

MARRIAGE GUIDELINES



St. Patrick Church
280 N. Grant Ave.
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Revised December 2023

CELEBRATING YOUR MARRIAGE AT ST. PATRICK CHURCH

Congratulations on your engagement and your decision to make a lifelong commitment to each other in the vocation of marriage!

The path you have chosen is a high calling. The self-giving love of husband and wife for each other has for its model the highest of all loves: the love of Christ, who lays down his life for his Bride, the Church. As husband and wife, your paths will be joined together as fellow pilgrims on the way to God through all the days of your life.

The family you are preparing to create will, at its best, reflect the Holy Trinity: persons joined in a communion of love that overflows to bring life to others, especially—God

willing—through the gift of children. The family is, in the view of the Church, the fundamental unit of human society, and is itself a domestic church, where children first learn to know and love God, where the family members come together regularly in prayer, and where each member becomes more truly the person they were created to be in their work, their rest, and in laying down their lives for each other each day.

Because your marriage and family will be such a central part of your lives and, God willing, the lives of your children, there are several important steps we ask you to take in your preparation for marriage. Our commitment to you at St. Patrick is to give you the best preparation we can, so that you will have a strong foundation on which to build your marriage and your domestic church, especially in a world where marriage as a lifelong Christian vocation is not always easy, and is not always well supported or understood.

These Marriage Guidelines are designed to make you aware of the important steps involved in your marriage preparation at St. Patrick, and to help you plan a beautiful and reverent wedding, because your wedding day is meant to be a manifestation of your faith in God and the consecration of your lives to each other through a joyful, grace filled, and sacred ceremony. Please read the following information carefully.

GENERAL POLICIES

- **Parish Membership:** Because marriage is typically celebrated in the bride or groom's own parish, one or both members of the engaged couple must normally be registered and active at St. Patrick Parish for at least six months. Alternatively, a parent of one member of the engaged couple must normally be a registered parishioner at St. Patrick's.
- **If You Plan to Have an Outside Priest Celebrate Your Marriage at St. Patrick:** Catholic priests who are not from St. Patrick Parish may preside at a wedding with the pastor's permission. By Ohio law, every officiant at a marriage in Ohio, including an officiant residing in a different state, must be registered by the civil authorities of the State of Ohio to witness marriages. This is easy to do, but must be done in advance. Please check with your assigned priest for more information.
- **If You are Being Prepared for Marriage at a Different Parish and Marrying at St. Patrick:** If due to one or both members of the engaged couple living far from St. Patrick, it is easiest to complete your marriage preparation at another parish near where you live, you will still need to complete the *Wedding Request Form*. After being approved to celebrate your wedding at St. Patrick, you will then need to contact and meet the priest who will prepare you for the prenuptial interview to establish your

freedom to marry. After that, you may confirm the wedding date at St. Patrick to enter your date on the church calendar. When your marriage preparation is complete, the priest who is preparing you should forward your completed file to the priest who will be presiding at your wedding at St. Patrick. You will then meet with the priest presiding the presiding priest to plan your wedding ceremony.

- **Preparation at St. Patrick with Marriage at Another Parish:** If you are being prepared for marriage at St. Patrick but are to be married at another parish, submit the Wedding Request Form with a note that you are planning to be married elsewhere. A St. Patrick parish priest will be assigned to help you with your preparation. He will help coordinate your preparation with any requirements of the parish and diocese where you will be married.
- **Nuptial Mass or Ceremony Outside of Mass:** Typically, the marriage of two Catholics takes place within Nuptial (wedding) Mass. If the bride or the groom is not Catholic, the marriage normally takes place in a ceremony outside of the context of Mass. Please consult your priest for details.
- **Days/Times of Weddings:** Saturday weddings are scheduled between 10:00am and 2:00pm. exclusively. Weddings are permitted on days other than Saturday, depending on the availability of a priest and the church calendar.
- **Rehearsals:** Wedding rehearsals begin at 5:30pm the night before wedding.
- **Cohabiting Couples:** While it is not unusual at the present time for engaged couples to decide to live together before marriage for various reasons, the gift of sexual love is understood by Christ and the Church to belong exclusively to the context of a lifelong commitment of married love, just as a beautiful diamond is most secure and at home when set in a beautiful ring. Part of your preparation for marriage is to understand the goodness and importance of sexual love as the consummation of your marriage vows and its openness to giving new life. If you are already living together, the priest preparing you will encourage you to consider a time of separation and abstinence before your marriage as a way of saving the gift of sexual love for the day you can give this gift to each other as husband and wife.

PART I:

MARRIAGE PREPARATION AT ST. PATRICK CHURCH

- 1. Thoroughly understand St. Patrick's marriage guidelines.
- 2. Complete and return the *Wedding Request Form* to the parish office. Once the request is received and approved, a priest will contact you to schedule your introductory interview. *Note that your wedding date will not be put on the parish calendar until after Step 4, below.*
- 3. Complete your first meeting with presiding priest, at which you and he will introduce yourselves and the priest will give you an overview of your marriage preparation at St. Patrick. At this meeting, the priest will complete the prenuptial interview (PNI) to ensure your freedom to marry in the Church. In some cases, such as if one or both members of the couple had a previous marriage, this situation will need to be resolved in the Church before further wedding plans can proceed. Also, at this meeting, you can discuss the availability of a day and time for your wedding.
- 4. Once your priest approves the wedding date, please contact the parish office directly to arrange to have it entered on the church calendar so that you may proceed with your reception venue selection.
- 5. Contact our parish Director of Music, Kathleen Tully, to be added to the music department calendar (separate from the church calendar) and, if necessary, to schedule additional musicians for the wedding. All music must be approved by our Director of Music, whether using parish or outside musicians.
- 6. As directed by your priest, complete the requirements for engaged couples: (ie: Diocesan Pre-Cana Retreat; Columbus Engaged Encounter, etc.)
- 7. Register for a diocesan-sponsored Natural Family Planning (NFP) course through the Diocesan Family Life Office.
- 8. Couple will meet with the priest to discuss the theology of marriage as understood in the Catholic Church. At the end of this meeting, the *Declaration of Matrimonial Consent* is signed.
- 9. Closer to the time of your wedding, meet with the priest and separately, the Director of Music, to plan your wedding ceremony.
- 10. Additional steps as indicated or required by preparing priest.

Necessary Documents to Provide as Directed by your Preparing Priest:

- 1. Complete and return the *Freedom to Marry Affidavits*.
- 2. Baptismal certificates for each baptized party.
 - For Catholics: *no earlier than 6 months before your wedding*, contact the parish where you were baptized to request a recently-issued baptismal certificate with “notations” of any other sacraments your parish of baptism has recorded for you since your baptism. Even if you still have your original baptismal certificate from when you were a child, you will need to request a recently-issued one, since notations of any other sacraments you have received since baptism (such as Confirmation) are normally forwarded to your parish of baptism.
 - For baptized non-Catholics: if you have a certificate or record of your baptism, make a photocopy and bring it to the priest. If you do not have a baptismal certificate, contact the church where you were baptized to request a certificate or a photocopy of the church’s baptismal register where your name is listed.
- 3. *Certificate of Completion* of marriage preparation course, if required.
- 4. *Certificate of Completion* of Natural Family Planning course.
- 5. *Permission of Proper Pastor* (for Catholic party registered in another parish). The *Permission of Proper Pastor* letter testifies that the engaged person is a registered member of his parish, is a practicing Catholic, and has the pastor’s approval to be married outside of their own parish.
- 6. Obtain your civil marriage license (*within 60 days of wedding*) from an Ohio circuit court and give to priest *by the rehearsal*. *No wedding can be performed unless the marriage license is presented*.

PART II:

WEDDING MUSIC

Your wedding ceremony is a worship service in the presence of God who has called you together in marriage, and is a liturgy similar to the other sacraments celebrated in the Church. Therefore, the music for your wedding should be sacred, beautiful, and prayerful. Musical choices, including the prelude, should fit this liturgical context, and be free from any association with secular contexts. Secular music is more effectively used at the reception where it can be appreciated in the proper venue. These guidelines, which apply to all weddings celebrated at St. Patrick Church, will help you choose music for your church wedding ceremony that is both joyful and reverent.

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Musicians

Upon confirming wedding date with the parish office, please contact our Director of Music, Kathleen Tully, in order to have your date placed on the music department's calendar. This is a separate calendar than the parish.

We encourage you to use St. Patrick's organists, cantors and instrumentalists. We have access to a variety of talented, qualified instrumentalists, and singers who are familiar with our guidelines and ready to provide beautiful and appropriate music for your ceremony. To engage any of these musicians, please contact Kathleen Tully.

Any and all outside musicians, vocalist or cantor *must first be approved* by our Director of Music before being hired or even engaged. Outside musicians, vocalists and cantors must be skilled musicians who are **(a)** familiar with Catholic wedding liturgies, and **(b)** willing to follow the guidelines of St. Patrick Church. Please note engaging outside musicians may require additional fees to St. Patrick (as determined by the Director of Music.)

While there is a microphone as part of our church sound system in the choir loft, professional cantors and instrumentalists will have no difficulty projecting throughout the church even without amplification. Portable sound systems and additional amplification are not permitted.

Please pay musician fees directly to the Director of Music no later than two weeks in advance of your wedding date.

Typical Fees for Wedding Musicians:

Organist	\$175-250
Vocalists (male and female)	\$125-175
Trumpet, Trombone, Oboe, Flute, Violin, etc.	\$175-225 each
Harp	\$300-500
Bagpipe (Pipes may not be played inside of the church.)	<i>fees vary</i>
Groups of Instrumentalists (String trio, Brass Quintet, Quartets, Small Choir)	\$300 and up

Please Note: Additional fees will apply if extra rehearsals are necessary.

Music Selections During the Wedding Liturgy

Our Director of Music, will schedule time to meet with you to plan music selections, and can play samples of musical pieces so that you can hear how they will sound in church. Please consult with her for a list of approved music.

During the wedding liturgy, music may be chosen for the following:

Prelude	A variety of instrumental/vocal music may be used before the ceremony.
Processional	Music begins when guests are seated and the wedding party is lined up: one piece may be enough, especially if the bridal party is small.
Gloria	Sung prayer at the beginning of Mass. [<i>Mass Only</i>]
Responsorial Psalm	This is sung after the First Reading. The text must be the approved version, not a paraphrase.
Gospel Acclamation	This is sung before the reading of the Gospel.
Offertory	Since there is no offertory collection, a brief music selection is recommended. [<i>Mass Only</i>]
Eucharistic Acclamations	The Holy, Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation; Great Amen; and Lamb of God are led by a cantor. Selections may be chosen that will be familiar to your guests. [<i>Mass Only</i>]
Communion	As your guests receive Communion, there are many pieces of music from which to choose that are conducive to Eucharistic meditation. [<i>Mass Only</i>]
The Lord's Prayer	To be spoken or sung by the priest and congregation. Solo versions of <i>The Lord's Prayer</i> may not be used.
Dedication to Mary (Optional)	Either vocal or instrumental music may accompany the presentation of flowers to the Blessed Mother. [<i>Mass Only</i>]
Recessional	Joyous music as you exit the church.

Note on using music in printed wedding programs. If you plan to print wedding programs containing the music or texts for your service, you must obtain copyright clearance for all copyrighted materials. Please allow at least eight weeks for the responses to these requests. The Director of Music can help you obtain these permissions.

PART III:

WEDDING LOGISTICS, POLICIES, AND FEES

Church Offerings, Fees and Deposits

Church Offering	\$750 for the usage of the church proper, to defray costs of maintenance, utilities, and staffing
Security	\$100 for provided security personnel
Wedding/Cleaning Deposit*	\$100 refunded if the church/facility is left clean and of no further maintenance
Total	\$950 to be paid upon entering date on parish calendar
Wedding Preparation <i>Only</i>	\$250 (only for those being prepared at St. Patrick and are being married elsewhere.)
Altar Boy Offering (2)	\$20 cash in an envelope for each Altar Boy Engaged couple give this to the priest at the rehearsal.

- One 2nd floor classroom is included and available for use by the bride and bridal party to dress and/or gather at no additional charge (St. Maximilian Kolbe Room). Wedding party is responsible for taking all trash to the outside dumpster and returning the room to its original condition..
- Aquinas Hall is also provided for the groom and groomsmen to gather before the wedding at no additional charge. Wedding party is responsible for taking all trash to the outside dumpster and returning the room to its original condition.
- Rooms for catered pre-wedding meals are rented as per customary procedure. Please contact the parish business manager to discuss availability of additional facility rooms.
- *Deposit is nonrefundable if wedding is cancelled.

The Wedding Rehearsal

Date and Time: Wedding Rehearsals begin at 5:30pm the night before the wedding.

Who should attend your rehearsal: In addition to the bride and groom and the wedding party, it is helpful if parents and grandparents also attend the rehearsal if they will be involved in the wedding procession. It is also helpful if your readers can be present at the rehearsal so that they can practice their Scripture readings and get used to the church sound system. Any other persons with a special role in the wedding liturgy should also attend if possible, such as ushers and those bringing forward the offertory gifts if your wedding is a Mass.

Wedding Coordinators: The wedding rehearsal is conducted under the supervision of the presiding priest. St. Patrick does not provide a wedding coordinator. If you have engaged a personal wedding coordinator, let the office and the priest celebrant know. Wedding coordinators are responsible for knowing and adhering to the contents of these Marriage Guidelines and protocols.

Rehearsal Length: Rehearsals last approximately one hour. All those attending are asked to PLEASE BE ON TIME! It is very helpful to have matched up your bridesmaids and groomsmen before the rehearsal in order to save time.

Confessions: (Optional) Inform priest in advance, to have confessions post-rehearsal.

Civil Marriage License: Turn in the civil marriage license to the priest at the rehearsal if you have not already done so. **The wedding cannot legally be celebrated unless the marriage license has been presented.**

The Wedding Day

Parking:

Parking is permitted in our parish parking lot. Beyond that, on-street city meters and college parking space are PAY-BY-APP only. If you anticipate a large number of people and would like information on renting and reserving a CSCC lot for your guests, please contact Columbus State Community College directly (contact office for information.)

Bride's Dressing Room:

One 2nd floor classroom may be used by the bride for dressing and as a place for the bridesmaids to gather. Wedding party is responsible for taking all trash to the outside dumpster and returning the room to its original condition.

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Do not leave personal items in public areas. It is suggested that all items are **locked out of sight** in your cars before the wedding begins. Please remember that this is a downtown parish and Saint Patrick Church cannot be held responsible for valuables left unattended either in the parish facilities or in unsecured/secured cars.

Groom and Groomsmen Space: The groom and groomsmen may gather in Aquinas Hall prior to the ceremony. Please note: Aquinas Hall tables and chairs are not to be rearranged.

Food and Drink: The wedding party is permitted to bring in bottled water and light snacks if needed prior to the wedding - no other food or drinks are permissible. Please observe the one hour fast before the reception of Holy Communion. Alcohol is not permitted in any area of the facility.

Flowers:

- Many brides choose to have Sr. Leonarda Zielinska, O.P. help to provide the wedding flowers. If interested, please contact Sister at 614-240-5912 - well in advance of the wedding date.
- Up to two bouquets may be arranged – one on either side – at the High Altar. Additionally, flowers may be placed on our two side altars dedicated to the Blessed Mother and to St. Joseph. Flowers put on any altar for the wedding are to be left where placed and not removed following the ceremony.
- For reasons of safety and aesthetics, dropping flowers or flower petals by flower girls in the church aisle is not permitted.
- If you choose to present flowers at the Blessed Mother’s altar, notify the office or your priest beforehand so that a vase is available.
- The parish office opens at 9:00 a.m. on Saturdays to receive deliveries of flowers or unlock doors for wedding parties.

Pew Decorations:

Bows or decorations must be *tied* to the pews. Tape, tacks, etc. are not permitted. Violations of this guideline will result in the loss of the cleaning deposit.

Aisle Runner:

The attractive hardwood floor of St. Patrick Church is well maintained and kept clean. Because aisle runners are slippery and often wrinkle or tear, they are not permitted.

Unity Candle:

The lighting of a unity candle is not part of the Catholic Rite of Marriage and is, therefore, not included in the ceremony at St. Patrick Church. Candelabras are not permitted.

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Rice, etc.:

Rice, flower petals, confetti, birdseed or rice paper are not permitted anywhere on church property, inside or out. Balloons are not permitted inside the church or the vestibule.

Live-streaming:

Live-streaming your wedding Mass is available at no additional charge. Contact the parish office well in advance of your wedding to request the live-stream be available for those family and friends who are unable to attend. Viewing will be available on our parish website and/or Facebook. Note that the camera used for live-streaming is stationary, and is only focused on the sanctuary and altar and does not include the procession or guests.

Groom and Groomsmen Arrival Times:

Groomsmen or ushers should plan to be in the back of church to seat guests 45 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony. The groom and the best man should plan to be in the church sacristy 30 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony.

Guest Arrival:

Public areas of the parish center will be available for the wedding party and guests prior to the start of the ceremony.

Seating Parents and Wedding Party:

The wedding party is seated in the first row of pews: groomsmen on the right (St. Joseph) side, and bridesmaids on the left (Blessed Mother) side, with immediate family of the bride and groom seated behind them. Parents and grandparents, as guests of honor, may be escorted to their seats by groomsmen or ushers just before the procession of the wedding party. The seating of parents and wedding party is also part of the wedding rehearsal.

Alcohol, Smoking and Vaping:

No unlicensed alcohol is permitted on church property. Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere inside the building complex, including the fountain courtyard. Please inform your wedding party that violations of the alcohol and smoking rule will result in the loss of your deposit.

IMPORTANT REMINDER ABOUT YOUR DEPOSIT REFUND:

All wedding debris and trash must be removed from the church and the facility and taken to the dumpster in the east parking lot. All areas are to be free from wedding debris (boxes, wraps, vases, trash in cans, etc.) There is no maintenance on staff. All areas must be left clean, clear and ready for our next Mass or event. If necessary, designate a responsible friend or family member to oversee the clean up of the church, hall and rooms after your wedding.

Guidelines for Photographers and Videographers.

Please be sure your photographers are familiar with St. Patrick's guidelines, [here](#).

Your wedding photographer/videographer must check in with the priest conducting the wedding before the ceremony takes place to review our guidelines concerning the taking of photographs and the use of video equipment. In keeping with the solemnity of the ceremony and occasion, the following policies are to be observed.

- Flash pictures may not be taken during the wedding ceremony. However, flash pictures are permitted during the procession and recessional.
- Pictures may be taken before or after the ceremony. The photographer and the wedding party must be out of the church by 4:00pm when confessions begin. Please note that if your wedding starts late, you may not have time for photos in the church afterward.
- Video cameras are not permitted in the sanctuary (the area inside the communion rail). One stationary video camera is permitted in either of the side aisles, in a position near one of the confessionals.
- On request, the presiding priest can wear a microphone from the videographer.
- Video cameras and official photographers are permitted in the choir area only with the permission of the Music Director. Tripods must be placed in a position approved by the organist so as not to interfere with the musicians.
- Photographers and videographers are permitted to move discreetly around the church, including in the central aisle, as long as the ceremony is not disrupted. They are not allowed to enter into the sanctuary (the area inside the communion rail). Because the bride and groom face each other in front of the altar with the priest behind them during their exchange of vows and rings, the best spot from which to photograph these moments is the central aisle.
- A separate room for pre-wedding photographs may be reserved if desired, following the usual procedure. Please contact the parish office.

PART IV

CONTACTS, ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, AND FORMS

Fr. Stephen Alcott, O.P., Pastor pastor@stpatrickcolumbus.org	614-240-5914
Fr. Paul Marich, O.P., Parochial Vicar frpaulmarich@stpatrickcolumbus.org	614-240-5917
Fr. Albert Dempsey, O.P., Parochial Vicar fralbert@stpatrickcolumbus.org	614-240-5919
Fr. Michael Donahue, O.P. frmichaeldonahue@stpatrickcolumbus.org	614-240-5925
Parish Office office@stpatrickcolumbus.org	614-240-5910
Kathleen Tully, Director of Music kathleen@stpatrickcolumbus.org	614-224-9522 ext. 152
Reception Hall Rental (Patrick or Aquinas Hall) Contact: Frank Hartge businessmanager@stpatrickcolumbus.org	614-240-5911
Sr. Leonarda Zeilinska, O.P. (Flowers) sisterop@stpatrickcolumbus.org	614-240-5912

MARRIAGE PREPARATION RESOURCES

Please speak to your priest about the marriage preparation requirements for couples marrying here at St. Patrick.

Pre-Cana Marriage Preparation

Contact: Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Office
614-241-2560 / <https://columbuscatholic.org/marriage-family>

Options for required instruction in Natural Family Planning

Contact: Diocesan Marriage and Family Life Office
614-241-2560 / <https://columbuscatholic.org/marriage-family/nfp/nfp-methods-classes>

Civil Marriage License information

Franklin County Marriage License Bureau / 614-525-3894
373 S. High St. – 23rd floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215
Website: <http://probate.franklincountyohio.gov/departments/Marriage.cfm>

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE REQUEST FORM *With Notations*

GROOM – Please SEND this to YOUR church of Baptism. Or, call the baptismal church’s parish office to make the request with certificate being forwarded to the St. Patrick office.

Today’s Date: _____

Name of Church of Baptism: _____

Address: _____

Dear Rev. Pastor,

I am planning to be married in at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Columbus, Ohio on (date)
_____.

I am requesting a baptismal certificate for the marriage investigation. Please include any sacramental notations.

The certificate may be mailed to:

St. Patrick Catholic Church
280 N. Grant Avenue
Columbus, OH 43215

Thank you,

(signed)

BAPTISMAL RECORD INFORMATION:

(My full birth name) _____

Date of Birth: _____

City/State of Birth: _____

Name of Father: _____

Name of Mother (include mother’s maiden name): _____

Date of Baptism (if known): _____

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE REQUEST FORM *With Notations*

BRIDE – Please SEND this to YOUR church of Baptism. Or, call the baptismal church’s parish office to make the request with certificate being forwarded to the St. Patrick office.

Today’s Date: _____

Name of Church of Baptism: _____

Address: _____

Dear Rev. Pastor,

I am planning to be married in at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Columbus, Ohio on (date)
_____.

I am requesting a baptismal certificate for the marriage investigation. Please include any sacramental notations.

The certificate may be mailed to:

St. Patrick Catholic Church
280 N. Grant Avenue
Columbus, OH 43215

Thank you,

(signed)

BAPTISMAL RECORD INFORMATION:

(My full birth name) _____

Date of Birth: _____

City/State of Birth: _____

Name of Father: _____

Name of Mother (include mother’s maiden name): _____

Date of Baptism (if known): _____

Blank

Bride's Information – PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY	
Full Given Name:	
Address:	
Email:	Cell Phone:
Denomination:	Current Parish:
Date of Birth:	

Groom's Information – PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY	
Full Given Name:	
Address:	
Email:	Cell Phone:
Denomination:	Current Parish:
Date of Birth:	

Reason for Celebrating Marriage at St. Patrick Parish	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bride and/or Groom are registered members of St. Patrick. Date of registration:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Bride's parent(s) are registered members of St. Patrick's	
<input type="checkbox"/> Groom's parent(s) are registered members of St. Patrick's	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	

Wedding Date / Celebrant Preference, if any	
First Choice:	Time: (between 10:00am and 2:00pm)
Second Choice:	Time: (between 10:00am and 2:00pm)
Preferred Priest (if applicable):	

Return the completed form to the parish office. A parish priest will contact you to set up an appointment to discuss your request. (Please note that the wedding date and time are not reserved until after the initial meeting with priest and payment of all applicable fees are received in the parish office.)

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO ADHERE TO THESE MARRIAGE GUIDELINES:

BRIDE: _____ **Date:** _____

GROOM: _____ **Date:** _____