



Wedding Guidelines

Holy Family Parish
St. Irenaeus, St. Januarius, St. John the Baptist,
St. Joseph & Our Lady of Joy Churches
444 St. John Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15239

Introduction

Congratulations! Through your exchange of vows in the celebration of Matrimony, one of seven great sacraments of the Catholic Church, the two of you will embark on life's grandest adventure – the sharing of one life together.

We know that you want everything to go perfectly, and so do we. That's why we have compiled this booklet. In it you will find explanations, expectations, suggestions, and helpful hints to make your wedding day as memorable and meaningful as possible. Through the grace of the Sacrament, may you be drawn closer to each other, closer to the Church and ultimately, closer to God.

Initial Meeting with the Priest

When you are ready to begin your wedding plans, contact one of the priests at Holy Family Parish at least six (6) months before the wedding to schedule an appointment. No wedding date can be confirmed over the phone. If you would like to invite a priest other than one of the priests in Holy Family Parish to preside at your wedding liturgy, either an initial interview must be conducted by the priest in our grouping, or the visiting priest must contact the Pastor.

Pre-Cana Instruction

As a concerned couple preparing for the sacrament and life of Marriage, you are required to attend some type of preparation course for this important part of your life.

There are three options available to you; each has a different fees:

1. Holy Family Parish: We offer a weekend, Friday night and Saturday workshop in February, May and October. Married couples give presentations on married life in the areas of communication, family, spirituality, sexuality and finances.

2. Diocesan: You may choose to attend a Diocesan Pre-Marriage Reflection Program. These sessions are usually held on Tuesday and Thursday evening during certain times of the year. Details, fees and registration information is available online at: <https://www.diopitt.org/marriage-preparation>.

3. Engaged Encounter: You may choose to attend an Engaged Encounter weekend retreat. It is a quiet weekend, specifically designed to give you the opportunity to talk honestly and intensively about your future together – an opportunity to discover a deeper appreciation of your relationship and God's call to unite in a permanent union, the Sacrament of Matrimony. Details and registration information is available online at <http://diopitt.org/office-adult-and-family-faith-formation/pre-marriage-classes>.



Wedding Coordinators

This is a ministry provided to you by the parishes. The coordinators have been trained to help you in planning for your wedding liturgy at the church.

After you have met with the priest, complete your pre-marriage instruction, a coordinator will be assigned to you. The coordinator will call you and introduce herself and provide her phone number to you once she receives the assignment. She will be happy to answer any questions about the church wedding policies.

The Wedding Coordinators conduct or help conduct the rehearsal with the priest and attend the wedding and are available to meet you at the church.



Marriage License

A civil marriage license is required for any marriage in the State of Pennsylvania. You may apply for a license in Allegheny County, PA within 60-days of the wedding. (*Application dates vary by county, so you will want to validate this information for other counties.*) The Marriage License Bureau for Allegheny County is located on the First Floor of the City-County Building, 414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania ((412) 350-4230). Please bring the license to the priest one week before your wedding. Also, you can get a license from another County in Pennsylvania.

Baptismal Certificate

If you are not Catholic, yet validly baptized, you will need to provide us with a copy of your baptismal certificate. If you are Catholic, we will need an updated (issued within six-months prior to your wedding) baptismal certificate from the parish of your baptism. The reason that it must be six months prior to the wedding is that the church in which you were baptized also keeps records of all the Sacraments you receive, including marriage. After you are married, a notification will be sent to your church of baptism informing them of your consecrated marriage.

To obtain a copy of your baptismal (and confirmation) certificate, simply phone the church where you were baptized and give them the necessary information. Be sure to tell them you are getting married and need all notations and parish seal. If you were baptized at one of our Holy Family Parish, simply tell the priest and we can get the certificate made for you from our office.

Visiting Priests

In light of the pastoral nature of these forms, if a visiting priest is presiding, please understand that it will be his privilege to take care of the necessary paperwork, unless he lives out of town, or some other reason makes it impossible. Priests outside of the Diocese of Pittsburgh need special permission from the Diocese well in advance to perform a wedding.

Flowers and Decorations

Make arrangements for flowers directly with the florist of your choice. Please give them a copy of the *Wedding Florists* instructions (available from the Wedding Coordinator) so that they will be familiar with our parish policies. A few notes...



- If you decide to have a crash (long white runner on which the bride walks) check with your wedding coordinator for the length that is needed for the church in which you are getting married.
 - The flowers are left in the church as a sign of thanksgiving for the marriage.
 - Silk or other artificial flower arrangements are not permitted in the sanctuary.
- Additional candelabras may not be used in the sanctuary or elsewhere in the church. Some churches provide aisle candles. Ask your wedding coordinator about these.

Photographs

Most couples hire a professional photographer to capture their memories forever. Directions for your photographer are available from the wedding coordinator. The presence of photographers and video equipment is not permitted in the sanctuary before or during the wedding.

Flash is permitted, but no additional lighting equipment is allowed.

Video cameras may be set in a stationary position well in advance of the liturgy. The location of cameras should be discussed in advance with the Wedding Coordinator or Priest.

Photos of the bride and groom are permitted in the sacristy and bride's room prior to the service.

No photography/video sessions are permitted in the sanctuary areas before or during the wedding. Following the wedding, approximately 30-minutes is allotted for photographs to be taken. The grounds outside the church are recommended for photographs.



Posing group photos of the wedding party at the reception is suggested.

You can have a wedding as late as 2 hours before the Saturday evening Mass. You must be completed and have removed all belongings at least ½ hour before that evening Mass time. To save time, we strongly suggest that

you not have a receiving line at the church. Keep in mind that even taking time for a balloon release outside reduces the available time you have for photos in the Church.

Altar Servers

Altar servers will be provided by the parish. If you request specific altar servers, please notify your wedding coordinator. You must have at least one (1) of our parish altar servers, but guest servers from another parish can help.

Music

A Catholic wedding, whether it takes place during the celebration of the Eucharist or in a simple ceremony, should be characterized by dignity, reverence, and joy. It is not only the solemn exchange of vows by the engaged couple, but is also an act of worship in which the bride and groom, along with their family and friends come together to offer thanks and praise and to ask God's blessing in their life together as husband and wife.

Music for use in a wedding liturgy is governed by the same norms as any liturgical celebration – that is, it must be:



Musically appropriate (Is the music technically, aesthetically, and expressively good, irrespective of musical style or idiom?)

Liturgically appropriate (Is the music's text, form, placement and style congruent with the nature of the liturgy?)

Pastorally appropriate (Will it help the assembly pray?)

Sacred hymns must highlight the Christian dimension of love and be appropriate to the liturgy. No secular music is allowed at a Catholic Wedding. Accordingly, such secular music as *Make You Feel My Love*; *Let it Be Me*; *My Love for You is Real* and *Here Comes the Bride* are not allowed. Our Music Director will guide you.

In order to ensure that your wedding music be joyous, appropriate and memorable, the following additional guidelines are provided for all weddings:

- An organist is available to you. Contact the parish office for the name and phone number. It is your responsibility to contact the organist and make arrangements with her/him.
- A music planning session is offered to all couples on an individual basis. You must contact the organist to set up your appointment time and date.

- The Music Director will make sure that a trained Parish Cantor is available for your wedding to fill this important liturgical role and to ensure quality music.
- Guest musicians (singers/instrumentalists) are welcome, although they must be a trained musician and they should contact the organist and discuss their ability and plans. Extra fees may be required depending on rehearsal time and extra effort required by the parish musician.
- Pre-recorded music (including accompaniment tapes or compact discs) is not permitted.
- Occasionally, there is a request for the organist to write an arrangement of a piece of music. This involved a reworking of the piece to fit the style and instrumentation requested. For example a piece originally written for a string quartet would need to be re-written in order to play it on the organ or piano. If this request is made, there will be an extra fee up to the discretion of the organist based on the amount of work involved.



Rehearsal

One hour is the customary length of the rehearsal. It will begin promptly at the scheduled time.

The following need to be present at the rehearsal:

- bride and groom
- bride's attendants (bridesmaids)
- groomsmen (ushers)
- flower girl and ring bearer (if any)
- readers and others taking part in the liturgy
- parents of the bride and groom

All those involved in the rehearsal are to assemble inside the church and are asked to be respectful.

It is preferable that the bride and groom and the wedding party celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the weeks before

rehearsal. Reconciliation is available at St. John the Baptist Church after 9:00 a.m. Mass each Saturday, at the rehearsal if the priest is available, or by appointment.

Please note: No alcohol and/or drugs should be used the day of the wedding and should not be brought onto the property at either the time of rehearsal or wedding liturgy. Use of these may give cause for no wedding or an invalid marriage. The priest will not perform a wedding when signs of alcohol or drug use are present.

Other Ceremonies

The Wedding Liturgy of the Church is already rich in symbolism and ceremony. The Unity candle, extended Sign of Peace and presentation of flowers to the Holy Holy Family are all ceremonies that have been unofficially added to the Church's liturgy. If a Unity candle is desired, the bride and groom provide it. You must receive permission from the priest having your wedding to use a Unity candle. Petal dropping by flower girls or others is not permitted.



Readers

You will have the opportunity to choose from a number of Scripture readings during your planning session with the Wedding Coordinators. You may wish to ask one or two people to serve as Readers. They should be persons who believe in the Word of God, have the desire to perform this ministry for your wedding service and have the gifts necessary to proclaim the Word of God with reverence and competence. Please give your readers copies of the readings well in advance. Readers will attend the rehearsal to practice the readings in the church and become familiar with our customs, sound system and environment.

Offerings

The offerings are as follows totaling \$425:

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|------------------|-------|
| Church | \$100 |
| Organist | \$200 |
| Cantor | \$75 |
| Set Up Team | \$30 |
| Server (2 @\$10) | \$20 |

The following services are optional with offerings listed if chosen.

| | |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| Aisle Candles | \$45 <i>(if available)</i> |
| Livestream | \$50 |

Please write a check for the full amount and bring it to the church office one week prior to the wedding (with your marriage license); or have each amount in cash in separate envelopes and give them directly to the Wedding Coordinators at the rehearsal. These fees are all that is required. Costs of additional musicians and soloists would be extra. Please ask the Music Director for further details.

Special Note

Due to our weekend Mass schedule, and for the safety of those attending, the throwing of rice, bird seed, confetti, etc. is not permitted. Bio-degradable helium balloons may be released.

Parking

Please inform your guests that parking is available in our parking lots but there may be specific areas where parking is restricted at each Church for handicapped parking, drop-off, and emergency vehicles only. Consult the wedding coordinator or priest for your wedding for details.

Wedding Preparations Check List

Six months before your wedding date:

- Meet with the Priest initially and again after your pre-marriage instruction
- Complete your pre-marriage instruction
- Obtain your Baptismal Certificate
- Arrange for flowers, photographer, etc.

One month before your wedding date:

- Obtain your marriage license
- Meet with the Music Director
 - Select Wedding Songs
- Meet/phone with your Wedding Coordinator/Organist:
 - Share your wedding party and family details for the procession
 - Schedule rehearsal time (if not done already)
 - Discuss wedding requests; i.e., other ceremony(ies), specific altar server(s)

One week before your wedding date:

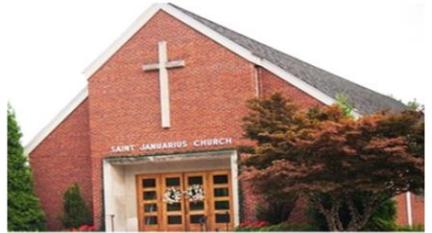
- Provide parish office with your marriage license
- Provide parish office with a check for the full amount of fees (or the night of the rehearsal, bring separate offering envelopes with cash for the Church, organist, altar servers, wedding coordinator, cantor and isle candles).

The Holy Family Parishes



St. Irenaeus
387 Maryland Avenue
Oakmont, PA 15139

St. Januarius
1450 Renton Road
Plum, PA 15239



St. John the Baptist
444 St. John Street
Plum, PA 15239

St. Joseph
825 Second Avenue
Verona, PA 15147



Our Lady of Joy
2000 O'Block Road
Plum, PA 15239