

Planning your Wedding
at
Sacred Heart of Jesus Church



Revised 11-12-15

Introduction

“This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.” (Genesis 2:24)

Weddings are special and joyful times for brides and grooms, for their families and friends and for the parish community. The new beginning, the love, promise and hope that weddings are, makes the celebration a special and grace-filled time. The Church welcomes its members to celebrate and to bring solemnity to their weddings in the context of our prayer as Christians. We believe that marriage is so important in Christian life that it is a Sacrament.

“You come together in this church so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love in the presence of the Church’s minister and this community. Christ abundantly blesses this love.” (Marriage Ritual, Introductory Address)

Because Christian marriage is a Sacrament, we take great care to see that the celebration of this special moment is reverent, grace-filled, beautiful and open to the movement of God’s Spirit among us. All our celebrations of Sacraments, marriage included, are rooted in the scriptures so that we can be nourished and strengthened by God’s Word. Since we always celebrate the Sacraments as a community, we gather our brothers and sisters in faith and ask for their prayerful support. These celebrations are only complete when filled with song, prayerful gestures, and the silence in which we hear the voice of God.

In this spirit, Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish provides the following guidelines for celebrating weddings in our parish church.

Who May Marry at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish

The couple wishing to marry at our parish must meet one of the following criteria:

1. At least one of the persons seeking marriage must be a validly baptized member of the Roman Catholic Church. A baptismal certificate with notations which is dated either within six months of the wedding or when marriage preparation begins, is needed for our files. The baptized person must also:
 - (a) be a registered, participating member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish for at least one year prior to the first meeting with the priest or his delegate
 - or**
 - (b) be a child of a registered parishioner.

2. A baptized Catholic who has completed the marriage requirements in his/her home parish maybe married at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish:
 - (a) with the written permission of the priest of that person’s home parish
 - and**
 - (b) with the permission of the administrator of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish

The Wedding Date and the Celebrant

The couple wishing to marry here must meet with the administrator or his/her delegate at least six (6) months prior to the proposed date of marriage in order to complete the marriage preparation program. The date and time of the wedding will be set after meeting with the priest or PLC, and is conditional upon the successful completion of the marriage preparation program. All marriages must take place in the church. It is the responsibility of the engaged couple to secure the date of the wedding with Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish *before* making commitments with caterers, reception halls, etc. Note that weddings are discouraged during the seasons of Advent and Lent for liturgical reasons.

Only the administrator may book the date for the celebration of the wedding. Wedding masses are usually scheduled on Saturday to begin sometime between 10:00 am and 1:30 pm. Our normal liturgical schedule prevents any wedding starting after 1:30 pm. Weddings outside of mass may begin between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Other possible wedding times would be evenings during the week, depending upon availability. A rehearsal is needed and is normally scheduled the evening before the wedding ceremony. Please consult with the administrator to arrange the rehearsal time as well.

Ordinarily, a parish priest or deacon (if no mass) presides at weddings celebrated in the parish. If a couple desires to have a priest who is a relative or close friend celebrate the wedding ceremony, then the couple must request permission from the parish administrator for this to take place.

Marriage Preparation Program

The marriage preparation program consists of:

- Meetings with the administrator
 - o Discussions of any previous marriages or unions
- Completion of the FOCCUS inventory
- Participation in an Engaged Encounter, Tobit weekend or an approved Pre-Cana program
- Planning the wedding ceremony including music
- Completion of the proper forms (Church & civil)
- Final meeting(s) with the priest/deacon before the wedding

During several meetings with the administrator, there is follow up on the above items and all necessary parish/archdiocesan forms will be completed. The couple will meet with the administrator or a Sponsor Couple who will facilitate the FOCCUS questionnaire, which is an inventory of values and attitudes. The results of this inventory will be examined, explained and discussed as necessary.

Civil Law Requirements

In the United States, Catholic marriage is not only Sacrament but it also encompasses the civil/legal requirements for marriage. Therefore, the Vigo County Clerk's office at (812) 462-3211 must be contacted for the appropriate information, forms to be completed, and all civil requirements. Some medical tests may be required. **Please contact the clerk's office well in advance of the wedding date so that all required civil laws may be followed.**

The packet of information from the clerk's office will contain the marriage license papers. Please bring these to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish office at least two weeks before the wedding so that the paperwork can be prepared. This should also include the presentation copy of the marriage license.

Planning the Ceremony

Congregational participation in prayer, action, word and song will greatly enhance the celebration of the Sacrament. The ceremony must be prepared with the help and consultation of the parish administrator and either the parish music director or the appointed parish music consultant. The administrator will guide the selection of appropriate prayers, readings and blessings found in the *Together for Life* booklet. The music director will assist in the selection of appropriate music for the liturgy, according to parish and archdiocesan guidelines.

The engaged couple is responsible for providing qualified persons to fulfill various ministries at the wedding liturgy. This includes the ministry of Lector (the person who reads the Old Testament and New Testament readings) and at least one Server (if needed). In considering the choice of Lector, the couple should ask someone who has the necessary gifts to proclaim God's Word effectively and reverently. Someone who is inexperienced should not fill the role of Lector. We request that all Lectors be present at the wedding rehearsal so that they may become familiar with the worship space and the sound system. If the wedding includes the celebration of the Eucharist, then an adequate number (at least two) of commissioned Eucharistic Ministers must also be provided.

Do not plan to include children under 4 years of age as part of the wedding party.

Music Consultation

The Director of Music must be made aware of the wedding date and time immediately after the administrator has scheduled the wedding so that a cantor and organist/pianist may be secured. The couple must contact the music director to set up a consultation to plan the music for the wedding. At this meeting, appropriate music will be suggested, demonstrated and chosen. In addition, all other specifics will be completely explained.

We prefer that musicians in the wedding ceremony be commissioned personnel from Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish but this is not a requirement. Musicians from outside the parish may participate in the music ministry at the wedding, provided that they are approved by the parish music director. This assures quality and adequate knowledge of music for the Catholic ceremony. If the requested musicians do not possess this knowledge, then the music director will recommend to the couple that other musicians should be chosen. Any and all music from the *Breaking Bread* hymnal will be provided to the guest musicians if they do not have access to these resources. Every attempt will be made to approve the couple's musician requests. Due to the musicians' need for rehearsal, any changes in musicians or music may be made only in consultation with the music director. In most cases, this consultation will fulfill the couple's responsibility for the music planning and the couple will not need to be concerned about any further musical details. Whenever possible, it is desirable that both the bride and the groom attend meetings with the music director so that they may share in the decisions concerning the music for the Sacrament of marriage.

Music Selection

If music other than that suggested by the music director is desired, the music choices must be reviewed and approved by the music director no later than six weeks prior to the wedding date. This assures that we continue to follow the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, which have their roots in the Church's liturgical documents. The use of popular (secular) music before and during the sacramental celebration of the wedding has come under great scrutiny in recent years. It is quite understandable that many couples might think of using "special" songs in their wedding; however, unlike previous generations, today's engaged couples have many musical options from which to choose. With these options also comes responsibility. When choosing music, couples must honestly ask the question, "Will this song help us and the assembly to lift our hearts in prayer?" While music chosen for liturgical services should be as musically attractive as possible, **it is the text that matters most**. Each and every hymn or song must be identifiable as a form of prayer. If it cannot, then it is inappropriate in a liturgical context. Thus, a song that highlights the Christian dimension of married love always deserves priority:

- A song that speaks directly of the divine dimension of love is most suitable at a Catholic wedding.
- A song that negates, either explicitly or implicitly, the divine dimension of love is unsuitable at a Catholic wedding.

Musician Fees

Fees for musicians from Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish must be negotiated directly with the individual musicians. The parish does not pay musicians for this ministry. All stipends must be mailed to the musicians no later than two weeks prior to the wedding. This avoids any confusion on the wedding day. Furthermore, in case of illness or emergency, the contracted musicians are responsible to secure and pay their own substitutes.

Worship Aids

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish does not prepare worship aids. Should you desire a worship aid, please discuss this with the administrator and music director when you meet to plan your wedding music. At that time the music director will provide you with all the necessary information.

The Worship Environment: Decorations, Flowers & Candles

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish church is a beautiful building, and home for the local faith community. Like other homes, it has its family members, customs and traditions, and its own shared understanding of its identity. The beauty of our sacred space is best enhanced by simplicity. Flowers and decorations that are too lavish can become a real distraction. Please remember that people, not decorations, create the mood for your wedding. You can't make up in glitter and extra flowers what is lacking in hospitality and graciousness. A simple rule of thumb: **less is more**.

Our parish environment committee does an exceptional job with seasonal decorations. These decorations are often quite substantial and may be all that is needed for the wedding. **No decorations in the church may be moved, removed or altered without permission from the administrator. This includes banners and liturgical objects.**

Floral arrangements may never be placed directly on the altar of sacrifice. Instead, floral arrangements may be placed in front of the altar; by Mary's altar; in front of the pulpit and/or cantor stand; and at the front entrance, if there are no other decorations present. Placement of flowers must not obstruct the view of anyone present. Floral decorations must never impede movement around the altar of sacrifice or any procession in the sanctuary.

The administrator must approve any additional decorations. The priest or deacon also reserves the right to remove anything that interferes with the ceremony in any way or does not follow the above guidelines.

Florists are responsible for their own cleanup. All flowers and decorations must be removed immediately after the wedding unless other arrangements have been made with the administrator. Sacred Heart does not have space to store florist supplies and will not be responsible for decorations left after the wedding. Furthermore, the wedding party (e.g., the ushers) **must** tidy up the church immediately following the wedding ceremony. They should collect programs, hymnals and whatever else is left in the pews, on tables, etc. by the wedding guests.

Wedding candle options include the following

- Two altar candelabra with all the beeswax candles:
 - o candelabra may be placed on either side of the tabernacle on the back altar
- The Unity Candle:
 - o you must provide your own Unity Candle
 - o you may provide the two side candles or ask us to provide them

Dress and Behavior

Your wedding is the celebration and receiving of a Sacrament. The most important moment of your wedding will happen in church. Please be aware of the appropriateness of the wedding party's dress and behavior.

- Please be on time for the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.
- Because a Sacrament is being celebrated, **alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited in any part of the church, parish facilities, or on the grounds, either before, during or after the wedding ceremony. Inebriated individuals will be unable to stay on church property.**
- We ask that women's dresses be modest. If there are any specific questions about the appropriateness of dress, please ask the administrator.

Parish Facilities

The bride and her attendants may dress in the Parish Center. There is no additional charge for this.

The maximum seating capacity in the church is 400-450.

No smoking or alcohol is permitted on the church premises. We ask that if flower petals are to be thrown inside, they be silk for ease of cleanup. Aisle runners are discouraged as they cause a tripping hazard. Outside we ask that you avoid flower petals, birdseed, confetti, and rice. Blowing bubbles or ringing little bells is permissible. Discuss any other ideas with the administrator.

Photography and Videography

The wedding liturgy is a sacred moment of rejoicing in prayer, song and gesture. While we understand your desire to record this moment, we ask that you observe the following so that all may experience the joy of this celebration without distraction.

- Videotaping equipment should be set up so as not to impede the progress of the wedding party.
- Professional photographers may take non-flash photographs during the wedding from the side aisle or the back of the church. **No flash photography is permitted by anyone.**
- It is helpful to remind the wedding guests that picture taking and filming during the liturgy is limited to the professional photographer and/or videographer hired by the bride and groom. This information could easily be included in the worship aid.
- Photographers and videographers are asked to remain inconspicuous throughout the ceremony.
- No additional lighting may be used during the ceremony.
- Provided that there is no conflict with other scheduled liturgies or parish events, the church will be open before and after the wedding for posed photography. Flash cameras are allowed at this time.
- The church must be vacated by 3:00 pm on Saturdays.***
- Important: it is the couple's responsibility to communicate the above information to any photographer or videographer who will be working at the wedding. Questions about setup of equipment, etc. should be answered well ahead of time, not immediately before the wedding ceremony.

Fees

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish does not charge a fee for the celebration of Sacraments. However, fees are charged for the materials used in the marriage preparation process and to help defray utilities and overhead expenses. If you are experiencing financial hardship, please speak to the administrator.

Marriage Preparation and Administrative Fees: \$50

Includes premarital instruction, wedding rehearsal, all forms, FOCCUS survey, meetings with administrator.

Facility Fee: \$100

Includes lights, heating/AC, microphones, maintenance

Music Fees:

Arranged with and paid directly to the musician/cantor. Call to ask about their fee schedule. Mail checks two weeks prior to the wedding. (approximately \$100-150 for musician, \$30 for cantor)

Discretionary Fees:

A courtesy gift is customary for the priest as a token of appreciation, amount to be decided by the couple.

If you have servers it is customary to offer \$10-20 per server.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Welcomes You

As a newly married couple, we request that a new parish registration form be submitted that is representative of your newly formed family. This also gives us any name changes that you choose to make. Welcome to your new home!

Wedding Preparation Checklist

Baptismal certificates with notations (request these right away):

- Bride
- Groom
- Submit to administrator

Rehearsal Date & Time

Wedding Date & Time

Pre-Cana/Tobit Weekend: <http://www.archindy.org/fatima/marriage.html>

- Make reservation (right after first meeting)
- Attend
- Submit Certificate to priest

Notes:

Marriage Sponsor Couple or administrator:

- Spoke with priest about a couple (usually 5 months prior)
- Complete FOCCUS Questionnaire
- Discuss results with administrator

Music:

- Contact the Music Director to select/approve music (usually done 4 to 6 months prior)
- Contract for musician & cantor (it is best to get this arranged early)

Vigo County Requirements (usually done 2 months prior to the wedding):

- Make application for Marriage License – no more than 60 days ahead
- License taken to Parish Office – at least 2 weeks prior to wedding

Select Readings and Plan the Wedding Ceremony (usually done 1 or 2 months prior):

- Pick up *Together for Life* wedding booklet from the parish office
- Meet with the priest/administrator on _____ (date)

Pay all fees

- Facility Fee \$100
- Marriage Prep/Admin Fee \$50
- Presider's stipend/Musicians/Servers

If applicable (usually done 2 months prior to wedding):

- Dispensation application made
- Permission for outside priest to preside

If applicable:

- Worship Aid prepared
- Photographer notified of requirements listed in this wedding booklet
- Ushers informed that they must straighten up the church after the wedding
- Schedule a time for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession)

Bride Name Change:

- Let the church secretary know if the Bride will be using the groom's surname