

Weddings at Saint Joseph Church, Charlton

Introduction

- Congratulations on your recent engagement. It is our desire to support and assist you as you prepare to make this important commitment in your lives. This booklet is intended to provide you with the basic information pertaining to the preparation and celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony at Saint Joseph Church, Charlton, Massachusetts.

Who can be married at Saint Joseph Church?

- Registered members of the parish may celebrate their wedding at Saint Joseph Church.
- Catholics living within the boundaries of the parish that are not registered members of the parish should speak with the pastor of Saint Joseph Church about registering as members.
- Non-parishioners may also celebrate their wedding at Saint Joseph Church, but they should receive permission from the pastor of their parish.

Who can officiate at weddings at Saint Joseph Church?

- The pastor, the associate pastor, or deacon, or a delegate of the pastor can officiate at weddings at Saint Joseph Church. Permission may be given by the pastor for another priest or deacon to officiate.

Scheduling your wedding

- Weddings should be scheduled approximately one year in advance. Weddings are celebrated on most Saturdays from 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM, and again at 6:00 PM. Other arrangements can be made for weddings on Fridays and Sundays.
- There are times in the Church year when the liturgical season discourages or even prohibits the celebration of weddings. For example, the Season of Lent is a time of penance in the Catholic Church and that spirit colors all the liturgical celebrations from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday.

Wedding Rehearsal

- The wedding rehearsal normally takes place the night before the wedding. If there is a conflict with other scheduled events at the parish, the priest or deacon will make alternative arrangements in consultation with the couple.
- The following people should plan to attend the wedding rehearsal:
 - Bride & Groom
 - Bride's Maids
 - Groom's Men
 - Parents of the Bride & Groom
 - Grandparents of the Bride & Groom
 - Readers
 - Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (optional)
- The wedding couple should bring with them to the rehearsal the marriage license.

Wedding Fees

- The wedding offering for parishioners is \$250.00, which includes \$125.00 for parish compensation, \$50.00 for marriage preparation materials, and a \$75.00 priest stipend.
- The offering for non-parishioners is \$325.00.
- Musician fees are NOT included in the offering.

- A non-refundable security deposit of \$50.00 must be presented at the time of scheduling the wedding in order to cover the cost of marriage preparation materials. The balance is due at the time of the wedding rehearsal, if not before.

Marriage Preparation

- The process of marriage preparation is outlined in the purple folder.
- Marriage preparation should be done at the church where the couple is to be married.

Documents

- The Church requires that certain documents be produced in order to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage. The couple is responsible for obtaining these documents. With the exception of the civil marriage license, these documents must be completed and returned to the priest or deacon preparing the couple for marriage at least two months before the wedding ceremony. The receipt of these documents is the only way that we can be sure that the marriage can be performed in the Catholic Church.
 1. **Baptism Certificate:** Calling or writing the parish of your Baptism can obtain an updated Baptism Certificate. It must be stamped with the seal of the parish and dated within six months of the wedding. If one of the parties involved has been baptized but is not Catholic, a certificate of baptism must also be obtained.
 2. **Declaration of Nullity:** If there was a previous Sacramental Marriage, a declaration of nullity must be obtained.
 3. **Pastor's Letter of Permission:** Non-parishioners must obtain a letter giving the permission of their pastor for the wedding to take place at Saint Joseph Church.
 4. **Civil Marriage License:** A civil marriage license must be obtained in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts within 60 days of the marriage and must be brought to the rehearsal.

Wedding Music Guidelines

- Arrangements for music for the wedding should be made with Marge Jalbert. She can be reached at 508-248-5059.

Photography/Videography

- Photographers and videographers are welcome to take pictures and film during the wedding ceremony. We ask that they do NOT enter the sanctuary area of the church.

Wedding Flowers

- Typical floral arrangements may be placed throughout the sanctuary (never atop the altar table itself). Please note, at different times in the liturgical year the sanctuary is already decorated with various floral displays, plants, trees, and banners. If your wedding falls during one of these times, it may not be possible to remove the existing decorations. Please consult with the priest or deacon before ordering any additional floral arrangements.
- Decorations for the pews – namely ribbons or flowers may be attached to the pews with the plastic clips provided by your florist. It is never permissible to tape anything to the wood surface of the pews.
- The throwing, tossing, or placing of confetti or birdseed or rice either inside or outside of the church is not permitted. The blowing of bubbles is also not permitted. Flower petals may be used but they must be picked up by the wedding party at the conclusion of the ceremony.
- If an aisle runner is used, it must be removed by the wedding party at the conclusion of the ceremony.