

Wedding Policy for Saint Joseph Parish Vinton, LA

Great care is taken to see that the prayer for this special moment is reverent, graceful, beautiful, and open to the movement of God's Spirit among us. In this spirit, Saint Joseph Parish provides the following policy for celebrating weddings in our church. This policy must be followed in order to preserve the dignity and respect of the church, as well as to contribute to the dignity and beauty of your wedding.

1. Respect for the Church and its facilities and grounds must be shown at all times.
2. Smoking is **NOT PERMITTED** anywhere in the Church, sacristy, or anywhere else in the buildings.
3. No food or drinks may be brought into the Church, dressing rooms, or sacristy. Gum chewing is **NOT** permitted in the Church.
4. For safety reasons, no rice, birdseed, confetti, or other materials, may be thrown on the Church grounds following the wedding. Likewise, not flower petals (real, silk or paper) may be thrown in the Church or on the Church grounds. This is both for insurance purposes as well as for safety reasons.
5. Children are **NOT PERMITTED** to run and play in the Church. Proper respect should be shown. Also, they are not permitted to stand on furniture in the Church. Again, this is for safety reasons.
6. All personal belongings must be removed from the Church facilities **IMMEDIATELY** following the wedding. The Parish cannot be responsible for articles left unattended.
7. **NOTHING** may be moved in the Church, sacristy, or any other facility of the Church without the explicit permission of the Pastor. This is to include furnishings, plants, flowers, and liturgical décor. Photographers and videotapers are not to move anything, even though things may interfere with photographs.

OUT OF PARISH WEDDINGS

Couples from other parishes may celebrate their weddings in Saint Joseph Church. However, since the parishioners of Saint Joseph provide the financial support to maintain the Church, and since weddings of persons from outside the parish incur expenses beyond the normal parish use of facilities, a fee of \$200.00 is required for non-parishioners desiring to have their wedding celebrated in Saint Joseph Church.

FLOURISTS AND CHURCH DECORATIONS

1. Flowers, plants and trees, genuine, of course, are particularly apt for the decoration of liturgical space (the Church and sanctuary) since they are of nature, always discreet in their message, never cheap or ill made. (From the document Environment and Art in Catholic Worship).
2. Floral decorations should never impede the approach to or the encircling of the altar nor obstruct any of the ritual movement and action. However, there are places in most liturgical spaces where it is appropriate to place floral decoration. The pastor and parish staff will advise you in this matter.
3. Wedding and floral decorations for Saturday morning or afternoon weddings must be cleared away following the wedding so that they do not interfere with the Saturday afternoon mass. Wedding and floral decorations for Saturday evening weddings may not be set up until after the Saturday 4:00 PM anticipated mass and must be removed immediately after the wedding.
4. We welcome any floral arrangements you may wish to leave in the Church after the celebration of the wedding, but we also respect your plans to bring these arrangements to your reception hall. During certain liturgical seasons (Advent and Lent), the Church uses no flowers, thus, the only flowers that may be used are the ones carried by the bridesmaid.
5. **DO NOT** use tape to attach flowers or bows to the ends of the pews. Please tie these decorations to the pews or use some type of holder. Tape removes the varnish from the surface of the pews.
6. If aisle candles are used, these **MUST** have glass globes placed over them and they must be securely fastened.
7. IF candelabras are used in the sanctuary, there must be a cloth or covering placed over the candelabras to catch the dripping wax. (In cross ventilation, there is no such thing as “drip-less candles.”)
8. The **FLORIST** is responsible for cleaning the Church of boxes, candleholders, pew bows, etc. **IMMEDIATELY** after the wedding.
9. The **FLORIST** is responsible for contacting the Parish staff to set the time for decorating the Church for the wedding.
10. There must be nothing blocking the ends of the pews of the church (such as ribbon streamers, netting that drapes from one pew to the next, etc.) when weddings are celebrated within the context of the mass. This does not allow for easy access during communion.
11. The “Unity Candle” is not a liturgical symbol and thus will not be part of weddings celebrated at Saint Joseph.

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The floral and wedding decoration policy must be shown to the florist when making arrangements with them. The florist and bride must abide by all aspects of the policy outlined above. By signing this policy statement, the florist and bride agree to the terms of this document.

Bride’s signature

Florist’s signature

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE PARISH OFFICE 10 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPING

Photographers are welcome, however, they must keep in mind that a wedding in the Catholic Church is a liturgical worship service and they must be sensitive to the service. Likewise, since most weddings are formal occasions, photographers should dress in a manner befitting the occasion. Open shirt collars and shirttails hanging out are inappropriate attire for male photographers.

The wedding liturgy is a sacred moment. While we understand the desire to record this moment, the following policy is to be observed so that the sacred joy of this day will not be marred by photographic and video taping equipment and personnel.

1. Photographers and video tapers are permitted to move about the Church once the liturgy has begun, but must be sensitive to the sacredness of the liturgy. Photographers and video tapers may set up in the “wings” of the sanctuary. Videotaping should be from a stationary tripod.
2. Every effort should be made to let the wedding guests know that picture taking and filming is limited to the professionals hired by the bride and groom. Other guests may take pictures from their pews.
3. Only the lighting already available in the Church may be used. No additional lighting may be used during the wedding. Additional lighting may be used for pictures taken before or after the wedding.
4. After the wedding celebration, the Church will remain open for the taking of pictures. However, since other weddings, the Sacrament of Penance, or Parish masses may be scheduled immediately following the wedding, you must restrict the taking of pictures to 15 minutes. Please keep in mind that you are still in Church and proper respect and consideration must be given to anyone wishing to offer prayers in the Church.
5. Photographs may be taken as the bridal party walks down the aisle during the processional and recessional, but they may not stop and pose. Pictures may also be taken prior to the wedding but must be completed at least 30 minutes prior to the appointed time of the wedding so that guests may be seated and the wedding begins on time.
6. Photographers and video tapers are not permitted to move anything in the Church or sacristy, even if objects may interfere with the taking of pictures.

This form is to be read carefully by the bride, groom and the photographer and/or video taper. All members of the wedding party, the photographer and/or video taper must abide by all aspects of the policy outlined above. By signing this policy statement, the involved persons agree to the terms of this document.

Bride's signature

Groom's signature

Photographer's signature

Video taper's signature

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE PARISH OFFICE 10 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING.

THE CELEBRANT OF THE WEDDING

Ordinarily, the priest on staff at Saint Joseph will preside at weddings celebrated in the Parish. On occasion, a couple may have a priest friend or priest relative they wish to invite to preside at the wedding or to assist at the wedding. In this case, the couple should mention this to the priest early in the preparation process. When the couple is of different faiths (ie, Catholic-Methodist,), the minister of the non-Catholic party is invited to participate in the celebration. The priest should be notified of this so that he may include the minister in the celebration. Visiting priests must observe Church law and parish policy and customs regarding the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage.

SIZE OF THE WEDDING PARTY

Weddings are a celebration of God's love found in the lives of two people which is solemnized in liturgical prayer. In order to preserve the reverence and dignity of the celebration, no more than SEVEN(7) couples [including Miniature Brides/Grooms or Ring Bearers/Flower Girls] are allowed in the bridal party.

Ring bears and flower girls are not ministers, nor are their services required for the celebration of marriage. Couples will be asked to consider the age of children involved in these roles and whether their presence will enhance or detract from the joyful solemnity of the celebration. If couples choose to use ring bearers and flower girls, it is the policy of this Parish that these youngsters be at least FOUR (4) years of age.

UNITY CANDLE

The Unity Candle is a commercial product of which no mention is made in the liturgical documents of the Roman Catholic Church. It has no real history or tradition behind it. For this reason, we do not include the unity candle in weddings celebrated in our Parish. We do encourage you to prepare carefully the many signs and symbol of unity already available in the Rite of Marriage, the exchange of vows being the most important.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals must begin on time since there are often other services or wedding rehearsals to take place in a single evening. It must be remembered that rehearsals are conducted in the Church; therefore, shorts, cut-offs, etc. are not considered to be appropriate attire for the occasion. Wedding party members should not come to the rehearsals drinking or chewing gum in the Church.

CHURCH DÉCOR

During certain liturgical season of the Church year, such as Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, particular décor is used in the Church. The colors used by the church should be considered when planning weddings, as these colors and décor **CANNOT** be removed or changes for any reason.

LITURGICAL MUSIC FOR YOUR WEDDING

1. A Roman Catholic marriage; sacred rather than merely secular; public as well as personal. It is therefore of utmost importance when you are planning this significant event in your lives that the focus of the preparation be to help those in attendance to pray, the primary purpose of music in any liturgical celebration.
2. You are welcome to have an organist of your choice at your wedding. Financial arrangements for an organist's services are between the couple and the organist. Payment is usually expected TEN (10) days before the wedding.
3. Vocalists and instrumentalist may enhance your wedding celebration. Arrangements with these individuals is between the bride and groom and these people. They are expected to follow the principles of liturgical sacred music.
4. In planning the music for your wedding, keep in mind that the rules of liturgical music and good liturgy for Sunday worship shall not be compromised for weddings. If you are unsure of these principles, the pastor will be happy to discuss these with you. All music must be approved by the pastor **BEFORE** final selections are made.
5. Love songs from Broadway plays, secular rock, country and western ballads, or "pop" music of any kind are not permitted during your wedding liturgy. These kinds of pieces have texts that do not conform to the principles of liturgical suitability in sacramental celebrations and should be reserved for the wedding reception.
6. When a cantor or soloist is present, it is recommended and encouraged that the Responsorial Psalm (response to the reading) and the Alleluia (Gospel Acclamation during Lent) be sung during the Liturgy of the Word. Selection of the text for the Responsorial Psalm must be restricted to musical settings from the Book of Psalms or other Canticles are required in the liturgical documents. Other parts of the Mass (Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen, Agnus Dei) may be sung as well. Vocal or instrumental selections may be used during the Mass at the Presentation of Gifts (Offertory) and at Communion (should be something all could sing, not a solo). However, the Lord's Prayer is a part of the liturgy that is expressly intended to be a prayer of the entire community and a solo rendition of this prayer at its proper place in the liturgy is not permitted
7. A listing of appropriate wedding music is available to help you and your organist/vocalist prepare for your wedding.

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The wedding policy of Saint Joseph Parish has been carefully read and understood, and we, the undersigned bride and groom, by our signature, agree to follow the policy as stated.

Bride's signature date

Groom's signature date