

**WEDDING PREPARATION CHECKLIST**  
**St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church**  
**Grand Coteau, Louisiana**

*The following checklist will help you plan your wedding at St. Charles Borromeo*

- 1) \_\_\_ Read St. Charles Borromeo's *Parish Wedding Guidelines* and fill out the *Application to Reserve Church for Wedding*.
- 2) \_\_\_ Fill out *Prenuptial Inquiry* with priest/deacon.
- 3) \_\_\_ Schedule the wedding and rehearsal dates:
- 4) \_\_\_ Pay the parish secretary to reserve the Church for the wedding and rehearsal.
- 5) \_\_\_ Complete the *Prepare & Enrich* online questionnaire as soon as possible and no later than one month after the initial meeting with priest or deacon. (see Diocese of Lafayette website: [www.diolaf.org](http://www.diolaf.org)).
- 6) \_\_\_ Complete a formal diocesan marriage preparation course at least 2 months prior to wedding date, if possible. (See Diocese of Lafayette website, Office of Marriage and Family Life: [www.diolaf.org/marriage](http://www.diolaf.org/marriage). Register 4 months in advance!). (Present *Certificate of Participation* to the priest or deacon doing your preparation).
- 7) Actively participate in the Sacramental life of the Church: Eucharist and Confession.
- 8) \_\_\_ Provide the priest/deacon who is handling the marriage preparation with the following *certified* documents:
  - a. \_\_\_ Baptismal certificates (annotated and dated no more than 6 months prior to the wedding. These can be obtained from the Church where you were baptized).
  - b. \_\_\_ (If previously married): Civil marriage certificate, divorce decree, ecclesiastical decree of invalidity, prior spouse's death certificate or published obituary from any previous marriages.
- 9) \_\_\_ If bride is registered at another parish, provide a letter indicating her pastor's permission to have the wedding at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church. If bride is not Catholic, the pastor of the groom should provide the letter of permission.
- 10) \_\_\_ Provide names of two (2) witnesses for the wedding to the priest/deacon.
- 11) \_\_\_ Complete the liturgy-planning sheet with the aid and approval of the priest, the music director, and/or other pastoral ministers.

- 12) \_\_\_ Contact St. Charles' wedding music minister, Ms. Stephanie James to coordinate the music for your wedding. Phone: (337) 277-1962; Email: [Stephaniesheriejames@gmail.com](mailto:Stephaniesheriejames@gmail.com)
- 13) \_\_\_ Obtain a civil marriage license (dated no more than 30 dates before the Wedding) and bring it to the parish office one week prior to the wedding date.
- 14) \_\_\_ Consider receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) before the wedding. Confession will be offered after the wedding rehearsal.

**WEDDING GUIDELINES**  
**ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
**Grand Coteau, Louisiana 70541**  
**337-662-5279**

*The following policies are intended to help the wedding ceremony go smoothly,  
so that it will be a joyful and prayerful day for the couple.*

**Diocesan Policies**

Couples must begin the marriage preparation process by meeting with a priest or deacon of St. Charles Borromeo Parish at least **six (6) months** before the proposed date of the wedding.

**Place of Marriage**

Couples are to marry in either the parish of the bride or the parish of the groom. If they are going to marry elsewhere, their proper pastors are to be asked to give permission (c.1115).

**Wedding Times**

Weddings are scheduled only at the following times:

**Fridays** at 6:00PM, 6:30PM

**Saturdays** at 11:00 AM, 1:30PM, 6:00PM, 6:30PM

\* Weddings are not held at St. Charles during the season of Lent.

**Reservation of the Church**

The Pastor of St. Charles will confirm and reserve the date of the wedding and the rehearsal date only when he has approved and signed the *Application to Reserve the Church for a Wedding* form and the couple submits full payment for the wedding.

If a dispensation from an impediment to marry is required from the Holy See or the diocesan tribunal, a wedding date cannot be scheduled, even tentatively, until the dispensation is obtained.

**Fees for Use of Church and Marriage Preparation**

If either the future bride or groom is an “active” parishioner, the fee for a wedding and the marriage preparation is \$300.00.

- “Active” is determined by Mass attendance as recorded by offertory envelopes (even if nothing is actually donated) for at least 26 weeks of the year.

For “inactive” couples or those residing outside St. Charles boundaries, the fee for use of the Church is \$850.

\* Additional stipends apply for “inactive” parishioners if they request a priest or deacon of St. Charles Borromeo Church to do the marriage preparation (\$300) or perform the ceremony (\$100).

A stipend of \$100 payable to St. Charles Church’s Wedding Sacristan(s) is required for all weddings.

A stipend of \$75.00 payable to the St. Charles Wedding Music Minister for coordinating and approving the music is required for all weddings. The fee is \$ \$250.00 if she also performs the music.

The wedding is considered “booked” or confirmed when the **entire fee** for the wedding is paid.

### **Liturgical Guidelines**

The attire of the wedding party, especially the bride’s dress and the bridesmaids’ dresses, should reflect the dignity and sacredness of the Sacrament of Marriage.

There is no limit on the number of attendants for the wedding ceremony, but because of limited space in the sanctuary, **only the bride, groom, and two official witnesses may stand in the sanctuary during the ceremony.**

An adult must accompany children younger than 6 years old when they participate in the entrance procession.

### **Time Frame for Use of the Church**

The Church is available for **1 hour to conduct the wedding rehearsal.**

The reconciliation room is available to the bride for one hour before the scheduled time of the wedding.

The wedding party should arrive no earlier than 30 minutes before the scheduled time unless they are taking pictures outside.

Wedding parties may remain in the Church for 20 minutes after the wedding ceremony to take pictures.

Please designate someone to stay after the wedding to tidy up both the church and the bride’s room. Dispose of all trash in the large bin located in the gravel parking lot.

### **Wedding Coordinators**

The **Church’s Wedding Sacristan(s)** must be present for the rehearsal and the wedding to assist the wedding party.

If a contracted Wedding Coordinator is engaged as well, he/she will be expected to follow the wedding policies and guidelines of St. Charles Borromeo Church. Any questions regarding the ceremony will be addressed by the Church's Wedding Sacristan. The contracted Wedding Coordinator can phone the Church office for any questions.

### **Wedding Music**

All couples must meet (either virtually or in person) with our Wedding Music Minister, Ms. Stephanie James to discuss and select music for your wedding.

Ms. James must approve of all music to be performed before, during, and/or after your wedding ceremony in the Church, as well as approve of all musicians and/or vocalists. Please, do not make prior commitments regarding musicians, vocalists, or choice of music until you have consulted with Ms. James.

Please contact Ms. James as soon as your *Wedding Application* has been approved and the Wedding date reserved. (phone # (337) 277-1962; email: [Stephaniesheriejames@gmail.com](mailto:Stephaniesheriejames@gmail.com); website: [www.Stephaniesheriejames.Com](http://www.Stephaniesheriejames.Com)).

### **Decorations**

**No part of the Church décor (banners, plants, etc.) may be changed or removed**, especially during the Advent/Christmas season.

#### **The following are not permitted at the wedding ceremony:**

- Unity candles.
- Candles or candelabras brought in from outside of the Church.
- Runners for the main aisle.
- Strollers, wagons, etc. during the procession.
- Archways.
- Tape and tacks, especially on the pews. Only clip-on hooks or ribbon ties are permitted.
- Flowers on the altar. Flowers may be placed in front of the altar or on the side altars.
- Throwing of rice, birdseed, flowers, or any other item either inside or outside the Church.
- Food and drink inside the Church.

If a florist is contracted, the florist must check with the Church's Wedding Sacristan before any final decisions are made regarding flower arrangement.

### **Photography**

The following guidelines must be observed:

- **Flashes and spotlights are not permitted during the ceremony.**
- **Photographers and videographers are not permitted in the sanctuary of the Church.**
- The wedding party may engage the services of only one still photographer and/or only one videographer
- Lights will be turned on in the Church 30 minutes before the wedding begins.

- Photographers should not take group pictures inside the Church before the wedding begins.
- The wedding party may remain after the wedding for group pictures for a maximum of 20 minutes.
- Photographers may not stop persons during the procession to take pictures.

### **Alcohol**

Use of alcoholic beverages before the rehearsal or the wedding is strictly forbidden. As free consent makes a marriage, one jeopardizes the validity of the marriage if he or she is *under the influence*.

### **Cohabitation**

Cohabitation, according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church is the status of unmarried couples living together as sexual partners and sharing a household. The Church teaches this is gravely contrary to the dignity of the person and of human sexuality which is naturally ordered to the good of married spouses and to the generation and education of children.

It is important that this issue be addressed early-on in the marriage preparation process and that the couple be challenged to separate or, at least, to stay chaste until their marriage. (It may not be advisable to separate, for instance, if the care of children is involved).

Couples should reflect on this challenge and prayerfully discern what is best for their relationship in terms of preparing for a sacramental marriage within the Catholic Church. (See, Marriage Preparation Guidelines, Province of New Orleans, Pastoral Guidelines VI, A).

### **Accountability**

The bride and groom will be held responsible for the actions and behavior of all the guests, florists, musicians, and photographers.

### **Marriage License**

The marriage license should be brought to the parish office one week prior to the wedding date or brought to the rehearsal (at the very latest)!

*APPLICATION TO RESERVE ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO CHURCH  
FOR A WEDDING  
Grand Coteau, Louisiana 70541  
337-662-5279*

We attest that we have read and understood the policies and guidelines for the celebration of weddings at St. Charles Borromeo Church, and that we will abide by them.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bride

\_\_\_\_\_  
Groom

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*\*\*\*\*

*The priest or deacon preparing you for marriage will fill out what is below.*

I have met with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
and have begun the marriage preparation program with them.

They have requested use of St. Charles Borromeo Church for their wedding as scheduled below:

Wedding date: \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding time: \_\_\_\_\_

This will be a \_\_\_\_ wedding Mass or \_\_\_\_ wedding ceremony only.

Weddings are held at St. Charles only at the following times:

**Fridays** at 6:00PM or 6:30PM

**Saturdays** at 11:00 AM, 1:30PM, 6:00PM or 6:30PM

\* Weddings are not held at St. Charles during the season of **Lent**.

Rehearsal date: \_\_\_\_\_ Rehearsal time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsals are held at St. Charles only at the following times:

**Thursdays** at 6:00PM, 6:30PM or **Fridays** at 6:00PM, 6:30PM

Name of Priest/Deacon preparing the couple: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*(over)*

*(Items below are for the St. Charles Borromeo Church staff.)*

Fee for this wedding is: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Entire fee received

on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

\$100 fee for St. Charles Borromeo Church's Wedding Sacristan received

on \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.

I approve the wedding listed above:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor, St. Charles Borromeo Church

The wedding date will be reserved only after the Pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Church has signed this form  
and the entire wedding fee has been received.



*REQUEST for DELEGATION to WITNESS MARRIAGE VOWS*  
*ST. CHARLES BORROMEO CATHOLIC CHURCH*  
*Grand Coteau, Louisiana 70541*  
*337-662-5279*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of priest/deacon requesting delegation: \_\_\_\_\_

Church address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I request delegation to witness the vows of:

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_ Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding will be held at \_\_\_\_\_ St. Charles Church or \_\_\_\_\_ Academy of the Sacred Heart

This will be a \_\_\_\_\_ wedding Mass or \_\_\_\_\_ wedding ceremony outside of Mass

Weddings are held at St. Charles only at the following times:

**Fridays** at 6:00PM or 6:30PM

**Saturdays** at 11:00 AM, 1:00PM, 6:00PM or 6:30PM

\* Weddings are not held at St. Charles during the season of **Lent**.

Rehearsal date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsals are held at St. Charles only at the following times:

**Thursdays** at 6:00PM, 6:30PM or **Fridays** at 6:00PM, 6:30PM

I accept that it is my responsibility to deliver the completed paper work of this marriage to the rectory office of St. Charles Borromeo Church. I also will send the fully signed marriage license back to the civil authority.

Signature of priest/deacon requesting delegation:

\_\_\_\_\_

Delegation granted by: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_