

St. Mary's Church, Newport

Wedding Handbook 2021

PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT IN ITS ENTIRETY BEFORE CONTACTING US.

&

**WE MUST SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE FUTURE BRIDE OR GROOM
PLEASE NO CALLS OR EMAILS FROM PARENTS OR IN-LAWS.**

Wedding Coordinator: Kyle Medeiros
stmarykyle@gmail.com 401-846-6057
P.O. Box 547 Newport, RI 02840



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. The Sacrament of Matrimony
2. Setting the Date and other important matters
3. Regulations Regarding the use of St. Mary's
4. Financial Arrangements
5. Guidelines for Photographers and Videographers
6. Music Policy at St. Mary's
7. Guidelines for Wedding Event Planners
8. Wedding Rehearsal at 5:00 PM
9. Wedding Day Reminders
10. Guidelines for Receiving Communion

1. MATRIMONY IS A SACRAMENT

The Sacrament of Matrimony is a calling to live out the Christian witness within the context of a married life. We admire your desire to bring your marriage before the Lord. The Sacrament requires a commitment to living out the Christian vocation of married life and giving living witness to the love that Christ has for his Church. It is, therefore, expected that your Catholic faith should be an important part of the lives of those wishing to enter into this Sacrament and to get married at St. Mary's.

St. Mary's Church is **not** a "venue" and we will not tolerate being treated as such. We will not tolerate disrespect for our sacred space or for the Sacrament of Matrimony at any point during the process. Any such behavior may result in rescinding your privilege to have a Wedding Mass in our beautiful church.

2. SETTING YOUR DATE AND OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS

NOTE: We will only communicate with the future Bride and Groom!

If either the future bride or groom has ever been **DIVORCED**,
an **ANNULMENT FROM THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MUST BE OBTAINED**.
If you do not have an annulment we will not accept your request for a date.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ST. MARY'S PARISHIONERS

- A. **Prior** to making any wedding arrangements with us, a bride or groom to be must be a registered and active member of St. Mary's parish for twelve (12) months. They must be regularly contributing to the life our parish through either financial support or active involvement. Catholic parties wishing to celebrate the Sacrament of Matrimony at St. Mary's must also give evidence of their regular attendance at Sunday Mass and the reception of the Sacraments. No definite plans may be made for the marriage until such a commitment has been evidenced.
- B. A bride or groom who has moved away and whose parents are registered members in good standing and who regularly contribute to the support of St. Mary's Church either through budget envelopes or online giving will receive due consideration. However, the bride or groom must be an active member of their new local church and provide evidence from their local pastor.
- C. Summer "dual-resident" members of St. Mary's parish will also receive due consideration. Special permission by one's home pastor must be granted to register as "dual-resident" members of St. Mary's parish.
- D. All couples are to participate in an approved program of Preparation for Marriage program in the Diocese of Providence.

(For A – C please see [CAN I GET MARRIED AT ST. MARY'S?](#) for more details.)

RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE YOU SET YOUR DATE:

If either the future bride or groom has ever been **DIVORCED**,
an **ANNULMENT FROM THE CATHOLIC CHURCH MUST BE OBTAINED**.
If you do not have an annulment we will not accept your request for a date.

Process for booking your wedding ceremony:

1. Fill out the 'Catholic Wedding Inquiry Form' found on the St. Mary's website under the "Sacrament of Marriage" tab.

Include with the Inquiry Form the following documents:

- A. A letter from both the bride and groom expressing why a Catholic Wedding is important the couple and your own faith journey as individuals and as a couple. Also mention what, if any, your connection is to St. Mary's Church in Newport.
- B. A new Baptismal Certificate (re-issued in the last three months).
- C. A new First Communion and Confirmation Certificates (if those entries do not appear on the Baptismal Certificate).
- D. or Non-Catholics only: a copy of their birth certificate and two letters from family members stating that he/she has never been married in any way before.
- E. If someone other than the pastor of St. Mary's is preparing you for your wedding, you will need to provide the name of the priest or deacon who is taking on the responsibility of preparing all your paperwork – along with a signed letter on parish letter head from that priest or deacon stating as much and stamped with parish seal.
- F. If someone other than the pastor of St. Mary's is celebrating the wedding you need a signed letter from that pastor on parish letter and stamped with parish seal stating his intention to celebrate the wedding ceremony. (This may be combined with the above letter, if the priest or deacon preparing you is the same priest or deacon celebrating the wedding - **See 'Can I Get Married at St. Mary's' link for more info**)

(For E and F See [CAN I GET MARRIED AT ST. MARY'S?](#) for more details.)

SEND COPIES OF ALL YOUR DOCUMENTS TO:

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
ATTN: Kyle Medeiros
P.O. BOX 547
NEWPORT, RI 02840

2. Contact our Office Wedding Coordinator, **Kyle Medeiros**, (401-846-6057) a week or two after sending the documents for the sole purpose of verifying that we have received the above documentation. Once we receive your documents, only then will we discuss a date for your wedding. Please take note of the following:
 - a. We cannot approve or book a wedding date until **ALL** of these documents have been submitted. And even then we can only “pencil” it in the calendar until the Pre-Nuptial Investigation (PNI) takes place. No one is guaranteed a wedding date until after the PNI is complete. The PNI must be done in the presence of and by the priest who is preparing the rest of your paperwork.
 - b. **Always remember** that **the wedding comes before the reception**, and so, be sure you **make arrangements for the Church prior to booking your reception site**.
 - c. And please remember that there is **no guarantee** we will be able to accommodate your wedding at St. Mary’s or book the date you are asking for. If we have to decline your request for a wedding at St. Mary’s or the date you are seeking, as disappointed as you may be, we expect that you will be respectful and understanding of our decision. **See ‘Can I Get Married at St. Mary’s’ link**

3. **RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER YOUR DATE IS SET:**

- a. Meet with your local pastor for the required Pre-Nuptial Investigation.
- b. Make arrangements for a marriage preparation program. These are offered at various times and places around the state. If you are from out-of-state, you may participate in a program from your home diocese.
- c. Kyle Medeiros is our parish organist, he is assigned to most of our weddings. The use of another organist or musician or a soloist or accompanying singer requires permission from St. Mary’s. Arrangements for the wedding ceremony music should be made at least three months prior to your wedding.
- d. Kyle Medeiros or another Ceremony Consultant will contact you two weeks prior to your ceremony. He/she will explain the finer details of the Catholic Wedding Ceremony.
- e. ***Be sure to obtain your **Rhode Island Marriage License** well in advance (one month), and **bring it with you to the REHEARSAL. BY LAW: NO MARRIAGE LICENSE = NO WEDDING*****
- f. Pay major church fees within two months after registering for your wedding date.
See Financial Arrangements section below.
- g. Pay all minor fees / gratuities one month before the Wedding Day.
See Financial Arrangements section below.
- h. Verify the date, time and details of your wedding by filling out St. Mary’s Ceremony Check List form and returning it at least two weeks before the wedding. **BE ON TIME.**

3. REGULATIONS REGARDING THE USE OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH

DIGNIFIED AND RESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR

What we do at St. Mary's is sacred, thus we expect the best from you, your wedding party, and your guests while on our premises.

NO ALCOHOL ANYWHERE INSIDE OR ON CHURCH GROUNDS

Being intoxicated or possessing alcohol is completely disrespectful of the sacredness of the Wedding Mass. If alcohol or intoxication is suspected within the wedding party or bride or groom, the priest will simply conduct a short wedding ceremony and not celebrate a Holy Mass. Further, if a bride or groom is found with alcohol or intoxicated, a notification will be included in your permanent sacramental wedding record or the wedding may be cancelled.

Scheduling

Weddings can be scheduled for Friday or Saturday afternoons. They can take place no later than 3:00pm on Fridays and no later than 2pm on Saturdays. There are no weddings on Sundays, holidays, during the liturgical season of Lent, or on other high Solemnities or Feasts of the Church that are Holy Days of Obligation.

Parking for Rehearsal

School parking lot (Parish Center lot) will be open and all chains down for rehearsal. The other lots will be available for wedding ceremony. The side door will be unlocked. All participants will enter the Church through the side door at the back of the church – where you will be met by whomever is conducting the rehearsal.

PUNCTUALITY FOR REHEARSALS AND THE WEDDING CEREMONY IS ESSENTIAL.

Rehearsals

All parties involved in the rehearsal are to be present at least five minutes before rehearsal time. All rehearsals are held promptly at 5:00 PM on the day before the wedding. Your wedding rehearsal should take one half hour. We will not wait for late arrivals.-

Wedding Day

Ushers are to be present at the Church **one hour before** the ceremony.

The Groom and Best Man should be in the Sacristy at least one half hour before the wedding.

The Bridal Party should arrive at least fifteen minutes before the ceremony.

Punctuality is a sign of respect for all involved parties. Weddings beginning later than 10 minutes after the agreed start time will forfeit their "Courtesy Deposit." Any weddings which linger in our Church after the ceremony will also forfeit this fee.

Decorations:

In as much as St. Mary's Church has such natural beauty, all floral arrangements will be placed within the Sanctuary, and should be in keeping with proper Church etiquette and may remain in the church or be removed immediately after the ceremony. Nothing should be taped or tacked to any part of the church, if so you will forfeit your "Courtesy Deposit." **Absolutely no glass** of any kind is allowed on the floor of the aisle or hanging from ends of pews.

Photographer:

Photographs and videos may be taken during the ceremony but discretion is advised. No one is to step into the sanctuary. Access to the choir loft may be allowed at the discretion of our organist. Please instruct your photographer to introduce him/herself to the priest and to our Ceremony Consultant before the ceremony. The dignity of the Liturgy should never be interrupted. No photos are allowed after the ceremony.

Carpet / Aisle Runner:

St. Mary's does not allow the use of any carpet. Tile floors covered by carpet / aisle runner create a safety hazard. Do not ask us for an exception.

Kneelers:

Please alert us if the bride and groom request chairs in addition to kneelers throughout the ceremony.

Flower Petals, Rice, Confetti and Bubbles:

The throwing of flower petals, rice, confetti, or other materials, or blowing of bubbles in or around the Church is strictly prohibited and will result in the immediate forfeiture of your "Courtesy Deposit."

Receiving Lines:

Receiving lines are not permitted within the Church or in the outdoor courtyard. After the wedding ceremony, all wedding party members and guests are encouraged to proceed directly to the reception site. As weekends at St. Mary's are very busy, ample time is needed to prepare the Church and parking lots for the scheduled Masses. Your consideration in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Parking:

Please inform your guests that we have limited parking available. All cars must be removed from the parking lots immediately following the ceremony so that people coming to later Masses may have room to park. **Cars left in the parking lots will be towed.** The towing company number is 847-4000. Parking for the wedding rehearsal is available in the Parish Center/School parking lot.

Additional notes:

The bride and groom are encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Penance some time before your wedding. There is nothing quite like starting with a clean slate between you and your spouse and God!

If you plan on living within St. Mary's Parish boundaries after your marriage, please return to the Parish Office in the near future to register as a family.

4. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Church Fee: Our Wedding Coordinator, Kyle Medeiros, will discuss your fee with you.
Payable immediately upon registering for your date.

The remaining fees are payable one month before the wedding date.

Courtesy Deposit: \$200.00. Made payable to St. Mary's Church.

Your "Courtesy Deposit" check will be "returned" (i.e. torn up or shredded) so long as your rehearsal and ceremony don't start more than 10 minutes late and our Church and grounds are treated with dignity and respect and are left as clean as they were found.

Organist: \$300.00. Please make separate check payable to our Director of Music, Kyle Medeiros. Contact Kyle at stmarykyle@gmail.com at least 3 months prior to choose your wedding music.

Soloists or Musicians: If you use our soloists in addition to or in place of Kyle Medeiros, you should make out a check to the soloist for \$200. If you choose and are approved to use a soloist or musician that is not one of our own you are responsible for any compensation they may require.

Celebrant: (*optional*) If you choose to offer a gift to the celebrant please make a separate check in the amount of your choice payable to the celebrant himself.

Please give this page to your PHOTOGRAPHER and/or VIDEOGRAPHER when signing your contract

In order to insure that the dignity and reverence proper to the celebration of a Roman Catholic Wedding Mass, we are providing these instructions for photos and/or videotaping in St. Mary's Church:

- All photographers and videographers, amateur or professional, must immediately introduce themselves to our Ceremony Consultant or the Celebrant upon arrival to the church and must follow these instructions:
- They are not permitted to operate anywhere within the Sanctuary area of the Church.
- They may set up and/or use their video cameras and microphones only from the pillar at the top of the Memorial Boulevard aisle of the Church. No extra lighting may be used for camera work anywhere in the Church.
- No extra microphones shall be attached anywhere in the Church. Our pastor will not give permission to have a microphone attached to him.
- Photographers are not permitted to wander around the Church during the Celebration of the Wedding Mass. • They may **not** stand in the Center Aisle during the Mass. • They may not place any stationary equipment in the center aisle. • They may not be seated among the wedding guests. • Access to the choir loft is not permitted.
- Photographers should not hinder the procession of the wedding party either entering or leaving the Church.
- Photos may be taken from the Center Aisle during the exchange of vows and rings – but only from the rear of the church (with a telephoto lens).
- Absolutely no photos are to be taken when guests are receiving the Eucharist.
- Before signing your contract(s) with a photographer/videographer, the couple should discuss these instructions with them to avoid any difficulty later. The photographer should introduce himself/herself to the Celebrant before the ceremony to receive any last minute instruction or to ask any questions.

These instructions are necessary to prevent annoying distractions and intrusions during the ceremony and to maintain proper reverence and devotion during the liturgical celebration. We hope that everyone will understand and respect these rules and abide by them.

6. MUSIC POLICY AT ST. MARY'S

Contracting of St. Mary's Organist

Contact Kyle Medeiros to begin making arrangements for the wedding ceremony music. (You may choose your own organist, however you must still pay Kyle his "Bench Fee.") You may contact Kyle immediately upon solidifying your wedding date but no later than three months prior to your wedding. Rehearsals, contacting and exceptional situations may cost extra. Please remember that it is the couple's responsibility to contact our organist; he will not make the first contact.

Contracting of Singer(s)/Other Musicians

The couple should consult and receive approval from our organist before contracting musicians, including singers, for the wedding. **If you contract singers or other musicians please note that the couple is solely responsible for the fulfillment and payment of those contracts. These fall outside St. Mary's jurisdiction.**

Music Selections

As the wedding ceremony is in context of the Mass, it is important to remember that all music selections **must be sacred as opposed to secular**; i.e. the music, particularly sung music, should be religious in nature. For this reason, all music selections must be approved by our Director of Liturgical Music. It is advisable to contact our organist as soon as the wedding date has been arranged.

When planning your wedding ceremony music, the couple should consider the following:

- * Seating of the Mothers (optional)
- * Bridesmaids' Processional
- * Bridal Processional
- * Responsorial Psalm
- * Offertory
- * Communion
- * Recessional

All questions regarding wedding music should be directed to the organist.

7. GUIDELINES FOR WEDDING EVENT PLANNERS

St. Mary's does not invite Wedding Event Planners to the Wedding Rehearsal or to the Wedding Ceremony. Catholic Weddings are sacred and are best left in the hands of the Pastor or own our coordinator who understands the sacramental nature of the Catholic Wedding Ceremony. So once the bride and groom enter the doors of our church - we are in charge – your Wedding Event Planners are welcome to attend the rehearsal but they will not have a specific role at the rehearsal

8. WEDDING REHEARSAL AT 5:00 PM THE NIGHT BEFORE THE WEDDING

Remember, you are entering a Sacred Place and we are preparing for the Sacrament of Matrimony. We reserve the right to simply end a rehearsal if parties are not conducting themselves in a respectful and prayerful fashion.

We begin promptly at 5:00 PM. We will not wait for late comers! Only those involved in the wedding ceremony should be present (Bride, Groom, groomsmen, bridesmaids, parents, ring bearer, flower girl, readers, etc.) Time will be spent arranging everyone and walking through the ceremony so that everyone will feel comfortable on the wedding day. Make sure that any last minute changes are discussed and questions answered. The Church and parking lots will be secured after the rehearsal. Please be sensitive to this. Thank you.

The Wedding Party will go immediately towards the altar and will be seated in front pews.

1. Opening prayer – Let us pray together the Our Father and ask the Lord to guide us today and tomorrow. “Our Father” (recited by all).
2. The two readings and Prayer of the Faithful will be practiced.
3. Presenting the gifts of Wine and Bread will be practiced.
4. BEFORE THE REHEARSAL determine the manner in which you want the procession to occur: Example – will the maid of honor, bridesmaids, and groomsmen walk in single file, as a couple, etc. and relay that information to whomever is conducting the rehearsal.
5. The processions up and down the aisle will be rehearsed.
6. Reminder regarding punctuality for the wedding – procession of Bride and attendants begin on time.
7. Announcement regarding removal of automobiles after the rehearsal and tomorrow also.
8. Please inform your guests that they must remove their cars immediately after the ceremony.

9. WEDDING DAY REMINDERS

BE ON TIME!!!!

Summer Traffic in Newport can be horrendous. The Jamestown and Newport Bridges can be backed up for miles. Please inform your wedding party and guests that the ceremony will not be delayed. It causes great stress! It is not fair to your guests or to St. Mary's staff. Unless there are unavoidable circumstances, if the wedding is very delayed, the priest may forgo a Holy Mass and simply perform a shortened wedding ceremony. This is especially true on Saturdays when there is a Vigil Mass following the wedding ceremony.

Groom and Best Man:

The groom, best man and ushers should arrive at least 30 minutes before the wedding. The groom and best man should go to the Sacristy and wait there for the beginning of the ceremony. The rest of the groomsmen act as ushers for the guests.

Ushers:

- Greet and escort guests to their seats.
Facing the altar: Bride's guests on the left. Grooms guests on the right.
- The main doors of the Church on Spring Street will be used for the wedding. They will be closed after the bride has entered.
- Ushers do not seat anyone after the bride has arrived and the mother of the bride has been seated.
- Ushers usually return to the sacristy for the groom's procession before the bridal procession.

Bride:

Please arrive at least fifteen minutes before the wedding is scheduled to allow time for your bridesmaid to get into position. It is not polite or fashionable to keep your guests or our staff waiting. If there is a problem on the way, please call one of your ushers so that he can keep everyone informed. SUMMER TRAFFIC in Newport is horrendous!!!

Parents and Bridal Party:

Please assemble at the main doors immediately and prepare to process in. Someone will direct the activities in the rear of the Church and will inform the Celebrant when everything is ready.

10. GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING COMMUNION

For Catholics

Catholics fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when they receive Holy Communion in fulfillment of Christ's command to eat His body and drink His blood.

In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, communicants should not be conscious of grave sin, have fasted for an hour, and seek to live in charity and love with their neighbors. Persons conscious of grave sin must first be reconciled with God and the Church through the sacrament of Penance. A frequent reception of the sacrament of Penance is encouraged for all.

For Other Christians

We welcome to this celebration of the Eucharist those Christians who are not fully united with us. It is a consequence of the sad divisions in Christianity that we cannot extend to them a general invitation to receive Communion. The Catholic Church believes in the Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and therefore reception of the Eucharist by an individual is an affirmation and sign of their personal belief in the Real Presence and of their desire to be one with the Catholic Church in faith, life, and worship.

Reception of the Eucharist, therefore, by Christians not fully united with the Catholic Church forces them to affirm a teaching they do not truly accept and implies or signifies a oneness which does not yet exist, and for which we must all pray.

For Those Non-Catholic Christians Not Receiving Communion

Those not receiving sacramental Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

For Non-Christians

We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot extend to them an invitation to receive Communion for essentially the same reasons as non-Catholic Christians, we do welcome them to St. Mary's Church and invite them to be united with us in prayer.