

Wedding Guidelines

CATHEDRAL BASILICA
OF SAINT PETER IN CHAINS

CINCINNATI, OHIO

REVISED MARCH 2026



A Message to Engaged Couples

Planning a Wedding at the Cathedral Basilica

Congratulations and blessings on your decision to marry, a decision given much thought and prayer!

Now that you have decided to marry, you will undoubtedly be placing a great deal of time and effort into the planning and preparation for your wedding liturgy. As you are considering the Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter in Chains as the place for the celebration of your wedding, please know that all of the clergy and staff here would like to be as helpful as possible and that is the purpose of what follows.

As we schedule more weddings at the cathedral basilica than the typical parish church, we have found that it is helpful for everyone concerned – you, your families, and guests if we put our expectations in an easily understandable form. It is our experience that everything will proceed much more smoothly, both in preparation and in the liturgy itself, if everyone knows what is expected of them and adheres to those expectations accordingly.

Please understand that with so many weddings taking place at the cathedral basilica, we are not able to allow exceptions to the policies we have established. Additionally, we have the responsibility of assuring that weddings adhere to the beauty, truth, and goodness of the Church's centuries old liturgical standards. In choosing the cathedral basilica as the place for the celebration of your wedding, you are promising to abide by the policies governing the use of this beautiful and historical cathedral church.

The guidelines that follow are designed to assist you in planning your wedding liturgy. If there are any additional questions that come up in this process, please reach out to the parish office at 513. 421. 5354, and we will be most happy to assist.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Very Reverend Jan K. Schmidt
Rector

An Exhortation on Marriage



Beloved of Christ, you are about to enter upon a union which is most sacred and most serious. It is most sacred because it is established by God Himself. By it, He gave to man a share in the greatest work of creation, the work of the continuation of the human race. And in this way He sanctified human love and enabled man and woman to help each other live as children of God, by sharing a common life under His fatherly care.

Because God Himself is thus its author, marriage is of its very nature a holy institution, requiring of those who enter into it a complete and unreserved giving of self. But Christ our Lord added to the holiness of marriage an even deeper meaning and a higher beauty. He referred to the love of marriage to describe His own love for His Church, that is for the people of God whom He redeemed by His own blood. And so He gave to Christians a new vision of what married life ought to be, a life of self-sacrificing love like His own. It is for this reason that His apostle, St. Paul, clearly states that marriage is now and for all time to be considered a great mystery, intimately bound up with the supernatural union of

Christ and the Church, which union is also to be its pattern. This union, then, is most serious, because it will bind you together for life in a relationship so close and so intimate, that it will profoundly influence your whole future. That future, with its hopes and disappointments, its successes and its failures, its pleasures and its pains, its joys and its sorrows, is hidden from your eyes. You know that these elements are mingled in every life, and are to be expected in your own. And so not knowing what is before you, you take each other for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death.

Truly, then, these words are most serious. It is a beautiful tribute to your undoubted faith in each other, that recognizing their full import, you are, nevertheless, so willing and ready to pronounce them. And because these words involve such solemn obligations, it is most fitting that you rest the security of your wedded life upon the great principle of self-sacrifice. And so you begin your married life by the voluntary and complete surrender of your individual lives in the interest of that deeper and wider life which you are to have in common. Henceforth you will belong entirely to each other; you will be one in mind, one in heart, and one in affections. And whatever sacrifices you may hereafter be required to make to preserve this mutual life, always make them generously. Sacrifice is usually difficult and irksome. Only love can make it easy, and perfect love can make it a joy. And when love is perfect, the sacrifice is complete. God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, and the Son so loved us that He gave Himself for our salvation. "Greater love than this no man has, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

No greater blessing can come to your married life than pure conjugal love, loyal and true to the end. May, then, this love with which you join your hands and hearts never fail, but grow deeper and stronger as the years go on. And if true love and the unselfish spirit of perfect sacrifice guide your every action, you can expect the greatest measure of earthly happiness that may be allotted to man in this vale of tears. The rest is in the hands of God. Nor will God be wanting to your needs; He will pledge you the life-long support of His graces in the holy sacrament which you are now to receive.



THE
WEDDING
LITURGY
*is the Worship
of the Church*

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE is a religious ritual that centers, not just on the couple, but on the entire community, standing in praise of our God who unconditionally loves us and gives us life. In other words, while the wedding liturgy certainly celebrates the love that couples have found in each other, it is more fully the prayer and praise of all who gather... of us, the Church.

The process of preparing your wedding liturgy should not be a chore but rather, an enjoyable and memorable journey. That being said, it does take time and care, and should not be taken lightly. The more prepared you are, the less stressful things will be as you get closer to the celebration. Do not wait until the last minute! This notion of preparation will enable all to relax and be receptive to the wonderful blessings that will await you as you celebrate. The process will undoubtedly bring about tensions, disagreements, and conflict at times. It will be impossible for the two of you to agree on everything. Don't worry – this is normal. When those times arise, say a prayer together, calm down, and take a break. Then, after a while, come back with a renewed sense of cooperation. Listen to the ideas that your parents, family, and friends may offer – but always stay true to yourselves; decisions should be made by the two of you together with the priest or deacon who is presiding, our music minister and wedding coordinator. Be good to each other. Discuss, listen well to one another, compromise – just as you will throughout your married life. It is our prayer that both the preparation and celebration of your wedding will bring you closer to each other and to God and His Church, and that it will enrich your life and the lives of those who share your joy.

We offer what follows as a guideline for a joyful and fulfilling celebration of the sacrament of marriage.... enjoy your journey!



Initial Considerations

Confirming the Date

The wedding date you have set with the cathedral basilica secretary is TENTATIVE. The date will be held for one month during which time the prospective bride and groom must have the priest or deacon who will be presiding at the wedding liturgy return the signed “agreement” to the cathedral basilica confirming his intentions to be responsible for completing all marriage preparation with the two of you and forwarding the necessary paperwork to the cathedral basilica, including the marriage license, making himself available for the rehearsal as scheduled and presiding at the wedding on the assigned date and time.

The date will be held indefinitely after payment of a non-refundable \$700.00 deposit, the signed and dated “Wedding Guidelines Agreement” are received, and the letter from your priest or deacon, who is presiding is forwarded to the cathedral basilica secretary.

Wedding Times

With so many other regularly scheduled liturgies celebrated at the cathedral basilica, wedding celebration times available are restricted to the following:

- Friday evenings at 7:00 pm;
- Saturdays 1:00 pm
- and several options for late Saturday afternoon or early evening beginning at 5:00 pm.
- Sundays in Ordinary Time (for instance: Memorial and Labor Day weekend) 2:00pm or 6:00pm

Weddings are not celebrated during the Season of Lent.

Location of the Wedding Liturgy

For weddings expecting fewer than 70 guests, we suggest using our Blessed Sacrament Chapel. For larger weddings of 70 or more guests, the main church will be used. In the first instance the choice is up to the couple.

Marriage Preparation Process

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati requires arrangements for a wedding be made at least six months and preferably longer, prior to the date of the wedding liturgy. We suggest a minimum of one year as this is an important time for you as a couple. Our attention during this time is not primarily about the wedding liturgy but most importantly that you are prepared as well as possible for your life together as a married couple living in a Catholic sacramental marriage.

The requirements as stipulated by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for marriage preparation are as found here: <https://www.centerforthenewevangelization.org/marriage-family/marriage-preparation>

Please be certain to complete all preparation, with time to spare, at least three months prior to the wedding liturgy. All required documents/forms must be received in the cathedral basilica office at least six weeks prior to the date of the wedding liturgy. For couples prepared outside of the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, all documents/forms must be forwarded directly to the Office of the Chancellor (see page 19) and received at least six weeks prior to the date of the wedding liturgy.

Necessary Documents *to Be Provided to Preparing Clergy*

1. Pre-Cana certificate or equivalent from the chosen program.
2. Baptismal Certificates for both parties whether Catholic or other Christian faith. (A baptismal certificate, with notations, of the Catholic Party must be a recently issued one, not more than six months old.)
3. For the non-Catholic Party, a statement from his or her parent(s) that they have never been married before must be included in the paper work.
4. Letter from the pastor of each Catholic party giving permission for the wedding to take place at the cathedral.
5. If either party was previously married, documents must be submitted which prove the person is free to marry in the Catholic Church. If widowed, a death certificate of the deceased spouse is needed. If divorced, a copy of the Declaration of Nullity from the Church Tribunal must be submitted (this is not the Civil Divorce Decree). No wedding may be scheduled until an annulment process is completed.
6. If clergy are from outside of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, a letter of suitability from the diocesan bishop, or religious superior must be mailed to the chancery of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati at a minimum of 30 days in advance.
7. Ohio State license must be obtained and a copy forwarded to the Cathedral Basilica office at a minimum of 3 days prior to the wedding.



Rehearsal

At your wedding rehearsal, the cathedral basilica wedding coordinator will assist the presiding clergy, you, your family, and your wedding party in a walk-through of the liturgy, so that all involved are comfortable in their roles.

It is very important that all members of the wedding party and liturgical ministers attend the rehearsal. It is important that anyone who has a role in the wedding liturgy (parents and grandparents included) be present so as to know their place in the flow of the liturgy and marriage rite. If they are unable to attend due to circumstances of travel or other important reasons, please have a substitute stand-in present who will properly transmit the directions given by the cathedral basilica wedding coordinator....you want your wedding day to go smoothly....someone missing the rehearsal could make that less likely!

The earliest the rehearsal can be scheduled is five months prior to the wedding date. Please call the cathedral basilica office at that time to make arrangements for the day and time of the rehearsal. Rehearsals are typically scheduled after 6:00pm.

It must be understood that archdiocesan events could be scheduled in the cathedral basilica on the eve of your wedding. This may result in not being able to schedule the rehearsal at the most convenient time, or that the day and time of the rehearsal may have to be changed.

Fee Schedule

The following fee schedule has been established at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter in Chains for celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. These fees cover the basic expenses of materials and testing in your marriage preparation process as well as the use of the cathedral church. They do not cover fees for your Pre-Cana retreat, Natural Family Planning (NFP), or Theology of the Body offerings.

- *For registered parishioners or their parents who have financially supported the cathedral basilica for two years or more going back from date of contact:*

\$1,250.00*

\$725.00 for use of cathedral basilica

\$525.00 for musicians

- *For registered parishioners or their parents who can provide proof of having financially supported any parish for two years in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati going back from date of contact:*

\$1,750.00*

\$1,225.00 for use of cathedral basilica

\$525.00 for musicians

- *For Catholic(s) wishing to marry in the cathedral who are not able to provide proof of having supported the cathedral or another parish in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati:*

\$2,750.00*

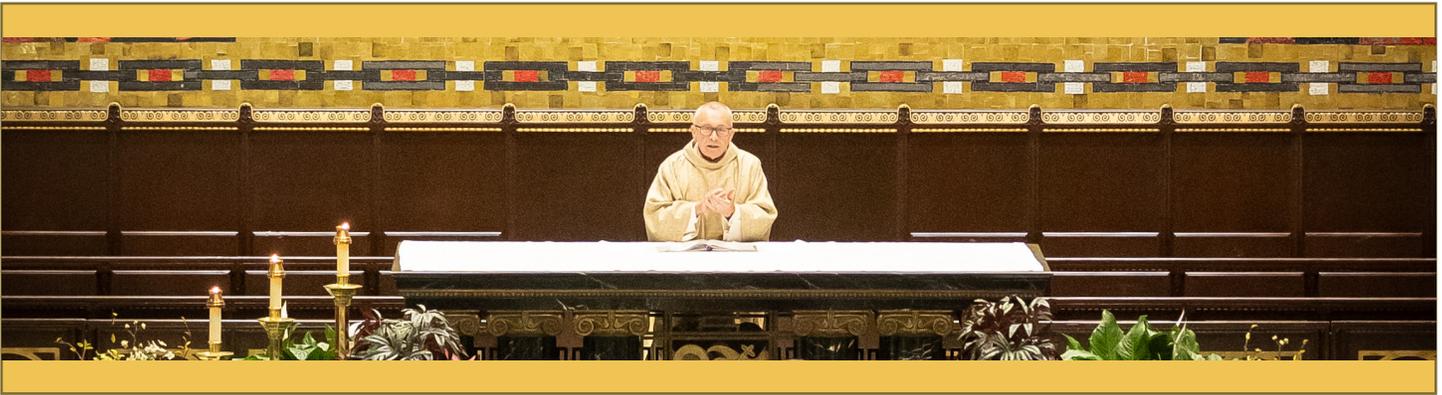
\$2,225.00 for use of cathedral basilica

\$525.00 for musicians

Above fees for musicians include the organist and a professional cantor. Additional musicians must be coordinated through the cathedral basilica musician at an additional expense.

Stipends for presiding clergy are optional and are not included in the above fees, though certainly appreciated.

**Payment by credit card will include an added 3% convenience fee imposed by credit card companies.*



Attention to the Liturgy

In the process of preparation for your wedding day there are several key individuals you will need to engage and/or meet with in preparation of and for the wedding liturgy.

Presider

It is your personal responsibility to choose the priest or deacon who will preside at your wedding liturgy. If both bride and groom are Catholic, then Holy Mass ought to be a very important part of the day, and you will need to have a priest to preside. Fr. Jan Schmidt, Rector of the Cathedral Basilica: jschmidt@catholicaoc.org, Fr. Raymond Larger, Parochial Vicar: rlarger@catholicaoc.org, and Fr. Kevin Scalf, In Residence: kscalf@cathedrallaoc.org are open to preside. Please communicate with them directly to determine their availability.

The priests of the cathedral basilica respect the desire of couples who may have relatives or friends who are priests and you are welcome to invite them to preside with the Rector's written permission and according to the guidelines on page 6.

If the bride or groom (one or the other) is not Catholic, the wedding liturgy is typically not to be celebrated within Mass. However, there are circumstances where it is possible to celebrate your marriage within Mass. If this is your desire please discuss this matter with your presider. There are several deacons assigned to the cathedral basilica parish. Should you choose to celebrate your marriage outside of Mass, please contact one of our deacons to preside. [see page 19]

Preparation for the wedding liturgy should begin several

Please note: To reiterate, if a priest or deacon presides from outside of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, special permission is required for him to minister here. A letter of suitability from his bishop or superior is required and must be sent to the Office of the Chancellor (see page 19). The letter must arrive at least one month prior to the date of the wedding liturgy.

months before to ensure that the liturgical and spiritual aspects are what are most evident in the liturgy. It is expected that you will set up a meeting with the priest or deacon who is presiding to go over the details of the liturgy at least four to six weeks prior to the wedding day. At this meeting you should have with you the completed form detailing all of the prayers and readings you have chosen for the liturgy and other details as required.

A wedding date cannot be confirmed without a commitment from a priest or deacon who agrees to accept full responsibility for all aspects of the preparation and celebration of the wedding. The priest/deacon is responsible for all pre-nuptial preparations, liturgical planning in cooperation with the cathedral basilica music director, the rehearsal, and the wedding liturgy itself. He is responsible, of course, for seeing that all Archdiocesan and Liturgical Norms, as well as all Cathedral Basilica Policies, are followed.

Music and Musicians

Music is an important element of all weddings celebrated at the cathedral basilica. Its purpose is to both prayerfully support, the liturgy and to engage the congregation in participation.

Guidelines for music at weddings have been established by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and are strictly adhered to for weddings at the cathedral basilica [see page 15 for these guidelines]. Choosing wedding music, however, is to be done only in consultation with the cathedral's organist. Couples are advised not to hire singers or instrumentalists until after meeting with the organist.

The Cathedral Basilica Music Director or his staff assistant will be responsible for the music chosen for your wedding. Outside organists are not permitted. In addition to a cathedral basilica organist, a professional cantor is provided for all weddings. The role of the cantor is to lead and assist the assembly in singing. Additional singers may be utilized only with the agreement of the cathedral basilica's organist and never instead of the cathedral basilica's cantor. No contact with such persons should be made before discussion with the cathedral basilica's organist and obtaining his agreement to their involvement. Likewise, instrumentalists may be utilized with the agreement of the cathedral basilica's organist.

The cathedral basilica choir is also available for hire for weddings. This possibility can also be discussed with the cathedral's organist at the time of the consultation.

The bride and the groom are expected to meet with the cathedral basilica's organist at least three months prior to the wedding, to plan the music that to be used. The couple should make contact with the cathedral basilica's organist to set up a consultation meeting. [See page 19 for contact information].

The compensation for the consultation with the organist, the organist's fee for playing the wedding and the services of the professional cantor are all included in the wedding fee. If additional rehearsal time beyond one hour prior to the wedding liturgy is necessary because of additional musicians an additional fee will be negotiated between the organist and couple. Payment for additional singers and instrumentalists is, of course, an additional cost that is the responsibility of the couple directly with those individuals.



Cathedral Basilica Wedding Coordinator

The cathedral basilica wedding coordinator is your key contact with the cathedral as you plan the logistical aspects of your wedding ceremony. This person will contact you at least once prior to your rehearsal and wedding, but as often as they feel it is necessary to help you plan the logistics of your wedding liturgy. The purpose of the cathedral wedding coordinator is to assure your wedding meets your expectations while at the same time meeting the requirements of the cathedral basilica.

At your wedding rehearsal and at the liturgy, you should rely on the cathedral wedding coordinator to guide you, your family, and your wedding party. We would like for you to be able to relax, enjoy, and focus on your wedding liturgy and the importance of what the two of you as a couple are about to commit to each other and to God. Leave the logistics of the church and liturgy to us.

The cathedral basilica coordinator will be on hand for the wedding to assure all “behind the scenes” details are handled smoothly.

Altar Servers

For the celebration of the wedding liturgy, one of the important ministries helpful to the liturgy is that of the altar server. For a wedding that is to be celebrated at

the cathedral basilica at least one required if there is no deacon present.

Often times the couple has family members who they would like to have fulfill this role and, so long as they are trained and active in their parish as altar servers, they are welcome, though we ask that they be present at the rehearsal for familiarization with the cathedral basilica ritual. The cathedral basilica will provide an altar server if no one is available from amongst family or friends.

Readers

You should carefully select the individuals who will read the scriptures during the liturgy. We recommend that you choose three different individuals who will carry out this very important ministry. You might want to consider asking trained Readers or individuals who have had success in public speaking.

You will need three Readers: one for each of the scripture readings (Old and New Testament) and another for the Universal Prayer (Prayers of the Faithful). Please be certain they are able to attend the rehearsal so they can practice the text and become accustomed to the layout of the sanctuary, the proper way to approach the ambo, and the peculiarities of the acoustics in the church.



Other Considerations

When speaking with the cathedral basilica wedding coordinator, the following points of the wedding liturgy can and will be discussed and determined.

The Universal Prayer

You may choose to write your own Universal Prayer, also known as the Prayers of the Faithful or Petitions, or you may select from those provided in the liturgical preparation booklet that you will be given at some point on the journey. If you choose to write your own “Petitions,” we ask that you provide a copy (via attachment to an email to your presider (priest or deacon for review at least one week prior to the rehearsal but preferably at the liturgy preparation meeting previously mentioned. After approved, email a copy to the wedding coordinator to be used during the liturgy.

Day of the Wedding

The time at which you arrive at the church will depend on several things. For instance, do you plan to take photographs at the church before the ceremony? Keep the following guidelines in mind when planning. You will be able to arrive at the church up to 45 minutes prior to the liturgy. If you are considering taking pictures at the church prior, you and your photographer should take this time frame into consideration. Also keep in mind that your guests may begin to arrive up to 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the liturgy and perhaps earlier.

All weddings are expected to start at the announced time. Ushers are to stop seating guests five minutes before the liturgy is scheduled to begin so that those in the procession can be lined up and prepared to begin on time. After seating has ceased, guests are to seat themselves by means of the side aisles. The cathedral basilica wedding coordinator will be present to help this process run smoothly. (Note: Any delay in starting will lessen the amount of time for pictures afterwards.)

After the conclusion of your wedding liturgy, you and your guests may remain at the church for up to 30 minutes.



Food or Drink

No food is permitted in the church. **ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOL!** It is very important that everyone in the wedding party clearly understands this restriction. Any member of the wedding party showing signs of alcohol use before the rehearsal or the wedding liturgy will not be permitted to participate in the ceremony. It is vitally important to understand there are canonical issues involved if the bride and/or groom and/or witnesses are under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the wedding.

Flowers

Flowers are a traditional decoration for a wedding liturgy. Keep in mind that during various liturgical seasons, the church is already beautifully decorated, especially through the Christmas Season and Easter through Pentecost. During Ordinary Time in the calendar of the church, there is a wide range of use for flowers you might consider, but at all times we ask that you do not move any of the flowers or plants already in place without having first spoken with our art and environment coordinator. Flowers specific to the wedding are the financial responsibility of the couple. They should be arranged in such a way that they will enhance the liturgical celebration and not detract from it. Remember, the action of the liturgy is what is most important. Keep in mind that the cathedral basilica sanctuary is a large space. To be effective, flower arrangements must be large. One large arrangement in front of the altar is often more effective than several smaller ones elsewhere. Please consult with our art and environment coordinator.

For planning purposes, the altar is 40” tall, 10’ long and 48” wide. Be certain the florist is familiar with the space. Artificial flowers are not permitted. Flowers used for weddings may be left at the cathedral basilica after the liturgy, and are in fact welcomed.

Flowers may be placed on the floor at the foot of the altar as well as on the floor in front of the ambo if they fit in appropriately. Flowers may not be placed on the altar itself.

If you wish to use flowers, greenery, or other decorations in the aisles, or on the pew ends or on the steps, you or your florist will need to furnish the appropriate stands or ribbons. We would also ask that you consult beforehand on your decorating plans with the art and environment coordinator.



Flowers are to be placed or removed from the church at times that will not interfere with other cathedral basilica liturgies. If the wedding liturgy is on Saturday evening, you would not want to place flowers until after the 3:00pm Mass....simply to assure their freshness and survival.

You or your florist or another designated person must remove all refuse after decorating and after the liturgy. We can arrange to have a staff person on duty to take care of this, but there will be an additional charge for this service.

Please inform the cathedral basilica wedding coordinator at least thirty days before the wedding date of the name and contact information for your florist. Special instruction sheets are provided at the end of this document for you to share with them in advance.

Marian Devotions

The custom of taking a flower or bouquet in tribute to the Blessed Virgin Mary, although commonly included in wedding ceremonies, is not part of the marriage ritual. This custom is not very effective at the cathedral basilica since the shrine of the Blessed Mother is in the adjacent Blessed Sacrament Chapel, and guests seated in the body of the cathedral basilica are not able see what is happening. Unless this devotion has special importance to you, it is probably best to exclude.

Aisle Runner

For the safety of you and your guests, we do not allow the use of an aisle runner on the marble floor. It truly is a safety issue on our highly polished floor.

Photography and Videography

You will be able to take pictures up to 30 minutes before your liturgy (after the 3:00pm Mass in the case of a Saturday evening wedding) and up to 30 minutes after your liturgy.

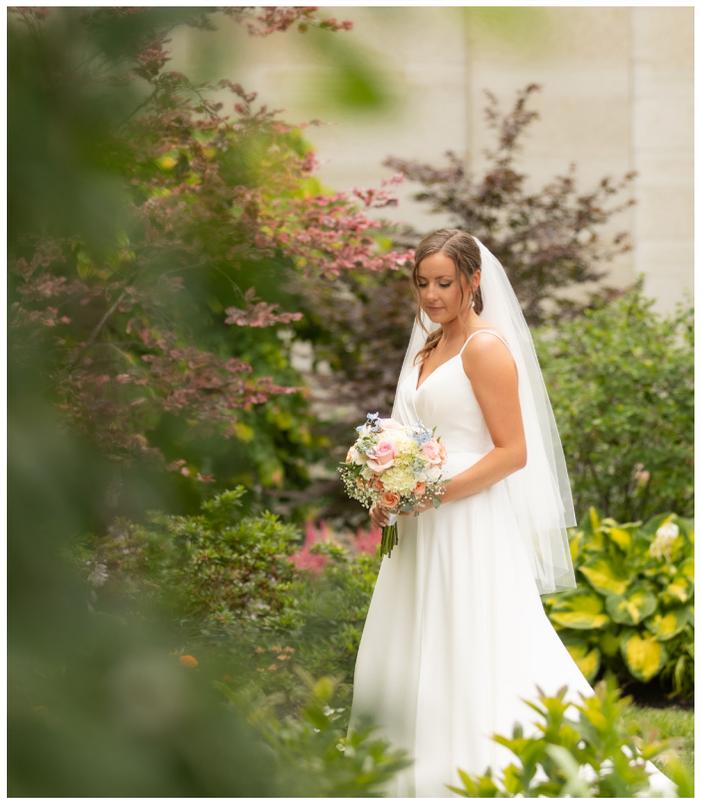
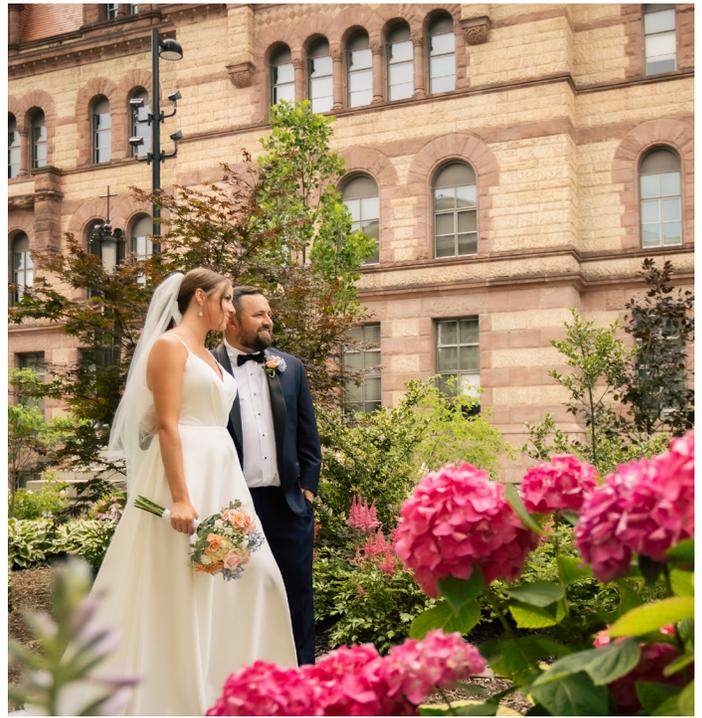
To help maintain the dignity and solemnity of your wedding, we ask that you inform your photographer of some minimal restrictions.

1. Flash or extra lighting is not permitted during the liturgy; photographers may use only available light.
2. Photos may not be taken from the head of the aisle, (i.e. the photographer must not position him/herself between the presider and the participants in the wedding party as they process up the aisle.)
3. The photographer must not enter the sanctuary at any time during the liturgy.
4. Pictures may not be taken of the musicians.

The cathedral basilica retains the right to refuse photographers and videographers found not to be observing these guidelines at previous cathedral weddings. Posed photos after the ceremony have become a standard tradition and are important for preserving memories of your wedding. With the cathedral's schedule, the time allotted for these photos is limited. The amount of time available will depend upon the hour you have chosen for your wedding. Photos after a 1:00pm wedding by 2:30pm; after a 6:30pm wedding by 8:00pm. Arrangements for some photos to be taken prior to the ceremony can sometimes be made, depending upon the cathedral basilica's schedule for the day. There is no space for photographer to use as a studio. Guidelines for your photographer are available on pg. 22.

Please note that the cathedral basilica grounds have beautiful landscaped gardens that you are welcome and encouraged to use in your photography. Please consult with the wedding coordinator as to accessibility as our courtyard is often locked to the public.

Please note: *It is best not to plan a receiving line after the liturgy. This will severely limit the time for photos.*





Videotaping is permitted only if the following guidelines are observed.

1. All restrictions for still photographers must be followed.
2. No equipment may be set up more than (1) one hour prior to the wedding and all equipment must be removed immediately following the wedding.
3. No cables or electric cords may be used that will cross aisles or areas where people will walk.
4. No additional lighting may be used.
5. Movement of cameras and video-taping devices must be held to a minimum.

Please discuss our guidelines with your photographer prior to your liturgy so they clearly understand. Photographs can be wonderful mementos of your wedding, but the photographer must not interfere with the wedding liturgy. Please ask your photographer to introduce themselves to the presider prior to the liturgy as some may have a few rules of their own.

Live-stream is available. Please arrange with our wedding coordinator to set up the streaming for your wedding liturgy. Guidelines for your videographer are available on pg. 23

Please inform the cathedral basilica wedding coordinator at least thirty days before the wedding date of the name and contact information for your photographer and videographer. Special instruction sheets will be provided for you to share with them in advance.

No Unity Candle

The unity candle is not part of Catholic liturgical rites, and it is not properly a part of the Roman Catholic Marriage Rite. The unity candle has enjoyed widespread acceptance over the years, but its origins and meanings are confused. How it has worked its way into Catholic custom is somewhat of a mystery. The fact of the matter is, however, that it is simply out of place in a Catholic wedding liturgy.

The cathedral basilica does not allow the use of the unity candle during the liturgy under any circumstances. We suggest that should you like to include the candle in some meaningful way you do so at your rehearsal dinner or



reception...perhaps at the toast to bride and groom!

Decorative Candles

Traditionally candles represent the “Light of Christ” to the world. We see this particularly during the lighting of the Pascal Candle at the Easter Vigil. Candles and their light are used by Catholics as a sign of Christ in our midst and should never be confused with representing individuals or couples, as the unity candle suggests. Candles at the ends of the pews in the center aisle are available for a rental fee of \$350.00, for the set of ten, from the cathedral basilica. There are also candelabra that may be placed upon the marble walls at the steps into the sanctuary for a rental fee of \$150.00. These fees include the candles to burn and will be set in place by the cathedral basilica sacristan.



Rice, Birdseed, Flower Petals, Confetti

For the safety of your guests and other visitors at other liturgies, we **do NOT** allow the throwing of rice (also dangerous to birds), birdseed, flower petals, or confetti before, during or after the liturgy....however, bubbles may be used outside.

Liturgy Program

It is common for many couples to provide their guests with a program to guide them through your wedding liturgy and to encourage full participation in your celebration. If you would like, we can provide you with information and suggestions about creating such a program. We also suggest that as soon as you have a prepared draft you seek advice from the cathedral basilica musician assuring the liturgical order and form is proper prior to printing.

Other Fees To Be Aware Of

The fee schedule previously noted has been established at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter in Chains for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. These fees cover

the basic expenses of materials and testing in your marriage preparation as well as the use of the church. They **do not** cover fees for your Pre-Cana retreat, NFP or Theology of the Body processes as required by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

A stipend for the Altar Server is by no means necessary. However, if you are delighted with their service and hard work you are welcome to show your appreciation.

Sanctuary Arrangement

With the many weddings celebrated at the cathedral basilica, we have one standard sanctuary arrangement for all weddings. This allows for two chairs (and kneelers if the wedding includes the celebration of Holy Mass) for the bride and groom. Wedding attendants are seated in the front pews. The wedding couple will be kneeling in front of the altar during the Eucharistic Prayer.

Finally

Once again...CONGRATULATIONS! We look forward to assisting in your preparation for marriage and your wedding day. All of us at the cathedral basilica are honored to assist you in planning your wedding ceremony and in preparing for a lifelong Catholic marriage. Just relax and take it all one step at a time...we know how daunting it can be, but we also know how this experience will be rewarding to you as you enter into the Sacrament of Marriage.

If at any time you feel a need to discuss your marriage or any issue that may arise, especially during your first year, please feel free to contact anyone of us...Fr. Jan, Fr. Ray, Deacon Mike, Deacon Larry, or the minister who prepared you.

May God’s blessings be upon you in this very special time of your lives!



Wedding Music Guidelines



MUSIC plays a very important part in a wedding, as it does in every liturgy. Its primary role is to help members of the assembly join themselves with the action of Christ and to express their faith. Singing a text expresses a dimension of meaning and feeling that spoken words alone cannot. Music has been an integral part of the liturgy since the early days of the Church – specifically, singing. In fact, the human voice is considered the primary musical instrument for the liturgy. In singing the liturgy, the human person joins his or her voice with the voice of Christ to offer a song of praise to God the Father. In the liturgy, we encounter Christ in symbols, and can recognize the presence of Christ when the Church prays and sings. So, the musical choices you make can really have an impact on the way the assembly celebrates at your wedding liturgy.

With respect to the parts of the ceremony that require singing, the outline for the wedding liturgy follows very closely the order of the Mass. There are opportunities for the assembly to sing hymns and songs; to sing the refrain of the Responsorial Psalm; and to sing acclamations (the Alleluia before the Gospel; acclamations during the Eucharistic Prayer, if your wedding takes place during Mass). The structure of our liturgy requires particular kinds of music at these particular times: the text, or the form, or length of the piece, for example.

While the Church welcomes a variety of styles of music, at the same time it calls us to consider several criteria for any piece of music we choose for any liturgy we celebrate. Does it meet the requirements of that particular moment in the liturg?, Is it appropriate for the ritual? Will it

enable this particular group of people assembled this day, in this place for your wedding to express the faith of the Church? Does it open their hearts to the mystery being celebrated on this occasion? Is it of good musical quality, so that it is worthy of expressing the mystery of God's love that we celebrate in this sacrament? Or, is it trite or a musical cliché?

In the wedding liturgy, we sing about love – not a love initiated between two human beings alone, but a love that has Christ at the center, one that will deepen and grow through the years to become a sign for the world of the love God has for God's people. Hymns and songs that express this love rooted in Christ are much more appropriate for the liturgy. Secular, popular music that focuses only on the human aspect of relationships is inappropriate. The music at your wedding – chosen with all of this in mind – will express not only the love you share as a couple, but will enable you to proclaim to the Church and to your guests how your marriage will be a sign of the presence of Christ for the world.

Prelude music played or sung while your guests are gathering in the church can help set the tone for the sacred nature of the celebration. There is a natural transition that begins long before we arrive at the church building for a liturgy: our preparation at home, our journey to the church, our arrival at the doors – all of this is part of our gathering to celebrate. The prelude music can help your guests transition from the world outside the church doors and begin to focus on the sacred – to focus on the wedding ceremony which takes place in the context of liturgical prayer. With this in mind, music from the

sacred repertoire is appropriate for prelude music.

The **Entrance Hymn** can accompany the procession of the ministers and bridal party at the beginning of the liturgy, otherwise it is sung after the procession has concluded. In either case, the assembly joins in the singing of the hymn. Singing together at the beginning of the liturgy can be a very welcoming thing to do. It invites your guests to unite their minds and hearts as they join their voices in one song. This is especially effective in cases where the bride and groom come from two different faith communities. A hymn that is familiar or sung in a wide range of churches will serve to make guests feel comfortable and invite them to participate fully in the celebration. In addition, the **Gloria** is sung at weddings within Mass.

You will choose scripture readings to be proclaimed in the Liturgy of the Word. Of equal importance is the **Responsorial Psalm**, which fosters meditation on the Word of God that we hear proclaimed. The Order of Celebrating Matrimony offers several psalm texts especially appropriate for the wedding liturgy. There are many different musical settings of the psalms and they represent a wide variety of styles.

Just as we do at any liturgy, we stand and sing our “**Alleluia**” before the proclamation of the Gospel. Choosing a setting of this that is familiar is important to encourage the singing of the assembly. The rite provides a sung or spoken **acclamation** after the vows, as well as singing a **hymn or canticle of praise** after the Blessing and Giving of Rings. The parish musician will assist in making these musical choices.

If your wedding is celebrated in the context of Mass, there will be a procession with the gifts of bread and wine which can be accompanied with a song or instrumental music. This song should end as the presider finishes preparing the cups on the altar. Music should be chosen with this in mind. Also, if you are celebrating in the context of Mass, there will be a Eucharistic Prayer which includes acclamations to be sung by the assembly. These are the most important pieces of music sung in any liturgy because they are our way of externally participating in this great Christian prayer of thanksgiving.

Even if no particular attention is paid to any other pieces of music for your wedding, the Church asks us to make sure these acclamations are able to be sung by everyone. The musical setting of the **Holy, Holy, Holy, Mystery of Faith** and **Amen** should be chosen with the parish musician.

The **Rite of Peace** follows our praying the Lord’s Prayer together. In the gestures we exchange, we pray for peace and unity among ourselves and the whole human family. We express our communion before receiving the Sacrament of Communion. This is a simple gesture that does not require any ritual music. Since the Sign of Peace should not unduly prolong the liturgy, adding music to the ritual at this point is not appropriate. Following the Sign of Peace, the breaking of the bread is accompanied by the **Lamb of God**.

The **Communion Song** enables us to express with our voices the union that we share in the Body of Christ. In selecting a Communion song, we may sing not only about the liturgical action of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, but may include songs that express the joy, wonder, unity, gratitude and praise we know through our union with the God who loves us and gives us all gifts.

Most couples choose to have an instrumental piece for the **recessional** music, and there are many fine pieces that can serve the liturgy in this way. Some choose to have the assembly sing together while the wedding party processes out of the church. If you choose to have your assembly sing for this part of the liturgy, hymns and songs that are especially effective are those that speak of your marriage as a witness of the love you share in Christ – praying that your union will be salt and light for the world.

Providing a **printed program** with the music or references to the hymn numbers for the gathered assembly will enable them to participate in the liturgy more fully and consciously. This is also a gesture of hospitality for your guests. It is important to know that if music is printed in the program, appropriate copyright permission will need to be obtained. The parish musician can assist you with this.

Wedding Planning Timeline and Checklist

- ___ Meet with the Rector of the cathedral basilica
- ___ Schedule wedding date and time
- ___ Schedule rehearsal date and time
- ___ Meet with Marriage Preparation Coordinator
- ___ Provide recent copies of baptismal certificates with notations
- ___ Complete F.O.C.C.U.S. inventory
- ___ Meet with F.O.C.C.U.S. couple (2-4 meetings)
- ___ Schedule Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter weekend*
- ___ Send copy of Pre-Cana certificate to the preparing clergy
- ___ Attend Natural Family Planning classes*
- ___ Following F.O.C.C.U.S., complete M-1 insert questions
- ___ Meet with Deacon to discuss marriage preparation (if being prepared at cathedral basilica)
- ___ Meet with Presider to discuss readings and other details of wedding ceremony
- ___ Meet with the Cathedral Basilica Organist to select music for ceremony
- ___ Contact the Cathedral Basilica Wedding Coordinator by telephone to discuss logistics of ceremony, use of space, and other practical matters related to the ceremony.
- ___ Obtain marriage license from probate in the state of Ohio
- ___ Payment of Preparation and Use Fees to the cathedral basilica

*Schedule through the Archdiocesan Office of Marriage and Family Life

*Contact
Information*

Rector

Very Rev. Jan K. Schmidt 513.263.6653
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Music & Wedding Liaison

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Parish Office

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*Mailing
Addresses*

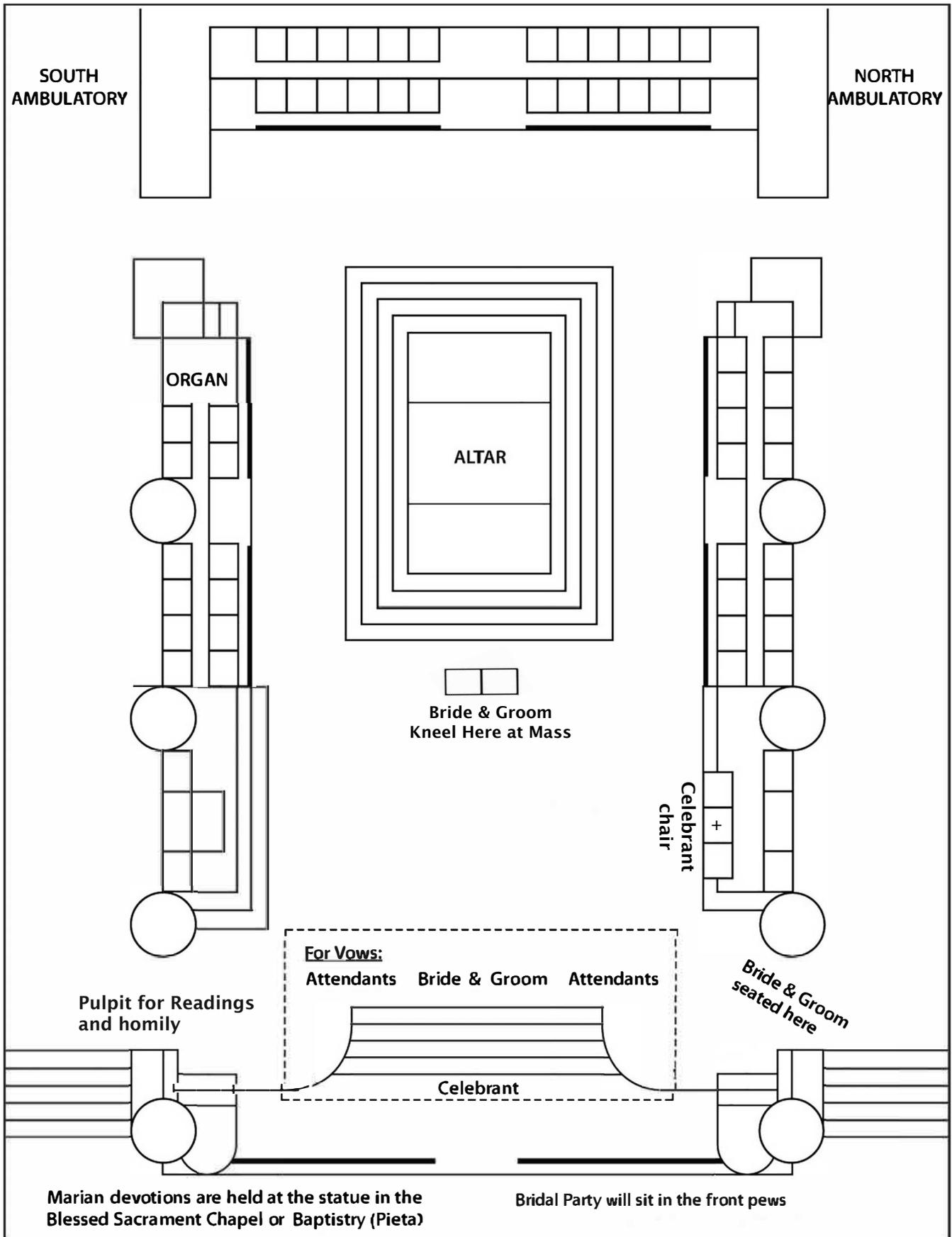
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Office of the Chancellor
Archdiocese of Cincinnati
100 East Eighth Street
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Archdiocesan Office for Marriage and Family Life

<https://www.centerforthenewevangelization.org/marriage-family/marriage-preparation>

Sanctuary Arrangement



Guidelines for Florists

(To be given to the Florist when hired)

Flowers are an important part of the environment for any celebration. They can certainly enhance a liturgical celebration. Here in the Cathedral Basilica simplicity is best due to the already ornate nature of the building. If flowers are used, our experience has shown there to be three options that work best:

1. A large arrangement in front of the altar. [May not be taller than 40"]
2. Two arrangements to either side of the altar steps
3. Low (no higher than 12 inches) arrangements on the marble rail at the front of the sanctuary.

Because of the vastness of the area, larger flower arrangements work better than smaller delicate ones.

Flowers may be placed in the sanctuary before the 5:15 pm Mass on Friday for weddings in the evening and before the 3:00 pm Mass on Saturday for weddings that evening. For 1:00pm Saturday weddings, flowers may be placed any time in the morning that does not conflict with other liturgies (such as the regular 11:30 am Mass). **CAUTION:** The altar and sanctuary areas are alarmed, please do not enter these areas without first checking in with the sacristan.

During the Advent, Christmas and Easter Seasons flowers may be used to enhance what is already in place but you may not, under any circumstances move anything that is part of the regular worship environment. Please consult with the Cathedral Sacristan regarding floral arrangements to be used in these seasons.

Aisle candles and decorations other than pew ribbons are not permitted. Pew ribbons must be supplied by the Cathedral because of the difficulty of attaching them to the pews and our restriction about attaching anything to the pews.

Aisle runners may not be used because of slippage on marble floors.

The use of the "Unity Candle" is not permitted as part of the wedding liturgy.

Florists may not bring candelabra into the cathedral for decorative purposes. Only the cathedral's own candelabra may be rented for this purpose.

The Cathedral staff is happy to assist you in any way possible, especially in the placement of flowers. For any additional information, please contact the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator.

Thank you, in advance for your cooperation and we look forward to your presence and ministry at the Cathedral Basilica.

Guidelines for Photographers

(To be given to Photographer when hired)

Having the beautiful and well composed pictures is an important concern for every couple as they plan their wedding. The Cathedral Staff will make every effort to assist the photographer, in meeting the wishes of the couple. Our primary concern is the creation of a prayerful atmosphere for the celebration of a sacrament. To help us maintain the dignity and solemnity of weddings at the Cathedral, we ask that you follow these minimal guidelines:

1. Flash or extra lighting is not permitted during the ceremony; while we know that our lighting is not the best, photographers must use available light.
2. The photographer may not position him/herself at the head of the center aisle to photograph the wedding party coming down the aisle. These photos should be taken from the last occupied pew (from behind the congregation).
3. The photographer must not enter the sanctuary at any time during the ceremony. (i.e., if you “step up” into an area you are in the “sanctuary”).
4. The photographer is responsible for maintaining a respectful atmosphere during the time of picture taking after the ceremony. If those remaining in church for picture taking become loud and boisterous the photographer is asked to quiet them, reminding them of the sacred nature of the space

Posed pictures after the ceremony have become a standard part of weddings. With the Cathedral schedule as busy as it is, it is often difficult to make arrangements for this. If sufficient time exists after the ceremony, pictures will be permitted for approximately thirty (30) minutes. The use of the gardens around the outside of the building as a place for photographs is also permitted. Please arrange this with the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator.

For Friday evening weddings, the Cathedral must close at 8:30pm. For Saturday weddings, we must have the sanctuary cleared by 2:30pm after a 1:00pm wedding and by 8:00pm after a 6:30pm wedding. Every effort will be made to begin the wedding on time ... delays are usually not the fault of the Cathedral Staff or the Presider ... so that the allotted time for posed pictures might be available.

Should you require access to the various balcony and choir loft areas please speak with the Cathedral Sacristan for access.

The Cathedral staff is happy to assist you in any way possible. For any additional information, please contact the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator.

Thank you, in advance for your cooperation and we look forward to your presence and ministry at the Cathedral Basilica.

Guidelines for Videographers

(To be given to Videographer when hired)

While having a video record of the wedding will be important to a couple getting married, what ought to be of greater significance to all is the religious nature and tradition of the liturgy and that it not be diminished by undue distraction or interference and thus, the purpose of these guidelines. Most importantly, we ask that videographers respect the sacred nature of the liturgy and the Cathedral Church in which it is taking place. Videographers should make every effort to maintain the dignity of the atmosphere before, during and after the wedding liturgy.

In order to preserve the significant religious atmosphere of our traditions of the wedding liturgy, we request that videographers adhere strictly to these conditions:

1. Videographers should strive to be as unobtrusive as possible; to be as little distraction as possible to those participating: the minister, the bridal party and the congregation.
2. Video cameras should be stationary. They may not be wheeled around from place to place or carried from place to place during the ceremony.
3. Extra lighting is not permitted to be brought into the cathedral for videoing.
4. Cables or cords may not be placed across aisles. To do so creates safety hazards which are unacceptable.
5. Video cameras may not be placed in the cross aisle in front of the first pew or at the head of the center aisle.
6. Video cameras are not permitted within the sanctuary area (i.e., if you “step up” into an area you are in the “sanctuary”)

The Cathedral staff is happy to assist you in any way possible. For any additional information, please contact the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator.

Thank you, in advance for your cooperation and we look forward to your presence and ministry at the Cathedral Basilica.

Wedding Guidelines Agreement

We have received and thoroughly read the Wedding Guidelines for the Cathedral Basilica of St. Peter in Chains. We agree to abide by the guidelines as set forth for weddings at the cathedral basilica, and take special notice of the sections pertaining to time limitations, photographers/videographers, and florists.

Signature of Bride:

Signature of Groom:

Date Signed:

Wedding Date and Time:

(Detach and return this agreement to the cathedral basilica along with your \$700.00 deposit)