



*The Great Grouping*  
SAINTS JOHN & PAUL  
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

*The SACRAMENT of*  
**HOLY MATRIMONY**

*A Wedding Guide for the Bride and Groom*





***To the Bride and Groom—***

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage!

Enclosed are some guidelines to assist you in the planning of your marriage liturgy.

The ministry of the Wedding Coordinators is provided as a service of Saints John & Paul Parish. We offer our services without charge and will assist you, your families, the bridal party, and guests at the rehearsal and on the day of your wedding.

***—The Wedding Committee***

## *Planning* the Order of Holy Matrimony

The celebration of the Rite of Marriage is a very joyous and sacred celebration! The parish community of Saints John & Paul celebrates this sacrament with you. The parish priests are representatives of the entire church community. They will assist you and are the ones who determine what is appropriate during the liturgy. In order to respect the desires of you (the bride and groom) and to keep all communication as clear as possible, the parish asks that all communication regarding the wedding liturgy be with you (the bride and groom).

A parish wedding coordinator, as well as members of the parish wedding committee, will be present at your rehearsal and wedding to ensure that you, your bridal party and your families are prepared for your wedding ceremony and to ensure that all of your needs on the wedding day are met. We ask that all members of the bridal party follow and respect the directions given by these volunteers.

This booklet includes a checklist of things to complete prior to the wedding ceremony, as well as, guidelines for our church.

## *Checklist* for the Bride and Groom

Please insure that all items have been addressed before the wedding.

### **6+ Months Prior to the Wedding**

- Contact parish office to preliminarily set a wedding date and speak with Father Michael Roche (Father Mike) to learn about the pre-marriage process, including “Renew the I Do” preparation.
- Begin and complete the “Renew the I Do” marriage preparation steps. See [renewtheido.org](http://renewtheido.org) for details.
- Complete/turn-in paperwork after meeting with Fr. Mike or the priest/deacon assigned to our wedding.

### **3-4 Months Prior to the Wedding**

- Contact the Minister of Sacred Music to schedule a meeting with her.
- Schedule final meeting with your assigned priest/deacon.

# Checklist *for the Bride and Groom (continued)*

## **1-2 Months Prior to the Wedding**

- Give a draft of your program to the Minister of Sacred Music for approval prior to printing.
- Obtain marriage license.

## **3-4 Weeks Prior to the Wedding**

- Complete Wedding Worksheet at [greatgrouping.org/wedding-worksheet](http://greatgrouping.org/wedding-worksheet)
- Have final meeting with your assigned priest/deacon to review final details of your wedding.

## **1-2 Weeks Prior to the Wedding**

- Give each reader a copy of their reading.
- Discuss rehearsal and ceremony details with the wedding coordinator.
- Celebrate Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession.

## **Rehearsal**

- Bring marriage license to rehearsal.
- Bring all fees and donations to rehearsal.
- Bring programs, unity candle, pew decorations, bells, bubbles, ring bearer pillow, etc. to rehearsal.
- Allow 1 1/2 hours for the rehearsal.

## First Steps

At least six months prior to the wedding, you must first contact the parish office to make an appointment with Fr. Mike. You can schedule your wedding date and rehearsal over the phone with the parish secretary, but it will not be confirmed until the required pre-marriage interview with Fr. Mike has taken place.

The purpose of this meeting is to help determine that both parties are free and ready to marry. Fr. Mike will explain the preparation process and required documentation.

## Marriage Preparation

Church law requires that every couple participate in an approved pre-marriage preparation program. Saints John & Paul requires couples to participate in the “Renew the I Do” program, including an organic married health course. See [renewtheido.org](http://renewtheido.org) for dates of programs. You can find additional information on marriage preparation at [greatgrouping.org/holy-matrimony](http://greatgrouping.org/holy-matrimony).

***The Sacrament of Reconciliation:*** This Sacrament should be celebrated by the Catholic parties prior to the time of the rehearsal and wedding.

## Liturgy

Fr. Mike or the priest/deacon assigned to your wedding will guide you regarding selections for the marriage liturgy, including the readings, petitions, and other ritual elements.

### ***Visiting Priest or Permanent Deacon:***

If you have a priest or permanent deacon that you would like to have celebrate your wedding liturgy, they will need to obtain the proper permissions of the Church. If you ask a visiting priest or permanent deacon to perform your wedding liturgy, it is understood that he will be responsible for the preliminary paper work. They must also follow our wedding guidelines.

### ***Wedding Liturgy Times:***

Weddings cannot be scheduled on a Sunday, nor can they be scheduled on a Friday or Saturday if it is a Holy Day. Marriages are typically not celebrated during Lent and Holy Week because of the solemn nature of that time.

## Liturgy (continued)

Wedding liturgies are typically scheduled on Saturdays at 2:30 PM for registered parishioners. The liturgy can be earlier than 2:30 PM, but it cannot be later than 2:30 PM. Weddings for non-parishioners are scheduled on Saturdays at 11:00 AM. The time for a Friday liturgy is flexible.

### **Pastors of Other Faiths:**

In the case of an interfaith marriage, the non-Roman Catholic party may invite his/her pastor to participate in the ceremony. In the context of the Liturgy of the Word, the visiting pastor may vest and proclaim one of the readings before the Gospel. At the conclusion of the ceremony he/she may offer a prayer/blessing. If an interfaith wedding is celebrated during a Mass, the visiting pastor may come from the assembly at the end of the ceremony to offer additional prayers, and exhortation and a blessing. This should be discussed with Fr. Mike.

### **Lectors:**

As a couple, you are encouraged to ask as many as three people to participate as lectors for the Readings and the Universal Prayer. The lectors should attend the rehearsal (if they cannot attend the rehearsal, they should arrive forty-five minutes before the wedding for instruction) and review the readings prior to the rehearsal. The lectors do not need to be Catholic.

### **Altar Servers:**

If you are having a wedding Mass (liturgy with Communion), the church will provide two altar servers. However, if you have trained family members or friends who would like to be an altar server at your wedding, you can have one or two additional servers. Please email their names to Michelle Tully at [weddings@greatgrouping.org](mailto:weddings@greatgrouping.org).

## Liturgical Music

All music before, during, and following the wedding must be appropriate for a sacred place, time, and event. It must be suited for its place within the worship service and rendered by those who are both musically and liturgically competent. Music composed for theatrical or entertainment purposes is not appropriate for a sacred place or sacred occasion. Hyery Hwang, Minister of Sacred Music, is responsible for the music in all marriage celebrations, and is available to advise you on all matters of music. Everything relating to the music of the ceremony must be handled directly through Hyery, who must approve all selections and

## Liturgical Music (continued)

plans for music. Please contact [ssjpmusic@greatgrouping.org](mailto:ssjpmusic@greatgrouping.org) 3-4 months before your wedding to arrange a time to meet, and have questions regarding a cantor, soloist, or additional musicians answered.

Hyery Hwang, Minister of Sacred Music, can be reached at (724) 935-2104 x232, or [ssjpmusic@greatgrouping.org](mailto:ssjpmusic@greatgrouping.org).

## Guidelines for Use of the Church

### **Altar Flowers:**

The church typically has green plants and/or flowers in the sanctuary throughout the year. If you wish to have additional flowers, it is customary to have a flower arrangement on either side of the tabernacle. There are several different stands available that you can choose from for these flower arrangements. If you choose to have flowers for the sanctuary, they should arrive at least one and a half hours prior to the wedding. Artificial flowers are not liturgically appropriate for use in the sanctuary. Please contact the wedding coordinator if you have any questions regarding flowers or seasonal decorations. If you choose to add flowers or plants to the sanctuary, please note that they must be set on a protective saucer or stand so the marble is not stained or damaged.

Please note: During Advent and Lent, the church is not decorated except for the Advent wreath (Advent only). You are permitted to bring flowers or plants for the sanctuary, but they must be removed following the ceremony. During Christmas and Easter, the church will be decorated appropriately with flowers, plants, and trees. These may not be removed for weddings.

### **Pew Decorations:**

They should be light in weight and attached to the pew in a way to avoid scratching the wood. A rubber band works well to attach the decorations to the chairs and pews. The use of metal, pins, or adhesives is not permitted. **Please also note that live flowers in the pew decorations are not permitted.** For safety reasons, no glass vases/containers are permitted in the center aisle.

There are four rows of chairs and eleven rows of pews in the front section of the church and ten rows of pews after the break.

### **Aisle Runner:**

A crash is not permitted because it is too slippery and a tripping hazard.

## *Guidelines for Use of the Church (continued)*

### ***Flower Girls & Ring Bearer:***

Flower girls and ring bearers are not permitted to throw/drop petals while processing up the aisle. They are also not permitted to carry any signs as these are not liturgically appropriate.

### ***Worship Aides/Program:***

You may want to consider preparing a program for your wedding. This would help your guests follow the Catholic rite and encourage the congregation to participate, particularly in the singing of songs, responses, and acclamations. Sample programs are available for your review. Please have our Music Director preview your program before printing to prevent any errors.

### ***Directions to Saints John & Paul:***

Please include with your wedding invitations detailed directions to guide your wedding party and guests to the church. The church's official address is: 2586 Wexford Bayne Road, Sewickley, PA 15143.

### ***Photography and Videography:***

Photography and videography will be permitted during the ceremony, but should not detract from the solemnity of the occasion.

Cameras are not permitted on the elevated area of the sanctuary. All equipment must be kept out of aisles when not in use. Please consult your wedding coordinator for specific instructions.

All photos of groomsmen must be completed at least thirty minutes before the ceremony begins to allow them to escort guests. The photos of the bride and bridesmaids must be completed fifteen minutes before the ceremony. We simply ask that the photographer and videographer act in a professional manner. Photos may be taken in the pavilion, but the tables may not be moved.

## Marriage License

You must secure a marriage license from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania before your wedding day. A marriage license is typically valid for sixty days. To obtain a license, please visit your local county marriage license center. The license should be given to the wedding coordinator at the wedding rehearsal.

## Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal is typically scheduled at 5:30 PM on the evening before the wedding. If this time is not convenient, please talk to the parish secretary when scheduling your wedding and rehearsal. Please allow one and a half hours for the rehearsal. Please have all members of the wedding party, and anyone else involved in the wedding liturgy, meet in the church 15 minutes before the rehearsal is scheduled to begin. Please bring the marriage license, fees, and donations; and if used, ring bearer pillow, pew bows, bubbles or bells, unity candle, and programs to the rehearsal.

## On the Day of the Wedding...

- The groom, ushers, and groomsmen should arrive fully dressed one hour before the liturgy on the day of the wedding. They must be available to seat guests thirty minutes before the ceremony.
- The bride and bridesmaids should arrive fully dressed thirty minutes before the liturgy.
- No food or drink is to be taken into the church, bridal room or any other rooms used by the wedding party.
- ***Alcoholic beverages and drugs are not permitted in or on the premises of Saints John & Paul Parish.*** Should the bride and/or groom consume alcohol or drugs prior to the wedding, the wedding vows will be invalid.

## *On the Day of the Wedding (continued)...*

- Upon entering the church, all cell phones, pagers, and electronic devices should be turned to silent.
- While you may employ a wedding planner or coordinator, we ask that while at Saints John & Paul Parish, the bridal party please follow the directions of our wedding coordinators, who are trained to assist you for the wedding ceremony.

## *After the Ceremony*

Photos are permitted in the sanctuary until 4:00 PM and on the premises until 4:30 PM.

A receiving line is welcome in the vestibule if time permits.

Doves, bells, or bubbles are permitted outside of the church. The throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, etc., or balloon releases is strictly prohibited.

Since there is a 5:00 PM Mass on Saturday evening, it is requested that the wedding party and their guests kindly vacate the parking lot by 4:30 PM.

# *Fees / Donations*

Please see the list of donations/fees below. To avoid confusion on the day of the wedding, please give the donations/fees envelopes to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal.

## ***Saints John & Paul Parish Donation***

The parish does not charge for sacraments or the use of the church for weddings; however you are welcome to make a donation to the church. The typical donation is \$500 for parishioners and \$1,000 for non-parishioners. Please make check payable to Saints John & Paul Parish.

## ***Priest/Deacon Donation***

If you choose, you may give a donation to the priest/deacon as a thank you for his time. You can choose any amount that you feel is appropriate.

## ***Minister of Sacred Music Fee***

\$200—If our Minister of Sacred Music cantors as well, the fee is \$250 total. If additional practice is necessary with Hyery and an outside soloist or musician, the fee to Hyery is \$25/hour.

## ***Cantor Fee (if used)***

\$100—Fee is payable to the cantor.

## ***Musicians Fee (if used)***

Price quoted from the musician or Minister of Sacred Music.

## ***Altar Server Donation***

\$20 is the suggested donation amount per server (2 servers).

## Contact Information

### ***Saints John & Paul Parish***

2586 Wexford Bayne Road  
Sewickley, PA 15143  
(724) 935-2104  
[greatgrouping.org](http://greatgrouping.org)

### ***Scheduling Your Pre-Marriage Interview***

Fr. Michael Roche  
[fatherroche@gmail.com](mailto:fatherroche@gmail.com)  
(724) 935-2104 x227

### ***Scheduling Your Wedding Music Meeting***

Hyery Hwang  
Minister of Sacred Music  
[ssjpmusic@greatgrouping.org](mailto:ssjpmusic@greatgrouping.org)  
(724) 935-2104 x232

### ***Wedding Coordinator***

Michelle Tully  
[weddings@greatgrouping.org](mailto:weddings@greatgrouping.org)  
(412) 215-3858