



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH ST. PATRICK CHURCH

GUIDELINES FOR WEDDING PREPARATION

Congratulations on your engagement! Your wedding and marriage are important to you, your family, and your parish family – you are a witness to the enduring love of God. We offer these parish guidelines to assist you in the preparation of your wedding at Immaculate Conception and St. Patrick. Many of your questions will be answered with this document, but an essential part of your preparation includes a meeting with the pastor followed by the Director of Music and wedding coordinator, whose goal is to help you plan a wedding that reflects your style. Your wedding is a joyful occasion, and a clear understanding of expectations and procedures at this time will help to prevent the stress of future misunderstandings.

THE TIME AND PLACE

You will initially meet with the pastor to discuss some important issues and to complete the necessary paperwork. If you are not a registered parishioner of Immaculate Conception or St. Patrick, you will need to provide a letter from your pastor granting permission to be married here. (This is for Catholics only.) Your wedding date cannot be reserved until you have personally contacted the pastor of Immaculate Conception and St. Patrick.

CLERGY

In order to enter a valid marriage, a baptized Catholic must proclaim his/her vows before a priest or deacon and two witnesses.

FEES

When considering the cost of the many details of your wedding celebration, please consider your gift to God as equally important. While the Sacrament of Marriage is priceless, the cost of maintaining the church is significant. Sacraments are never denied to anyone because of financial hardship—please speak with the pastor if that is your circumstance. The Director of Music is happy to provide the names of wedding musicians in the area, however, it is your responsibility to contact them and consult with them about their fees and terms of payment.

THE MARRIAGE RITE

The Church's Rite of Marriage includes options which address particular pastoral situations; i.e. the marriage of two Catholics, or the marriage of a Catholic and a member of another Christian community. A wedding ceremony (liturgy) outside of Mass might be more comfortable and familiar to non-Catholic families and guests. To celebrate marriage within a Mass, the reception of Holy Communion would need to be explained. Outdoor weddings are permitted (Diocesan and Church Policy) with permission of the Bishop.

A WORSHIP AID

Some couples may wish to prepare a worship aid (program) for their guests. Programs may vary in detail but should include at least the order of service, the liturgical ministers, and names of the wedding party. Reference numbers for songs in the parish hymnals could also be included. Composers' names should be included with the song titles. If music is printed in the program, necessary copyright permissions must be secured and included. A personal message from the couple can also be added if you choose. The Director of Music would be willing to help with this.

THE ROLE OF THE ASSEMBLY

Your family and friends have been invited to witness your commitment to each other and to pray with you and for you, and to offer love and support. Their involvement in this joyful liturgy is essential. The Church asks that all liturgical celebrations be planned in ways that involve the participation of everyone present. Therefore, hymns and acclamations that you choose would encourage this participation. While a soloist may perform a worthwhile role during parts of the liturgy, every member of the assembly has a vital role, by responding to prayers and singing hymns, the Responsorial Psalm, and Gospel Acclamation.

FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY

Flash photography is prohibited by guests during the service. It is a significant distraction in the celebration of the sacrament. (This notice should be included in your worship aid.) Professional photographers may consult with the presider to discuss when flash may be necessary for them. Videotaping is permitted, but the presider must be consulted in advance.

DECORATIONS

You may use, with permission, any decorations which the church has, at no extra cost. You are responsible for replacement if broken. Please consult with the wedding coordinator before you order flowers or other decorations. No decorations are allowed on top of the altar. Balloons are prohibited in the church. No nails, tacks, tape or adhesive of any kind may be used to attach decorations to the pews. Plastic holders which do not damage the finish of the pews are allowed, for hanging bows, etc., on the ends of pews. Please contact the wedding coordinator to know when the church will be available for you to set up your decorations. Rice, bird seed, etc. may not be used. Not only is it a liability risk for people who may slip and fall on it, but also an extra responsibility of clean-up.

REHEARSAL

Your rehearsal will be determined by you, the presider and the wedding coordinator. The rehearsal will begin promptly. The wedding party is asked to arrive on time. Bring your marriage license with you. Most of your decisions regarding the ceremony should be made prior to the rehearsal. If you ask family members or friends to serve as readers of scripture or intercessions during the ceremony, they ought to be present to rehearse their reading using the microphone. The use of alcohol is prohibited on all parish property, including the church, rest rooms, and parking lots. Out of respectful reverence for the church and the sacred nature of the wedding ceremony, alcohol consumption is strongly discouraged prior to the rehearsal or the wedding. Any individual who exhibits inappropriate behavior, at the presider's discretion, may be prohibited from participation in the rehearsal and/or the wedding.

MUSIC

Music is a powerful and beautiful way to help express your love and your acknowledgement of the presence of God in your union. Mindful of the sacramental nature of marriage, there are guidelines regarding what music may or may not be used in a wedding ceremony. The music must be appropriate for use in church, in a liturgical setting. The suitability of texts sung at your wedding is an important consideration. Popular love songs often stress the couple only and exclude God and the Church community. While they may be desirable choices for your reception, they often overlook God's ongoing role in Christian marriage. Songs which merely include or imply the name of God may not necessarily be appropriate. Suitable song texts will speak explicitly of the Christian dimension of love, or express trust in, thanksgiving to, or praise to God. Good wedding music also acknowledges the power of the prayer of the community. No taped or pre-recorded music may be used during the service. You are financially responsible to provide legal copies of any music which must be obtained for your musicians. For the comfort level of both you and the musicians, who need adequate time for practice, it is best to select your music as far in advance as possible; all musical selections are subject to the approval of the Director of Music.

PROCESSIONAL MUSIC

While not absolutely necessary, there is a trend toward separate music for the attendants and for the bride. Keep in mind that within the course of any piece, the volume level could be increased appropriately to announce the entrance of the bride.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Lectionary, a book which contains all the Scripture readings used at Mass, has a wonderful assortment of readings for wedding liturgies. They may be found in your planning book. Once you have made your selections, choosing a musical setting for the psalm and the gospel acclamation will be simple. Selected solos or hymns should also complement the reading.

THE RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The Responsorial Psalm immediately follows the First Reading. Since a psalm is a song, it is normally sung; this is a role that is filled by your soloist, or cantor. Your music minister may suggest various settings for the psalms. Please note: the psalm is from Scripture and may not be replaced by a "song".

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

This acclamation is always sung. The Director of Music may suggest various settings. The verse for the acclamation usually relates to the Sacrament of Marriage or selected readings.

THE RITE OF MARRIAGE

The Vows / The Declaration of Consent The ministers of the sacrament are the bride and groom, and this reality is expressed as the vows are proclaimed. The options for the vows are included in the book which you are given to help you to prepare.

THE UNITY CANDLE AND OTHER OPTIONS

Though it has been popular in many churches in the United States, the unity candle is a commercial product that is not part of the Catholic marriage rite. The real symbols of the sacrament are the bride and groom themselves. The candle is not required in the wedding ceremony—please discuss that option at the time of your consultation with the Director of Music.

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

If your marriage takes place within Mass, the liturgy then continues with the Liturgy of the Eucharist. You may invite family or friends to bring forward the gifts of bread and wine. Instrumental music may be played or a hymn or solo can be sung. The time required for this rite is brief, so you might choose a piece of appropriate length. Acclamations during the Eucharistic Prayer The parish musician will know the settings with which the congregation is most familiar. Please rely on that experience.

NUPTIAL BLESSING

The Nuptial Blessing is recited after the Lord's Prayer.

COMMUNION HYMN

While the congregation processes to Communion the hymn is sung by the Cantor and/or congregation. Some suggestions can come from the Parish Musician.

THE CONCLUDING RITE

The Concluding Rite includes a Greeting, Dismissal, and Recessional music.

CONCLUSION

This booklet has been designed to make preparing your wedding liturgy an enjoyable and enriching experience. It has offered rationale for proper selections and brief liturgical explanations. Your presider, Director of Music, and wedding coordinator are happy to work closely with you to answer any questions and assist you in this process. May your wedding celebration give praise to God, sanctify your day, and be a wonderful beginning of a long and happy marriage.

WEDDING FEES

	<u>PARISHIONER</u>	<u>NON-PARISHIONER</u>
Wedding Coordinator	\$175	\$250
Presider	\$150	\$150
Accompanist	\$200	\$225
Cantor	\$150	\$175

CONTACTS

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