

Wedding Guidelines

St. Joseph Church

Marblehead, Ohio



Congratulations! on your decision to marry each other and to begin your life together in the Church through the ritual of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Welcome to St. Joseph Parish here in Marblehead, Ohio. Thank you for choosing us to help you plan and celebrate your wedding and life together as husband and wife. We look forward to working with you to make, not only your special day memorable, but your lifetime as a Catholic couple.

God bless you both as you undertake this most holy of relationships and prepare for your life together. God is the author of marriage and his grace has called you to your decision to marry each other.

Since God is the author of this call, this vocation to marry, by its very nature, it is a holy venture requiring those who enter a complete and unreserved gift of self.

“The Matrimonial Covenant, by which a man and woman establish themselves in a partnership of life and love for a lifetime, is ordered toward the good of the spouses (each other) and the procreation and education of their children. The natural relationship that is marriage has been elevated by Christ to the dignity of a Sacrament of baptized spouses.” (CCC#1660)

The woman and the man are the principal ministers of Christ’s graces for each other, and mutually confer upon each other the Sacrament of Matrimony by expressing their free, open consent before the Church through the celebrant and their witnesses. This free consent is at the heart of marriage, as well as unity, a permanent life-long commitment to grow together as a couple in their love and in their faith. (Their principal responsibility is to get each other to heaven.) Another essential aspect of marriage is the openness to having children, caring for them and educating them for life and faith (the couple are co-creators).

In order to help you in your preparations to build a solid foundation for your new life together as you establish your home, we offer these guidelines and facts.

*Following an initial interview with the pastor, you will be asked to take an instrument, called **FOCCUS** on-line. You will meet several times with the pastor or team members to review your results. Another step in your preparation will call*

for your participation in a Diocesan pre-marriage program called **A Joy-Filled Marriage**. This two day weekend experience is held in Sandusky, Fremont, and Port Clinton. The final preparation is the scheduling of the liturgy, readings and music, and the time of the rehearsal for your wedding day. Please contact Mr. Ron Ossovicki, our liturgical and music director, to establish a schedule with him.

The time of the Engagement is a holy time of prayer, faith, and growth in your love for each other and in service to one another. It is as important as the wedding itself. Attending Mass each week and the Sacrament of Penance is an excellent way to help you prepare for a lifetime of love and grace.

May God bless you both abundantly as you begin this sacred journey.

Fr. Jim Brown

St. Joseph Parish Phone Number: 419-798-4177

Fr. Jim Brown: 419-277-4307 (cell); frjeb68@gmail.com

Ron Ossovicki : 419-798-4177, ext. 302;

Making Arrangements:

Before making any other arrangements or renting a hall, please make an appointment with the Pastor. Only he can set a date for your wedding at the Church. In most cases, he will want to meet with you prior to agreeing on a wedding date.

St. Joseph will be the site of marriages of those who are themselves registered members or their families for at least six months prior to seeking a wedding date.

If a priest or deacon from another parish is to preside at your wedding, permission must be obtained from the Pastor of St. Joseph and perhaps the Diocese of Toledo.

Traditionally, the wedding takes place in the parish of the bride. If the groom is Catholic and from another parish, he should notify his priest at least six weeks in advance of his impending marriage. This is so that banns may be published.

Church Fee:

The church fee for a wedding is \$300 and to be paid at the Parish Office at least two weeks prior to the wedding. A gift for the priest is not expected.

The Rehearsal and Wedding Time:

SATURDAYS: Mornings or early afternoons are available. Weddings are to start no later than 1:00 p.m. This allows plenty of time for a reception line and photographs afterwards. The parish liturgical schedule for the weekend begins with the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) at 3:00 p.m. Hence, the worship space and gathering space must be free no later than 2:50 p.m. Evening weddings on Saturdays are not permitted. The church space is available to you for a minimum of three hours, including decorating (flowers), the wedding itself, and photographs.

WEEKDAYS: Weddings on Fridays or other weekdays allow for more flexibility in terms of starting time. Discuss this with the Pastor so that a suitable time can be arranged. Please note that on the first Friday of each month, the church space is not available for any decorating, pictures, etc. until after 5:00 p.m., due to exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

REHEARSAL: Rehearsals are to be scheduled with the Pastor. With cooperation and prompt arrival, the rehearsal usually lasts no longer than an hour. Any decisions during the rehearsal will be made by the Pastor and the bride and groom, not by consultants or family members.

Marriage Preparation:

The Diocese of Toledo requires all couples preparing for a Catholic marriage to participate in a marriage preparation program. This consists of meeting with the Pastor for about four private sessions and attending a weekend Pre-Cana program, *A Joy-Filled Marriage*, (where several other couples will also be present).

Required Documents:

Baptismal Certificate: a recently completed certificate for each party is needed. Those baptized at St. Joseph need not obtain this certificate; the Pastor will do it for you.

Previous Marriage: Any previous marriages may require the completion of appropriate forms or a formal Petition for Declaration of Nullity (church annulment). Please advise the Pastor immediately of any previous marriages (regardless of when, where or how). He will help you with any necessary forms. The priest is forbidden to set a wedding date before any annulment proceeding is completed.

Marriage License: This is to be obtained from the Ohio county probate court in which you reside. It is valid for 60 days. Please bring the marriage license with you to the rehearsal. The Pastor MUST have the license before witnessing your marriage.

Parish Customs and Rules:

St. Joseph Church and Church Hall is a SMOKE-FREE facility. Absolutely no smoking is permitted anywhere in the building.

NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES are allowed in the building or on church property during the wedding or at rehearsal.

FLOWERS are considered a gift to the church; thus, they are to be left in place for the Sunday liturgies. During certain seasons, flowers may not be needed. Flowers may never be placed on the altar. Artificial flowers are forbidden. GLITTER in any form IS NOT PERMITTED, e.g. in flower arrangements or in the bouquets or corsages of wedding parties. Please advise your florist of this. No flower petals are to be strewn on the floor during the course of the ceremony since they would be crushed as people walk on them and stain the carpeting. Church environmental decorations need to be left in place.

An AISLE RUNNER is not permitted.

No CANDLES or candelabras are permitted in the aisles on the pews or in bridal bouquets. The church sanctuary candlesticks may not be moved. Unity candles are not permitted.

WORSHIP BOOKLETS (programs) often help the assembly to participate in the prayer and worship of your wedding liturgy. They are not required. Please consult the Pastor and Director of Music prior to printing your worship booklet. The printing is not done by St. Joseph's Church, but is the couple's responsibility.

SERVERS for Mass will be provided by the parish. If there is someone special that you would like to serve, let the Pastor know. It is a common courtesy to give each server a gratuity. A \$10 gift is appropriate. The Parish provides Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and an usher to operate our elevator.

NOTHING IS TO BE THROWN OR STREWN AFTER THE WEDDING (i.e., no rice, birdseed, confetti, candy, silly string, etc.).

BALLOONS ARE NOT PERMITTED, as they are a hazard to wild life.

The families are responsible for removing any decorations and equipment, which were brought in for the wedding (bows, etc.). The Church isn't responsible for anything left behind.

Photography and Videos:

A separate sheet is available for you to give to your photographer outlining the guidelines for photography at St. Joseph Church. Please see the Pastor to receive a copy.

No more than two video cameras are permitted. Both cameras must be stationary.

Cameras and video equipment are not permitted in the sanctuary area at any time during the wedding.

One official photographer is permitted. No flashes are permitted during the ceremony. The only exception is the entrance procession. The photographer is expected to be discreet and judicious in photo taking, so as not to distract from the liturgy.

Dressing Rooms:

The use of the Church Hall and restrooms are available prior to the service, for dressing.

Wedding Music Guidelines:

1. To begin making arrangements for the music at your wedding, contact our liturgist and Director of Music, Mr. Ronald Ossovicki, when you set a date. He can be contacted through the parish office (419-798-4177, extension 302).
2. It is expected that parish musicians will provide music at all the wedding liturgies at St. Joseph Church, as they are the most familiar with the wedding guidelines, local traditions, and the instruments and equipment (PA, lighting, etc.). Normally, only parish organists may play the organ for weddings at St. Joseph Church. Guest musicians are to have appropriate musical training, experience, and understanding of the liturgy and marriage rite. An interview with the Director of Music will determine whether the guest musician meets these criteria.

3. **Appropriate Music:** Since the wedding liturgy is a celebration of a sacrament, the music must reflect that sacramental nature. The music should be chosen with utmost care and consideration for the sacredness of the liturgy. It needs to be expressive of the Christian faith and values. St. Joseph Parish follows the music guidelines set forth by the Diocese of Toledo. These guidelines are to be followed for any wedding celebrated at St. Joseph Church. Most musical numbers from the past or present billboard charts, Broadway Shows, or movie soundtracks are not appropriate in church, as they do not reflect the Christian faith and the dignity of the environment or the Church. This type of music, as well as sentimental pieces, secular in nature, are best to be used at the reception. The Director of Music will be able to assist you in selecting appropriate music for your celebration, and will make all final decisions regarding wedding music at St. Joseph Church. All music is to be approved by the Director of Music, even if a guest musician is used.
4. **Use of Recorded Music:** The liturgy is a series of signs expressed by living human beings. In the marriage rite, two living persons exchange vows and symbols, indicating that they are becoming one new life together in Christ. The music used during the wedding should also be live. Recordings are never to be used to replace the assembly, the organist, or any other musician.
5. **Musicians' Fees:**
 - a. The fee for the Parish Organist, Ronald Ossovicki, can vary but starts at \$175 (the fee for a non-Parish organist can vary further still). This fee should be paid directly to him prior to the day of the wedding. This fee includes consultation with the couple to plan music for the wedding liturgy, a maximum of two rehearsals (30 minutes) with a vocalist (if needed), as well as providing music on the day of your wedding. Additional time needed is \$40 per ½ hour.
 - b. Vocalist fees are generally \$75 but can also vary, and you should pay the vocalist directly before the day of your wedding. Please check with your vocalist regarding the exact amount of his/her fee. The vocalist will be responsible for learning his or her own music, and will be required to have at least one rehearsal with the organist before the day of the wedding, as well as singing on the day of the wedding.
 - c. The fee for instrumentalists varies greatly depending on what is expected of them for the wedding. Consult with the instrumentalists you choose to be sure of their particular fee. You should pay any instrumentalists before the day of your wedding. Instrumentalists will be responsible for learning their own music.