

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST MARRIAGE PREPARATION GUIDELINES

YOUR WEDDING AT ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

St. Paul writes that marriage is a sign of the marital love existing between Christ and His Church. The married couple is seen as a symbol of the unconditional love and intimate union between Jesus as the groom and the Church as His bride.

Marriage fills us with joy and gratitude. That is why we take the preparation and celebration of your wedding ceremony so seriously. Through the years, the many beautiful weddings at St. John the Baptist have built a tradition of family and parish life that is very important to us.

These guidelines are important, whether your ceremony is simple or elaborate. Every wedding is significant. We want to help make your wedding the most important event in your life. To assist us in this task, we ask you to read these guidelines thoroughly.

PREPARING FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

Parishioners

Parishioners of St. John the Baptist are welcome to be married at St. John's. A parishioner is someone registered, actively participating in the sacramental life of the parish and supporting the mission of St. John's. A six-month period of preparation before the wedding is required. Please contact Fr. Carl before making any plans to be married at St. John the Baptist. **The cost to use the church is \$250.00 for parishioners; a \$50 deposit is necessary to hold the date.**

Non-Parishioners

St. John the Baptist Parish church is also available for non-parishioner weddings. A six-month period of preparation before the wedding is required. Please contact Fr. Carl before making any plans to be married at St. John the Baptist. **The cost to use the church is \$350.00 for non-parishioners; a \$50 deposit is necessary to hold the date.**

You can ask one of the priests or deacons at St. John the Baptist to officiate your wedding; you may also invite a priest or deacon of your choosing to prepare you and to officiate your wedding. If the priest or deacon is from a diocese other than the Archdiocese of Saint Louis, he must provide a letter of suitability from his local Ordinary. Your priest or deacon will complete all of the necessary paperwork and will assist you with planning your wedding ceremony in conjunction with the guidelines of the Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of St. Louis. All proper forms and dispensation(s) shall be delivered to St. John the Baptist Parish Office no later than 30 days prior to the wedding.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROCESS

1. Please arrange an appointment with the priest/deacon to begin the marriage preparation at least six months prior to the wedding date. Preparation includes the following:
 - A. The Pre-Nuptial investigation form must be completed.
 - B. The FOCCUS (marriage assessment tool) must be taken.
 - C. The proper documentation must be obtained:
 - Baptismal certificate dated within the last six months.
 - D. Participate in the Archdiocesan Marriage Preparation Program.
 - i. Please go to the Archdiocese of St. Louis Marriage Preparation website at www.archstl.org/marriageprep and follow the directions.
 - E. A Marriage License from the State of Missouri
(The license is valid for thirty days.)
2. Those seeking marriage in the Catholic Church are expected to be practicing their faith. It is a good custom to seek out the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) at the beginning of the preparation period and once again just prior to the marriage, so that you are spiritually prepared to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony.
3. If either party has been previously married, an annulment from the Catholic Church may be necessary. The priest/deacon preparing you for marriage will help you with any necessary paperwork. **Please note...A date for your wedding cannot be scheduled until the annulment process is completed.**

WEDDING COORDINATOR

A wedding coordinator is assigned to each wedding scheduled at St. John's. **Sue Salisbury (314-393-4914)** will be available to assist you, answer your questions and will be present at the rehearsal and wedding. She will contact you shortly after we receive the necessary forms. Sue's fee (\$75.00) is not included in the Church fee.

THE CHURCH

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church was built in 1928, in a day and age before any consideration was given to such things as a “cry room” or “bridal room.” We also do not have a church basement. While there is a small lavatory near the front entrance, it is certainly not adequate as a dressing room. There is a small area across from the lavatory that has a mirror for the bridal party to comb their hair and check their makeup. **THE ENTIRE BRIDAL PARTY MUST COME FULLY ATTIRED. THERE IS NO CHANGING ROOM, CRY ROOM OR BASEMENT.** The groomsmen should gather in the sacristy (the room directly to the right of the altar.)

A Catholic Church is a most sacred space, for within the walls of the church the Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the tabernacle. Because of this unique presence of Christ, certain behaviors are expected. Activities appropriate in a mall or reception hall are not acceptable in a Catholic Church (i.e. loud talking, yelling across the church, talking/texting on cell phones or any electrical devices, etc.). **ALL CELL PHONES SHOULD BE TURNED OFF.** Food, drink, gum or smoking is never allowed in any part of the Church. In addition, alcohol is not allowed on the church premises before, during or after the rehearsal or wedding. There is a time and place for everything.

With an aging facility, it can be difficult to heat or cool the church properly at all times. Please know that we do everything possible to maintain the facilities and regulate the temperature at a comfortable level.

TIMES FOR WEDDINGS

Weddings may be celebrated on Friday evenings (time negotiable) or Saturdays at 10am and 1:00 PM. Since we offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) beginning at 3:00 PM on Saturday afternoon, we ask that you vacate the Church as soon as possible so that the carpet may be vacuumed before confessions.

Due to the penitential nature of the season, weddings generally are not scheduled during Lent. Due to church services, weddings are not scheduled on the First Friday of the month.

TIMES FOR REHEARSAL

It is recommended that your rehearsal be scheduled two days prior to your wedding. If there are any last minute details that need your attention, you have an extra day to do so!

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO

Photographers **may not enter the sanctuary** (the carpeted area of the church). Photos are allowed in the **center aisle** during the procession and recessional **only**. Once the wedding has begun a discreet presence should be maintained. Photos **may** be taken from the choir loft. Posed photos are **not allowed** in the sanctuary **prior** to the ceremony, but are allowed after ceremony. Posed photos **may be taken** in other areas of the church and church grounds. Video cameras may be located on the side, outside the sanctuary.

AFTER THE CEREMONY, GROUP PHOTOS SHOULD INCLUDE THE BRIDAL PARTY AND IMMEDIATE FAMILY ONLY. PHOTOS MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE 3:00 PM CONFESSIONS.

It is your responsibility to notify your photographer/videographer of these rules. Please remember that our church is not a photography studio. Your wedding is part of the daily routine of parish life. Once celebrated, we have other Sacraments and Masses for which we must prepare. We appreciate your cooperation.

MUSIC

Secular music is not appropriate for a religious ceremony. If you need an organist, **Lois Horak**, the parish organist/choir director, may be available. Please call her to discuss your selections at **314-570-6887**. Lois' fee (\$200.00) is not included in the Church fee.

FLOWERS/DECORATIONS

We do not require any decorations for the wedding. The sanctuary of our church is beautiful already. If you do supply live flowers for the sanctuary, it is the custom to leave them in Church. Florists are to be instructed to remove additional candles, bows or decorations within one half-hour of the ceremony. Boxes or other disposable items must be disposed of either by the florist or ushers.

The main aisle is 100 feet in length. There are 13 pews in the front portion of the Church and 17 in the back portion of the Church (on both sides). If you wish to use candle stands, bows or flowers in the main aisle, they **MUST NOT** be taped to the pews. Please use freestanding holders or clamps that fit over the pew to avoid scratching the wood finish.

THROWING RICE, BIRD SEED, CONFETTI OR BLOWING BUBBLES IS NOT ALLOWED. THESE ARE FORBIDDEN BY THE INSURANCE AGENT OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS AND MUST BE STRICTLY ENFORCED HERE AT ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH.

ALCOHOL

The consumption of alcohol anywhere on the premises before, during or after the wedding or rehearsal is absolutely forbidden. There is a time and a place for everything. If there is any evidence of alcohol being consumed in or around the church, your wedding may be cancelled at St. John the Baptist.

FEES

- The fee for a parishioner is: \$250
- The fee for non-parishioner is: \$350
- Suggested payments:
 - 1st payment: half of total is due on the **15th of the month three months prior to the wedding.**
 - 2nd payment: balance due on the **15th of the month one month prior to the wedding.**

ALL FEES ARE TO BE PAID IN FULL PRIOR TO DATE OF THE WEDDING

The following FEES are to be paid directly to the individuals involved:

- The fee for the parish organist (if used) is \$200. This includes a planning session with the couple and wedding. If rehearsal with guest soloist is necessary, then fee is an additional \$25.00 per rehearsal session.
- The fee for the parish wedding coordinator is \$75.
- If the parish provides servers, the fee is \$10.
- A gift to the priest/deacon is at your discretion.

REQUEST FOR MARRIAGE

Bridegroom: _____

Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Bride: _____

Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Requested date and time of Marriage: _____

Requested date and time of Rehearsal: _____

Priest Officiating: _____

Check one:

Parishioner (Cost for wedding: \$250. Deposit of \$50 to hold wedding date, remainder of \$200 to be paid by rehearsal).

Non-parishioner (Cost for wedding \$350. Deposit of \$50 to hold wedding date, remainder of \$300 to be paid by rehearsal).

Signature: _____

Please return document to:
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church
4200 Delor Street
St. Louis, Missouri 63116-2304

For office use: Deposit amount and date paid: _____

Remainder due: _____

Remainder paid: _____