

Marriage Guidelines

Christ the King Parish & L.S.U. Catholic Student Center

PREPARATION

The marriage policy of the Diocese of Baton Rouge requires a preparation period of at least six (6) months, consisting of several distinct steps:

- Completion of the Prenuptial Inquiry;
- Completion of "Facilitate Open, Caring Communication, Understanding and Study" (FOCCUS).
- Counseling sessions based on the initial interview and the results of FOCCUS;
- Attendance at an Engaged Encounter Weekend or its equivalent as approved by the Diocese;
- All paperwork must be completed at least two (2) months before the wedding unless explicitly permitted otherwise by the Pastor.

DOCUMENTS

- If neither party is a parishioner of Christ the King nor associated with LSU, a letter of permission from one's own pastor is necessary.
- A recently-issued, certified copy of the baptismal certificate for each Catholic party.
- Certificate of attendance at Engaged Encounter or its equivalent.
- If previously married, a copy of the annulment decree. If this has not been obtained, the Parish Office can assist the person to file the petition for the declaration of nullity. Arrangements for a wedding date cannot be made until this declaration is obtained.

DATES and TIME

The couple should make arrangements with a priest of Christ the King Parish in person. No date and time is set until after this meeting and the wedding fee has been paid (or the waiver request has been approved by the Pastor). Furthermore, all dates and times are considered tentative until the entire preparation process is completed.

When there is no other parish event which would preclude the use of the church or available university parking area, wedding ceremonies may be scheduled on weekdays between 5:00 - 7:00 pm, and on Saturdays at 11:00 am or 1:00 pm. The exceptions to this general norm are holy days, vigils of holy days, and Saturdays of LSU home football games.

MINISTERS

The priests at Christ the King are readily available for all weddings. A priest or deacon who is a family member or close friend of the couple may witness the wedding with a letter of delegation from the Pastor of Christ the King Parish.

If one party is non-Catholic, his or her minister is welcomed to take part in the wedding liturgy.

If other ministers (extraordinary communion ministers, readers, or servers) are desired for the ceremony, persons who have served within that ministry in their own parish church are preferred. Such ministers must be at least of high school age.

DÉCOR

Décor adds to the beauty and dignity of a wedding ceremony; however, the couple should consider the negative value of expensive and extravagant weddings.

Church furnishings and decorations are not to be moved for any purpose whatsoever.

The décor should be simple and conform to the spirit of the liturgical seasons (e.g. minimal decorations during Advent; no decorations during Lent). The couple may want to contact the priest for guidelines before consulting with a florist.

In the church of the living God, only living plants and flowers are allowed. Floral arrangements may not be nailed or attached in any way to walls, arches, beams, or doors. Nor may tape of any type be used to affix bows or other decorations to the chairs or other church furnishings. Flowers or plants should not obscure the view of the altar, lectern, chair, or the couple.

Flower girls may be a part of the wedding; however, the practice of spreading rose petals or any other material on the floor is not permitted.

If candelabra are used, adequate protection against wax drippings must always be provided. If such usage leads to damage, the couple is responsible for cleaning and/or replacement.

Nothing is allowed on the altar/table itself.

Due to liability insurance, aisle cloth/runners are not permitted.

Availability of the church for decoration prior to the wedding will depend on whether other services or weddings are scheduled the previous or same day. The normal expectation is that no more than one hour is needed to decorate before the ceremony. More time for earlier decoration can be requested but not presumed.

The wedding party and/or contracted florist is responsible for removing any debris (e.g. boxes, flower petals, bows, programs, etc.) and décor (e.g. plants, flowers, candle stands). This should be done as soon as possible after the ceremony but without inconvenience to either wedding party or the Center. If the cleaning is not satisfactory, additional cleaning will be billed to the couple or directly to the contracted florist, at the rate of \$25 per hour.

The couple is responsible for making these guidelines known to the contracted florist(s) or to others responsible for wedding décor. The Center is to be assured such notification has been made prior to the rehearsal.

MUSIC

All couples to be married at Christ the King Church should contact the Parish Coordinator of Wedding Music, Jan G. Dupre, jgdupre@cox.net, **at least three months prior to the wedding date.**

As Wedding Music Coordinator, Mrs. Dupre will assist you in selecting appropriate music for your wedding, and will assist you with booking musicians. Music at the wedding ceremony should be chosen to express the distinctly sacred character of the celebration and should enable the gathered assembly to participate fully in the liturgy. The Coordinator must approve all musical selections.

The Pastoral Musicians who regularly serve in the Parish are available for weddings on a contracted basis. The Coordinator will provide a list of these musicians. We recommend and encourage their employment since they are familiar with the musical requirements and facilities of our parish.

Instrumentalists and/or vocalists from outside of Christ the King Parish may be employed only if they are trained and experienced musicians who are familiar with the liturgical order of a Catholic wedding ceremony. The Coordinator must approve the use of all out of parish musicians.

Financial arrangements with musicians are a matter of private contract between the couple and the musician(s) and should be completed prior to the ceremony.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography of the ceremony should be done with extreme sensitivity to the sacredness of the event. It should never intrude upon the event, cause a delay in the ceremony, or be a distraction to the assembly.

During the ceremony, there should be only one photographer (professional or amateur) and, if video is to be taken, only one video camera operator. These persons need to speak with the officiating cleric prior to the ceremony.

Bright lights are not permitted and flashes are discouraged during the ceremony. Modern low light photographic techniques should be employed if photographs are taken during the ceremony.

Neither the photographer nor camera equipment should be in the ceremonial area at any time before or during the ceremony; pictures during the ceremony must be taken from outside the ceremonial area; pictures will not be posed during any of the ceremony.

After the ceremony, fifteen (15) minutes will be allowed for planned, posed photography. Please respect the church as church (it is not a photography studio) and the time limit of fifteen (15) minutes.

No furnishings or decorations at any place in the complex may be moved to facilitate a photograph.

The couple is responsible for making these guidelines known to the contracted photographer and/or camera operator, and family members. The Center is to be assured that this has been done prior to the rehearsal.

Failure of the photographer to comply with these guidelines may result in the photographer's privileges to photograph weddings at the Center being suspended.

REHEARSAL

All members of the wedding party, including the bride herself, should rehearse for the wedding. The substitution of another person for the bride has no validity for a believing Catholic Christian.

The rehearsal cannot be scheduled more than six (6) months prior to the wedding date. Either the officiating cleric or the parish wedding coordinator will conduct the rehearsal and is available for assistance at the wedding.

CHURCH FEE

There is no charge for the wedding service, and the priest expects no stipend, but because of the costs of utilities, maintenance, paperwork, and the just remuneration for the coordinators, there is an expected donation.

Varying circumstances place different duties and responsibilities on the Center staff. Additionally, those who do not regularly support the Center by ministry or financial contributions are expected to further allay costs and help the ministry of the Center/Parish. Therefore, there is a scale of expected donations for weddings at the Center.

If the couple (at least one party) or their families are students, faculty members, or other university personnel who are actively involved at the Center, or are registered parishioners of the Center, the expected donation is \$200.

If the couple (at least one party) or their families are students, faculty, or other university personnel but are NOT actively involved at the Center, the expected donation is \$350.

If the couple (at least one party) or their families are students, faculty members, or other university personnel who are actively involved at the Center, or are registered parishioners of the Center, and a visiting priest (other than an immediate family member) presides at the ceremony, the expected donation is \$350.

If the couple is not associated with the university or the Center in any way whatsoever, the expected donation is \$650.

Please understand that the Center subsidizes your wedding, since these figures do not even cover the cost of utilities for the set-up, rehearsal, and wedding. Of course, these financial expectations are always dependent upon the couple's financial situation. No one is ever denied a wedding at the Center due to the lack of financial resources. We are happy to celebrate the weddings of those who cannot afford the above fee, provided the simplicity requested is carried out throughout the whole celebration in terms of music, number of attendants, décor, reception, etc. If an exception is to be made, the officiating cleric will make the appropriate recommendation to the pastor who has to approve the request.

There are no other expected remunerations.

The expected donation is to be received at the time the church reservation is made. If the wedding is canceled, one half of the fee will be refunded.

DRESSING BEFORE CEREMONY

There is no private dressing area available in the Center; however, the Activity Center, the restrooms and the classrooms in the administration building (depending upon availability) are available for use by the wedding party as they prepare themselves for the ceremony. Please remember that none of these areas are, by construction or by use, private.

Because of the public nature of the complex, the Center will not be held responsible for any valuables left unattended.

The church is a sacred place; therefore, reverence and proper decorum is to be observed at all times. Smoking, eating, and drinking are not permitted in the church at any time.

CARE OF THE FACILITIES

Someone in the wedding party or employed by the couple should attend to removing any items used for or in preparation for the ceremony (e.g. clothes hangers, shoe boxes, cups). This should be done prior to or during the ceremony, but with as little inconvenience as possible to either the wedding party or the Center.

NO alcoholic beverages are allowed on the premise of the Christ the King Parish during the rehearsal or prior to or during the wedding ceremony.

The custom of throwing rice (after the ceremony or reception) arises from a pagan fertility rite. To maintain this custom devalues the sacred character of a Christian marriage and shows a certain insensitivity to the plight of the poor throughout the world. It is neither permitted nor is the substitution of bird seed for rice permitted. No bubbles, confetti, or any substitute may be thrown.

Should there be any damages to the buildings or grounds as a result of the actions of the wedding party and/or guests, the couple will be expected to reimburse the Center for the cost of repairs, at the Center's option, of such damages plus 15%.

PARKING

The parking facilities of the Center are limited. Parking is available at the university facilities across Dalrymple Drive or Highland Road. The back parking area on Fraternity Lane may be used by delivery persons in preparation for the ceremony or rehearsal. That parking area may also be used, by prior arrangement with the Center staff, for the convenience of any member of the couple's families who are disabled.

No one is to drive or park on the grass area around the Center at any time for any reason.

RECEPTION

The Activity Center may be available for wedding reception of couples married at the Catholic Student Center on a contracted basis.

The Activity Center may not be booked prior to publication of the University schedule and is not available for wedding receptions during the season of Lent.

Arrangements for the use of the Activity Center must be made with Mrs. Susan Hankel (344-8595; shankel@ctk-lsu.org), during normal office business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm)

OTHER INFORMATION

Our official name is Christ the King Church and Catholic Center.

The physical address is "Corner of Highland Road and Dalrymple Drive" or "3485 Highland Road."

The church seats approximately 750 people.

The Activity Center sits approximately 150 people sitting and 275 standing.

When necessary, air conditioning or heat is turned on the night before the wedding and remains on through the wedding ceremony.

The Center hours are: during semesters, 7:00 am – midnight; during most breaks, 8:00 am – sunset. During the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, the Center is normally closed and will be opened only two hours before a scheduled ceremony.