

# St. John the Apostle Wedding Agreement

## Setting a Wedding Date

Congratulations: St. John the Apostle Catholic Church rejoices with you in engagement and approaching the church to celebrate this sacrament.

### Membership in the Parish:

To be considered a member, the Bride or Groom, or the parents of either, must live within parish boundaries and be registered and active in the parish. Please call the parish office if you are unsure of your status.

Wedding Date: The wedding date may not be set until the couple, if a member of the parish, has had an initial meeting with a priest or deacon from the parish: parish staff are not authorized to set a date for you. We understand that you are trying to make arrangements for many details; however, please do not make any plans until the priest has officially set the date and time. This usually happens in the first or second meeting with the priest. Non-parish members seeking to have their wedding here must complete the following requirements in order for the parish staff to confirm and schedule your wedding on the calendar:

- 1) You must have the priest/deacon who will be doing the marriage preparation and paperwork with you, and officiating at the wedding ceremony, confirm this with the pastor of St. John's directly; if there is to be a different priest/deacon officiating at the wedding, he too must confirm this directly with the pastor of St. John the Apostle. (Please note that the parish clergy of St. John the Apostle are not available to officiate at the weddings of non-parish members; and further note that the non-parish member couple is responsible for finding a substitute should there be any changes regarding the celebrant of the wedding: the substitute priest/deacon must confirm this directly with the Pastor of St. John the Apostle prior to the wedding.
- 2) The wedding agreement must be read, signed (by both bride and groom), and returned to the parish office.
- 3) The wedding fee for non-members (which is non-refundable) must be paid.
- 4) Until all the above requirements for non-members are met...any wedding date, location and time, remains available to be taken by another couple (parish member or non-parish member) ...so you are directed and encouraged to move quickly to fulfill the above requirements in order that we may confirm and secure the wedding date you wish on our calendar.

## Instruction

Instruction: There is a minimum of six-month preparation period required by the Diocese of Arlington between the time you set the date with the celebrant and the wedding.

Retreat: In addition to their preparation meetings with a priest/deacon...couples must also attend one of the Diocesan approved marriage education weekends. The priest or deacon you are working with will discuss these programs with you:

- ❖ R1: Conference for the engaged
- ❖ R2: Catholic Engaged Encounter

To sign-up for one of these, please see the diocesan website:

<https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/familylife/marriage.aspx>

Focus Test: Each couple will complete the 'couple inventory.' Father will provide instructions for how to complete the test online. The results of this test will be reviewed and discussed with the couple during the course of the marriage preparation process.

Meetings: Each couple will have several meetings with the Celebrant (priest/deacon). The Priest directing the preparations will determine the number of these meetings according to the individual needs of the couple.

## Documentation

Baptismal: **Catholics:** All Catholics are required to obtain a **NEW Baptismal Certificate** from the church of their baptism. It must be issued within six months of the wedding date and include Sacrament notations. If you call the church of your baptism, just tell them that you are getting married and need a baptismal certificate for marriage, they will know what the notations are.

**Non-Catholics:** Those baptized in other faiths should provide proof of baptism. A copy of their original certificate or a letter from the church of baptism is sufficient.

Confirmation: Confirmation Certificates are required only for Catholics and only if the baptismal certificate does not include notations with the date of confirmation.

Affidavits: Also required are two Affidavits of Free Status for each person.

License: This must be obtained by the bride and groom prior to the wedding. No wedding will take place without the proper civil marriage license. These are good for 60 days, so they may be obtained from the clerk of the court in the month before the wedding. As soon as you get the civil license, please give it to your celebrant.

Dispensations: Any required dispensations or permissions will be addressed by the priest/deacon who is working with the couple in the marriage preparation and paperwork.

## Ceremony:

Location: Weddings can be celebrated in either:

**Church:**

Seating capacity 1100-1200.

Address: 55 Oakcrest Manor Drive NE  
on the corner of King Street and Oakcrest Manor.

**Chapel of the Immaculate Conception:**

Seating capacity 100-150

Located at the corner of King and Union Streets. There is no street address for the chapel, so for "GPS" purposes use the address of the Church above.

(Please note that the chapel does not have any space for the bridal party to wait/prepare prior to the ceremony; in addition, there are no restroom facilities in the chapel: those needing such facilities must utilize the Church).

Time: Applies for both Nuptial Mass or Marriage celebrated outside of Mass. No weddings are scheduled for any Sunday. Weddings may be celebrated at the following times:

**Church:**

Monday-Thursdays: as the parish calendar permits.

Friday: before 3:00 p.m.

Saturday: 10:00 a.m. (only on the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of the month), 12:00 p.m., or 2:00 p.m.

**Chapel of the Immaculate Conception:**

Friday: between 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., or 3:00 p.m.

No weddings permitted any other day of the week due to extended Adoration.

Rehearsal: Rehearsals are usually held the evening before the wedding, at 4:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m.

Rehearsals for Friday weddings in the Chapel will take place earlier the same Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

There is no music at the rehearsal.

Music: All music to be used at the wedding mass or ceremony must be sacred. The parish Music Director is the organist/cantor at all weddings. Additional vocal or instrumental soloists may be contracted with the approval of the music director. To set-up a meeting to plan the music for your wedding, please contact the Music Director by phone at (703) 777-1317, or by email at [mike@stjohnleesburg.com](mailto:mike@stjohnleesburg.com). Specific music selections, guidelines for guest vocal or instrumental soloists, and music fees will be discussed at this meeting.

Pictures Pictures may be taken during the Mass or ceremony but we ask that everyone involved remember that this is a religious ceremony and that picture taking and video should be done as discretely as possible. The photographer must follow the priest's instructions on where to stand during the ceremony, and when to refrain from movement.

Flowers The parish does not provide flowers, nor do we set out the arrangements. You may leave your flower arrangements in the Church after the ceremony, and please note that if there is more than one wedding on your day, couples might want to "share" flowers with the other couples. Flowers are placed in front of the altar on the floor or in stands directly next to the tabernacle. Flowers and/or bows used as pew markers must be hung with plastic u-shaped hangers or with ribbon loops over the top end of the pew. Do not use tape, nails, thumbtacks, or another adhesive on parish furniture. Please email Joan Mentzer for further assistance [mentzerji@aol.com](mailto:mentzerji@aol.com).

Other Please consult with the parish office, or celebrant of the wedding, with regard to any other questions or special requests.

Rice, etc. No rice, no birdseed, no flowers, no flower petals or anything else may be thrown in front of the church/chapel or strewn in the church/chapel, including the main aisle. Please inform your wedding party and guests.

### **Donations / Fees / Gifts:**

Members: Because it is assumed that you, or your family, are already financially supporting the parish there is no fee associated with getting married in the parish: a free-will donation may be made to the parish for the wedding. Most couples donate \$200 to \$500 in a check payable to "St. John the Apostle." Your generosity is most appreciated.

Non-Members: For those who are not members of St. John's there is a fixed offering of \$2,200 for the Church and \$1,100 for the Chapel: again, this must be paid prior to the confirmation and scheduling of the date for the wedding...and is non-refundable. Check to be made payable to "St. John the Apostle".

Music (Members or Non-Members): St. John's music fee is \$450, which covers the \$300 Organist fee and \$150 Cantor fee. Additional musicians or soloists will incur additional fees, please discuss with the Music Director. Please make check(s) payable directly to the individuals in question: this fee is due at your initial meeting with Music Director. A bench fee of \$150 is payable to St. John the Apostle if outside musicians are requested for the ceremony.

Gift for the Priest (Members or Non-Members): While not required, most couples will give the priest a gift as well; in appreciation for his work with them. This is a free-will gift. If the gift is monetary, the range is usually \$150 to \$250. This check would be made payable directly to your priest.

**St. John Wedding Agreement Form**

I acknowledge receipt of St. John's wedding agreement, have read it entirely, and will comply with all of its requirements and instructions:

Date of wedding: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: Historic Chapel/ Church

Signature of the Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list name of celebrant: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation received from celebrant: \_\_\_\_\_.

Signature of Receipt by St. John's staff member \_\_\_\_\_:

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_