

Guidelines for Celebration of Christian Marriage
at
The Cathedral of St. Joseph
Wheeling, WV 26003

The heartiest congratulations and prayers of the Bishop, Rector and Parishioners of Cathedral of St. Joseph Parish for the two of you as you prepare for the Celebration of your Marriage. We hope that your celebration in the Cathedral of the Diocese, our parish church, will be prayerful, memorable and Spirit-filled for you and your families.

We have prepared these guidelines to help you prepare just such a celebration.

The Cathedral of St. Joseph provides the Cathedral for couples who Parishioners of the Cathedral of St. Joseph.

1. We begin with the assumption that in arranging to have your wedding in the Cathedral you **understand that the Sacrament of Marriage is a vocation, a promise of love and fidelity to one person for your entire life and that your wedding day celebrates the beginning of your life as husband and wife.** All the decisions you make about the celebration, then, should flow from this understanding. Everything about the celebration should help you; your families and your guests experience the presence and blessing of God. Anything that is not appropriate for prayer in a holy place is not appropriate for your celebration in the Cathedral.

2. Arrangements for a wedding should be made at least **six months in advance** of the desired date. This allows plenty of time for the necessary paperwork, the preparation expected of every couple that marries in the Catholic tradition and for reservation of the desired dates.

3. Active members*

**Active members are those who have be registered for the past two years and who participate in the life and worship of the parish community*

4. Members of the Cathedral Parish who wish to be married should contact the rector for the necessary arrangements, begin preparations and complete the paperwork. The rector and parish staff will work with each couple to help them make their Sacramental celebration a powerful expression of both their faith and love.

5. Before any dates and times are finalized and the marriage can take place, all completed paperwork must be sent in and fees owed must be paid **no later than one** before the wedding, such as: premarital investigation MA-93, MB-84, dispensations or permissions from the bishop, permission letters from the parish pastor, baptismal certificates with all notations. This means you will have to give as much if not more attention to the priest preparing you for marriage and the church as you do the other areas and people of wedding planning. **The Cathedral does not permit weddings to take place when there is an incomplete marriage file.**

6. Since a wedding is a **celebration of the love and communion** two people have found in Christ, the liturgy should highlight this communion. If both parties to the marriage are of our Catholic tradition, celebration of marriage in the context of the Mass is preferred. However, if either bride or groom is not of our Catholic tradition it may be better to celebrate the marriage in the context of the Liturgy of the Word, this allows all to participate fully in the liturgy.

7. **Music is an essential component of the wedding liturgy** and enhances the joy of the celebration. There, the entire wedding assembly (bride and groom, the wedding party, families and friends, the whole congregation) needs to be able to participate in both the spoken and sung prayer of the liturgy.

A. The Cathedral's Coordinator of Music must approve all music selections and will provide guidance and assistance to couples in their musical selections. This approval assures us that the Church's directives on appropriate music are met and copyrights observed, as well as providing music selections that will encourage participation by the assembly.

B. We are happy to work with other musicians and song leaders; however, the Coordinator of Music must approve them and work in collaboration with them. Any additional expense for these soloists and instrumentalists is the responsibility of the couple.

C. Use of the Cathedral's musical instruments, especially the pipe organ, must be done under the direct supervision of Cathedral musical staff. Since these instruments are extremely expensive, we must insure that they are properly cared for. C:\Users\dfahey\Documents\Wedding Guidelines changed.doc

8. All couples are expected to pay for the services of **musicians, singers** and ministers. If you do not have a musician and cantor of your own, the Cathedral's Music Department can assist you in making arrangements for a musician. However, fees for musicians are negotiated directly with those individuals and should be paid directly to them, **not** to the Cathedral of St. Joseph

9. **Florists and photographers** should be guided by #1 above. Nothing they do or arrange should inhibit the celebration of worship. Be advised that our experience with the building and its use may be helpful before a great deal of money is spent needlessly.

10. Out of respect for the hungry of our world and its ecology, we ask that **no rice, birdseed, confetti, balloons, flower petals, etc.** be used inside or outside the Cathedral. **The Cathedral permits only the use of bubbles or bells in the receiving line.** You may have a flower girl drop flower petals. However, if you plan on having a flower girl you must make arrangements to have the petals removed after the wedding

11. **It seems rather silly that we mention it, but experience has shown that we must remind you that serving or drinking of alcohol is not appropriate in or around the Cathedral. If anyone is caught drinking they will be asked immediately to leave**

12. Since the Cathedral of St. Joseph is committed to being principally the Cathedral of the diocese and is a functioning parish with its own regular schedule...

A. no weddings will be scheduled after 2:00 p.m. on Saturdays so as to not interfere with the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and a televised Mass. **The celebration and all post-wedding photography in the building must be completed by 4:00 p.m.**

B. there will be ongoing restoration and renovation work done to the inside and outside of the church. We do not know well enough in advance the exact dates and times certain projects will take place. However, once we do know we will inform you of any such projects.

C. the Cathedral does not supply facilities for getting ready for the wedding. It is your responsibility to get dressed before you arrive at the church.

13. As you have undoubtedly already found out, there can be significant expenses in a wedding. The Cathedral also costs money to operate and our staff must be compensated for their time and work. Thus, **active members of the Cathedral Parish** are asked to pay a fee of \$150.00 for the use of the building. *This fee covers the costs of utilities and maintenance staff for both the rehearsal and the wedding itself.* All fees should be made payable to the Cathedral of St. Joseph **one month prior** to the celebration. (See attached form.)

14. It is also highly desirable that members of the wedding party, families or guests **participate actively in the celebration.** These may serve as readers, gift bearers, soloists or other liturgical ministers.

15. Couples are welcome to provide their own altar servers. **If you would like the Cathedral to supply Altar Servers, there is a fee of \$30.00 per server that is payable to the Cathedral of Saint Joseph.** Weddings which take place within the celebration of Mass require at least one server; if couples will not be supplying their one server, they are asked to inform the priest at least one month before the celebration. Weddings that do not include the celebration of the Mass Guidelines do not necessarily require altar servers.

All fees are due one month prior to the wedding celebration. Checks should be made payable to the Cathedral of St. Joseph