



OLV **Wedding Guidelines during COVID**

July 2020

The following safe guidelines are utilized at all weddings during this period of the virus.

We apologize for any inconvenience, but safety is our concern. Thank you.

- Face-coverings/masks are to be worn in and around the church (even the photographers, and during the rehearsal). Please keep in mind this is for the safety of all at your wedding, including the wedding coordinators and the priest/deacon.
- Physical distancing is to be practiced in the church and on church property.
- Our total capacity is 140 persons:
 - ▶ Pews are marked “seating” and “no seating” and alternated so that there is an empty pew between seating pews.
 - ▶ For those sitting in the same pew safe distancing markings are noted for those who may not be of the same household.
- Communion is distributed by receiving at your seat. The Communion Minister will come to the recipient and after the recipient has replied, “Amen” they receive the host, remove their mask and receive (Not Applicable if the wedding ceremony is outside the context of a Mass).

Again, we apologize for any inconvenience. The following offer guidance on the ceremony while at the same time creating the most special environment we can. The rehearsal is a good time to share this with your attendants, family & friends. We appreciate your assistance since we only have two wedding coordinators at your ceremony. Please consider bringing additional masks for guests who may not bring their own. The priest/deacon will have a mask on if outside of the sanctuary area, or in close proximity of the bride and groom. Once the ceremony starts, though, all eyes, mask or not, distancing, or not, will be on the bride & groom and it will be a beautiful ceremony!

The Bride & Groom:

At this time the normal Bridal Room in the back of the church off of the Thayer Rd. entrance may not be large enough for all of the ladies with respect to physical distancing (more than 6 total persons). If there are too many bridesmaids for the size of the room some may need to wait outside of the room in the seating area opposite the bridal room. The Neumann Room may also be used which is off of the back parking lot (facing Thayer Rd.) with it's own outside door. It is a close walk to the Thayer Rd. church entrance (we have a way in if the weather is inclement). It is a much larger space. Groom and Groomsmen do not have a designated room, but may wait in the Gathering Area (which is standard).

Greeting & Seating Guests:

- Distancing indicators are marked on the ground outside of the main church doors for those entering.

- Please have your ushers thank your guests as they come in for respecting the guidelines we must follow.
- For seating, it would be best to decide before seating guests how many pews will be needed for attendants and family. If attendants are not of the same family they need to follow distancing—pews are marked for this.
- We ask that your ushers (groomsmen, perhaps) escort guests to their seat as they arrive thus avoiding any undue gathering.
- Wedding coordinators will assist as best they can, if needed.

Procession/Beginning of Ceremony:

The **priest/deacon** will be seated in the sanctuary for the beginning of the ceremony.

The **groom** will be to the side of the sanctuary (as is standard) coming to the front of the sanctuary area as the ceremony begins. Masks are not necessary for those in the procession, or parents/grandparents being escorted to their seats, but we ask that they be put on following seating. Bride & Groom should wear masks as their comfort level suits during the ceremony.

As most **bridesmaids/groomsmen** are not of the same household, we suggest having the groomsmen in place in their pew at the beginning with the bridesmaids proceeding individually up the aisle. Should the attendants be of the same household they are most welcome to walk together. This can be addressed to at the rehearsal.

Please follow physical distancing if not of the same household. Thank you. If the couple wishes both groomsmen and bridesmaids to be in place before the procession that's fine. If so, we'd suggest the Maid/Matron of honor coming up the aisle on her own with the Best Man already at his seat. Of course, the Bride and Dad/Escort would be as usual as would parents of the groom and grandparents who may be proceeding up the aisle to their seat; mother of the bride should be escorted (and usually is) by a family member where distancing is not an issue.

Readings:

Readers should approach the ambo with mask on, but can take the mask off for the actual reading. Readings can be brought individually, but we will have each reading set for them.

Vows:

If the Bride and Groom have opted to wear masks during the ceremony, it is perfectly fine for the bride and groom to remove their masks for their vows (and any kissing – we'd hope you'd do that). The priest/deacon will wear a face mask depending on distance.

Rings:

We wish to avoid any unnecessary touching and will address the presentation and blessing of the rings at the rehearsal.

Unity Candle:

If a Unity Candle is used, we ask that the mom's light the candle at the beginning of the ceremony (at the time of their seating); each approaching the candles individually.

Recessional:

The newly married couple have the option of our usual back down the center aisle and then loop around back up, or to the side as we do at Mass. Bridesmaids & Groomsmen will need to walk individually respecting distancing as they follow out the newly married couple. We ask that the ushers who seated your guests also invite your guests out one pew at a time (as we currently do at Mass). We would really love it if everyone could hang around the Gathering Area afterwards to visit, but we simply **can not allow this**. Anyone who is not in the pictures should be leaving the church after the ceremony.

Photographers/Pictures:

Photographers/Videographers, again, need to wear masks as all do and respect distancing. Please use common sense and respect proper distancing when necessary when taking your photos after the ceremony. Outdoor photos would not require masks provided proper distancing is taken into account.

Thanks so much! Hope this helps. It will be a great day!