

# Wedding Guidelines

## Hamilton Catholic Pastoral Region

Parishes: St. Julie Biliart St. Peter in Chains St. Joseph

*Congratulations on your engagement and upcoming wedding! Our parish community is glad to be part of your preparation.*

### **Preparation process**

- Initial meeting with priest or deacon: Introduction. Process overview. Reserve date and time of wedding. This meeting should be at least 9 months prior to the anticipated wedding date.
- Instructional evening: You are to attend once. These occur on the second Thursday of odd months or the third Monday of even months. Please schedule with Fr. Rob to determine which month you will attend.
- FOCCUS = Facilitating Open Couple Communication and Understanding Survey: After your first meeting with Fr. Rob or Dcn. Jeff, you will receive an e-mail with a link that will take you to a questionnaire of about 180 questions that usually takes 50-60 minutes to complete.
- Mentor couple: You will meet with a mentor couple two or three times. At least one meeting will be used to go over the results of the FOCCUS survey.
- Second meeting with priest or deacon: Focus on prayer in the home and growth in the life of faith for you and your future family.
- Pre-Cana weekend: This may be completed through the Archdiocese of Cincinnati or through Engaged Encounter or through Ruah Woods "God's Plan for a Joy-filled Marriage" and "Living a Joy-filled Marriage." You will receive available dates at your initial meeting with the priest or deacon.
- Meet with parish music director: You are required to meet once with the parish music director to ensure that the ceremony observes the dignity and nature due the celebration of a Sacrament and liturgical ritual. Any music played as part of the ceremony – whether during the ceremony or as a prelude – must be approved by him. Guest musicians must also be approved by him to ensure their familiarity with Catholic liturgical practices.

### **Ceremony – Within Mass or Outside of Mass**

It is preferred that the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony be celebrated within Mass since all of the Sacraments draw their life from the death and resurrection of Jesus that we commemorate at Mass. There may be circumstances that make it preferable to celebrate the wedding ceremony outside of Mass – especially if many guests cannot receive Holy Communion as often is the case when one spouse is not Catholic. Mindful of guests who will not receive, a couple may choose to celebrate the wedding during Mass for the additional graces since no other action of the Church can equal its effectiveness by

the same title and to the same degree.” (SC #7) When one spouse is not Catholic permission must be received from the pastor to have the celebration within Mass.

### **Fees**

Use of church: \$200 for active parishioner\*                      \$700 for non-active parishioner

\*Active parishioner means that bride/groom or their parents frequently celebrate Sunday Mass at our parish.

Musician:            \$200

\$25 / rehearsal if guest musicians require more than two rehearsals with the parish music director.

Servers: It is recommended you provide \$10 for each server when Mass is celebrated.

Note: A guest celebrant or guest musician(s) should be provided a stipend in addition to the above fees.

### **Musician(s)**

You are welcome to bring in your own musicians or soloists so long as they are familiar with the solemnity of a Catholic ceremony. We ask that you inform the parish music director early on if you will have other musicians as part of the ceremony.

### **Time of ceremony**

St. Peter in Chains:            Saturday at 1pm or after 5:30pm.\*

St. Joseph:                      Saturday at 1pm or 7pm.\*                      Friday 5pm or later.

St. Julie Biliart                Saturday at 1pm or after 5:30pm                Friday 5pm or later.

\*If Deacon Jeff or a visiting clergy is the celebrant arrangements can be made for another time during the afternoon.

It is permissible to celebrate the wedding during a regularly scheduled Sunday Mass. However, the bride and groom would enter as part of a continuous procession with the priest and servers. Only one reading would be taken from the marriage rite and music options would be more constrained (but you might have a full choir).

### **Flowers, etc. Ringbearer/Flower girl**

It is certainly appropriate to decorate with flowers to recognize the joy of the occasion. We ask that you not rearrange parish flowers (e.g. flowers during the seasons of Christmas and Easter), though you may add to them. Under no circumstances are flowers allowed on top of the altar. Weddings during the seasons of Advent or Lent require flowers to be at a minimum to reflect the character of the season.

Flowers may be presented to parents during the sign of peace.

Flowers may be presented to Mary after the prayer after Communion and before the final blessing and presentation of the couple. This is a beautiful opportunity for quiet prayer asking our Blessed Mother's guidance and assistance as you begin your married life. After all, she was mother of the Holy Family in Nazareth.

At St. Peter in Chains we have two large, beautiful candelabra that are used to decorate the sanctuary unless the couple directs otherwise. Flowers may be added around the candelabra for greater effect.

The unity candle is not part of the Catholic ceremony for matrimony and is not permitted at the church. The symbols that are proper to the ceremony are the exchange of vows and the exchange of rings. If the unity candle is a symbol that you want to include that day, it can be set up at the reception hall. This would apply to sand or other performative actions that are not prescribed in the liturgical books.

Aisle runners and throwing of rice or confetti are forbidden for safety concerns. Flower petals may be spread ahead of the bride, but must be cleaned afterward by the family or wedding party. (If the petals are crushed it may require some scrubbing.)

Ring bearer(s) and Flower Girl(s) should be at an age by which they can make it down the aisle in a timely manner. It is recommended that they be 4 years of age or older. The priest or deacon celebrating the wedding will determine whether children younger than 4 are acceptable.

Decorations on the ends of the pews can be hung from a string (or mounted with a broad, padded clamp). It is not permissible to use tape, glue, or any other adhesive on the pews.

### **Photography / Videography**

Please remember that a Catholic wedding is a liturgical ceremony. Photographers and videographers must be mindful of this sacredness. Flash photos may only be taken as the bridal party is processing into and out of the church. Photographers are not to enter the sanctuary (raised area at front of the church) at any time during the ceremony. Video cameras are restricted to the balcony during the ceremony. The photographer or videographer must introduce himself or herself to the celebrant prior to the ceremony.

St. Joseph is not available for wedding party photos from 4:30pm to 6:45pm on Saturdays. It is recommended that photos be taken in the afternoon.

St. Julie Biliart is not available for wedding party photos from 2:45pm to 5:30pm on Saturdays.

### **Rehearsal**

The rehearsal can take place either Friday or Thursday before the wedding at a time agreed to with the celebrant or wedding coordinator. At the rehearsal you will be shown the area available for the bridesmaids and groomsmen to prepare (no such space is available at St. Joseph).

St. Peter in Chains: Friday rehearsals can begin no later than 5pm so as not to interfere with parking for bingo. Thursday rehearsals can begin no later than 6pm to accommodate choir rehearsal.

## Fenmont

The large hall in the Fenmont (property of St. Julie parish) may be used for your wedding reception if there is no scheduling conflict for the date you have chosen. Contact Betty Meiner (863-1040) for further details.

### Contact info (musician, parish office, priest/deacon)

St. Peter in Chains parish office:		(513) 863-3938
Fr. Rob Muhlenkamp:	<a href="mailto:muhlenkampr@stpeterinchains.org">muhlenkampr@stpeterinchains.org</a> *	Phone ext: 305
Deacon Jeff Merrell	<a href="mailto:merrellj@stpeterinchains.org">merrellj@stpeterinchains.org</a>	Phone ext: 302
Musician: Michael Collins	<a href="mailto:collinsm@stpeterinchains.org">collinsm@stpeterinchains.org</a>	Phone ext: 309

\* indicates preferred method of communication

### Checklist

Meetings with the celebrant	_____	(1 <sup>st</sup> 8 mo. – 1yr. ahead)
FOCCUS online survey completed	_____	
Parish instruction night	_____	(7 or 8 mo. ahead)
Meetings with the mentor couple	_____	
Pre-Cana weekend	_____	
Recent Baptismal Certificate sent	_____	(6 mo. ahead)
Meeting with Director of Music	_____	
Marriage License from courthouse	_____	(60 days ahead)

**Last revised: January 10, 2017**