

Frequently Asked Questions about Getting Married at St. Joseph

What is the first step to inquire about getting married at St. Joseph?

You may either call the parish office at 319-377-4869 to setup an appointment with a priest or deacon to begin the process, or fill out the form found at www.stjoesmarion.org/marriage.

When can weddings take place at St. Joseph?

Weddings may take place on weekday evenings or on Saturday afternoons between noon and 2:00 PM. The church must be vacated by 3:30 PM on Saturdays. All picture taking must take place within this time slot. Weddings are not celebrated on Sundays, Holy Days, or during Holy Week. Weddings may be celebrated during Advent and Lent but the liturgy (ceremony) must reflect the season in terms of decoration and festivity. The date and time of the wedding liturgy may be set at the first meeting with the priest or deacon if the couple agrees to full participation in marriage preparation.

Is there a cost for getting married at St. Joseph?

The reception of any sacrament never requires a fee of any sort. Weddings involve upkeep of the church facilities. For non-parishioners (i.e. neither spouse is a participating member nor daughter or son of a participating member of St. Joseph), we ask for \$400 to cover this upkeep. For parishioners, there is no fee for the facilities. For both parishioners and non-parishioners, there is a \$35 fee for the wedding coordinator and the organist/pianist, vocalist, and other musicians will charge a fee that they set.

When will the wedding be a full Mass or not?

Ordinarily, if the bride and groom are both Catholic, then a Mass is celebrated. If either the bride or groom is not Catholic, then the wedding will typically occur outside of Mass. In that case, a deacon will typically conduct the marriage preparation and will preside at the wedding.

What are the components of marriage preparation at St. Joseph?

Marriage preparation at St. Joseph begins with an initial meeting with a priest or deacon to discuss your desire to get married at the parish and complete the pre-nuptial questionnaire. The next step typically involves completing the FOCCUS pre-matrimonial inventory, which may be done either at the parish offices or online. The preparing priest or deacon will then meet with the couple for a few sessions to discuss the results. Each engaged couple must also participate in one of the following marriage preparation programs: 1.) An Engaged Encounter weekend retreat; 2.) A Pre-Cana Saturday workshop; or 3.) Six sessions with a Sponsor Couple from the parish. Additionally, a free introductory session on Natural Family Planning will be available to attend at St. Joseph. More information, including dates and times, will be provided by the preparing priest or deacon about all these opportunities.

What will I need to provide to get married at St. Joseph?

For Catholics, a baptismal certificate that has been issued by the church where the baptism occurred within the last six months must be provided. For non-Catholics, a copy of the baptismal certificate is sufficient. Couples must obtain a marriage license and bring it to the parish office one week before the wedding.

Will we have a wedding coordinator?

The parish will provide a wedding coordinator for a \$35 fee. During the marriage preparation process you will be work with the Wedding Hostess Coordinator who will set you up with a parish wedding coordinator. A professional wedding coordinator may be utilized if he/she agrees to abide by all parish procedures and policies and permission is granted by the presider.

May the church hall be used for the wedding reception?

The church hall is available for use for the reception with the following stipulations: 1.) Availability of the hall on the wedding date; 2.) If the wedding is on a Saturday afternoon, the reception may not begin until 6:00 PM due to the 4:30 PM Mass; 3.) The hall must be vacated by 9:00 PM (including clean-up); 4.) There is a \$250 rental fee; and 5.) There is a strict no alcohol policy. To inquire about use of the church hall, please contact the parish office at 319-440-6940.

What are the guidelines that photographers and videographers must follow?

Photographing and video recording of the wedding can contribute to the renewing of this special event. We are happy to make the church available for photography, and we ask that you give us the name and address of your photographer/videographer as soon as you contract with one so that we can provide him or her with information concerning our space prior to the event. The photo and videography requirements must be followed to maintain reverence for this sacred liturgy. *No flash pictures may be taken during the liturgy either by the professional photographer or wedding guests. All photographs taken by the official photographer must be taken from beside or behind the seated guests (never in the sanctuary). All video recording must be done discreetly, outside of the sanctuary.* The wedding party may take posed pictures beginning two hours before the wedding time and ending a half an hour prior to the wedding so the church may be prepared for the liturgy. Because the church must be prepared for the Saturday evening Mass, there may be no photo sessions following a Saturday afternoon wedding.

What are the guidelines for decorations in the church?

Decorations already in place in the church will be in accord with the liturgical season in which the wedding is occurring. Additional decorations should respect the sacred space and complement the seasonal decorum. This is especially pertinent if the wedding is occurring during Advent or Lent. If using candles, please make provisions to keep wax from dripping on the floor. Your wedding coordinator can explain fire regulations. Candelabra need metal followers. Due to sticky residue, please refrain from using tape or other adhesive on church surfaces, including pews. You may tie decorations to pews with ribbons or decorative rope. Your florist can discuss options with your wedding coordinator. Ushers should be appointed by the couple to clean up and return the church and dressing room areas to good order after the wedding. You may not throw rice, birdseed, flower petals, or other objects requiring extra cleaning.

What facilities will be available for use on the wedding day?

Two separate rooms at the church will be available on the day of the wedding for preparation—one for the bride, her attendants, and bridesmaids and the other for the groom and groomsmen.

When will the wedding rehearsal take place?

Typically, the wedding rehearsal will be scheduled for the day before the wedding. The time will be dependant upon the church availability and presider's schedule.