

Welcome

Congratulations on your engagement!

Thank you for your recent inquiry regarding the Sacrament of Matrimony and for contacting St. Patrick Parish regarding your wedding plans. Your decision to marry, to commit yourself to love one another for the rest of your lives, is a beautiful blessing. It is wonderful that you have also decided to give God a place of prominence in your marriage. The priests and deacons of St. Patrick Parish are happy to assist you as you prepare to live the Sacrament of Marriage. It is our great privilege to celebrate this sacrament with you.

The Catholic Church always has considered marriage a most sacred commitment, forming the basic unit of human society and the Church. Therefore, we feel it deserves our most careful attention. Our goal is to help you make certain that the commitment you will be making is one that is freely chosen, mature and well informed and that your understanding of marriage is compatible with the Catholic sacramental understanding of marriage.

We ask that you acquaint yourself and all involved in your wedding with the following guidelines and policies to insure yourself of a respectful, dignified and enjoyable experience.

One element of marriage is the wedding liturgy. The wedding liturgy is a sacred event. While weddings have a social side, we should never confuse the two, thereby making the Church the primary place for the social side of the wedding. It is for these reasons that we require certain procedures to be followed during marriage preparation and at the wedding itself to insure an atmosphere conducive to the sacredness of the event, and then to make the ceremony and its preparation more meaningful for the bride and groom.

In Christ,

Fr. Brian Fischer

Deacon Kirk Lackas

Fr. Gerson Parra

Deacon Pat Rankin

Fr. David Skillman

"Thus they are no longer two but one flesh

Therefore let no man separate what God has joined. "

- Matthew 19:6

Important Church Contacts

St. Patrick Catholic Church

405 S. Church St.
Wentzville, MO 63385
(636) 332-9225 Fax: (636) 887-2055

Celebrants:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Fr. Brian Fischer, Pastor | 636.332.9225 ext. 226 | frfischer@stpatsch.org |
| Fr. Gerson Parra, Assoc. Pastor | 636.332.9225 ext. 282 | frgerson@stpatsch.org |
| Fr. David Skillman, Assoc. Pastor | 636.332.9225 ext. 223 | frskillman@stpatsch.org |
| Deacon Kirk Lackas | 314.374.8355 | superkal741@gmail.com |
| Deacon Pat Rankin | | patrankin@baue.com |

Wedding Coordinator—Melissa Olexa | 815-871-3430 | melissaole@stpatsch.org

We have a wedding coordinator to assist you with maintaining proper traditions of our faith and our parish. Our coordinator will help setup the church and chapel for weddings and rehearsals and will work with you on the wedding day to ensure that the wedding starts on time and goes smoothly. She directs the procession and can help with boutonnieres and corsages.

Music Director—Carrie Piotrowski | 636-332-9225 ext. 777 | musicdirector@stpatsch.org

Carrie will guide you in the selection of music and musicians. She is very knowledgeable about Catholic liturgy. She will be happy to assist you with information about any parish musician, or liturgical matter. Please contact her before you make any plans for music or musical selections. Only music composed for liturgy is permitted at the wedding. If musicians other than staff are involved, Carrie will need to meet with them. Musicians must be accomplished at their craft and be strongly familiar with the music guidelines for the Catholic Church. Music from pop, rock, opera, and contemporary are better suited for the reception and are not permitted in church. If you would like other musicians in addition to Carrie Piotrowski, those arrangements can be made through her.

Timeline for Marriage Preparation

PRELIMINARY (at time of engagement – no less than 6 months before desired wedding date)

- ☐ Contact the priest or deacon to make an initial appointment (this should be done by the bride and groom, not their parents)
- ☐ Contact Wedding Coordinator
- ☐ Contact Music Director

DISCERNMENT (6-12 months before)

- ☐ FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication Understanding and Study) completed by appointment with priest or deacon
- ☐ Make appointment with priest or deacon to discuss FOCCUS results
- ☐ Wedding and rehearsal date are finalized (according to guidelines established by the Catholic Bishops of Missouri, the date of your wedding can be confirmed **only after** your FOCCUS instrument has been taken and evaluated) and the couple informs priest of Marriage Preparation Program (see page 8)
- ☐ Participation in a Marriage Preparation Program either at St. Patrick or one of the Archdiocesan programs. (see page 8)
- ☐ Schedule a Natural Family Planning Introductory Session by visiting <https://www.archstl.org/natural-family-planning>. See page 9 for more information.
- ☐ Obtain current Baptismal certificates from church of baptism and give to officiating priest. Let the priest or deacon know if you have not been confirmed.
- ☐ Inform the parish office of rehearsal date and time

LITURGY PLANNING AND FORMAL PREPARATION (3-5 months before)

- ☐ First Liturgy meeting: after you have completed discussion of the FOCCUS, this meeting with your priest or deacon and Wedding Coordinator will help you plan your wedding ceremony
- ☐ Second Liturgy meeting: please contact the Music Director to plan the music for your celebration
- ☐ Three months before wedding, contact priest or deacon to complete the Pre-Nuptial Investigation, bringing current Baptismal Certificates and all other necessary documentation
- ☐ Certificate of Completion from their Natural Family Planning Session (**this is separate from the one received for marriage prep**)

THRESHOLD EVENTS (up to 2 months before)

- ☐ Schedule a meeting for Liturgy finalization with priest or deacon
- ☐ All fees are due no later than 2 weeks before the wedding

Marriage Information

- ☐ In the Catholic Church, marriage is a sacrament, a holy moment. All sacraments are a reflection of our deepening faith commitment. Weddings are celebrated with those couples who both practice their faith and see their faith in God as an integral part of their relationship with each other.
- ☐ Weddings are scheduled for those couples who do not have a prior marriage bond. If either party, regardless of religion, has been married previously, the prior marriage must be resolved. The process for a formal annulment take about fourteen months. Please contact one of our priests or deacons for more information.
- ☐ Weddings take place on Friday evenings at 5:00, 6:00 or 7:00 pm or Saturday no later than 2:00 pm (2:30 pm for a wedding without a Mass). Weddings are scheduled throughout the calendar year. Weddings are not normally scheduled during the Liturgical Seasons of Lent or Advent unless, under unusual circumstances, approval has been granted by the Pastor.
- ☐ Details regarding church fees can be found in this packet of information. These fees do not cover the parish musicians or offering for the priest or the deacon. It is customary to offer a stipend to the priest or deacon conducting the ceremony.
- ☐ A Catholic can be married validly only when it is done in the presence of a priest or deacon and two Catholic witnesses. Normally, a person is married by a priest or deacon of the parish in which they reside, but it is possible to have another priest or deacon from outside St. Patrick Parish prepare the couple and officiate the wedding (especially when they are related or have a close personal relationship to one or both parties to be married.) The visiting priest or deacon will need to contact one of the priests at St. Patrick to confirm he is doing the wedding and all preparations. A Catholic cannot enter into marriage outside of the parish in which they reside without the permission of the pastor of that parish and, in certain circumstances, the Archbishop of St. Louis.
- ☐ When a Catholic is marrying a non-Catholic, the wedding is usually performed outside of Mass.
- ☐ A Marriage License valid in the State of Missouri must be purchased at least one (1) week prior to the rehearsal and given to the Priest/Deacon or Wedding Coordinator on the night of your rehearsal. The State of Missouri require a three day wait after the application for license has been made. Note: licenses are valid for thirty (30) days after issuance.
- ☐ Make sure to consult with the celebrant before any programs are printed or any changes to the liturgy are made.

Parish Policies

✧ Modesty and Reverence ✧

Be attentive and choose modest, beautiful dresses for yourself and the bridal party. This means that the following must be avoided: low-cut fronts showing cleavage, strapless or spaghetti straps, mini-skirt-like bottoms, low cut back sides, open midsections. Keep in mind that the majority of current fashions do not maintain the standards of modesty; however, almost all bridal shops offer the possibility of modification. A simple sweater, shawl or shrug can be added for the ceremony to maintain this level of modesty.

✧ Wedding Party ✧

Since we are limited to the size of the sanctuary, the size of the wedding party should be limited to a maximum of 6. There can be exceptions of course but large wedding parties can be difficult in our church. The bride and groom will be seated in chairs in front of the first pew on the Bride's side. Additional members of the wedding party will be placed in the first pew.

Respect—A wedding in the Catholic Church is a sacred event. We insist on proper respect at all times. Please help in having your wedding party understand the silent and quiet atmosphere we observe in our parish. We would ask that there be no gum chewing or tobacco chewing in church.

✧ Decorations –Flowers, Aisle, Candles, Candelabras & Pews ✧

The church will be open 1 ½ hours before the wedding for the florist to make the necessary preparations. Floral arrangements are encouraged for wedding ceremonies and may be placed on the altar steps or on either side of the altar and near the pulpit.

Be aware that the church may already be decorated according to the liturgical season. Colors primarily used in the church and chapel for seasonal decorating are:

- Advent (four weeks before Christmas): violet; rose for the third week
- Christmas: red, gold, white
- Ordinary Time (usually June-November and also following the Christmas season): green
- A wide variety of decorations may be used depending on the time of year

For the safety of our guest and wedding party, our insurance company prohibits aisle runners of any type or material. Flower petals, either real or silk, are not to be dropped in the aisles. Please be mindful of dresses and/or decorations that use glitter. Many times additional effort must be used to clean and an additional cost may be added.

For safety reasons, setting up stands for candles in the aisles and on pews is prohibited. St. Patrick will lend you clips for pew bows and flowers. **These are the only clips you may use.**

✧ Photography and Videography ✧

Pictures are happy reminders of this sacred and special event. The photographer must check with the parish wedding coordinator prior to the beginning of the ceremony as to what is appropriate in the church. The use of video equipment is optional. If you choose to record your wedding or have a videographer present, all video equipment must be set up prior to the start of the ceremony and controlled remotely. With regards to the photographer, there is to be no conversation, no gum, no cell phones, no flash photos of musicians and he/she must not walk in front of the musicians. The photographer may not proceed past the beginning of the first step to the altar, this includes the sides of the altar. Neither the photographer nor videographer are to move anything in the church without the expressed permission of the parish wedding coordinator.

Pictures are allowed in church for 45 minutes immediately following your wedding. It is for this reason that we highly discourage having a receiving line. This greeting of guests might be better done at your wedding reception.

✧ Rice, Birdseed, Confetti, Balloons, etc. ✧

Our insurance company prohibits the custom of showering the bride and groom with rice, birdseed, flower petals, or confetti, this includes inside and outside of the church building. It also presents a clean up problem. We also prohibit the release of balloons. The bride and groom should let their relatives and guests know this.

✧ Food and Beverages ✧

Food and beverages are not permitted in the church building with the exception of water bottles in the cry room.

The consumption of alcoholic beverages prior to the arriving at St. Patrick and/or on church property including the parking lot is forbidden in connection with wedding rehearsals, marriage ceremonies or photography sessions before and after them. Consumption of alcoholic beverages before the ceremony could invalidate the ceremony itself.

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to inform the wedding party of this policy.

**~ The time before the wedding is for Prayer & Preparation and
the time after the wedding is for Party & Celebration. ~**

**** Please remember that everything you bring must be taken out with you when you leave. Rooms should be left as they were when you arrived.**

Wedding Fees

The fee for the wedding ceremony at St. Patrick is \$400 for parishioners and \$700 for non-parishioners. If your wedding takes place in the context of a Mass, a fee of \$10 per server is the customary token of your appreciation for the their assistance at your wedding. St. Patrick altar servers will be assigned for your wedding, unless you inform the Wedding Coordinator that you wish family members or friends to act as servers. If the servers are not from St. Patrick, they should attend the rehearsal.

There is a \$75 Wedding Coordinator Fee. This fee should be paid directly to the wedding coordinator.

The pianist's fee is variable and include consultation, planning music selection, and hiring singers and/or other musicians. If your music choices involve purchasing new pieces or rehearsing with vocalists/musicians who don't normally perform at St. Patrick, the pianist's fee may be increased. Vocalists and other musicians will have their own fee schedule. Please discuss fees with them personally.

A free-will offering for the presider, either the priest or deacon, is always welcome.

All fees are due at least two weeks before your wedding date and should be sent to the Wedding Coordinator. Make checks payable to St. Patrick.

Fee Breakdown

| | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Ceremony: | Parishioner | \$400 |
| | Non-Parishioner | \$700 |
| Clergy: | Free-will Offering | |
| Wedding Coordinator: | | \$75 |
| Music Ministries | Fees vary | |
| Servers (if a Mass): | Two at \$10 each | |

Formal Preparation for Holy Matrimony

As you prepare for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, you have the option of attending one of the programs listed below. It is important that you make your plans early and complete the program at least **three months** before your wedding.

Please choose ONE of the following:

St. Patrick (Couple to Couple)

Skills for marriage life are developed while exploring a variety of married life situations with a married couple. The engaged couple meets with a married couple from our parish for five sessions. Meetings are held in the home of the married couple and last about two hours. These sessions include (1) Communications, (2) Everyday Practical Problems, (3) Growth and Marriage/Family Life, (4) Sacrament of Matrimony and (5) Our Life as Church.

Contact Rich & Candice Doerr at craed1122@gmail.com.

Archdiocesan Marriage Preparation Classes

Sponsored by the Office of Laity and Family Life, these classes are a total of 10 hours and take place at locations throughout the Archdiocese. Please do not contact the class location directly. Instead, please call **314-792-7182** and speak with the Marriage Preparation Coordinator for information or to register.

Engaged Encounter Weekends of St. Louis: Marianist Retreat & Conference Center in Eureka, MO

For upcoming dates and a registration form, call 636-379-0962 or visit their website at <http://www.stlengagedencounter.org> to receive the form by mail or fax. Cost: \$250/couple

Office of Laity and Family Life

20 Archbishop May Drive

St. Louis, MO 63119-5738

Phone: 314-792-7170 **Fax: 314-792-7199

Website: <http://archstl.org/marriageprep>

Natural Family Planning

Every couple seeking to marry in the Catholic Church in the state of Missouri must attend an introductory session on Natural Family Planning (NFP). This class should be completed at least **2 months before the wedding** and after the Marriage Preparation Class.

What is NFP?

Natural family planning (NFP) is not to be thought of as a “Church approved” contraception. While it is capable of accomplishing the same function, NFP represents an entirely different perspective on fertility and sexuality within marriage that is healthier for the body, empowers the couple with the knowledge of their bodies, and enriches marital bonding.

Contraception circumvents the very life-giving meaning of sexuality. NFP strives to work holistically, faithfully, and cooperatively with God and nature to avoid or achieve pregnancy.

Why NFP?

- Up to 96.8% actual use effectiveness (compared to most oral contraceptives at 94% actual use effectiveness)
- Only 5% of couples using NFP divorce. The conventional divorce rate in America is approximately 50% and increases with cohabitation.
- No side effects; artificial hormones in birth control and contraceptive devices (IUDs) can have some serious side effects.
- Follows the Church’s teachings. God’s law is not arbitrary but is directed towards our true happiness.

Introductory Sessions and Methods:

<https://www.archstl.org/natural-family-planning/methods/introductory-sessions>

Billings Ovulation Method

- A method based on the observations and tracking of a single biomarker, cervical mucus. It is taught once a month at St. Anthony Hospital

Creighton Model FertilityCare Services

- A standardized method of tracking cervical mucus providing a 98.6% actual use effectiveness, backed by peer reviewed research studies. This method is taught by individual certified practitioners and used by specially trained doctors to track healthy cycles as well as diagnose and treat reproductive disorders like PMS, PCOS, endometriosis, and infertility.

Couple to Couple League (CCL)

- Focuses on helping women be aware of their bodies using basal body temperature in conjunction with other biologic signs of fertility. This system is taught by teaching COUPLES.

Marquette Model

- A technologically based method teaching couples to use the Clearblue Easy Fertility Monitor to track hormone levels in coordination with the time of the women’s fertile cycle. These observations can be combined with other observations.

**** This session should be attended after the Marriage Preparation Class, but at least two months before the wedding.**

Rehearsal

- ☐ A rehearsal is required and should be scheduled with St. Patrick's Wedding Coordinator as soon as the wedding date is confirmed. The presiding Priest/Deacon does not need to be present at the rehearsal. The rehearsals are normally one or two days prior to the actual wedding ceremony. The date and time will be given with consideration for other church activities for the worship space.
- ☐ All members of the wedding party should be in attendance at the wedding rehearsal. In addition to these members, any other who may perform a service in the ceremony should also attend: Bride & Groom, Maid/Matron of Honor, Best Man, Bridesmaids, Groomsmen, Flower Girl, Ring Bearer, Parents of Bride & Groom, Grandparents of Bride & Groom, Readers, Ushers, Gift Bearers (if the wedding is a Mass), and Servers (if not currently a server at St. Patrick and the wedding is a Mass)
- ☐ The Bride and Groom should also bring any of the items that will be used at the Ceremony, including Wedding Programs and copies of selected Readings, etc.
- ☐ At all times, during both the rehearsal and actual wedding ceremony, reverence and decorum require appropriate attire. Those in attendance are to be punctual and aware of the sanctity of the Church.
- ☐ You must bring the Marriage License valid in the state of Missouri. This license is valid for 30 days prior to the wedding. Without it, a wedding cannot be celebrated. A three-day waiting period is required by the civil authorities between the time of application and the reception of the license.

♥ *The Day of Your Wedding* ♥

- ☐ The cry room is available beginning 1 ½ hours prior to your wedding for the bride and her attendance to prepare. Hair and makeup should be done prior to your arrival.
- ☐ Please appoint someone to clean up the cry room after the wedding.
** Please remember that everything you bring must be taken out with you when you leave. Rooms should be left as they were when you arrived.
- ☐ No refreshments or food items are to be brought into any area of the church, with the exception of bottled water. Please eat something before you arrive. **Under no circumstances are alcoholic beverages acceptable anywhere on the church property. Do not consume alcoholic beverages before you come to St. Patrick.**
- ☐ Groom and groomsmen should dress prior to their arrival.

Thank you for letting us be a part of your Wedding Celebration. The most important thing you can do together throughout your marriage is PRAY TOGETHER.

Congratulations and our prayers are with you!

♥ Notes ♥



WEDDING INFORMATION SHEET

Celebrant: _____

Wedding Date: _____

Time: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____

Time: _____

Full Nuptial Mass ☐

or

Liturgy of the Word ☐

Bride _____

Groom _____

Telephone _____

Telephone _____

WEDDING PARTY (please list in order of couples)

Maid/Matron of Honor

Best Man

Bridesmaids

Groomsmen

Flower Girl _____

Ring Bearer _____

Ushers _____

Readers _____

Gift Bearers (optional) _____

Servers _____

Eucharistic Ministers _____

Bride's Parents

Groom's Parents

Bride's Grandparents

Groom's Grandparents

Florist _____

Photographer _____

PLEASE RETURN TO WEDDING COORDINATOR AT LEAST 5 MONTHS PRIOR TO WEDDING

| | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Date | _____ | Rehearsal | _____ |
| Bride | _____ | # | _____ |
| Groom | _____ | # | _____ |
| Church | _____ | | |

1st Meeting _____

2nd Meeting _____

3rd Meeting _____

4th Meeting _____
