



St. Pius X Community Marriage Guidelines

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, the promise and hope that weddings are for us make their celebration a special and grace-filled time in our lives. The church welcomes its members to celebrate and solemnize their weddings in the context of our prayer as Christians. Indeed. Marriage is so important in Christian life that it is called a *sacrament*.

Great care is taken to see that the prayer for this special moment is reverent, graceful, beautiful, and open to the movement of God's Spirit among us. Our celebrations of the sacraments, marriage included, are always rooted in listening to the scriptures so that we can be nourished and strengthened by God's word. Always, we celebrate the sacraments as a community. We gather our brothers and sisters in faith and ask for their prayerful support. These celebrations are incomplete unless they are filled with song, with prayerful gestures, and with silence in which we hear the voice of God in our lives.

In this spirit, St. Pius X provides the attached guidelines for celebrating weddings in the building that shelter the prayer of our community.

Revised 1/12/2015

I. Marriage is a lifetime work -- one that requires some special training and preparation. For this reason, certain policies and guidelines have been developed on the diocesan and parish levels to facilitate the preparation process:

a) A couple may call the parish office and inquire whether a certain date is available for a wedding. **However, the date can only be made firm after the couple has talked with one of the priests at St. Pius X.**, or if a *priest from outside St. Pius X parish will be performing the wedding celebration.

***An outside priest must call the St. Pius X secretary to confirm they will be the celebrant.**

- A two hundred dollar (\$225.00) check made out payable to St. Pius X Church must be received within seven (7) days to confirm your date. The fees quoted in this document will be used as a stipend to the priest and to reimburse someone to open and close the church for the rehearsal and liturgy itself as well as to cover the cost to the parish.
- **The charge for an “Inactive Parishioner” is \$525 (unless the St. Pius X Parish Pastor approves otherwise).**

If the retaining fee is not received within the allotted time, the date will once again be considered an open date and made available to others.

b) This first contact with the priest should be made as soon as possible. A meeting with the priest is necessary at least six months prior to the wedding.

c) Weddings take place on Friday or Saturday evenings at either 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. or on Saturdays prior to 2:00 p.m.

No one is to be in church or leave anything in the church for the wedding until after the 5:00 p.m. Mass on Saturdays (approximately 6:00 p.m.).

II. At least one of the parties must be a registered member of the St. Pius Community. If you will be residing within our parish boundaries after the wedding, please remember to register at the rectory.

III. All events occurring inside the church are subject to the approval of the parish priest.

This includes music, decorations, servers, florists, photographers, and other matters. The following important areas deserve particular concern:

a) DECORUM – The church is the house of God. A prayerful attitude should be observed at the time of the rehearsal, as well as before, during, and after the ceremony (including picture-taking.) Food and drinks are NOT permitted in the church gathering space, or in the room where the bride waits. **No beer and/or alcoholic beverages are to be brought into the church area.**

b) PHOTOGRAPHERS – You are welcome to bring in a photographer to help provide special memories of your day; however, the photographer is to be reminded that he is a

guest in our church; the church is not to be used as a studio. Photographic equipment should be as unobtrusive as possible. Flash photography and additional lighting are not permitted during the ceremony. All video equipment should be located in the rear or on the side of the church. The photographer is not allowed in the front of church after the Mass or ceremony begins, nor are they to stand in front of the aisle as the couples come down the aisle. Couples are allotted **a half-hour after the ceremony for pictures.**

c) **ATTITUDE** – As stated above, a reverent attitude must prevail. The altar is not to be used as a utility table for cameras or other paraphernalia. No furnishings (i.e. fern stands, chairs, etc.) or seasonal decorations (i.e. Advent Wreath, Christmas Circle, etc.) may be rearranged or removed without the permission of the pastor or sacristan.

d) **MUSIC** – Music should reflect the seriousness and dignity of the marriage sacrament; thus, only sacred or classical music may be used. Secular love songs are not appropriate and may be reserved for the reception if desired. Wedding musicians should be professionals who are comfortable leading all the responses and are well versed in Catholic liturgy. If you have friends or family members whom you would like to have sing or play at your wedding, it is best to reserve one or two special songs for them to perform and allow professional musicians to handle the rest.

The parish music director, Rebecca Slater, 859-802-9344, can supply professional music for your wedding ceremony. She can supply organ, piano, and/or vocal music and can help you choose appropriate and beautiful selections for your wedding. She can also arrange for professional cantors and instrumentalists as desired. Her fee is \$200, which includes singing and/or playing your wedding as needed and one consultation/planning meeting. Any additional rehearsals/meetings may be scheduled for a fee of \$50 per hour.

If you intend to use musicians outside the parish who have not been pre-approved by the parish, an email or telephone consultation is required in order to receive rules and guidelines for outside musicians. For all non-approved musicians, the music director must approve the music selections. The music director can supply a consultation meeting to help plan music for outside musicians for a fee of \$50 per hour.

e) **FLORIST DECORATIONS** – In addition to corsages, boutonnieres and bouquets, you may desire to place floral arrangements in church. Ordinarily, bridal couples order two floral displays for either side of the sanctuary platform. No flowers are to be placed on the altar. The parish can supply a “unity candelabra.” Flowers for the bridal party (boutonnieres, bouquets, corsages, etc.) are to be delivered to the bench in the church foyer, not placed inside the church room. Flowers for the sanctuary are to be placed there by the florist or a family member. If you are ordering special candelabras from the florist, the candles must be dripless. Any wax dripped onto the sanctuary carpet will be professionally removed and charged to the couple. The florist or family member **MUST** remove from the premises all their equipment, boxes, and materials within one-half hour after the wedding, including aisle candles. (This is necessary so that the church is ready for the early morning mass the next day.) Nothing may be affixed to the pews with tape. Only padded clamps may be used to fasten candles or other items to the pews. Any damage done to the finish of the pews will be charged to the couple.

- f) RESPONSIBILITY – It is up to the couple to inform photographers, musicians and florists of these guidelines. The name of your florist and photographer must be included on your liturgy-planning sheet.
- g) RICE – No rice, confetti, birdseed or other “throwables” may be used under any circumstances (safety and janitorial reasons.) For the same reason, no flower petals can be thrown on the aisle.
- h) RUNNER - An aisle runner may be used, but for safety reasons, it is not recommended. Should you insist on using one, our aisle is 75 feet long.
- i) BRIDE & BRIDESMAIDS – They may use the choir room. Please refer to Section III, article (a) regarding regulations for use of this room.
- j) PROCESSION – The wedding procession is part of the Liturgical entrance procession. Neither the aisle nor the procession is meant to be a sort of runway for displaying dresses or participants. It is the beginning of the liturgy and the entrance of the ministers. The procession should have the same tone, reverence, and atmosphere that the liturgy has. For this reason, **THE WEDDING PARTY SHOULD CONSIST OF NO MORE THAN SIX COUPLES!!!**
- k) SMALL CHILDREN – Although they may look cute, children **UNDER THE AGE OF 7 ARE NOT PERMITTED TO TAKE PART IN THE WEDDING PROCESSION.** The unpredictability of young children can take away from the dignity that should be present during the bridal procession.
- l) ONLY COUPLES who are part of the procession are permitted around the altar for the exchange of vows. Extra ushers and junior bridesmaids are to remain in their pews at this time.
- m) THE WEDDING PARTY and all others who are to be in the photographs after the wedding, should return to the sanctuary **IMMEDIATELY** after the recessional for photographs. A receiving line or the “dismissal” of the congregation by the bride and groom is not permitted.
- n) BECAUSE of the penitential nature of the season, we do not allow weddings during the Lenten Season.
- o) THE CUSTOM of dedicating flowers to the Blessed Mother is not very effective visually because of the position of the Holy Family statue. However, if the bride does have a devotion to Our Lady, she may certainly take flowers to her statue.
- p) THE PRIEST presiding at the wedding is responsible for the design of the ceremony and for conducting the rehearsal. So-called “wedding planners” or “wedding coordinators” are not permitted to function during the liturgical part of the wedding.

The wedding party may not use the downstairs hall before the ceremony unless they have rented it for the reception that evening.

We are happy that you want to have a Catholic church wedding. It is always a great experience when the church celebrates the sacraments. It is a true blessing for our parish as well as for the couple.

We hope that these guidelines and policies are of help to you in preparing a religious ceremony in which all of us proclaim our faith in God and our desire to fulfill God's wishes for us.

If you have any questions about these policies and guidelines, please feel free to contact Debbie at the parish office, 859-341-4900, ext. 201, dleuthner@staff.stpiusx.com