



Wedding Guide for St. Joseph Catholic Church

Planning the Wedding

Who is needed?

1. Ushers
2. Lectors & EMHC*
3. Offertory*
4. Servers*
5. Music
6. Wedding Coordinator

*Not needed if Wedding is not a traditional Mass

There are several options and suggestions concerning this part of the planning process. Please ask the parish Wedding Coordinator about specifics.

1. **Ushers:** You must have a minimum of TWO ushers, they can be family or friends. They need no training to do this, they will help with the doors for the wedding procession, getting various people seated and some light crowd control prior to and following the wedding if needed.
2. **Lectors and EMHC's:** Friends or family members who are experienced Lectors or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may be honored to exercise their ministry in the liturgy. Only those who are experienced in these ministries and commissioned in their home parish may participate in this way. If you would like, we can schedule these ministers for you from the parish.

The Scripture readings and petitions are selected in advance by the bride and groom from a booklet given to them by the priest or given to them once they have completed the FOCCUS test. These selections should be provided to the Wedding Coordinator no later than two weeks prior to your wedding.

3. **Offertory:** Members of the family or friends may want to bring up the gifts at the Offertory time if your Marriage is being celebrated at a Mass. Since these gifts are to be used at Communion, those bringing up the gifts should be Catholic.
4. **Servers:** A server is required when your Marriage is being celebrated at a Mass. If you have experienced servers in your family, you are welcome to invite them to serve, regardless of whether St. Joseph is their home parish. If you don't have friends or relatives who are willing or able to do this for you, we will schedule a server from the parish for you. Normally, servers are not needed when Marriage is celebrated outside of Mass, but it depends on each Priest and what they prefer.
5. **Music:** Music must be coordinated with our music team. Please email music@stjoeshawnee.org to make arrangements to discuss the music options, including bringing in your own musicians and/or singers. If a parish musician is not used, someone will still need to provide access to the church and give direction to the organ and the sound system a fee may be charged
6. **Wedding Coordinator:** Our specific wedding coordinators will reach out and contact you a month or so prior to the wedding to start putting the final arrangements in place. Expect to:

- a. Review the rules and expectations of the wedding
- b. Tour of the church
- c. Sit down and go over the people involved with the wedding
- d. Talk about how the wedding will process upon arrival at the church
- e. All plans for the Wedding Liturgy including readings and petitions are compiled by the Wedding Coordinator.
- f. The arrangement of bridesmaids and groomsmen on the Altar (only a maximum of 8, 6 is ideal)

She is your best resource for any questions about the ceremony, the Liturgy, parish customs, or any other aspect of your wedding here at the parish including things like:

- Special Requests: Many couples, especially those with a strong devotion to Mary, opt for a visit and prayer to the Blessed Mother after the vows or, in the case of Mass, after Communion. When it is chosen, it normally consists of bringing a rose or a small flower posy to the statue of the Blessed Mother at the back of the Church. This is always done as a couple.
- Wedding Programs/Worship Aid: Guests will be able to participate fully more easily if the wedding liturgy is included in a worship aid, which they receive before the ceremony.
- Any question about anything else

Wedding Times & Due Dates

- Remember to get your Marriage License – you must have a Marriage License to get married. Make sure your Marriage License is at the Parish Office 1 month prior to your wedding day.
- The church will be opened for your use no earlier than 3:15pm for a Friday evening Wedding and no earlier than 11:30am on Saturdays...the wedding coordinator will let you in when necessary.
- Remember, the bride goes down the aisle at the marked time of the ceremony, not the wedding party, so please make sure your guests know that the procession will start 10 minutes before 6pm or 1pm.
- After the wedding, pictures may be taken but MUST conclude no later than 3:15pm for Saturday weddings, since Confessions begins at 3:30pm.

Fees: Fees can be paid in cash or check and made out to the names below of who are performing the service. Please bring all payments to the Rehearsal in envelopes with names on them

- Church (St. Joseph Catholic Church): Registered members: \$250 (you must be a registered member of the parish for at least 6 months to get this rate) Out of Parish: \$1,000
- Priest: \$250
- Seana Yearsley or Maureen Friedt - Wedding Coordinator- \$225
- Music: Fees are assessed for the music options including Piano, Organ, Choir or Soloist and can range anywhere from \$150-\$275 each
- Servers: \$20 each cash only

Church Expectations

- This is sacred space- no food or drinks should be brought into the Church. Small snacks and water can be brought into the bride's and groom's spaces but should always be left there.
- Children should always be supervised.
- No smoking is allowed inside the building.
- Alcohol is not permitted on the property. The consumption of alcohol or other drugs is not permitted before the rehearsal or the wedding. Any evidence to the contrary may result in the cancellation of the wedding.
- Please be respectful of the Narthex. The Narthex is a great place to make conversation, but we ask that you advise your guests to wait to mingle at the reception.

Church Décor Guidelines

- Runners down the main aisle are not permitted for safety reasons.

- No flower petals, real or silk, are to be used. Nothing to be in the pews.
- So as not to obstruct the view of the congregation or impede fire code regulations, the use of aisle stands topped with candles or similar lights is not permitted.
- Rice, birdseed, confetti, etc., should not be used. Bubbles are fine and to be used outside only.

Flower & Candle Guidelines (Please feel free to give an extra copy of these guidelines to your florist.)

- These guidelines are taken from the latest document concerning church decorations by the American Catholic Bishops.
 - The use of flowers and plants should enhance the celebration and not detract from the central focus of marriage, which is the bride and groom.
 - The decorations should never impede the approach to or encircling of the altar or any movement which would normally occur during the celebration.
 - Also, they should not obstruct the line of sight to the sanctuary area.
- Floral arrangements should not be taller than the altar surface (about 42in tall or 3.5ft)- we do have pedestals that are 10in tall that arrangements can sit on, but make sure they do not exceed the 3.5ft when on the pedestal.
- During certain church seasons (especially Christmas and Easter), the church is already richly decorated. These seasonal decorations used for parish liturgies may not be moved. The addition of wedding flowers will be limited during these times.
- The parish provides candles that normally stand next to the main altar and beside the tabernacle.
- NO unity candles are to be used.

Please be sure to advise the parish Wedding Coordinator of your decorating plans. Also, please check with the musicians before ordering flowers such as corsages for them. Many of these individuals have indicated that this tribute, while lovely and thoughtful, isn't necessary.

Photography Guidelines (Please share a copy of these guidelines with your photographer.) Our rules with the photographers are in place to provide the best photos and videos, while keeping the our sanctuary a sacred place.

- Please advise the wedding coordinator of the name of your photographer. This should be done as soon as you have a photographer committed to your wedding.
- The parish wedding coordinator can provide you with a diagram of the church that indicates several locations from which professional photographers may take non-flash pictures or where videotaping equipment may be set up.
- There should be no starting or stopping of the wedding processional—or any part of the ceremony—for photography.
- The photographer should not be intrusive to the ceremony or the liturgy in any way.
- “Roaming around” the church after the wedding liturgy has begun should be kept to a minimum so that the focus of the assembly always remains on the celebration at hand.
- There should be no standing on the pews or on chairs.
- The photographer should not step up onto the Sanctuary/Altar space at any time during the liturgy.
- Only the lighting already available in the church may be used for pictures taken during the liturgy; no additional lighting may be used.
- Additional reasonable lighting equipment may be used for pre- and post-wedding pictures.
- Any pre-wedding pictures MUST conclude no later than 30 minutes before the start of the ceremony (this is an archdiocesan policy).
- After the wedding, pictures may be taken but MUST conclude no later than 3:15pm for Saturday weddings, since Confessions begins at 3:30pm.

Remember that the church property has many beautiful outdoor spots for photography, especially after the ceremony. Depending on the season of the year, you may wish to consider photos in front of the church or in the prayer garden on the south side of the church behind the Adoration Chapel. Spend time with your photographer in advance and provide him or her with a list of the photos you want to have taken. This really speeds things up.