

Saint Paul Catholic Church

241 S. Main Street
North Canton, Ohio 44720
330 499-2201

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Wedding Guidelines



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Saint Paul Roman Catholic Church

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To the bride and groom: Please give these notes to your florist, or to whomever you place in charge of church decorations for your wedding.

- * If the church is decorated for a liturgical season - Advent, Christmas, Lent or Easter, **these decorations are to remain.** Decorations that you bring should compliment those already in place.
- * No flowers or decorations are permitted on the altar of sacrifice. Decorations may not impede movement around the altar.
- * Absolutely no tape or sticky substances may be used to fasten flowers, decorations, or ribbon to the pews or to any other church furniture.
- * The candles used for rented candelabras or aisle candles must be protected by a glass globe or the tube type tapers. The floor must be protected with plastic.
- * The center aisle is 35 feet long. **However, aisle runners are highly discouraged.**
- * Because of the number of weddings and services at Saint Paul Church, decorating the church often cannot be done until forty minutes to a half hour before the wedding. If decorations are brought before that time, they may be put in the space between the confessional rooms on the south side of the church.
- * Rented candelabras, aisle candles and other rented decorations are to be removed immediately after the ceremony and picture taking.
- * Plastic coverings must be placed under all rented candelabras and decorations that drip. The carpet and other surfaces must be protected when live plants or other decorations that leak are used. Decorative foil around the pots or containers is not adequate protection.

Notes _____

WEDDING GUIDELINES

**SAINT PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH
NORTH CANTON, OHIO**

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and the two shall be made into one.” (Ephesians, 5:31)

These words of St. Paul indicate the great reverence the Church has for the union of man and woman in the sacrament of Marriage. Marriage is a gift from God, stemming from the creation of humankind, male and female “in His image and likeness” (Genesis, 1:27).

Marriage enables man and woman to participate in the creative love of God in a way that will be a witness to God’s love in the world. By its very nature, marriage is closely woven into the divine plan of creation and redemption. It is the duty of the Church to uphold the holiness of marriage, and to guide those who enter it to the fullness of the life God intends for them in marriage. Whatever the Church requires in regard to the Marriage Covenant is to fulfill that responsibility, to God and to the couple who enter it.

These guidelines are compliance of general Church and liturgical law, diocesan regulations, and policies in effect here at St. Paul Parish. They seek to provide answers to most of the questions commonly asked during marriage preparation. We hope that it will help you.

POLICIES AND PRACTICES

A. The Place of Marriage

1. Ordinarily the wedding of a Catholic person will take place in a Catholic Church.
 - a. When both bride and groom are Catholic, the wedding may take place in the parish of either one, as they choose.
 - b. For certain reasons, permission may be obtained for an ecumenical wedding (between a Catholic and a Christian of another denomination) to take place in a non-Catholic church.
2. Permission may not be given for home, garden, or studio weddings.

B. Official Minister at the Wedding

1. With few exceptions, a priest or deacon of St. Paul will officiate at a wedding held in St. Paul's Church.
 - a. A priest or deacon who is a relative of the bride or groom or who has received one of them into the church, will be delegated to officiate at the wedding.
 - b. When permission is obtained for the wedding to take place in a non-Catholic Church, the minister of that church will be the official witness.
2. Other Catholic or non-Catholic clergy may be invited to participate in a wedding held at St. Paul. Likewise, a Catholic priest or deacon should be invited to participate when permission is obtained to have the wedding in a non-Catholic church.
3. Whoever officiates at a wedding must be licensed to perform marriages in the State of Ohio.

C. Wedding Dates and Times

1. Weddings may be scheduled for any day except Sunday, during Holy Week and a few liturgical celebration days.

8. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to tidy up rooms they use. The church and rooms must be put in order before the wedding party leaves the church. St. Paul Parish is not responsible for the loss of any personal items left behind.

I. Wedding Fees

1. **For registered members of St. Paul Parish (bride/groom and/or their parents)**, an all inclusive fee of \$425.00 is required.
 - a. This covers the actual expenses the parish incurs in the preparation and planning of weddings, the musician fee, clergy and altar server stipends.
 - b. Checks should be made payable to St. Paul Church. All fees, along with the marriage license, should be given to the priest or deacon at the rehearsal.
 - c. Any additional musicians, soloists, etc. are at the personal expense of the couple.
2. **For Non-registered Catholics** wishing to get married at St. Paul Parish, an all inclusive fee of \$600.00 is required when neither the bride/groom, nor their parents are registered, active members of St. Paul Parish.
 - a. The church reserves the right to refuse the marriages of non-members.
 - b. This fee is to be paid at the time the church is reserved. Marriage license should be given to the priest or deacon at the wedding rehearsal.
 - c. This fee will be refunded if the wedding is canceled by the bride and/or groom.
 - c. Any additional musicians, soloists, etc. are at the personal expense of the couple.

PLEASE NOTE: The all inclusive fees are non-refundable when ceremony is canceled due to the consumption of alcoholic beverages. (reference H.7., page 8)

If you have any questions, concerns, or need clarification on information contained in this booklet, please call the parish office at 330 499-2201.

- c. When two or more weddings take place the same day, couples may wish to share the cost of flowers and decorations.
- d. Floral arrangements should not be removed following the ceremony.
- e. Important notes for the florist:
 - * No flowers or decorations are permitted on the altar of sacrifice.
 - * Flowers and decorations may not impede movement around the altar and the sanctuary.
 - * Rented candelabras, aisle candles, and other rented decorations are to be removed immediately after the ceremony and picture taking unless other arrangements have been made. Plastic coverings must be placed under all rented candelabras.
 - * Florists are not to use anything to fasten decorations that will leave a sticky residue, nor use candles that will spatter the furniture or floor with wax.
 - * The center aisle is 35 feet long. **The use of aisle runners is highly discouraged.**

H. Other Incidentals

1. Room is available on the lower level for the bride and her attendants.
2. The unity candle ceremony may be used provided the couple may provides their own unity candle set.
3. Photographers and videotapes are permitted.
 - *Pictures during the ceremony are permitted at the discretion of the officiating priest or deacon.
 - *Posed pictures may be taken before or after the ceremony as time allows. All photography for 2:30 p.m. weddings must be completed by 4:30 p.m.
4. The couple may choose to have a receiving line at the church or at the reception. In either case, time constraints should dictate when it occurs.
5. The custom of releasing helium balloons or soap bubbles as the couple leaves the church is permissible. The custom of throwing rice, birdseed, etc., is prohibited.
6. Gowns and dresses worn by the bride and her attendants should be appropriate for a church environment.
7. **The consumption of alcoholic beverages before a wedding is strictly prohibited and grounds for cancellation of the wedding ceremony.**

2. Weddings are permitted during Lent, though the celebration should reflect the penitential nature of the season. In the event of a wedding during Advent or Lent; please note that the church decorations, altar cloth colors, etc. *cannot be changed.*
3. Wedding times on Saturdays at St. Paul are 12:00 Noon and 2:30 p.m.
 - a. These times are for the beginning of the ceremony, not the beginning of the musical prelude.
 - b. Times on other days will be scheduled with the priest or deacon.
 - c. Wedding times may never interfere with regularly scheduled church services.
4. Wedding dates and times must be scheduled at least six months prior to the wedding. The wedding date cannot be confirmed until the couple has completed the Wedding Information Form **and it has been reviewed and approved by the pastor.**

D. The Rehearsal

1. Rehearsals are ordinarily held the evening before the wedding at 5:00 and 6:00 and p.m. They should be scheduled well in advance of the wedding date.
2. All members of the wedding party, plus the readers and the parents, should be present for the rehearsal.
3. The time allotted for the rehearsal is one hour.
4. The civil marriage license and all unpaid fees must be brought to the rehearsal.

E. Marriage Preparations

1. Diocesan law requires a six-month period of preparation for a wedding. This preparation will include the following:
 - a. A pre-marital inventory administered by the priest or deacon with subsequent counseling if indicated.
 - b. Participation by the couple in an approved Sponsor Couple Program, or an Engaged Encounter Weekend, or a Diocesan Retreat Day.

2. This preparation is also required when permission is obtained for the wedding to take place in a non-Catholic church of the bride or groom.
3. Couples who are unable to participate in this preparation at St. Paul must have certification that they have completed an approved Catholic marriage preparation program elsewhere.
4. Professional marriage counseling may be required by law or by the judgment of the priest or deacon in some cases.

F. Documents Required

1. For Catholics, a recently issued certificate of baptism from the church of Baptism, with all the appropriate notations.
2. For a baptized Christian not of the Catholic faith, a certificate of Baptism is requested if it is available.
3. Where there has been a prior marriage or marriages on the part of either the bride or groom, there is required:
 - a. A death certificate when the prior spouse is deceased.
 - b. A Declaration of Nullity or a Declaration of Free State from an appropriate Catholic Church Tribunal in the case of any and all marriages when the prior spouse or spouses are still living.
 - c. In the case of a prior marriage, no wedding date will be scheduled until the above documentation has been provided.
4. A Marriage License from the Probate Court of Stark County or of the county of Ohio where the bride or groom reside.

G. Planning the Ceremony

1. The norms of general Church and liturgical law and diocesan and parish regulations and guidelines are to be followed for every wedding held at St. Paul Church.

2. Scripture readings and prayers for the wedding liturgy are to be selected from approved sources by the bride and groom.
 - a. A planning book for the ceremony will be provided during the marriage preparations, or is available from the parish office.
 - b. The planning sheet listing the selections, is to be given to the priest or deacon officiating the ceremony **at least two weeks before the wedding.**
3. Music is to be fitting and suited for use in a religious ceremony.
 - a. Guidelines for wedding music, published by the Office of Worship of the Youngstown Diocese, are to be followed. The guidelines also apply to music before the liturgy as well as during it.
 - b. Music not appropriate for wedding liturgies such as Broadway musical selections and taped or “canned” music are not permissible.
 - c. The parish musicians and vocalists of St. Paul will be the music ministers at all weddings in the parish. The only exception are musicians who are employed as church musicians elsewhere and those who can demonstrate an expertise in liturgical music.
 - d. The parish music minister will assist the couple in carrying out diocesan and parish policies and practices, and must be consulted for every wedding at St. Paul Parish, even when other musicians or vocalists are engaged. When making final arrangements, the couple is asked to submit a copy of their printed program to the parish music minister.
4. Flowers and decorations are provided by the bride and groom.
 - a. If the church is decorated for a liturgical season or feast, additional decorations brought in should compliment those already in place. Couples scheduling weddings before and after Christmas and Easter are strongly encouraged to consult with the parish office about purchasing additional flowers for the church.
 - b. At other times, the church will provide only the large altar candles ordinarily used at liturgies.