

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

Wedding Planning Guide



St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church

551 N. Rush Street
Itasca, Illinois 60143

630-773-1272
stpeteritasca.com

St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church

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WEDDING PLANNING

Our Catholic parish community welcomes those interested in celebrating their wedding at St. Peter the Apostle. In the sacrament of marriage, a man and women pledge their love before God in the presence of the community, vowing to journey together as partners for life. The Church sees in the commitment of marriage a symbol of Christ's love and devotion to his Church. It takes seriously the never-ending covenant that this bond implies.

Following is information regarding the marriage preparation process and wedding planning. To schedule a wedding, call the Parish Center at 630-773-1272. It is advisable for couples to schedule their wedding with the church before booking a reception hall, as not all dates and times may be available at St. Peter's.



REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR ALL COUPLES

A commitment of this nature takes prayer, thought and preparation. Couples who wish to celebrate their marriage at St. Peter the Apostle should contact the parish at least six months in advance of the date they have in mind. The Parish clergy and staff are ready to assist couples through the marriage preparation process, the completion of the required documentation for the Diocese and the planning of the wedding liturgy.

Below is information regarding the marriage preparation process and wedding service planning. St. Peter the Apostle parishioners will receive first priority in scheduling wedding dates. Requests will be accepted from non-parishioners depending on church availability and with the pastor's approval. To schedule a wedding, call the Parish Center at 630-773-1272. It is advisable for couples to schedule their wedding with the church before they book a reception hall, as not all dates and times may be available at the church.

The following required documents must be filed with the Parish Center one month prior to the wedding:

Baptismal and Confirmation Certificate

A baptismal certificate issued no more than six months before the wedding must be submitted by each Catholic party and procured from the church where each was baptized. A record of baptism must be procured by any non-Catholic Christian from their own denomination. A confirmation certificate should also be obtained for both persons.

Affidavits

Two affidavits affirming each party's freedom to be married must be submitted. These affidavits are signed by a witness, normally a family member, in the presence of a priest or deacon from any Catholic church.

Pre-nuptial Questionnaire

A pre-nuptial questionnaire is to be filled out with the priest or deacon who is assisting the couple prepare for their marriage. The Catholic party signs a paper expressing each other's intention to raise their children in the Catholic faith. In interfaith and interdenominational marriages, the Catholic partner promises to have the children of the marriage baptized and reared as Catholics. The non-Catholic partner is informed of the promises made by his/her spouse-to-be.

Marriage License

A marriage license must be obtained from the DuPage County Clerk's Office. Both parties must appear together at the location listed below and present valid identification with proof of age. There is a nominal fee for this license. The license is to be given to the priest, deacon or wedding coordinator the night of rehearsal or dropped off at the Parish Center prior to the wedding.

DuPage County Clerk's Office

421 N. County Farm Road

Wheaton, Illinois 60187

Phone: 630-682-7035

<http://www.dupageco.org/countyclerk/1822/>

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Pre-Cana Retreat

Engaged couples in the Joliet Diocese are required to participate in a formal marriage preparation program. This can be a "Pre-Cana" weekend retreat or a day-long Wedding/Pre-Cana Preparation Workshop. Though not offered at St. Peter the Apostle, parish staff can provide couples with contact numbers for the Diocese of Joliet and the Archdiocese of Chicago to locate upcoming Pre Cana events at a parish and time convenient for both parties. It is strongly advised that couples look into scheduling a preparation program soon after they book their wedding date.

FOCCUS Inventory

Part of the marriage preparation process in the Diocese of Joliet includes the completion of the FOCCUS Inventory (Facilitating Open Couple Communication Understanding and Study). This multiple answer questionnaire surveys engaged couple's opinions regarding issues that arise in marital relationships. One of our parish staff members will administer the FOCCUS inventory. The priest or deacon assisting the couple with their marriage preparation will review and discuss the results with them at a subsequent meeting. Couples should call the Parish Center to make an appointment to take the FOCCUS Inventory. Please allow 60-90 minutes for this survey.

Wedding Liturgy Planning

The clergy and the marriage coordinator will help couples plan the church service. A sacramental wedding is a liturgical event of public worship and requires that the Rite of Christian Marriage is followed. The Sacrament of Marriage is celebrated within a full Mass or a Ceremony consisting of a Liturgy of the Word service with marriage rites. In consultation with the priest or deacon, the couple will determine what form of liturgy will best enable their particular wedding assembly to celebrate to its fullest. Couples have latitude in planning some of the details and personalizing their wedding within the framework of these rites. The planning of the wedding itself is the last thing to be done with the members of the clergy once all the preparation has been completed.

After completion of all the necessary documentation and preparation sessions, it is the responsibility of the clergy to help you continue to assess your readiness for the Sacrament of Matrimony.

According to Church law, the wedding date remains tentative until all necessary documentation has been submitted and all forms have been completed and assurance of readiness concerns have been evaluated and addressed.

ADDITIONAL WEDDING INFORMATION

Weddings can take place on Saturdays at 12 noon or 1:30 pm, and on Friday afternoons and early evenings.

A rehearsal usually takes place the evening prior to the wedding day and will last about an hour. All members of the bridal party and anyone participating in the Mass or ceremony should be present and prompt.

The marriage license and donations for the Church and ministers (including musicians) should be presented to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal if not sooner.

Stewardship

Donations and fees will be requested from you to represent your support of the mission and ministry of the parish. As Christians, let us always remember our gratitude and a desire to make a proper return to the Lord for all the good He has done for us. For everything we have, everything we are, is truly a gift from God and that should make us willing and eager to make a return back to Him and His Church because we love Him. May the Lord bless you abundantly for the love and sacrifice you show Him and His Church.

Sacred Music

All sacred music selections for the Mass or ceremony are arranged through the parish organists. They will help arrange extra musicians such as trumpeters, violinists or vocalists as needed. All instrumental and vocal music must be sacred or classical in nature and reflect the ritual moment.

Prayers and Readings of Scripture

The readings, prayers, and the marriage vows used during the liturgy of Marriage must be taken from the approved liturgical books of the Church. The priest or deacon will guide you on those selections on the final meeting of your preparation. You may choose to provide a service program for the liturgy. All information for the bulletins must be approved by the clergy and wedding coordinator before you bring them to final print.

Photographers, Florists and outside Wedding Consultants

Enclosed in the marriage packet, you will find a copy of the "Guidelines for Wedding Photographers and Video Photographers." These guidelines must be shared with your respective vendors, and they must agree to follow our proper procedures.

****Modest floral arrangements can be purchased to enhance the celebration of worship and to offer praise to God.*** Floral arrangements can be placed in the sanctuary by the aid of the wedding coordinator. Nothing may be moved within the sanctuary without Father's permission. Other details for the ceremony or Mass will be discussed with members of the clergy and the wedding coordinator.

Parish Wedding Coordinator

A parish coordinator will be assigned to your wedding. The coordinator will help lead the wedding rehearsal and any procedures and expectations needed for the Mass or ceremony. Parish wedding coordinators are appointed by the pastor. Outside coordinators that you may hire must communicate and consult with the parish wedding coordinator. All permissions must be approved by the parish wedding coordinator.

Conduct Expectations of Guests and Wedding Party

The Church is a sacred place where the worship of Almighty God takes place. Each Catholic Church has the Body and Blood of Jesus the Christ present and so at all times it is a sacred and holy place. We expect all guests, Catholics and non-Catholics to respect the Church and Her properties. No nonsense or lawlessness will be tolerated, and some may be asked to leave the premises if absolutely necessary. The use of alcohol, tobacco or recreational drugs is prohibited at any time in, on, or near parish property by persons participating in the rehearsal or in the wedding. Anyone under the influence of these things may not participate in the wedding and may be asked to leave the church.

No rice, confetti, or birdseed is permitted to be thrown. The wedding party and all guests are highly encouraged to arrive to church 30 minutes before the ceremony or Mass. It is most important that all weddings begin on time because of time constraints and other parish obligations of worship. Weddings that do not begin on time may have to be rescheduled. Any other concerns should be discussed with the pastor or staff and are subject to approval.

FIRM PROCEDURES FOR WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Saint Peter the Apostle Church is the physical building in which this parish community gathers to worship God. Even though you have been hired by the bride and groom to perform for them a service, the atmosphere of reverence and quiet must be preserved in our church at all times.

The church building is a house of prayer, and not a photography studio. So that you may effectively provide the wedding couple with the service they desire, we present to you the following guidelines to ensure that both you, and this parish, achieve the desired end goal for the couple:

- Pictures before the ceremony are not allowed in the sanctuary area of the church under any circumstances. Only the priest or the wedding coordinator will turn on the lights within the church.
- For the entrance procession, you may position yourself in a pew in the main aisle to take pictures of the wedding party as they enter the church. Do not use a tripod at this time. Naturally, as members of the wedding party pass, you must step aside. Once the wedding liturgy has begun, you may not enter the main aisle.
- Video cameras on a tripod in a fixed position are allowed, provided that position is chosen in accordance with these guidelines. We prefer that videotaping be done from the choir loft/balcony or the west side aisle away from the main sanctuary area. Electrical outlets are located throughout the church. No extension cords are allowed to run across aisles or around, near, or into the Sanctuary.
- During the wedding ceremony, pictures may be taken from the back and side aisles. A Catholic wedding is a sacred time. Please limit unnecessary movement and other distractions, which might interfere with the reverent nature of the celebration. Please do not use the aisle across the front of the church. Do not enter the sanctuary at all for pictures, it proves to be too much of a distraction. The sanctuary is not intended for casual use. At no time are the couples to be instructed to pose for pictures during the ceremony.

At the end of the ceremony, pictures are allowed for a period of twenty minutes if the wedding begins on time, of course. Please remember that a spirit of quiet and reverence is to prevail if the favor of a picture session is to be extended to the wedding party. Please stress this to the wedding party when taking pictures in the church after the wedding ceremony (the extension and duration of this favor is up to the discretion of the Pastor or Deacon and the parish's Wedding Coordinator should the situation arise).

- At no time are the sanctuary furnishings to be moved or used as "props" for wedding pictures. The altar, pulpit and presider chair in the sanctuary are likewise not to be used; flowers, candles, etc. are to remain in place. Picture taking should only be done on the lower section of the sanctuary. Following picture taking inside, pictures outside must be done in a reverent and proper manner. The display of alcohol or champagne bottles as "props" is strictly and absolutely prohibited at any time. This includes the time before, during and after the ceremony on church property.

We sincerely appreciate your cooperation with the guidelines.

Should you have any questions, please contact the parish staff contact, Patti Zubak, by phone at 630/773-1272 (ext. 200) or by email at office@stpeteritasca.com. You may also talk to Patti or another Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal or before the wedding.

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