

Saint Mary's Parish

Massillon, Ohio

Marriage Policies and Regulations

INTRODUCTION: The celebration of Christian Marriage is a unique moment in the life of the Church. The Christian Community rejoices in a special way whenever the bride and groom wish to commit themselves in faith and love to each other for life. This commitment reflects the love of God for all people and is a symbol of Christ's love for the Church. Thus, a Christian wedding is a religious event, as well as a secular one.

Marriage is a life-long and faithful union and process of choosing each other for the mutual sharing of life and love. It is a union which is open to children; it is a union which is modeled after and symbolizes God's ever-faithful love for his people. It is this union of life and love that each couple seeks in marriage and to which each couple publicly gives their consent.

Saint Mary's Parish is a sacred place in which to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage, as it is a focal point for the celebration of many important religious events. The following policies and regulations have been prepared so that all couples wishing to plan a wedding at Saint Mary's Parish may do so with the Church's understanding of Christian Marriage, and may prepare a celebration that is festive, prayerful, and appropriate to the dignity of our Church, in conformity with diocesan guidelines.

INITIAL PLANNING

SCHEDULING:

1. Saint Mary's Parish will be available for weddings of members of our Church who are registered, active, and contributing for at least one year. All others must be approved by the Pastor.
2. Weddings are usually scheduled on Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. or 6:30 p.m.. Weddings must be prearranged through the Parish Office.
3. The Pastor of Saint Mary's Parish will officiate at all liturgies of Marriage taking place at Saint Mary's Parish. If a couple requests a visiting ordained clergy, special arrangements must be made with the permission of the pastor, particularly if the clergy member is from outside the Diocese of Youngstown.

PREPARATION:

1. If either one of the couple has been married before, an annulment may be needed. Please inform the pastor when making arrangements, since this may postpone the wedding date.
2. Couples must make arrangements for their wedding by contacting the parish office **at least SIX months prior to the date desired**. Our Parish has many other events scheduled in the Church; therefore, the time of your wedding on a certain day may be restricted.
3. The priest or deacon who officiates at the wedding is usually responsible for the marriage preparation. The preparation process is designed to assist the couple to assess their own readiness for marriage and to provide instructions for the planning of and living out a marriage commitment.
4. This preparation includes, but is not limited to:
 - a) a number of meetings with the priest or deacon
 - b) attendance at a Pre-Cana session, such as Joyfilled Marriage,
 - c) completion of the FOCCUS assessment

DOCUMENTATION:

1. During these preparation classes Catholic persons must bring to the priest or deacon a recent certificate of Catholic baptism, obtained **from the church of baptism, within six months prior to the date of marriage**. Non-Catholic parties should bring a written record of baptism, if possible. A civil Marriage License should be presented no later than 30 days prior to the day of the wedding.

PLANNING THE LITURGY OF MARRIAGE

1. Wedding celebrations should be designed so that active participation of the assembly is both positive and encouraged. The liturgy itself should be expressive of the faith of the couple and should be carried out with the solemnity and dignity befitting a liturgy a Saint Mary's Parish.
2. The couple should meet with the Director of Music and the Liturgy Coordinator to plan the liturgy, selecting from the many options within the ritual for Marriage, which express their own prayer and faith commitment. The couple may make decisions about the selection of readings and offer suggestions concerning the prayers, blessings, music, and special ceremonies within the rite.

3. Friends and relatives of the couple may participate in the Liturgy in roles designated appropriate by the pastor and Liturgy Coordinator. This may include lectors or other ministers.
4. Rehearsals are normally scheduled on Fridays. The scheduling of rehearsals will take place at the availability of the church building. Arrangements for the rehearsal should be made along with the scheduling of a wedding date and time.
5. The lighting of a unity candle is not part of the Marriage Rite and therefore is not encouraged.
6. Other cultural customs, such as the blessing and placing of the Lazo (*veil*), and the blessing and giving of the Arras (*coins*), are part of the Marriage Rite and may be included if desired.
7. A visit to Mary's Shrine at the conclusion of the Liturgy is most appropriate for couples who wish to honor our Lady and to offer her special prayers at the beginning of their married life. This is especially appropriate since our parish and country are under her patronage.

OTHER DETAILS

1. Please inform the invited guests that the throwing of rice, birdseed, or other items are prohibited inside and outside the Church for safety reasons. Balloons and wedding poppers are also not permitted on Church property. You may use bubbles or real flower petals.
2. See the attached regulations for photographers.
3. The Church has flower stands, which may be used. Flowers placed in the sanctuary are done so for the glory of God; therefore, we request that flowers purchased remain in Church after the ceremony. These flowers will not only enhance our sanctuary for the weekend Masses but will also visibly share with the community the celebration that has taken place.
4. Flowers and other decorations for the wedding are to be selected and purchased by the couple. Proper care for worship space and decorum within the Church must be maintained. With this set of policies is a list of regulations for your florist. **Please see that the florist is given the list.** If these regulations are observed there will be no unpleasant incidents at the time of the wedding. The florist is expected to work in conjunction with the parish staff.
5. No church furniture may be moved or rearranged for any reason. If there is particular difficulty or need for some adjustment in this area, please discuss this matter with the pastor.

6. The couple may choose to receive their guests on the steps of the church or inside the front entrance if the weather is inclement. If inside, bubbles or real flower petals may not be used.
7. Brides may use the designated room for dressing at the Church. Due to security risks, valuables should not be left unprotected. Please note: it is the responsibility of the bridesmaids to have everything out of the room after the wedding. Anything left in the Dressing Room after the wedding ends may be discarded.
8. Our Church is entirely smoke-free. Absolutely no alcohol, drugs or other substances are permitted or to be used on the premises.

Impediment to a Valid Marriage

Canon 1095-1 in the Code of Canon Law states clearly that:

“They are incapable of contracting marriage (1) who lack the sufficient use of reason...”

An example of an impediment to marriage is the use of alcohol or any controlled substance by the bride and/or groom on the wedding day prior to the marriage ceremony. Alcohol and controlled substance abuse impede the senses and indicates that the couple is not fully capable of professing their vows.

If it is discovered prior to the ceremony on the day of marriage that a couple has been drinking alcohol or using a controlled substance, the presider will halt the ceremony and the couple will be responsible for rescheduling a VALID marriage ceremony on another day.

WEDDING STIPENDS

Celebrant.....	\$200.00
Soloist	\$150.00
Organist	\$150.00
Servers	\$10.00/per server (2)
Sound Board Operator.....	\$25.00
Non-Parishioner use of church	\$500.00

All fees are to be given to each minister on the day of the wedding.

The \$500 church fee (*if applicable*) is due the week prior to the wedding.

WEDDING MUSIC GUIDELINES

1. A Church wedding is a Sacrament of the Church and a very personal event. As such, the religious nature of the ceremony must be carefully preserved. However meaningful some music may be to the couple, the principle that governs its sacredness and acceptability is the religious aspect of the wedding. This is separate and distinct from the reception for family and friends.
2. The music will be selected from the list provided by the Music Director, appropriate for the assembled congregation's worship, and suitable for the intent and action of the particular wedding ceremony.
3. Popular and secular music, such as Broadway and film music, top 40 songs, etc. are not appropriate liturgical music for use in the Church during the wedding ceremony. The Music Director and Liturgy Coordinator will be able to assist you.

MUSICIANS AND VOCALISTS

1. The parish Music Director is employed to provide music for all liturgical events in the parish. In the event that a couple requests another musician or group, the parish Music Director must be involved in the planning and will be present to assist the other musicians or groups. The Music Director will also still receive a stipend. If a different musician or vocalist is requested, the couple must first contact the Music Director and arrange a meeting between the musicians of their choice and the Music Director. The Music Director is responsible for the scheduling of ALL musicians and vocalists and for the appropriateness of the music.
2. Music rehearsal(s) must be at a different time from the actual wedding rehearsal and must be scheduled through the Music Director.

REGULATIONS FOR FLORISTS

**Saint Mary's Parish
206 Cherry Road NE
Massillon, Ohio 44646
(330) 833-8501**

1. For safety reasons, the use of an aisle runner is strongly discouraged. The practice of using an aisle runner often creates a walking hazard and is an unnecessary expense.
2. If candelabras are used, they must have wax protectors or be dripless candles.
3. The Flower Girl may only drop real flower petals as she walks down the Church aisle.
4. Decorating may begin at 12:00 p.m. Noon for an afternoon wedding. If other events are taking place in the church prior to the wedding, the time permitted may need to be changed. The Liturgy Coordinator can assist with the specifics.
5. Decorations may not be attached with wire, tape, tacks, pins, or nails. Care must be used in order to prevent our liturgical furniture from being damaged. Floral wire or pipe cleaners are permitted.
6. Pew bows may be used but can only be fastened with pipe cleaners, floral wire, or ribbon. Care must be used so as to not scratch or mar the pews.
9. The Church has flower stands, which may be used. Flowers placed in the sanctuary are done so for the glory of God; therefore, we request that flowers purchased remain in Church after the ceremony. These, flowers will not only enhance our sanctuary for the weekend Masses but will also visibly share with the community the celebration that has taken place.

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**PLEASE GIVE THIS COPY TO YOUR FLORIST TO AVOID
ANY POSSIBLE MISUNDERSTANDINGS.**

REGULATIONS FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

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206 Cherry Road NE
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1. We welcome photographers at weddings, for both still photographs and videotapes; however, the photographer should check in with the Liturgy Coordinator prior to the wedding for any specific instructions.
2. Photographic equipment of any kind is not permitted in the sanctuary during the ceremony. Posing for pictures is permitted after the ceremony provided it is completed quickly and efficiently. **The photographer should be informed that a maximum of forty-five minutes is permitted after the service for pictures, due to other events.** There may also be a need to restrict the time, should you plan to take pictures prior to the service. It is important that you discuss your intentions in advance of your wedding day.
3. The Photographer should not stand in the way of bridesmaids and groomsmen as they come down the aisle for the wedding procession. The Photographer must not inhibit the flow of the celebration and should try to be as unobtrusive as possible during the wedding ceremony or Mass. The Catholic Wedding is the celebration of a Sacrament, and thus, a sacred ceremony. It is not the production of a photograph album or a videotape.
4. No flash pictures may be taken **during** the ceremony. The Photographer, still or video, may never **at any time** during the ceremony or Mass be in the sanctuary area. The sanctuary is the area elevated by steps in the center of the Church.
5. When the Scriptures are being proclaimed from the pulpit or the homily is being shared, the Photographer must sit and be silent.
6. Photographer(s) must leave Saint Mary's Parish with all their equipment one hour after the wedding ceremony is over. The entire wedding party must leave the Church after the photo session. If more pictures are desired, we might suggest additional photos be taken at the reception.

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PLEASE GIVE THIS PAGE TO YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER(S), BOTH STILL AND VIDEO SO TO AVOID ANY MISUNDERSTANDINGS.