



Guidelines for the Sacrament of Marriage

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

9100 93rd Avenue North

Brooklyn Park, MN 55445

763-425-2210

www.saintvdp.org

"Married Christians, in virtue of the sacrament of matrimony, signify and share in the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His church; they help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children; and they have their own special gift among the people of God."

(Rite of Christian Marriage 1969)

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ENGAGEMENT

Congratulations on your engagement! May this be a time of grace and growth as you prepare for the blessed sacrament of marriage. The staff at St. Vincent de Paul will be happy to assist you with your marriage and wedding preparations. This handbook provides essential information for a wedding here. We hope it will serve as a useful reference and aid in your preparation for marriage.

Your marriage is a sacrament of the Catholic Church, where you will become husband and wife in the presence of God, the celebrant, and your family and friends. Therefore, it should be treated with the respect and dignity of any event in the church. By having your wedding here, you are agreeing to abide by all of the Church's traditions, morals and standards.

CEREMONY TIMES

Wedding celebrations are scheduled as follows:

- Fridays: Call for times and availability
- Saturdays: At 2:00pm
 - The church will be open for your use a few hours before your wedding.

All members of the wedding party and guests should depart from the building by 3:20pm on Saturday's in respect for those arriving for the sacrament of reconciliation. This means that receiving lines must be cleared from the Gathering Space as well.

WEDDING REHEARSAL & TIMES

Wedding rehearsals are conducted by the Wedding Coordinator and are scheduled the day before the wedding at a time to be agreed upon between the Wedding Coordinator and the couple. All members of the wedding party, including the ushers and readers, should be present.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

A Wedding Coordinator will be assigned to you for your wedding. Once they are assigned they will reach out to you to get introduced. The Wedding Coordinator is responsible for the physical aspects of your wedding and rehearsal. Any questions about rehearsal and day of wedding logistics can be directed to them.

WEDDING FEES

The total cost of a wedding at St. Vincent's is \$900.

- A \$200 non-refundable fee, which includes holding a date for the church and PREPARE process, will be due at the time of your meeting with the Pastoral Minister.
- The remaining balance of \$700 will be invoiced to you approximately one month before your wedding and will be due two weeks before the wedding.
- Checks can be made out to St. Vincent de Paul and can be sent to Attn: Weddings.

BRIDE'S ROOM

A room will be available for the use of the bride and her bridesmaids to get dressed in. For larger wedding parties, it may be tight for all the bridesmaids to dress there so a large restroom directly across the hall from the room will also be available. Groomsmen are encouraged to arrive dressed for the wedding, as there is limited space available for them. The Bride's Room will be locked during the ceremony, so any personal belongings of the wedding party can be kept in here. The expectation is that the room will be returned to the condition it was originally in.

FOOD & BEVERAGES

We encourage you to be sure that your party is well hydrated and fed. There are a few specific areas designated for light food and beverages. The primary area is the corridor that connects the church gathering space to Regan Hall. This is a brightly lit area close to the Brides Room. This space is available unless there is another event happening in Regan Hall the day of the wedding. The second area is the coat area and small kitchen just across from the Brides Room. The third area is the West Meeting Room that can be used for resting for a large wedding party. In no cases should food or beverages be carried into the church or gathering space. You are responsible for informing all of the wedding party of this exclusion in particular during the photo session. Please clean up all food when you are done.

Smoking is prohibited throughout the building. Alcoholic beverages, mood altering drugs, and firearms are prohibited throughout the building and the grounds of the church property.

DECORATIONS/FLOWERS

While decorations and flowers can add to the beauty of the church, the primary mood or environment is shaped by people, not objects. Floral arrangements should never obscure or overwhelm the altar. Two smaller arrangements at the corners of the altar are preferred rather than a single large one in front of the altar.

If you wish to have fresh flowers in the sanctuary for the Wedding Mass or Word Service, plans should be made with a florist of your choice. Please note the large size of the sanctuary when considering flowers. Floral decorations, candelabras (must be liquid wax fueled), etc. are to be arranged by the couple with their florist. In planning your floral arrangements, you will need to consider the liturgical season and the Altar flowers and church decorations that will already be in place. Do not re-arrange the season decorations.

When using bows for decoration on pews, no tacky or glue-like substances or any form of tape are to be used. Floral hangers, rented from your florist work well. Also, large rubber bands, plain white ribbon, or cotton twine, tied to the end of the bow, can slide easily on to the end of the pew. No flowers or objects of any kind are to be placed on the Altar at any time. No exceptions.

Please note: Aisle runners and the throwing of flower petals, rice and birdseed are prohibited due to safety and maintenance concerns.

WEDDING ATTIRE

The length and style of Wedding dresses and Bridesmaids' dresses should be appropriate and reflect the solemnity and sacredness of a wedding ceremony.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING

Any pictures taken inside the church must be done prior to the wedding liturgy as time available after the ceremony is very limited. If any pictures need to be taken afterwards, they must be completed by 3:20pm. The garden area adjacent to Regan Hall is also available for pictures.

Only ONE photographer is to be present and filming during the ceremony. This does not mean that you cannot have more than one person for the staged pictures. The photographer may move around and take flash pictures of the processional and recessional. During the ceremony one photographer may be located with one camera on a tripod in section #4. The photographer cannot “roam” and take pictures during the celebration of the sacrament. If you choose to have the liturgy videotaped, only one video camera is allowed. The person doing the filming and/or photography remains in a single stationary position using a tripod. The tripod is to be positioned in the #4 wedge (ask your wedding coordinator) and there are to be no extension cord(s) across the aisle as they present a hazard.

THE WORSHIP PROGRAM

A well put together worship program can help your guests feel a sense of participation and involvement in the ceremony. The program should include the basic order of the service and the responses that will involve the assembly. Sample programs and assistance in creating/proofreading programs are available from the Director of Worship and Music. Please include the following phrase in your program: “Please refrain from taking photographs with or without flashes during the ceremony.”

ANNOUNCEMENT/BANNS OF WEDDING

Parishioners/Non-parishioners who are preparing and having their wedding ceremony here as well as those who are preparing here but are getting married at a different Catholic Church, will have an announcement in the bulletin before their wedding.

WEDDING LITURGY

In the Catholic Church, the Sacrament of Matrimony may be celebrated with a Mass or Word Service. The Sacrament of Matrimony is celebrated with Mass when both engaged parties are Catholic and with a Word Service for inter-faith couples. Both a Mass and Word Service will include biblical readings (refer to your folder for selections), a homily, the vows, the exchange of rings, and a concluding rite. The Mass will also include the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

There are also places where family and friends can participate in the Liturgy. These include:

- **Lectors** – Lectors will need to be chosen to read the first and Second Readings and the Prayers of the Faithful (Intercessory Prayers). Give your lectors the chosen readings well in advance for practicing. They should be present at the wedding rehearsal and be prepared to practice reading in front of the people in attendance.
- **Ushers** - A minimum of four ushers is advised and has proven to be effective. Keep in mind that a high percentage of those attending will arrive in the last 10 minutes.
- **Gift Bearers** - If you have a Mass, you will need to select two to three gift bearers to carry up the gifts of bread and wine during the preparation of the gifts. They should be present at the rehearsal for proper cues as to when the gifts should be brought forward.

PLANNING THE MUSIC FOR THE WEDDING LITURGY

You have chosen to have your wedding in a sacred space and in the presence of a faith-filled community, therefore, music for the occasion should reflect this. Wedding music is set in the context of a communal service of thanksgiving, praise, joy and the promise of love and faithfulness. All music (instrumental or vocal) is chosen in your required meeting with the Director of Worship and Music. Please contact the Director of Worship and Music at 763-762-7416 to set up this meeting.

CHOOSING MUSICIANS

Our parish staff musicians are generally used in the ceremony. Those who serve as music ministers here at St. Vincent's are active in our music ministry and are professionals in their field. They are also trained and experienced in operating our sound system and musical instruments. They know our liturgical practices here in our parish and are also trained in the art of cantoring and accompanying. The Director of Worship and Music will assist you in selecting your music ministers.

Relatives, friends, and guest musicians may also be invited to participate at your wedding in addition to the parish musicians. **All outside musicians must be approved by the Director of Worship and Music.** This request for approval should be discussed early on in your ceremony plans.

No prerecorded, taped music shall be permitted. If you require the services of other instrumentalists such as brass, string or woodwind players, contact the Director of Worship and Music who will help you enlist the services of these professionals.

GUIDELINES FOR MUSIC

- Wedding Music will be similar to what is presented at St. Vincent on Sunday mornings, as a wedding ceremony is a communal service of Christian worship.
- Music will be placed in the service in consultation with the Director of Worship and Music after having met with the celebrant.
- The singing of a gathering hymn, the Gloria, the Responsorial Psalm, the Gospel Acclamation, the sung portions of the Mass including Sanctus, 1 Acclamation, and Amen, a communion song and possibly a closing hymn/song from the parish hymnal is appropriate as this engages the assembly in the worship of God. Instrumental music is frequently used for Processional and Recessional portions of the ceremony.
- Texts sung by a soloist or vocal ensemble must be clearly Christian in emphasis. The inclusion of the word "God" does not mean that a text will be considered appropriate. All texts must be approved by the Director of Worship and Music.
- The Lord's Prayer is spoken by all as an act of worship, not performed by a soloist.
- Instrumental music that calls to mind a secular text is not used.

PREPARING FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

STEP ONE: Meet with the Pastoral Minister who will begin the process of preparing you for your wedding.

STEP TWO: Meet with the priest or deacon who will be officiating at your wedding.

STEP THREE: PREPARE

The PREPARE inventory helps you take an in-depth look at your relationship. It shows compatibility in relationships and areas of your lives that may need further discussion. PREPARE must be completed after your initial meeting with the priest/deacon.

STEP FOUR: Pre-Marriage Retreat

You will have your choice of seminars to pick from and we encourage you to attend the retreat early in the process. Some of the seminars are weekend events and some are a series of weeknights. *Please do not attend a retreat other than the ones given to you without prior approval.*

STEP FIVE: Meet with the priest/deacon

You will meet with the priest/deacon periodically as the preparation goes on or as issues arise. Please feel free to call if you have a question or an issue arises that you would like to discuss. At least six weeks before your wedding you must meet with the priest/deacon to complete the final paperwork and go over the readings and prayers you have chosen for your wedding. To complete the paperwork, both parties getting married will need recent (issued within the last 6 months) copies of their baptismal certificates. Reach out to the priest/deacon to setup this final meeting.

STEP SIX: Meet with the Director of Worship and Music to plan the liturgy and music for your wedding.