
Wedding Policies and Guidelines



ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH POLICIES ON WEDDINGS

All weddings held at St. Mary Catholic Church must be scheduled through the Church Office. No wedding will be scheduled until a presider (priest or deacon) has agreed to officiate at the wedding and deposit has been paid. Once a date and time for the rehearsal and wedding have been reserved, please do not make any changes without first consulting our office.

WEDDING FEES

The fee for the use of St. Mary Catholic Church is \$900. If the bride or the groom (or parents of the bride or groom) are active, tithing parishioners of St. Mary Catholic Church with records of contributions dating a minimum of 1 year prior to the date of the wedding, the discounted fee is \$200.

St. Mary Catholic Church will provide the services of an on-site coordinator/sacristan for both the rehearsal and the wedding (the fee for the on-site coordinator/sacristan is included in the fee for the wedding). The on-site coordinator's role is to prepare the church for the liturgy and assist the presider. The on-site coordinator will assist the bride and groom with planning the various aspects of the wedding ceremony. Tori Oetken, our on-site coordinator/sacristan can be reached at (251)510-5682.

To schedule a wedding, you must come into the parish office, located at 106 Providence Street in the Sister of Mercy Building, and meet with the events coordinator of the parish, Laurel Wallace. At the time a reservation for a date is confirmed, a non-refundable deposit of \$300 is required (\$100 for active, tithing parishioners), with the balance of the fee due 2 weeks prior to the date of the wedding. Checks should be made payable to St. Mary Catholic Church, 106 Providence St., Mobile, AL 36604.

HONORARIUM

The rental fee for the church does NOT include the honorarium for the priest (this would typically be NO LESS than \$100) or the honorarium for the altar servers (\$20/each in cash). Please be sure these honorariums are taken care of the night of the rehearsal.

At weddings with a full Mass, the parties are asked to select their own lectors and gift bearers. The altar servers can be family members or we can provide them.

ORGANIST/MUSICIANS FEES

For well over millennia, music has provided spiritual enhancement to the liturgy of the Catholic Church. At St. Mary's, we aspire to have the highest quality music for this special occasion in your life. Careful attention is taken when selecting music and musicians. The following are guidelines that will make music planning for your wedding as easy as possible.

- St. Mary's Wedding Music Director will be responsible for all music and musicians for services. To make an appointment, call Richard Courtney at 251-510-7501 at least six weeks prior to the wedding to determine music, singers, and instrumentalists needed. All musicians will be hired by the Music Director. Only musicians approved by the Music Director and the Pastor of St. Mary's may perform in church services.
- All music performed in Catholic weddings must be sacred, or absolute music that is appropriate for the liturgy. The "Bridal Chorus", or "Here Comes the Bride" by R. Wagner, and "Wedding March" by F. Mendelssohn are not allowed because of the secular subject matter associated with those pieces. Below suggestions for appropriate music for Catholic Church services can be found. There are other options, though additional fees may apply for the preparation needed for non-standard repertoire. **All music must be approved by the Music Director**, and cannot be secular popular music, and cannot be selections from movies, operas, or musicals.
- St. Mary's staff organist, Richard Courtney, has first choice for performing all wedding music when the organ is required. The fee for the staff organist is \$250. If the organist is needed to attend and play the wedding rehearsal, a fee of \$50 will be added. If an outside organist is wanted, a \$50 bench fee payable to Richard Courtney will be incurred.
- Musician fees should be paid in full and given to the on-site coordinator at the rehearsal. It is customary to be paid in cash or check. **Music will not be performed without advanced payment.** Fees for singers and instrumentalists differ, but are approximately \$100-\$250 per service for most instrumentalists, and \$50-\$100 for most vocalists.

WEDDING MUSIC SUGGESTIONS

(NOTE: A full Mass requires additional musical selections for the liturgy and can be arranged with the music director.)

PRELUDE

My Heart Ever Faithful...Bach

Ave Maria...Schubert

Panis Angelicus...Franck

Dona Nobis Pacem...Palestrina

O Perfect Love...Barnby

Whither Thou Goest....Singer
Meditation....Morrison
Altar Flowers....Overholt
The Gift of Love/ Though I May Speak (O Waly Waly)....Stevens
Like a Shepherd Lead Us....Bradbury
Ave Verum Corpus.... Mozart

PROCESSIONAL

Arioso/Sinfonia....Bach
Nocturne....Mendelssohn
Trumpet Voluntary....Clark
Trumpet Tune/Air....Purcell
Jesu, Joy Of Man's Desiring....Bach
Thanks Be To Thee (Largo)....Handel
Canon in D....Pachelbel
Wachet Auf....Bach
Bist du Bei Mir....Bach
Air (Water Music)... Handel
My Heart Ever Faithful....Bach
Ave Maria.... Schubert
Ave Maria....Arcadelt
O Perfect Love....Barnby

RECESSIONAL

Ode to Joy.... Beethoven
Psalm XVIII....Marcello
Prelude and Fugue in F Major....Bach
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus (Hyfrydol)....Prichard
O God, Our Help in Ages Past....Croft
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (Beacher)....Zundel
Rondeau....Mouret

TIMES

Weddings may be scheduled on Saturdays anytime between 10:00am and 2:30pm or 7:00pm for a full Mass. A 3:00pm wedding can be scheduled if it is not a full Mass. Weddings are not scheduled on dates that conflict with official events or liturgies at St. Mary Catholic Church, or on Christmas Day, Easter or Holy Week. Rehearsals are typically held on Fridays between 4:00pm and 7:00pm.

DOCUMENTATION AND PRESIDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Weddings performed at St. Mary Catholic Church must comply with the sacramental regulations of the Archdiocese. When you schedule your wedding, you will be required to provide St. Mary Catholic Church with the name, parish and address of the presider. Your presider will be sent a form to fill out and mail to our parish office to obtain delegation to preside at your wedding.

In addition, you must provide the names and addresses of any other priests or deacons who will be participating in the ceremony. The Archdiocese requires all priest and deacons from outside the Archdiocese of Mobile to be issued a Testimony of Suitability from their bishop or religious provincial. It is the responsibility of St. Mary Catholic Church to obtain that prior to your wedding; therefore we require the name of the parish and address of all priests and deacons participating in your marriage ceremony on your reservation form. Your reservation cannot be finalized until the parish office has the approval from the Archdiocese that any priest or deacon outside of Mobile has a Testimony of Suitability on file. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the priest or deacon from outside the Mobile Archdiocese to be denied participation in your wedding.

The presider, or his delegate, is responsible for completing all pre-nuptial investigations, requests for dispensation, Engaged Encounter verification, etc. The presider will take responsibility for the sessions of matrimonial preparation required by the Archdiocese of Mobile. The presider must send all wedding paperwork to St. Mary Catholic Church. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the presider to sign and mail the marriage license to the State of Alabama, providing a copy to St. Mary Catholic Church along with all other wedding paperwork.

It is the task of the presider to ensure that all liturgical and sacramental regulations are followed. However, questions as to music, photography, flowers, etc. can be discussed with the on-site coordinator, keeping in mind any restrictions contained in the wedding guidelines for St. Mary Catholic Church or the Sacrament of Marriage guidelines of the Archdiocese of Mobile. It is the responsibility of the presider to insure all policies are enforced.

It is highly recommended that you plan your liturgy carefully, including selecting the readings well in advance and printing them out for your readers. Your presider should work with you on this and all other aspects of your liturgy.

SEASONAL FURNISHINGS AND DECORATIONS

During the various liturgical seasons, the chapel will have appropriate liturgical furnishings and decorations. For example, during Advent, purple or blue may be the background color and an Advent wreath will be present; in Lent, purple will dominate; and green will be the color in Ordinary Time. At Christmas there will be a large Christmas crèche as well as other Christmas décor. As these appointments to the liturgical environment are seasonal, all weddings should be planned with these decorations in mind.

PARKING

Parking for weddings at St. Mary Catholic Church can be found along the south side of the Church itself as well as in the St. Mary School gated parking lot. All of McGill Toolen Catholic High School parking lots are available on the weekends as well. NO parking places may be reserved until after the 5:00pm Vigil Mass on Saturdays.

FLOWERS AND CANDLES

Simple and tasteful flower arrangements may be used to decorate the church. Only *live* flowers and plants may be used. The use of tape, tacks, or glue to secure flowers to altars, pews, or windowsills is strictly forbidden, as is the use of any other fasteners that could mar wood or marble surfaces. Nothing can be placed on the brass candles (standing or on the altar). ***Altar flowers from the final wedding on Saturday are to remain in the church after the wedding for our Sunday liturgies.*** Any greenery brought in may be removed.

No additional candles may be brought to the altar, nor any existing candle stands be moved as the air and heat will only blow them out. Candle illuminators with globes may be clamped to the pews, but no bags filled with sand, etc. may be used inside or outside the church. You MAY light every candle on every altar for your ceremony, with the exception of the memorial candles (blue or red) as they have a fee per candle.

There is a possibility that another wedding is scheduled before or after yours. Recognizing this, florists must be informed of when they would have access to prepare the church prior to the scheduled time of your wedding.

POSED PHOTOGRAPHS

It is the policy of the Archdiocese of Mobile that during the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony, no posed pictures are to be taken in the church before or after the ceremony. With the consent of the priest or deacon officiating, pictures may be taken during the ceremony in a discreet manner that does not interfere with the sacred character of the occasion. Prior to the recession of the bride and groom, the photographer may come forward and photograph all of the wedding party in the sanctuary.

THROWS/RUNNERS

No rice, confetti, birdseed, flowers, flower petals, or other items may be thrown either inside or outside the church. No runners may be used down the center aisle of the church.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is not permitted at any time in the church or on the grounds of the church. This applies to the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony itself.

PRIE-DIEUX (KNEELERS), UNITY CANDLE AND SEATING

The church prie-dieux (kneelers) and unity candle are for your use and will be placed for you. St. Mary Catholic Church seats 750 people.

Do not remove any candles or replace any candles from the unity candle stand.

DRESSING AREAS

There are no dressing areas in St. Mary Catholic Church. Two small restrooms are located in the vestibule of the church. The Seton Center is available for rental if it has

not been reserved already. To inquire about reservations, contact Laurel Wallace at 251.432.8678 x4.

REHEARSAL

The sacristan/on-site coordinator will be present during the rehearsal at St. Mary Catholic Church to set up microphones, chairs for the wedding party, etc. It is advisable to have your readers present at the rehearsal so they may practice with the microphone and become familiar with the acoustics of the chapel. You are asked to be prompt for your rehearsal time as the priest and on-site coordinator will be awaiting you. Average time for rehearsal is 45 min. to 1 hour. Extra time will not be added on to the allotted 1-hour time frame if your wedding party is late.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DAMAGE

Any damage incurred during the rental of the church, or to the organ, piano or sound system is the responsibility of the bride and groom.

FURTHER INFORMATION

This contract is entered into between the bride and groom and St. Mary Catholic Church. We are available and happy to answer questions from the bride and/or groom about logistics for the wedding liturgy; however, we cannot accept calls from a wedding coordinator/planner since they are not a party to this contract. Should you have any other questions after reading these policies, please contact our office at 251.432.8678 x4 or email Laurel Wallace, lwallace@stmarymobile.org. Mailing address is St. Mary Catholic Church, 106 Providence St., Mobile, AL 36604.