While all Christians are called to serve others, the deacon is an official sign of this service and he solemnly promises to be a living example of such service for others.

Transitional deacons are men who are in formation to be ordained priests. They are ordained deacons prior to priesthood while they are in the process of "transition" into priesthood.

Permanent deacons are men who are ordained deacons and remain deacons.

The church has three groups, or "orders," of ordained ministers: bishops, priests and deacons. Deacons are ordained as a sacramental sign to the church and to the world of Christ, who came "to serve and not to be served." Both transitional and permanent deacons share in the order of deacon.

The original meaning of "celibacy" is "unmarried." Jesus Christ presented celibacy as a legitimate lifestyle through his teachings and by his very life. He was never married. When Jesus taught that marriage is a covenant between husband and wife, and prohibited divorce and remarriage, he closed his teaching by saying some men "have freely renounced marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 19:12).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church affirms that "ordained ministers, with the exception of permanent deacons, are normally chosen from among men ... who live a celibate life and who intend to remain celibate 'for the sake of the kingdom of heaven'" (CCC 1579).

Permanent deacons are best described in Paul's first letter to Timothy (1Tim 3:8-13). "Deacons must be dignified, not deceitful, not addicted to drink, not greedy for sordid gain, holding fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ... Deacons may be married only once and must manage their children and households well. Thus those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus."

Hence, married men can become deacons with their wife's consent. Candidates who are married and whose spouse later dies may not marry again unless they gain a special dispensation. Single men who are ordained deacons take a promise of celibacy, similar to the priest's promise of celibacy, and may not marry once they are ordained.

The law of clerical celibacy is a discipline, not a doctrine of the church. (There are Catholic married priests. They are usually married Protestant clergymen who become Catholic and later study for the Catholic priesthood.) Celibacy involves freedom. It cannot be demanded or forced upon someone. Just like in any relationship one cannot demand that you love them.

After much discernment, prayer and reflection, a man called to holy orders freely accepts the obligation of celibacy. Celibacy involves sacrifice, and sacrifice is an act of love. Just as in marriage, when a man and a woman marry they make the sacrifice to remain faithful to one another, and to love one another "in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health until death."

Celibacy is a gift of God, "by which sacred ministers can adhere more easily to Christ with an undivided heart and can more freely dedicate themselves to the service of God and mankind" (Canon 277). Of course, celibacy requires the grace of God to be lived. Like chastity, the gift of celibacy is not only about keeping one's physical desires and emotions under control, or to live as a bachelor, it is being able to say "yes" to Jesus Christ each and every day.

As Pope John Paul II once said, "it is precisely in celibacy, joyfully welcomed and protected that we in turn are called to live the truth about love in a way that is different though just as full, giving ourselves totally with Christ to God, to the Church, and to our brothers and sisters in humanity."

As a church, we should be thankful to the bishops, priest, deacons, and religious brothers and sisters, who have made the total sacrifice of themselves out of love to serve our Lord and the church.

*Mason and Teo Matsuda are parishioners of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Ewa Beach and have served in youth and young adult ministries for years. Write to them at yaadvice@yahoo.com.*



Donna Lyn Rabe and James Baguio

HCH photo by Anna Weaver

## Keeping it real

### Mason and Teo help Donna and James get beyond the fantasy world of marriage as they prepare for their wedding

*The Hawaii Catholic Herald first featured Donna Lyn Rabe and James Baguio in the May 29 issue as they began their marriage preparation process in the Catholic Church with Engaged Encounter.*

**By Anna Weaver**  
Hawaii Catholic Herald

On a Tuesday night in June, three months before their wedding Donna Lyn Rabe and James Baguio sat down to a meal of sushi, chicken and cheesecake with Mason and Teo Matsuda at the Matsuda's Ewa Beach home. With lots of laughs and talking story, the two couples discussed the topic of the evening: matrimony.

This was the fourth of five "sponsor couple" marriage preparation sessions for Donna and James as they approached their wedding day at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Ewa Beach.

These meetings are where, as Teo Matsuda puts it, "we bring in the reality of what it's like to be married instead of the fantasy world of marriage."

Her husband of 17 years, Mason, adds, "We share life stories with them."

In a way, the couple sessions are like Engaged Encounter on a more intimate level.

While not all Hawaii parishes have sponsor couples who lead premarital sessions, the Diocese of Honolulu requires that an engaged couple have three to five counseling sessions. These could be with a priest, a deacon or a married couple.

Another diocesan rule is that an engaged couple notify their parish six months before their targeted wedding date. Couples must also submit "Freedom to Marry" and baptismal certificates, take a marriage questionnaire such as FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study), attend an Engaged Encounter weekend, and secure a marriage license.

Donna, 29, and James, 32, were friends of the Matsudas (who write a regular column for the Herald) long before they started marriage preparation sessions

with them, going back to when Donna started attending a Basic Christian Community Bible study at their house.

Teo remembers James coming to her several years ago when he and Donna were going through rocky times. She started crying in front of him because, as she recalls, "They had this genuine love for each other, but it was just clouded by the self."

The two did break up. While separated, they each got much more active in the church and the sacraments and, in the eyes of the Matsudas, they left behind the self-centeredness that had driven them apart. Donna and James got back together in June 2008. Mason joked that Teo was even happier than the couple that things worked out.

"You guys have really grown," she said.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help's marriage sessions follow the book, "For Better and Forever" by Father Rob Ruhnke, which discusses areas like Christian marriage's essential elements and marital spirituality and more specific topics like problem solving, finances, household duties, parenting and sexuality.

The Matsudas emphasize that if couples can't communicate now on small things like wedding prep-

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## Keeping it real

*Continued from page 24*

aration details, the bigger issues that will come at them in life will be that much more difficult.

Donna and James needed advice in dealing with their parents and more recently about finances, an area they hadn't spoken about much before.

"Teo and Mason keep it real with us too," James said. "There will be problems. Marriage is real."

"We know that the problems they've had are God's way of strengthening them to communicate better with themselves," Teo said.

Donna and James both nod their heads in agreement. "We told you guys before, if God wasn't in our lives, we wouldn't be together today. Guaranteed!"

Not all engaged couples make it to their wedding date. The Matsudas have seen this firsthand. The counseling sessions dredge up tough topics, some of which fiancés aren't able to get past. They've seen couples at meetings start bitter arguments or burst into tears. Often struggling pairs will decide themselves they aren't ready for marriage.

"We've had to write some sad reports in the past for couples that didn't make it," Teo said.

"It's better to find out what problems you have now rather than later, and have it lead to divorce," Mason added.

The Matsudas believe that marriage extends far beyond two people. "When a couple has the overflow of graces because of their marriage sacrament, the overflow is on all of us," Teo said. "So the church wants to make sure that they know what they're getting into."

So what's the secret to a successful marriage? The Matsudas could break it down to having two central things in a marriage: communication and Christ. And they see both in Donna and James marriage.

"One of the things about being married is the whole dying to yourself and sacrificing for the other person," Teo said to Donna and James at their session. "It's nice to see you actually do that now."

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*To read the first story on the couple, go to:*

[www.hawaiicatholicherald.com/Home/tabid/256/newsid884/2320/Default.aspx](http://www.hawaiicatholicherald.com/Home/tabid/256/newsid884/2320/Default.aspx)

## Ask Mason & Teo



### Do I have to stick to one parish only?

Mason and Teo,

Does one have to belong to a particular parish? Like many, I chose to leave my parish. But we learned in Catholic school that the parish you should belong to is the one in whose boundaries you live, and that you should support your parish and its school. I know the parish priest provides for our religious needs but I choose to belong to a parish away from where I live, or even "church hop" on Sundays and Holy Days. ("Roamer" Catholic)

Dear Roamer,  
It is through Baptism that "we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the church and made sharers in her mission" (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1213). Jesus instructed his disciples to "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20).

In essence, the church is missionary, and the work of evangelization — spreading the Gospel message — is a basic duty of God's people. No baptized and confirmed member of the church may regard himself or herself as exempt from this duty.

Jesus calls us to be in community. Pope John Paul II said, "From the communion that Christians experience in Christ there immediately flows the communion they experience with one another."

The word community comes from the Latin root word "munio" which means "to fortify." Community helps us to grow and be fortified. It is an essential part of our journey to holiness. We cannot separate how we relate to God from how we relate to one another. The very things that keep us from closer relationships with one another also hold us back from God.

Sharing our faith, our strengths and weaknesses in community often reveal those areas of brokenness we can't see on our own. The work of evangelization necessitates community. Jesus made our unity, being one with the other, the sign by which the world would recognize that we are his disciples. We need to "come" in "unity."

The church allows Catholics to be a part of a local parish community by domicile or by choice, domicile meaning the area in which you live or the parish closest to you. The local church is formed in the image of the universal church and shares the hopes and anxieties, the joys and sorrows of the entire church. For this reason, the local church is obligated to the evangelical mission of the universal church and is not left to its own free judgment.

As an adult, we can choose a parish community to belong to. It does not necessarily need to be the one geographically closest to you. However, belonging

to a community means taking on duties and responsibilities. We live in a society where people do not like to commit themselves, and being a member of a particular parish community involves commitment.

It means being a registered member, using your collection envelopes to support the parish financially, and giving of yourself through your time, talent and treasure.

Jumping from one parish to another, or hopping from church to church, does not appear to be making a commitment to a particular parish community. If you haven't found a particular parish to belong to, continue on your quest. Eventually, God will call you to settle down somewhere even if it is for a brief period.

If you have a traveling ministry, the fact that you go to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is good news. In Baptism, the soul is imprinted with an indelible spiritual character which enables a Christian to serve God by participating in the holy liturgy, Mass, and be a living witness of love and charity in the world.

Jesus calls every Christian to step out in faith and spread the Gospel message of salvation. It is love in action for the universal church and the local church. How Jesus is calling you in particular is something you need to discern. Attending Mass, either at a church near you or one farther away, is one of many steps on your journey of faith.

As St Paul says, "so then you are no longer strangers and sojourners. But you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being a cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you are also built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19-22).

We are all called to God himself and are blessed to be a part of his family — the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.

*Mason and Teo Matsuda are parishioners of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Ewa Beach and have served in youth and young adult ministries for years. Write to them at yaadvice@yahoo.com.*

Donna Lyn Rabe Baguio and James Baguio kiss at the conclusion of their nuptial Mass, Sept. 12.



HCH photo by Anna Weaver

A wedding is for a day. A marriage is for a

# lifetime

*This is the Hawaii Catholic Herald's third and final story following the marriage preparation of James Baguio and Donna Lyn Rabe. Our congratulations to the happy couple.*

**By Anna Weaver**  
Hawaii Catholic Herald

And then there was one. One married couple, that is.

James Baguio and Donna Lyn Rabe married each other on Sept. 12 before family, friends, and God at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Ewa Beach. The day was sunny and the atmosphere inside the church was even warmer.

Throughout their marriage preparation process, James and Donna often repeated that they wanted their wedding day focus to be on the Eucharist. They also adopted as their own motto an Engaged Encounter slogan "A wedding is for a day. A marriage is for a lifetime."

That was something emphasized by Capuchin Father Marvin Bearis in his homily at their nuptial Mass. "James and Donna, your life will reflect Christ's love ... There's much more substance in this love," he said. "On behalf of the community, I can only say it is our hope and prayer that you make your lives particularly Eucharistic-centered."

"We don't want to make the wedding bigger than our marriage," Donna said a month earlier on Aug. 12 when the couple sat down to discuss how they were finalizing wedding plans.

That didn't mean they put no effort into planning their actual wedding day. The couple did typical wedding planning things. They picked a color scheme based on a Neapolitan blend of white, brown and pink. They chose their best man Christian Legaspi and maid of honor Sherill Ontalan. They posed for official engagement photos at

Ko Olina and in the drum section of Easy Music Center in honor of drummer James. They enlisted musician and choir friends for wedding reception entertainment and handled dozens of other "big day" logistics.

Donna kept everything organized with a detailed, hourly itinerary of their wedding day. As James put it that August meeting, "Even having it this simple is difficult."

But most important to both of them was the careful planning of their nuptial Mass. The Baguios chose the "Mass of the Joyful Heart" Mass setting, Scripture readings and the responsorial psalm because of their meaning to the couple. For instance, the Gospel reading they had heard was one of Father Damien's favorite passages.

"I thought it was pretty fitting because of Damien's canonization

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# Lifetime

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and since James went to Damien [Memorial School],” Donna said.

The processional song “Through It All,” meditation song “My Heart Belongs to You,” and recessional song “I Could Sing of Your Love Forever,” were some of their favorites and performed by Our Lady of Perpetual Help music ministry friends.

In a catch-up conversation with the Herald a couple of weeks after their wedding day, James and Donna recalled what stood out on their wedding day.

“One of my non-Catholic friends said that the Mass was a little different from others he’s been too because there was more singing,” James said.

Donna remembers fighting back the urge to cry as she waited to process into the church. “I got all jittery and teared up. But I shook it off,” she said. When she made it to the altar, she found herself giggling at the thought that “we’re finally getting married.”

Throughout the Mass as James and Donna sat together on a rose-petal and white-fabric covered wedding bench, Donna would reach over to squeeze James’ hand or make him smile. James admits that he was nervous. “I stopped being nervous after the exchange of vows,” he said.

Asked if that’s because he couldn’t back out after that point, James laughed and later said, “I only live for wife and God now.”

Because they wanted to focus on the liturgy, the couple decided to forgo the lighting of a nuptial candle and the Filipino coin, veil and cord ceremony, which are often seen at local weddings but are not actually part of the Catholic wedding Mass.

Some less common touches added by the Baguios were having their maid of honor and best man read the first and second readings, and the bride and groom themselves acting as eucharistic ministers. In the latter case, the couple got some bonus congratulatory kisses as they served the Blood of Christ.

“I’m glad that we had the chance to serve our family and friends instead of having other people do that,” James said.

After Mass and photo taking, the Baguios headed to their wedding reception at Nehelani Banquet and Conference Center at Schofield Barracks where they were joined by 320 guests.

Post-“wedding is for a day” and into their “marriage is for a lifetime,” the newly married couple is experiencing more changes than just Donna taking Baguio as her last name. Public school teacher Donna will have a reduction in salary due to a system-wide school furlough. James has taken a second job as a dietary clerk at Hawaii Medical Center-Liliha in addition to working at Kuakini Medical Center.

The two also decided to delay a honeymoon until they could both find time off together.

But at the end of their long days of work and often church ministry, the Baguios can now come home to their shared Kalihi apartment. “We’re just happy to be together now, married in the eyes of the church and God and everybody else,” Donna said.