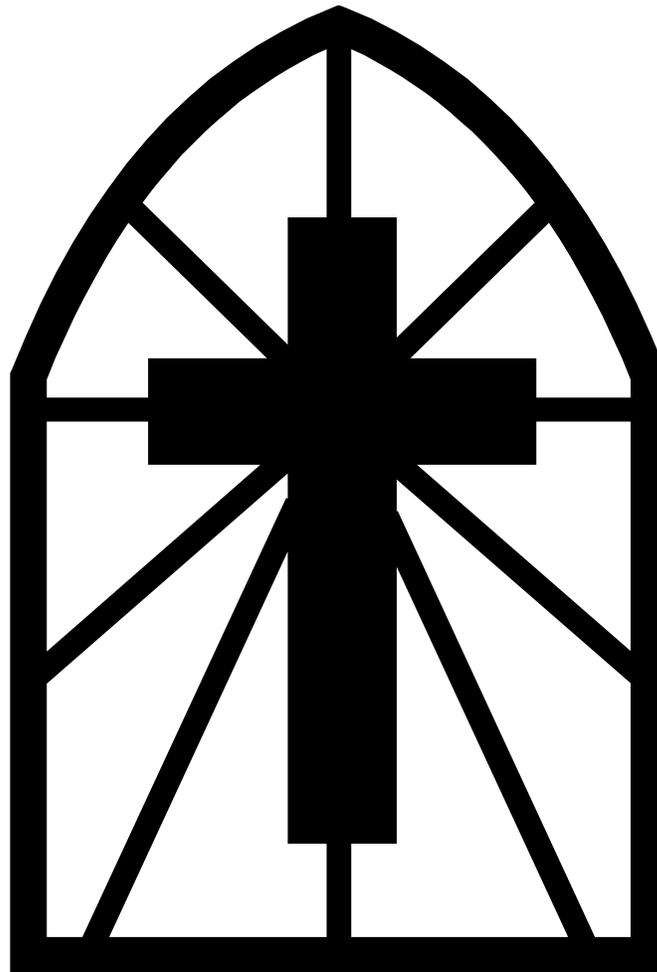


PARISH WEDDING GUIDELINES

(Revised 9/14/2021)

Preparing To Celebrate the
Sacrament of Holy Matrimony at
St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church



Congratulations on Your Engagement!

“The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring, has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament between the baptized” (Code of Canon Law, 1055 1)

We welcome you to St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church as you begin your new life as husband and wife. We are looking forward to assisting you in the planning and preparation for the Sacrament of Matrimony, one of God’s most precious gifts to His People.

This packet will provide you with pre-Marriage preparation and ceremony guidelines you need to assure you of a beautiful wedding day and better prepare you for your new lives together.

We are here to help you

Reverend Paul Hamilton, Parochial Administrator
phamilton28@gmail.com or 314.487.5736

Reverend George Staley, Associate Pastor
georgestaley@archstl.org or 314.487.5736

Lisa Wood, Office Receptionist
lisawood@sfastl.org or 314.487.5736

Jeremy Boyer, Organist
jboyer@sfastl.org or 314.487.5736 (ext.107)

SECTION I – PRELIMINARY PLANNING

Parish registration – The exchange of wedding vows in the Catholic Church (Holy Matrimony) is a sacrament when it occurs between two baptized Christians. All sacraments, including marriage, are celebrated in the presence of a faith community. Also, registration as a member of our faith community signifies your commitment to practicing the Catholic faith which includes regular attendance at Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist, receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis, and living other basics of the Catholic faith. For these reasons, we require that at least one member of the engaged couple (or one of their parents) be a registered parishioner.

Days and times for weddings – Wedding ceremonies may take place at St. Francis of Assisi Parish on Friday or on Saturday. To accommodate our liturgy schedules, Saturday weddings may be held at 10:00 or 11:00 a.m. or at 12:00 or 1:00 p.m. Friday weddings may be held late afternoon or in the evening. Weddings may be celebrated at St. Francis of Assisi during Advent and Lent, but we ask that you respect the prayerful and penitential nature of these seasons. All ceremony dates are subject to availability of parish calendar and priest.

Alcohol policy – At no time before the wedding ceremony is drinking allowed for the bride, groom or any member of the wedding party. The priest presiding at your wedding will refuse to allow the ceremony to occur if the bride, groom or any member of the wedding party has consumed or appears to be under the influence of alcohol or any controlled substance at that time. No alcoholic beverages are allowed on the church grounds.

Steps in sacramental preparation – The wedding preparation process is designed to help you assess your readiness for sacramental marriage. During this time an issue may arise that deserves more time and attention. It is better to address these issues during the preparation period when steps can be taken to resolve differences before the marriage commitment is made. Please refer to the following page for an overview of the process which can serve as a convenient checklist.

Marriage Prep Checklist

• Six to Twelve Months Prior to Wedding Date:

- Contact Lisa Wood (314-487-5736) at the rectory to secure wedding date and schedule an appointment with the priest. The signed registration form, and the \$100.00 deposit, must be received within 30 days of reserving the church. Your date is not guaranteed until they are received and you have booked your appointment with the priest.
- Initial meeting with priest to discuss the marriage preparation process, present Baptismal Certificates for each party-Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant. Catholics need a current certificate which can be obtained by calling the parish of baptism.
- Complete Pre-Nuptial investigation Form.
- Complete the Fully Engaged Inventory with your priest.
- Contact Wedding Coordinator at St. Francis of Assisi to discuss preparations.
- Contact Director of Music, Jeremy Boyer to discuss all wedding music, jboyer@sfastl.org
- Review the results of the Fully Engaged Inventory with your priest.
- Register for preferred archdiocesan marriage preparatory classes: God's Plan for a Joy Filled Marriage (see website) OR Engaged Encounter.
- If there is no Marriage Prep program in your parish please visit website of the Office of Laity & Family Life <http://archstl.org/laityandfamilylife/page/marriage-preparation>.
- If either of you are widowed or divorced & annulled please consider the Re-Marriage Prep Program: <http://archstl.org/laityandfamilylife/page/remarriage>.

• Four to Twelve Months Prior to Wedding Date:

- Natural Family Planning Introductory Session scheduled. (Call Office of Natural Family Planning: 314-997-7576. If possible you should schedule this class to occur after your Marriage Preparation class.)
- Certificates of Completion from Marriage Preparation Program AND Natural Family Planning.

• One to Two Months Prior to Wedding Date:

- Use the resources provided by the priest/parish for planning the Wedding Liturgy Sheet, email completed form to lisawood@sfastl.org 30 – 60 days prior to your wedding.
- No more than 30 days prior to the wedding date you must apply for a civil marriage license. For more information you can visit: <http://www.morecorders.com/RequirementsML.htm>
- Wedding Programs must be purchased through St. Francis. Contact Jeremy Boyer for details jboyer@sfastl.org

SECTION II – PLANNING THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Guidelines – Your wedding is an opportunity to express your relationship, your hopes, and your needs before God and a community of believers who gather with you to celebrate your life together. You will begin liturgy planning guide as the date draws near. When you meet with the priest who will preside at your wedding, he will review your plans for the wedding ceremony and make any modifications that may be needed.

The *Rite of Marriage* provides three forms for celebrating marriage in the Roman Catholic Church:

- I. The Rite for Celebrating Matrimony during Mass
- II. The Rite for Celebrating Matrimony outside Mass
- III. The Rite for Celebrating Matrimony between a Catholic and an un-baptized person

In the first form, the wedding is situated in the context of a Mass. In the second and third forms, Mass is not celebrated. Each of the forms is equally valid in the eyes of the Church; a wedding is not any more or less complete because of the celebration of the Mass.

- When two Catholics marry, the first form would normally be used. There may however, be circumstances in which the rite for marriage outside Mass is more appropriate for a Catholic couple. The second form might be a more honest choice if, for example, you are both Catholic but do not participate in Mass on a regular basis.
- When a Catholic marries a baptized person who is not Catholic, the second form will be used.
- The third form must be used when a Catholic marries an un-baptized person.

The choice of which form you will use should be made in consultation with the priest or deacon.

Music selections - All music must be approved 60 days in advance by Jeremy Boyer, Music Director. jboyer@sfastl.org

SECTION III – AT THE WEDDING REHEARSAL & CEREMONY

Respect for God’s house – Please respect the church as the sacred place that it is. We ask everyone to behave in a manner appropriate to being in church. In order to keep the church clean, food, drink and chewing gum are prohibited in the worship space. Food and non-alcoholic drink are allowed in the Bridal Room and cry room. Smoking inside the church building is prohibited.

The wedding rehearsal – Rehearsal usually is held at 6 p.m. the Thursday or Friday evening before your wedding. Rehearsal typically lasts one hour. All those who have a part in your wedding ceremony (except musicians) should attend the rehearsal to become familiar with their roles. Parents and grandparents attend as well. We ask everyone to arrive promptly. A smooth, well-ordered rehearsal makes for a less stressful wedding ceremony. We ask everyone involved to carefully listen to and follow the instructions of the Wedding Coordinator. Any questions or problems that arise will be answered/resolved before the rehearsal is completed.

Dressing rooms – The Bridal Room, for the bride and her attendants to get dressed is located in the basement. The groom and groomsmen usually come attired and will use the sacristy room to prepare. Please make sure after the ceremony that the dressing areas are left clean and all trash and belongings are removed.

Ushers – Ushers seat guests as soon after they have signed the guest book as possible in order to avoid a rush at the last minute. A podium will be provided for the guest book.

Flowers and decorations – We ask couples to keep their flowers and decorations tasteful and simple to keep the focus on the sacrament. When planning for flowers and decorations, please keep in mind the nature of the liturgical season in which your wedding ceremony will be held. For instance, during the weeks after Christmas and Easter the church may already be decorated with Christmas trees and poinsettias or Easter lilies and you will not need to do much more. Please notify your wedding coordinator if you will be providing flowers to place on the altar. Your flowers are appreciated by the Parish to help offset the cost of decorating the altar.

Your florist is welcome to visit our church prior to your wedding if they are not familiar with its layout and color scheme. Please have them contact the Wedding Coordinator to schedule a date and time for this. Flowers may be delivered on your wedding day one hour before the ceremony begins.

Memorial Candles: If you have a memorial candle, pictures or book you would like displayed at the back of church, please bring it to the rehearsal so that the coordinator can set it up for you on your wedding day. All candles must be LED candles. There is a small table that will be used to display it.

Pew Bows: may be used with pew bow holders, no tape or tacks may be used (there are 20 pews down the center aisle).

Bubbles: Are allowed outside when the couple is leaving the church. If you want this as a photo opportunity let the wedding coordinator know at the rehearsal.

Rice, birdseed, sparklers, poppers, real flower petals are *prohibited* from use on the church grounds. Flower girl(s) may strew silk petals if desired down the aisle provided they are picked up after the ceremony.

Please also note the following:

Runner - NO runners are allowed.

Wagons - NO wagons are allowed.

Dogs - NO dogs or animals allowed.

Photography & Video Taping

A Catholic wedding is a liturgical ceremony. Care must be taken to see that the Mass and marriage rite are not disrupted by the taking of pictures or video. Care must be taken to see that the focus of the congregation is on the altar and not on you. The parish Wedding Coordinator will assist you the day of the wedding. You may contact her earlier if you have questions. We ask for and appreciate your cooperation with our requests. Thank you!

- Flash photos may be taken as the bridal party is processing into and out of the church. They should be kept to a minimum during the Mass or ceremony.
- Photographers and videographers may not enter the sanctuary area.
- Please do not roam about the church once the Mass or ceremony has begun.
- Videotaping may be done from a stationary camera behind the baptismal font, and/or from the back of the church.
- Posed pictures may be taken in the church before and/or after the wedding. Pictures taken in the church following Saturday afternoon weddings must conclude by 3 p.m. to accommodate other regular weekend church services.

If you would like to be featured in the St. Francis of Assisi bulletin, please send a wedding picture to Lisa Wood at bulletineditor@sfastl.org.

Fees for Marriage Preparation Process & Church Ceremony

BRIDE: _____ GROOM: _____

Marriage Preparation Process	Amount	Date Due
Marriage Prep Program (see check list)	Varies	
Natural Family Planning Session (see check list)	Varies	
Fully Engaged Inventory (paid online)	\$25	

Marriage Ceremony/Parish Fees	Amount	Date Due
Parish Wedding Ceremony: Parishioner <i>Deposit due w/registration form 30 days after reserving the date...</i> (\$200 balance due 30 days prior to wedding)	\$300 -100.00	
Parish Wedding Ceremony: Non-Parishioner <i>Deposit due w/registration form 30 days after reserving the date...</i> (\$400 balance due 30 days prior to wedding)	\$500 -100.00	
FEES ARE DUE 30 days prior to wedding. Please give to Wedding Coordinator or mail to Rectory Office.		

Marriage Ceremony Fees	Amount
Presider (Determined by couple)	Varies
Organist (<i>See "Rite of Marriage Music Policy"</i>)	\$150
Cantor within Mass Cantor outside Mass	\$100 \$75
Additional Musicians	Varies
Servers (Provide stipend in cash, if possible)	\$20 each
FEES ARE DUE at the rehearsal. Please give to Wedding Coordinator.	

Acknowledgement of Understanding – Engaged Couple: We have reviewed the fee schedule above and understand the payment schedule. We will contact the Wedding Coordinator with changes or questions.

Signature of Bride: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Groom: _____ Date: _____

ST. FRANCIS of ASSISI WEDDING REGISTRATION FORM

BRIDE'S NAME _____ Parish _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Cell Phone: _____ Home phone: _____ Email: _____

GROOM'S NAME _____ Parish _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____ Email: _____

Rehearsal Date _____ Time _____

Wedding Date _____ Time _____

Your wedding date is not guaranteed until you have made your appointment to meet with Father Yates or Father Staley and you have returned this signed form along with a \$100.00 deposit within 30 days of reserving the church to: St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Attn: Lisa Wood, 4556 Telegraph Road, St. Louis, MO 63129

If a visiting priest will be celebrating your wedding, please send their name and contact information along with your form.

Name: _____ Parish: _____ Phone: _____

We have read and understand the Wedding Guidelines and the Fee Schedule. We agree to meet with the priest within 30 days of reserving our date.

Signature of Bride _____ Date _____

Signature of Groom _____ Date _____

Note to couple: Please let our office know if you plan to register as members of St. Francis of Assisi parish following your marriage and we will be happy to forward a registration form to you. Our best wishes to you both!

Office Use:

Date Received: _____ Check No. _____ Amount: _____

Date approved by Pastor _____ Date Jeremy was notified: _____ Date Wedding Coordinators were notified: _____