

# **Guidelines For Celebrating Marriage At St. Francis of Assisi Church**

386 Buttles Avenue, Columbus OH 43215

614.299.5781

[www.sfacolumbus.org](http://www.sfacolumbus.org)

*(revised AUGUST 2021)*

## **STAFF CONTACTS**

Church Office - (614) 299-5781

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Office

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Melissa Hornik – Wedding Coordinator \*\*\*Please stay on a single email thread!!!!

(614) 325-5945

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Kathy Dancey – RCIA Coordinator

(614) 421-7652

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Marriage & Family Life Office (Diocese of Columbus)

(614) 241-2560

## INTRODUCTION

Your wedding day is one of the most important days in your life. On this day you make a solemn, life-long promise, a covenant with God and with each other, witnessed by God's people, your relatives and friends. Your wedding, therefore, is special to others, too. It affects both Church and civil communities.

We at St. Francis of Assisi Parish want your wedding to be sacred, beautiful and memorable. Our wedding preparation program has been designed to assist you in planning and preparing your Wedding Mass or Ceremony in our parish church. These guidelines are your first source of information for the planning of your wedding. Please read and follow precisely. All documents requested, and paperwork to be filed, are to be submitted to the pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish. If you have any questions, call the parish at 614.299.5781. Realizing that sometimes exceptions may be necessary, all requests must be discussed with, and approved by, the Pastor.

May our Lord bless you in your decision to be married at St. Francis of Assisi Parish.

## INITIAL PLANNING

### **WHO MAY BE MARRIED AT ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CHURCH?**

**Members of the Parish:** Church law guarantees members of the parish the right to marry in their proper parish church. Traditionally, the marriage takes place in the parish church of the Catholic party. Otherwise, written permission is required from the pastor of the Catholic party to be married in any other church. **Ideally, couples will meet with the pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish at least six (6) months prior to the wedding date.**

To be considered a member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, the Catholic party/parties must have been registered and have been active and contributing in the parish for **three (3) months prior to marriage.**

**Non-Members:** Weddings of persons who are not members of St. Francis of Assisi Parish are also available. **Couples must meet with the pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish at least six (6) months prior to the wedding date.**

The Catholic party/parties must be an active member of a parish and obtain a letter of permission to be married at St. Francis of Assisi Church.

**Visiting Clergy**, who are licensed by the State of Ohio and having faculties from the Bishop of Columbus, may preside over weddings at St. Francis of Assisi Church, but must assume responsibility for all necessary paperwork and pre-marital interviews and counseling for the couple, unless arrangements are made with the presider. Delegations from the presider will also be necessary.

The first step is to have your presider write a letter to St. Francis requesting permission to preside over your ceremony. The presider should also send along his credentials.

**Confirmation:** The Catholic party/parties wishing to be married at St. Francis of Assisi Church must have received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

### FEES

The total fee is \$1,550.00. A fee of \$1,000 is charged for use of the church for both members and non-members. \$1,000 is due to reserve the date and the check should be made out to St. Francis of Assisi Church. **The remaining amounts are due no later than two (2) weeks before the wedding.** For accounting and tax purposes, the remaining fees should be paid with four (4) separate checks in the following manner:

Amount	Title	Payable to:
\$250	Presider	
\$200	Organist	
\$100	Cantor	

Deliver or send the final checks to the church office (386 Buttles Ave., Columbus OH 43215), ATTN: Weddings. They will be given to the appropriate person by the office. Please put your wedding date and both of your last names on the memo line.

**\*\*\*Once inside the 10 month window the deposit becomes non-refundable.**

### SCHEDULING

**RESERVATION OF DATE & TIME FOR WEDDING & REHEARSAL: No date is considered “locked in” until a \$1,000.00 deposit is received by the parish office.** Weddings are typically scheduled on Saturdays. We offer a 1:30pm and 4:30pm time slot. We also can accommodate weekday weddings as well. We have daily mass at 6pm which means the latest a weekday wedding could be held would be 4:30pm. On Fridays we have confession at 5:30pm, which means 4pm would be the latest a wedding could be held. In addition, due to our small staff, weddings on the following holiday weekends must be approved:

- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (4th of July)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving Weekend (fourth Thursday in November)
- Christmas Day (Saturday closest to December 25)
- New Year’s Day (Saturday closest to January 1)
- Easter (the Saturday before Easter)
- Pasta Dinner (Saturday before Ash Wednesday)

**REHEARSAL:** The rehearsal can be held at 4:30pm or 6:30 pm the Friday before the wedding. If you schedule the 6:30 rehearsal, it follows a 6 pm mass. When they arrive to the church, the wedding party is asked to be respectful and quiet until the mass is finished. When two weddings are booked for the following day, first to book gets first choice of rehearsal time.

**WEDDING WORKSHOP:** St. Francis of Assisi Church has a Wedding Coordinator who will assist all couples with wedding preparations, whether parishioners or non-parishioners. Contact the Wedding Coordinator to register for the workshop.

**APPOINTMENTS WITH PRIEST:** The wedding couple should make an appointment with the priest within six (6) months before their anticipated wedding date for the Initial Interview. It is advisable to contact the priest to begin preparations as early as possible. The first meeting is for the completion of the required paperwork. Couples must also schedule an appointment to meet with the priest one (1) month before the wedding to go over the final details of the ceremony. **Couples must bring a copy of their reading selections and their written intercessions to this meeting.**

### **DOCUMENTS/OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

All paperwork must be complete and delivered to the church office two (2) months prior to the wedding date.

**AGREEMENT FOR USE OF THE CHURCH:** The agreement included with the Wedding Guidelines must be filled out and signed by both parties. There will be a \$50 cleanup fee charged with there is disarray or debris left in the church, hall or on the grounds. There will be a \$100 fee charged if use of alcohol is discovered.

**BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE:** A certified copy of the baptismal certificate of the Catholic party/parties is required and must be brought or mailed to the office. The Catholic party must contact the parish of his/her baptism and request a copy of the baptismal certificate, stamped with the parish seal. **In order to be as current as possible, this record must be issued and dated within six (6) months of the wedding date.** The baptismal certificate, photocopy, or letter testifying to the Baptism is also required for parties not Catholic but baptized in another faith.

**FOCCUS INVENTORY:** Couples are required to take the FOCCUS Inventory, which will be administered by the wedding coordinator or can be taken online. The questionnaire is intended to highlight any topics a couple has not discussed fully as they prepare to be married. Once completed and scored by the wedding coordinator, couples must schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss the results.

**MARRIAGE EDUCATION WORKSHOP:** Couples are required to attend one of the following: "Diocesan Marriage Prep Two-Day Program," or "Engaged Encounter Weekend Program." We will also accept the online course from catholicmarriageprep.com. Once this is completed, we will require the original completion certificate for the wedding file. Our parish no longer requires the Natural Family Planning (NFP) portion of the program.

**INTERFAITH MARRIAGE:** If this will be an interfaith marriage, please let the priest or deacon know at the time of the initial meeting. The priest or deacon must complete a Dispensation form before presiding at the wedding. This form must be sent to the local Diocese for approval.

**SECOND MARRIAGE:** If this is a second marriage, we will need the Civil Decree of Divorce and the original copy of the Church Annulment. **Contact the pastor before going forward with any plans.** It is necessary to have any previous marriage annulled before proceeding with a second marriage. **No wedding date can be scheduled until an annulment has been granted.** If either party was married and widowed, we require a copy of the death certificate.

**MARRIAGE LICENSE:** The civil marriage license is to be presented to the officiating clergy or wedding consultant at the rehearsal or the rehearsal cannot proceed. The marriage license is valid for 60 days. If the marriage is not performed within that time, a new license must be secured.

Applications for license are made under oath by both parties to the Probate Court of the county in which the couple resides. Each party must have photo ID. In Franklin County contact:

Franklin County Probate Court, Marriage License Department

373 South High Street, 23rd Floor, Columbus, OH 43215

Hours: 8:00am-4:30pm, Monday-Friday Phone:614.525.3898

To expedite the process, start your application online at [www.franklincountyohio.gov/probate](http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/probate). After you are married the church will mail in the certificate and a **marriage abstract** will be issued by the court. It is your responsibility to obtain the abstract by going to the court in person or ordering it online from [franklincountyohio.gov](http://franklincountyohio.gov).

### **THE WEDDING LITURGY**

**GENERAL NORMS:** The model for the Nuptial Mass and the Marriage outside Mass is the Sunday liturgy. Therefore, the liturgy should be carried out with the dignity befitting the liturgical tradition of the Catholic Church and must adhere to liturgical norms and directives.

The presiding priest or deacon must always be informed about other Catholic clergy who plan to co-celebrate the wedding. Non-Catholic clergy who have a relationship with the bride and groom are also welcome to participate. Please let the wedding coordinator or priest know if involving other clergy in the ceremony.

All readings for the wedding must be from the Sacred Scriptures, especially those designated for weddings in the Lectionary for Mass. **Readings other than those from the Sacred Scriptures may not be used.**

Both parties must be Catholic for there to be a Mass. Readings for nuptial Masses after 4:00 p.m. – the Gospel and at least one of the two other readings must be from the liturgy of the Sunday of that weekend. Couples who want to choose all three scripture readings should choose an earlier time slot. This rule does not apply to ceremonies without a Mass.

**ALTAR SERVERS/EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS:** If the wedding involves a Mass, we do not require altar servers. However, the couple will need to choose Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist; -3 depending on the number of people expected to receive communion. These individuals don't have to be commissioned but must be Catholic. Friends and relatives of the couple may participate in the liturgy as Lectors or Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, provided they have prior experience.

**It is our policy at St. Francis of Assisi Parish that the bride and groom, in collaboration with the presider and staff, make all the decisions regarding the ceremony, including readings and music.**

### **OTHER LITURGICAL DETAILS**

The church is unlocked two (2) hours prior to the wedding. Other arrangements must be made to get into the church earlier.

**RECEIVING LINE:** There is not adequate space inside our small church to permit receiving lines after the wedding. Weather and time permitting, these may be held outside the church and off of the stairs.

**FLOWER PETALS/RICE/ETC.:** The throwing of flowers, flower petals, rice, birdseed or other projectiles is not permitted anywhere within the church. Only organic (natural) flower petals, birdseed, lavender, etc., may be used outside the church.

**AISLE RUNNER:** Aisle runners are not permitted because of the hardwood floor.

**UNITY CANDLE:** No unity candle is involved in the wedding ceremony.

**GUEST BOOK:** The guest book should be provided to guests at the reception.

**ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:** No alcoholic beverages are permitted on the church property (including the parking lot), or in the church itself, or in the church hall (basement), prior to or after the wedding. Food and non-alcoholic beverages may not be brought into the church, but may be made available in the hall below the church. A \$50 fee will be charged if there is disarray or debris left in the church, hall or on the grounds. **A \$100 fee will be charged if any use of alcohol is discovered.**

**SMOKING:** Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the church.

**DRESSING ROOM:** Brides and bridesmaids may use the designated "Ocean Room" below the church for dressing at the church. Due to security risks, all members of the bridal party are asked to place any personal possessions in secure places outside the church. **St. Francis of Assisi Church is not responsible for lost or stolen articles.**

**DECORATIONS:** Furniture, candelabras, microphones and other decorations in the church must be left in place. Florists are not to remove altar furnishings or existing sanctuary arrangements to accommodate floral arrangements. Flowers or other decorations may not be placed on the altar of sacrifice. Floral arrangements can be placed flanking the altar, but cannot be taller than the altar. Floral arches or extravagant arrangements are not permitted. Flowers and bows may be placed on the pews but cannot be attached with tape or tacks. Decorations may not be attached to church furnishings by tacks, nails, pins, adhesives or wire, in order to avoid any damage to the finish of wood. There can be no ribbon or fabric across the pews to block access from the aisle. Aisle runners are also not permitted. There are 11 pews on either side of the main aisle of the church, along with 3 pews on each side of the altar. There is also a row of chairs on each side of the altar where the wedding party sits during the ceremony. **Total seating capacity is 225 (and this is a limit provided by fire code and safety inspectors).**

Flowers and decorations for the wedding are the responsibility of the couple. Avoid unpleasant incidents the day of the wedding by acquainting the florist with these guidelines (a separate page is provided at the end of this document to be shared with florist). Florists are expected to work in conjunction with the Wedding Coordinator to plan the placement of all flowers and decorations.

**FLOWERS:** It is the responsibility of the couple to make sure the florist is aware of the guidelines (a separate page is provided at the end of this document). It is customary to leave the flowers used for the wedding in the sanctuary after the weddings.

**PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY:** It is the responsibility of the couple to make the photographer, videographer aware of these guidelines (a separate page is provided at the end of this document to be shared with those professionals). Photographers may not use a flash after the entrance processional. They also may not move around in the pews or in guests' sightline during the ceremony. They are allowed to take pictures from the choir loft and from the upper corners of the church.

Video cameras are allowed in the choir loft. We do not have a live audio feed system for videographers to plug their equipment in to. **Flash photography may be used during the processional and recessional but are NOT permitted at any time during the ceremony.**

## **MUSIC**

In the Catholic tradition, the marriage of two individuals is celebrated as a Sacrament, therefore, the religious nature of the wedding ceremony must be carefully preserved. All music must be approved by the parish Music Director. Music of a non-liturgical or non-religious nature may not be used before, during, or after weddings at St. Francis of Assisi Church.

As a rule, each wedding liturgy should have an organist and cantor. These will typically be musicians who are active and employed by St. Francis of Assisi Parish. Other musicians may be invited only with the pre-approval of the parish Music Director. A separate music rehearsal may be required and additional fees may be assessed.

Couples are required to meet with the Music Director at least 3 months prior to the wedding. Only the couple is permitted to attend this meeting. **Couples should contact Paula Vasey for an appointment at [musicdirector@sfacolumbus.org](mailto:musicdirector@sfacolumbus.org) or 614-323-3537.**

It is required that you supply the music and order of the wedding liturgy for your guests in a worship aid so that they can participate more fully in your celebration. The Music Director will assist in this process by providing a liturgically appropriate template for you to use once your music choices have been confirmed. The parish copier is not available for photocopying your worship aid or any music for your ceremony. Once approved, it will be the responsibility of the couple to print & provide the worship aids for their ceremony.

**St Francis of Assisi Parish**  
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**(614) 299-5781**  
**Page for Florist / Decorator**

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It is customary to leave the flowers used for the wedding in the sanctuary after the weddings.

Regarding weddings during the Lenten season of preparation (6 weeks prior to Easter) ... because this is a time of reflection, the Catholic Church asks for little or no flowers as decoration in the church.

With any questions, call the Wedding Coordinator or the church office at 614-299-5781.



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**Page for Photographer / Videographer**

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Video cameras are allowed in the choir loft. We do not have a live audio feed system for videographers to plug their equipment in to. **Flash photography and spotlights are not permitted at any time during the ceremony.**

If photographers / videographers would like to view the church prior to the ceremony, they may check with the parish office to schedule a time. Parish office hours are Monday – Friday, from 10 am – 3 pm, by appointment. Please call 614.299.5781 to schedule a time, or check with the wedding coordinator.

ITEM	CONTACT	TIME FRAME	DONE
Book Date, Attend Wedding Workshop, Pay Deposit	Melissa Hornik	At least 6 months before wedding date	
Email coordinator full names and email addresses for link to FOCCUS	Melisa Hornik	At least 6 months Before wedding date	
Meet with Priest for Initial Interview – complete all paperwork	Father Fritzner Valcin	Approximately 6 months before wedding date	
Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter or online Catholicmarriageprep.com	Marriage & Family Life Office at Columbus Diocese	At least 4 months before wedding date	
FOCCUS Follow-up Meeting CONFIRM TIMES FOR CEREMONY AND REHEARSAL	Melissa Hornik	6 months before wedding date	
Plan Music with Music Director Make Payments to Cantor (\$100) and Organist (\$200)	Paula Vasey	3-4 months before wedding date	
Complete Wedding File (baptismal certificates, Pre-Cana certificate, dispensations, parish registration, letter of permission, etc.)	Theresa Holleran – call or email to confirm your file is complete	2 months before wedding date	
Complete wedding program and music	Paula Vasey	2 months before wedding date	
Final meeting with Priest, bring reading selections and intercessions. Make \$250 payment to Priest	Father Fritzner Valcin	1 month before wedding date	
Marriage License	Franklin County Probate Court	Within 60 days of wedding	
Rehearsal – final details. What time do you need church unlocked the next day, etc.	Melissa Hornik	4:30pm or 6:30pm Friday, Bring Marriage License & programs	

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We have read and understand "The Guidelines for Celebrating Marriage at St. Francis of Assisi Church."

We agree to follow these guidelines including stipulations of a \$50 clean-up fee if disarray or debris left in the church, hall or on the grounds and a \$100 fee charged if use of alcohol is discovered.

BRIDE

Print \_\_\_\_\_

Sign \_\_\_\_\_

GROOM

Print \_\_\_\_\_

Sign \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_