



St. Joseph's
Catholic Community

315 Southwest 21st Street
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

We are pleased to be a part of this once in a lifetime celebration – your wedding day! Enclosed is our ‘Wedding Packet’ in which you will find all the information you need to assist in planning your wedding liturgy at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church in Grand Rapids.

1. Please take time to read the white sheets entitled, “Wedding Policy for St. Joseph’s Church”. This is a broad overview of most questions you may have regarding use of the church property (worship space and additional rooms, photography, timeframes, rehearsal, etc).
2. The yellow sheets, “Music Policies and Guidelines for Weddings”, offer information regarding the use of and proper selection of] music for your wedding ceremony.
3. The white sheets offer suggested music as well as parish musicians to contact. *There MUST be a musician from St. Joseph’s Parish present at your wedding.* You may use other musicians for your wedding liturgy in addition to the “required” parish musician. Please contact the Music Director with questions regarding additional music and musicians. (326-2843, x21).
4. **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO CONTACT AND RESERVE A MUSICIAN FOR YOUR WEDDING DAY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.** Once you have a musician scheduled, please contact Kitty at the parish office with his/her contact information.
5. The green and blue sheets are to be used with your musician to plan the music for your wedding. **Please use the GREEN sheet if you are celebrating a full Mass WITH Eucharist. Please use the BLUE sheet if the celebration is WITHOUT Eucharist. The sheet should be returned to Kitty in the parish office NO LATER THAN 3 WEEKS before your wedding day or on _____.**
6. The priest will help you select the scripture readings during your marriage preparation appointments.
7. The fee schedule is also included. **Please note that all fees are due to the parish office NO LATER THAN 2 WEEKS prior to the wedding, or on _____.**
8. There are many facets in organizing your wedding liturgy. We hope you find this packet helpful. If you have ANY questions, please contact Kitty Pollock, our parish secretary/wedding coordinator, at 218-326-1663 x10.

May God continue to bless you both as you prepare for this most precious Sacrament.

St. Joseph’s Parish Staff

Parish Center Phone	218-326-2843
Parish Center Fax	218-326-1663
School Address	315 Southwest 21st Street • Grand Rapids, MN 55744
School Phone	218-326-6232
Community Website	stjosephscatholic.org

WEDDING POLICY FOR ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH GRAND RAPIDS, MN

We are delighted that you have chosen St. Joseph's Catholic Community for your celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony. We are excited that you desire to begin your new life together with us. Our prayers and support will be with you as you prepare to become husband and wife.

The celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony is rooted in the assembly of the Church; it is not a private family function, nor is it a social affair or a personal expression of your love for one another. Rather, it is an action of the entire Church in whose presence you commit yourselves to one another. The liturgy is neither a show nor a performance and is not enhanced by the presence of passive observers.

In light of this we have developed a set of guidelines and procedures for the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony at St. Joseph's. This is to insure that the sacrament, which you ask to celebrate with us, be of the best theological, liturgical and artistic quality and be an unforgettable moment in your lives.

REMOTE PREPARATION

It is our policy that couples planning to marry [and are free to marry according to the laws of the Church] are to make initial arrangements **AT LEAST SIX MONTHS PRIOR** to the planned wedding date. It is preferable that contact be made one year before the planned date to allow adequate time for marriage preparation. **Please do not reserve a place for your reception and then call the parish. We might not be able to accommodate the date you have chosen.**

A MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM IS REQUIRED

A variety of programs for engaged couples are offered in our diocese and in the Twin Cities. It is not required that the preparation program be completed in the parish of the diocese in which the marriage will take place. For example, if a couple lives in the Twin Cities they might choose to attend one of the programs provided in their parish or in the Archdiocese. If a couple has taken their preparation classes in another city, a certificate or letter from the pastor or those in charge of the program must be provided as proof that the preparation program has been completed. Your pre-marriage classes/program should be completed at least 2 months before your scheduled wedding date. In addition to the various programs provided you might want to do your preparation with the priest who will be witnessing your marriage.

No wedding date can be confirmed until after an initial meeting of the couple with one of the parish priests. At this initial meeting, the priest will conduct an interview to obtain the needed information and to ensure that there are no obstacles to the wedding being performed in the Catholic Church. At this session the priest will also discuss with you the guidelines and procedures for planning your wedding here at St. Joseph's.

In addition to planning the wedding liturgy, other paper work must be completed. For Catholics, we must have a copy of your baptismal certificate that has been issued within the past six months from the parish in which you were baptized. [If you were baptized here at St. Joseph's we will have those records on hand.] For a non-Catholic, a baptismal date, church and place should be provided.

All couples are expected to plan their wedding ceremony within the guidelines set forth by the Catholic Church. Booklets are available that give various options or suggestions. One of the basic decisions that a couple will have to make is whether or not the wedding liturgy should be celebrated within the Mass or just as a ceremony. Since we are celebrating unity in the Sacrament of Matrimony, it is appropriate that marriages celebrated between practicing Catholics be celebrated within Mass. If either the bride or groom is not Catholic, a marriage ceremony without a Mass is recommended. The unity of the Sacrament of Matrimony is somewhat diminished when one party of the marriage, and usually their family and friends, cannot receive the Eucharistic. It is not appropriate that non-Catholics receive the Eucharistic.

THE CHURCH

The following guideline should be observed:

1. **FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS:** Floral arrangements should not hide the altar, the presider, or any of the participants and should be tastefully arranged. Flowers are never to be placed on the altar itself. Also, any decorations must reflect the liturgical season in which the wedding takes place, especially during Advent and Lent. Decorations must not be attached to the pews or other furniture by pinning, gluing, nailing, tacking or stapling. Bud vases attached to the pew ends are not allowed. Decorations may be attached by elastic bands, plastic pew clips or ribbons. It will be helpful to contact the Director of Liturgy and Music to find out what will already be in the Church at the time of your wedding. No changes are to be made in the liturgical environment. You may not take down the liturgical colors and replace them with your color scheme.

2. **FOOD AND BEVERAGE:** Food and/or beverages of any kind are not allowed in the Church. The church is a sacred place and is considered to be the house of God. If you are planning to bring a cooler of pop/food to the church for wedding rehearsal or on the day of the wedding, this is to be kept in the social hall.
3. **CHURCH ENVIRONMENT:** It is your responsibility to leave the church, the bride's room, the gathering space and the social hall as you found it. Since you will not be able to attend to this yourself, please arrange to have others do the clean up jobs required. This is normally the function of the ushers and the bridal attendants and includes picking up any copies of the programs, anything left in the pews, removing flowers and bows from the pews, picking up the social hall and bride's room of boxes, flowers, empty bottles, etc. and anything else requested by the priest.
4. **SEATING OF GUESTS:** We discourage the practice of "friends of the bride" on one side and "friends of the groom" on the other. Ushers should simply be instructed to fill the church from the front, leaving only the necessary pews in front reserved for the family.
5. **AISLE RUNNER:** The original intent of the aisle runner was to keep the bride's dress off the dirt floor of an ancient church. Today it is nothing more than a social custom and since it has no significance in the context of the wedding liturgy, it is not allowed.
6. **THE PRESIDERS:** The presider may be a priest or a deacon of the parish, or with the pastor's delegation, another priest or deacon whom you might request. [You must obtain the pastor's approval before asking another priest or deacon to preside at the wedding.] The visiting priest or deacon must observe the guidelines and procedures established by the parish.
7. **READERS:** It is your responsibility to obtain readers who will proclaim the Sacred Scripture readings. The readers you choose should have experience and ability in public speaking. If your wedding is celebrated within a Mass, the readers should be Catholic.
8. **SERVERS:** Normally, we do not use servers at a marriage ceremony outside of Mass as there is very little for them to do. If your wedding is celebrated within a Mass and you have some relatives or friends who would like to function as servers, please inform the presider.
9. **LIGHTS:** Our lights are controlled by a sophisticated panel so we do not want people "experimenting" with them. Please ask the presider for a "guided tour" of the lighting panel so you use it appropriately.
10. **RICE, BIRDSEED, ETC.:** The throwing of rice, birdseed or anything else is not permitted. This includes blowing bubbles inside the church. You may blow as many bubbles as you want outdoors. The practice of sprinkling flower petals as the bride enters is also not allowed.
11. **ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO:** Alcohol and tobacco are not allowed on church property. The use of alcohol or any other mood altering

substances will **ABSOLUTELY NOT BE TOLERATED DURING THE REHEARSAL OR ON THE WEDDING DAY.** [This includes the practice of gathering in the parking lot and drinking beer during the picture taking session.]

12. **PERSONAL ITEMS:** Do not leave any personal items lying around. If you want, we can provide you with a key to lock up the bride's room. The parish is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
13. **FEES:** The customary offering for the Church is \$100.00. If you want to make a gift to the priest who witnessed your wedding, you should do so in a separate envelope. Fees for the musicians, cantor and soloist **ARE DUE IN THE PARISH OFFICE TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING.**
14. **UNITY CANDLE:** The Unity Candle is not a part of the Roman Catholic Rite of Marriage and will not be used.

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS

We realize that pictures are an important part of your wedding, but they should be taken unobtrusively so as not to be distracting to your guests or interfere with the prayerfulness of the Sacrament you are celebrating. It is your responsibility to make arrangements for a photographer and to allow ample time before or after the ceremony for the taking of pictures. Only photos taken by a designated photographer are allowed during the ceremony. After the ceremony begins, video cameras must be stationary.

TIMES FOR WEDDINGS

Weddings may be scheduled at any time or season that does not conflict with other regular church activities or liturgical seasons of the Church. The time of the wedding is to be determined in conjunction with the presider in view of such activities as times for confessions, Mass schedules, and other events occurring in the church that day. The Church must be free of activity from 11:00-11:45 a.m. to allow for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Church must be cleared of people and decorations by 4:00 p.m. to allow people to begin to prepare for the 5:00 p.m. Mass.

CHILDREN IN WEDDINGS

In view of the fact that we are celebrating the liturgy of the Church at weddings, it is time for serious reflection and celebration which allows us to ponder the readings of Sacred Scriptures as well as the vows being exchanged. Too many weddings are diminished by the presence of little children whose only function is to look "cute"! Weddings are not times for coaxing children down the

aisle, trying to keep them from running to their grandparents, or making a shambles of a well planned celebration. To be involved in the wedding party children must be at least six [6] years old.

THE REHEARSAL

The rehearsal usually takes place the evening before the wedding at a time agreed upon between the couple and the presider. **PLEASE STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF ALL THE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE REHEARSAL BEING ON TIME.**

MARRIAGE LICENSE: Please obtain your marriage license as soon as possible. [It is valid for a six month period.] You must have some sort of legal residence in Minnesota. You should apply for your license at the courthouse and pick it up at the same place. Do not assume that the courthouse will send you the license. It takes several days to obtain a license and if you wait until the last minute- well, you know what will happen. No priest, minister or justice of the peace can perform a wedding without a license! The latest you should give the license to the presider is the wedding rehearsal; however, it is preferable to give it to him earlier as certain information must be typed in before the ceremony. Usually the license is not signed by the couple, but by the best man and maid/matron of honor.

SOME DO'S

- Involve family and friends in the ceremony.
- Choose Scripture readings and religious music that are significant and meaningful to you.
- Remember the basic artistic principle that "more is less" and "less is more." -
- Call the parish office if you have any questions.

AND FINALLY...

Don't be overwhelmed by the externals. Do only what you feel you can comfortably handle. Remember that the beauty of the day and the mood that is created ultimately comes through you and how you choose to express your happiness. Be honest, be simple, and be hospitable. May God bless you both in your new journey together.

FEES FOR WEDDINGS

(Please write separate checks for each person)

FACILITY FEE

<i>St. Joseph's Parishioners.....</i>	<i>\$100.00</i>
<i>and St Augustine's Parishioners</i>	
<i>Non-parishioners.....</i>	<i>\$250.00</i>

WEDDING COORDINATOR \$75.00

ORGANIST/PIANIST..... \$150.00
(includes wedding and rehearsal)

ORGANIST/PIANIST..... \$175.00
(includes wedding, rehearsal and extra practice with soloist)

CANTOR \$75.00

SOLOIST \$75.00

CANTOR/SOLOIST \$125.00

OTHER MUSICIAN(S) *Negotiated with musician(s)*

PRESIDER *(suggested donation)* \$100.00
(Refer to #13 in St. Joseph's Wedding Policy)

ALL FEES ARE DUE IN THE PARISH OFFICE TWO
WEEKS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING.