

WEDDING GUIDELINES & POLICIES

at St. Louis Bertrand Parish

The priests and staff of St. Louis Bertrand Catholic Church are happy to help you prepare for your wedding. You will find in this document a list of parish policies to assist you during the time of marriage preparation as well as for the celebration of the wedding itself. These are meant to ensure a fully Catholic celebration, in keeping with the Church's rich liturgical tradition: faithful to God's plan for marriage in the Church, both for those who are being married and those attending the celebration. They have been formed over many years and much experience.

General policies and procedures

1. Preparations for your marriage are best begun at least six months to a year before your wedding date. Marriage prep normally involves

- (1) Meetings with the priest.
- (2) Attend a diocesan marriage preparation retreat (or an online marriage prep program)
- (3) Instruction in Natural Family Planning (NFP).

For a general overview of the Archdiocese of Louisville marriage preparation policy, please visit the [Archdiocese Family Life](#) web page or see the booklet provided to you. If you live out of state, we will help you arrange for marriage preparation in your area.

2. Weddings are celebrated at either 3 p.m. or 6 p.m. on Fridays and 2 p.m. on Saturdays. We ask that the wedding party, florist, photographer, videographer, etc. arrive one hour prior to the wedding time and vacate the premises an hour and a half after the start time.

3. Rehearsals are scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Thursday and 3:00 or 6:00 p.m. on Friday, and should last no longer than one hour. Only the wedding party or those who will have a role in the wedding need attend. Please bring your marriage license to the rehearsal and give it to the priest.

4. At least one party to a wedding at St. Louis Bertrand Church must be a registered and regularly attending parishioner at the parish—unless for good reason the pastor waives this requirement. For those who have been participating and contributing parishioners at St. Louis Bertrand for at least one year, a \$750 stipend to the Church is requested. Others are asked to pay a stipend of \$1500 before a date for the wedding is set. If you are not enrolled at our parish, a letter from your current pastor is needed granting his permission for you to marry outside your parish. If you are currently not a member of any parish please contact us. Please remember to secure your wedding date at St. Louis Bertrand **before** booking your reception venue.

5. A stipend for the music director and a cantor is included in your wedding agreement with us.

6. Your wedding stipend also includes the help of our parish wedding assistant who will be present at the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony and the service of an altar server. If you would like an altar server to serve, please discuss with the priest. Any additional wedding coordinator you may wish to hire needs to restrict his/her arrangements to the reception or other aspects of your wedding day. It is the parish wedding assistant who will handle all that happens at the church.

7. The bride, groom, bridesmaids, and groomsmen must come dressed for the wedding. We do not have changing rooms. The bride and bridesmaids may gather in the Heritage Room in the Parish Center for final preparations. Groom and groomsmen may gather in the servers' sacristy on the south side of the sanctuary.

8. During the marriage ceremony only the bride and groom and the best man and maid of honor are permitted in the sanctuary space.

9. The "unity candle" is not part of the Catholic ritual, and is not used at weddings in St. Louis Bertrand Church. The primary sign of marital unity is the exchange of vows itself, or the Eucharist in the case of marriages celebrated within Mass.

10. We expect your wedding party and guests to respect the sacred nature of the church building.

11. Wedding attire should respect the sacred nature of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Modesty in dress is expected. Accessories such as hats, sunglasses, and flipflops are not appropriate.

12. No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are permitted on the property. If they are discovered, the wedding will be canceled immediately, and your stipend will be donated to the St. Louis Bertrand Emergency Aid Center. All buildings are smoke free.

Regarding flowers and decorations

- Flowers should be delivered before 1:00 p.m. on the day of the wedding.
- Aisle runners are not permitted due to the danger of slippage on the floor.
- Rice, birdseed, confetti, glitter, real or artificial flower petals, and balloons are not allowed in the Church or on the property. Flower girls may carry flowers, but not scatter the petals.
- Bows may be attached to the pews with ribbons, but not with pins, wires, hooks or tape.
- Entrances to individual rows may not be cordoned off.
- Flowers may never obscure the pulpit or altars.
- Flowers may not be placed on the inside or outside of the doors.
- The florist is responsible for removal of all boxes, paper and other debris related to the flowers.
- Decorations must be removed immediately after the wedding either by the florist or the family, or they will be discarded.
- Due to safety issues, the hand railings in front of Church must have no decorations of any kind.

Regarding the Photographer/Videographer

- Photographers and videographers are welcome to take pictures during the entrance and exit of the wedding party.
- During the service, photographers and videographers are allowed only in the choir loft.
- The use of flash photography during the wedding ceremony is prohibited.
- Tape is not to be used on the walls, floors, or podiums.
- The liturgical environment is not to be altered to accommodate the photo shoot. No liturgical furnishings, e.g. candles, chairs, etc., are to be moved without the permission of the priest.

Regarding music used in your wedding ceremony

Please arrange your wedding music selections directly with the parish music director. The priest will provide you with contact information for the music director.

All music chosen for your wedding must be sacred music, suitable for Catholic worship, and require final approval by the music director and the pastor. No recorded music may be used in the church. All instrumentalists and cantors are to play/sing from the choir loft.

Groom _____

Date _____

Bride _____

Date _____