



Weddings at St. Joseph Parish

Congratulations! The priests, deacons, and people of St. Joseph Parish rejoice with you at the announcement of your engagement!

In the weeks and months ahead you will be preparing to receive the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, one of the seven sacraments of the Holy Catholic Church. This matrimonial covenant between a man and a woman, as the Church teaches, is ordered for the good of the spouses for a lifelong union and for the procreation and education of children. Preparation for this Sacrament is directed not only for the wedding day itself, but for your entire married life together as husband and wife.

By asking to be married in the Catholic Church, you are publicly proclaiming your faith in the Lord Jesus and asking to live as married disciples of Christ for the rest of your lives. The policies which follow and all of the requirements you are asked to fulfill in preparation for marriage are designed to assure that the dignity of the Sacrament is upheld, and to help you make mature and well-considered decisions so that you are suitably prepared for the holy covenant into which you are entering.

Scheduling a Wedding

Ordinarily, at least six-nine months' notice must be given to the parish prior to the wedding. Couples are strongly encouraged to refrain from placing a deposit on a reception hall until they have met with the priest or deacon. Weddings are celebrated on Friday evenings at 5:00, 6:00, or Saturdays at 10:00 a.m. or 1:00 p.m. You may not arrive any earlier at the church than 1½ hours before the ceremony begins. Weddings are not scheduled in Lent. Wedding rehearsals usually take place at 5:00 or 6:00 p.m. on Thursday or Friday evenings prior to the wedding.

Marriage Preparation Includes:

1. The Fully Engaged pre-marriage inventory (This covers such topics as marriage covenant, communication, parenting issues, finances, readiness issues).
2. Several personal meetings with the priest or deacon.
3. Completion of an approved program of marriage preparation such as Living a Joy Filled Marriage or Engaged Encounter.
4. Attendance and participation in an Archdiocesan Natural Family Planning (NFP) introductory session.
5. Meeting with the parish musician/organist.
6. Meeting with parish wedding coordinator.

Cost

The cost for use of the church is \$250.00 for parishioners and \$500.00 for non-parishioners. We ask that you do pay those who assist with the ceremony; their fees include:

- Wedding Coordinator: \$150
- Altar Servers: \$10 each
- Priest or Deacon \$150

You will make arrangements directly with your musician(s) of choice; their fees vary.

Attendants

Children must be able to walk down the aisle on their own. No wagons. No animals. Bridesmaids must be women. Groomsmen must be men.

Decorations

Flowers for the altar may be provided by the couple and at the couple's discretion. Flower girls may throw silk petals; real petals stain the carpeting.

Candles may be used at the couple's discretion. Please use a ground cloth to catch wax, and keep in mind everyone's safety.

Aisle runners are discouraged, as our aisle is sloped. They can also make the aisle slippery.

We have 13 pews on each side of the center aisle. Decorations may be attached to the pews, but only in ways that do no harm to the pew, i.e. tape, putty, tacks, and rubber cement are not allowed.

Unity candle/sand/water: if a couple wishes to use these, they may do so at the wedding reception, but not at Holy Mass.

Birdseed, rice, balloons, etc., are not allowed to be thrown as the couple exits from the church.

Marriage License

Civil law requires the couple to obtain a marriage license within the thirty (30) days prior to the reception of the Sacrament. This license and its mailing envelope are to be brought to the wedding for the priest/deacon and witnesses to sign.

Clothing

The attire of the groom, the bride, and members of the bridal party should reflect the dignity of the Sacrament and the sacred rites, and the modesty and decorum which the Church expects all to observe when in the house of God. Men should wear suits (or tuxedos for more formal weddings). Women should wear wedding gowns or dresses which are appropriate for the sacred celebration (no strapless or low-cut dresses).

Food and Drink (Alcohol)

The bridal party is permitted to bring a light lunch/snacks for before the ceremony but alcoholic beverages are prohibited at all times. Chewing gum in

church or during the sacred liturgy is disrespectful and is not allowed. The priest or deacon celebrating the wedding reserves the right to dismiss from the church anyone under the influence of alcohol.

Music

Please speak to the wedding coordinator about the options for music. Because the celebration of a wedding is a public liturgical action of the Church, only music which is truly sacred is permitted at weddings. Decisions about the music permitted at St. Joseph Church, including permission to invite visiting vocalists and instrumentalists, are made in accordance with liturgical norms. Similarly, in conformity with liturgical directives, no music or accompaniment by recording or automation is ever permitted before, during, or after the wedding.

Photography

While wedding pictures and videos are not forbidden, the Rite of Holy Matrimony is a solemn celebration of the Sacrament which should not be disturbed or interrupted by obtrusive equipment and personnel. Cameras are not allowed on the altar; no exceptions. Flash photography may occur during the processional and recessional only, but not during the ceremony. Pre-wedding photography must be completed 30 minutes prior to the ceremony. While the ceremony is in progress, photographers must be unobtrusive; videographers are to remain stationary. After the ceremony, photographers may pose the wedding party and family members on the sanctuary steps in front of the altar.

All final photography must be completed within 30 minutes after the ceremony. (The bride and groom are advised to greet guests at the reception rather than the Church vestibule, if they would like to take pictures after the ceremony.)

St. Joseph Parish respectfully requests that all will cooperate with the spiritual nature of the wedding celebration, remain respectful of this sacred environment, and follow these guidelines.