



The two shall become one flesh. (Gen 2:24)

Guidelines for Celebrating Marriage St. Mary Parish

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Introduction

Christ has raised the union between a woman and a man to the dignity of a sacrament. It is in the sacrament of matrimony that two persons are joined together in a covenant, an unbreakable bond of self-giving love. Because it is touched with grace, marriage is a mingling of divine and human love. Welling up within the hearts of both bride and groom, it is this love that sustains and directs a couple as they journey together throughout their lives to their final destination: a place among the saints in heaven.

Married love, adventurous and unyielding, is meant to unite the couple intimately during their time here on earth. In the reciprocal offering of mind and will and body, a couple grows ever closer. Married love is, moreover, ordained for the procreation and education of children: matrimony creates a favorable space in which children can be raised; for shielded within the committed love of husband and wife, a child most adequately learns the very meaning of love. The Christian family is the “domestic church” in which virtues are fostered and faith grows.

It is not difficult to understand, then, how marriage affects not only the Church community, but also the civil community. The family is the basic unit of any society, and families necessarily flow out of the union between a woman and a man. It is primarily by means of strong marriages that our society is built up.

It is with all this in mind that we ask you to accept the responsibility of marriage preparation with utmost seriousness. This sacramental celebration will certainly be a defining moment in your life. That you might understand and appreciate the richness of married love is our hope. Please focus your mind and heart not on the smallest details of your wedding, but rather on the weight of the marriage enterprise which you are about to undertake.

May Jesus Christ, the very source of life and love, draw you into His own divine life and increase the love that you have for each other. May your days of wedding preparation further ground your relationship in Christ and open your hearts to the gifts that He has prepared for you.

Who may be married at St. Mary Church

Parishioners

Regular members of the parish may marry at St. Mary Church. To be considered a regular parish member, the bride or groom must be registered and active in the parish six months prior to the initial inquiry for marriage. Children of long-time members of the parish are also considered members and may be married without being registered.

Weddings of persons who are not regular members of St. Mary parish are typically not possible. A compelling reason or an emergency must be discussed personally with the pastor.

Please note that, according to Canon Law, the sacrament of marriage should take place in the parish of the bride. If this is not the case, written permission is required from the pastor of the bride to be married in any other church.

Second Marriages

If this is a second marriage for either party, the couple needs to provide the Civil Decree of Divorce and the original copy of your Church Annulment. No preparation for marriage can take place until an annulment has been granted to each previously married party. An annulment must be granted before a date can be placed on our parish calendar and before marriage preparation can begin.

Initial Planning

Appointment with the priest or deacon

As soon as a couple is engaged, they should contact the parish secretary and complete the initial questionnaire. A member of the clergy will then contact the couple to arrange a meeting.

While meeting for the first time with the deacon for preparation, the couple will discuss the marriage preparation program.

The Priest/Deacon, at that time, will confirm the date and time of the wedding. He will also schedule the next meeting with the couple.

Please note that the marriage preparation contract and \$200 deposit is due to the parish office no later than two weeks after the couple's initial visit with the priest or deacon. The contract and deposit will ensure that the parish will hold the anticipated wedding date.

The date and time for the wedding

Time frames for each scheduled wedding are as follows:

- **Saturday**

Weddings may begin between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Parties will have access to the building one hour prior to the scheduled time of the wedding and parties must exit the church one hour after the conclusion of the liturgy, being no later than 2:45 p.m. (Please note that a Saturday morning funeral may delay access to the Church.)

- **Friday**

Weddings may begin between 4:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Parties will have access to the building one hour prior to the scheduled time of the wedding and parties must exit the church forty-five minutes following the conclusion of the liturgy.

Marriage Preparation

St. Mary Church requires engaged couples to complete a marriage preparation program. There are several components to the program, all of which are explained by the priest or deacon when the couple meets with him for the first time. The highlights include the following:

- The couple must complete the FOCCUS Couple Inventory and discuss the results with the priest or deacon.
- The couple must complete the marriage preparation workbook *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage* by Christopher West. This is to be done in collaboration with the priest/deacon or facilitator for the program which is scheduled for two Saturdays and offered once yearly at St. Mary.
- The couple is to attend an introductory session on Natural Family Planning.

Documents

Marriage Preparation Contract

Attached to the St. Mary Wedding Guidelines is the Marriage Preparation Contract for the bride and groom which must be returned to the Church no later than one month following their first appointment with the priest or deacon along with the \$200, non-refundable deposit.

Baptismal Record

A certified copy of the baptismal certificate of both bride and groom is required (unless the Catholic party is marrying a non-Christian). Each party will contact the church of his or her baptism and ask for a copy of his or her baptismal certificate, with both *notations* and *parish seal*. This record must be no more than six months old.

Marriage License

The couple must have the civil license for marriage in hand at the time of rehearsal. (Neither the rehearsal nor the wedding can take place without this license.)

Please note that there is a five-day waiting period in Ohio. No license may be issued in less than five days (not more than thirty days) from the date of application. This is the case unless the Probate Judge, for good cause, waves the time limitation. The marriage license is good for sixty days. If the marriage is not performed within that time, a new license must be secured.

Applications for License must be made under oath by both parties to the Probate Court of the county in which either resides:

Delaware County Common Pleas Court

Probate Division, 145 N Union St, Delaware, OH 43015, (Hayes Building) Delaware, OH 43015

** Please refer to the attached link for updated procedures:

<https://probate.co.delaware.oh.us/formsservice/marriage/>

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please arrive no later than 4:00 p.m. to ensure adequate time to prepare your application and answer your questions. There are currently no evening or weekend hours.

Telephone: (740) 833-2685

Franklin County Court of Common Pleas, Marriage Licensing Department

** Please refer to the attached link for updated procedures:

<https://probate.franklincountyohio.gov/>

373 S. High Street, Columbus OH 43062, 23rd Floor

Hours from 8:00 a.m. till 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

Telephone: 614-462-3898

We strongly urge the couple to apply for their license fourteen days before their wedding. It is unadvisable for the couple to apply immediately before they are to be married.

Wedding Coordinators

It is entirely acceptable for the couple to employ a wedding coordinator to assist them in some of the finer details of preparation for their wedding day. However, the liturgical guidelines for the sacramental celebration of marriage in the Catholic Church are clearly defined. Outside wedding coordinators do not have a role in planning or directing the sacred liturgy, but are welcome to provide support to the couple during the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

A parish wedding coordinator has been delegated by the pastor to direct each and every wedding that takes place at St. Mary Church. Because he/she is trained according to the local and worldwide norms of the Catholic Church, the parish wedding coordinator will direct both the rehearsal and the sacramental celebration of marriage. (This same coordinator will assist any visiting clergy at the wedding rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.)

Our parish wedding coordinator will contact the couple prior to their rehearsal in order to answer questions and guide their expectations.

Rehearsal

The rehearsal will be held at the church the day before the wedding at 5:00 p.m. It may be necessary to hold the rehearsal earlier in the day or two days prior to the wedding date due to previously scheduled parish activities. The bride and the bridegroom, together with their family and wedding party, should be present at the rehearsal. We advise that any friends or family participating in the liturgy (e.g., readers) be in attendance as well.

The couple must bring the marriage license, programs and anything that will be distributed to the congregation following the wedding liturgy (e.g., bubbles).

The parish wedding coordinator will facilitate the rehearsal, which will not exceed one hour. At the conclusion of the rehearsal, we ask that the wedding party leave in a timely manner.

(Due to the ever increasing traffic into Delaware, we suggest you plan for extra drive time and advise your wedding party.)

Wedding Liturgy

Active participation

St. Mary Church encourages the entire congregation to participate actively in the wedding liturgy. With hearts and voices raised to God, all can pray with the couple throughout the sacrament of marriage, which is an expression of their faith. In this way, the liturgy will be carried out with the dignity befitting the liturgical tradition of the Catholic Church.

Readings

All readings at the wedding liturgy must be taken from the Sacred Scriptures. The couple is asked to select scripture readings as found in *Together for Life* booklet or online or as suggested by clergy.

Friends and relatives of the couple are encouraged to participate in the liturgy as lectors, provided they are experienced in this ministry.

Music

Only liturgically appropriate music may be used at weddings. The couple is asked to select prelude music and hymns for the liturgy in collaboration with the parish music minister. A wide variety of sacred music is available. Recorded music may not be used.

All guest musicians, those who are not associated with the St. Mary Music Department, must be approved by the Music Minister. This may include a brief audition to ascertain an acceptable level of ability.

Please note that the Wagner and Mendelssohn wedding marches, though associated with secular operas, are not found in the Catholic tradition and are not permitted at St. Mary Church. Please contact our Director of Music, John Blasko to arrange an appointment 740-363-4641 x 120.

Unity Candle

The unity candle is no longer permitted during the wedding liturgy. The common symbolism of the unity candle is that the side candles represent the family, the center candle the couple. Candles used in a liturgy properly represent only Christ, so to use the candles otherwise creates a conflict of symbolism. The appropriate place for the use of the unity candle is at the reception.

Offering Flowers to Mary

The offering of flowers to Mary is no longer a custom during the wedding liturgy. This custom goes back to when single women belonged to the Sodality of Mary. When a woman married, she had to leave the sodality. The flowers represented the woman's appreciation of that particular association with Mary. Because these sodalities no longer exist, the custom of offering flowers has been discontinued.

Receiving Line

We ask that receiving lines are to be held at the reception hall only, not at the church. Please relay this information to your invited guest. Also, the couple dismissing the guests, row by row, is not permitted because of the time factor. The Sacrament of Reconciliation begins at 3:00 p.m. Therefore, the wedding party must vacate the sanctuary and church by 2:45 p.m., at which time parishioners arrive for individual reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. NO EXCEPTIONS PLEASE.

Decorations

Additional flowers and decorations for the wedding are the responsibility of the couple. Together with a florist, the couple may provide additional floral arrangements for the church. These arrangements can often further enhance the beauty of the wedding liturgy. However, when decorating the church, we ask that no one remove, relocate, or change any objects or furniture in the worship space, such as candles, candle stands, chairs, tables and statuary. Florists and the couple must work in conjunction with the parish wedding coordinator to plan the placement of all flowers and decorations, as outlined in the contract provided. Two Altar arrangements are suggested for the High Altar.

Please note that St. Mary Church provides décor for the various liturgical seasons: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time. The decorations in the sanctuary of the church during Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter cannot be altered. We ask the couple to discover the liturgical season in which their wedding will take place; this will determine the way in which the church is decorated. The clergy are available for any questions regarding this matter.

We ask that the following rules regarding decorations be followed:

- No decorations may be placed on the main altar.
- No arches (floral or otherwise) may be used.
- No candelabra are available nor are additional candles are to be brought into the church.
- No tacks, nails, wire, tape, or pins may be used. (Pew bows and pew hangers are acceptable.)
- No fabric swags or ribbons may be hung between pews.
- No isle runners are permitted.

The couple may choose to leave two arrangements of flowers for use in the sanctuary after the wedding. This will not only enhance our worship space at weekend liturgies, but will also serve as a visible sign to the community of the celebration that has taken place.

Visiting Ministers

The couple should inform the clergy if there will be visiting clergy at the wedding liturgy. Clergy who have a relationship with the bride and groom are welcome at St. Mary. St Mary Clergy will also be present as well when this is a chosen option.

Smoking and Alcohol Policy

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on church property.

Consumption of alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited prior to the wedding liturgy. We ask that absolutely no alcoholic beverages be brought onto church property.

Dressing Room

***** Please note, this option is currently not available due to COVID-19.***

We ask that the groomsmen come to the church fully dressed for the wedding.

We ask that the bride and attendants use the teacher's lounge in the school for their dressing room. This room will be available ninety minutes prior to the scheduled time of the wedding. Due to limited time and space, we advise the bride and attendants to arrive with hair and make-up completed. The dressing room is available primarily for women to slip on dresses and to make final preparations for the liturgy.

Twenty minutes before the liturgy begins, the dressing room must be clear of all personal belongings. We suggest the bride designate individuals to remove such items.

Please note that the teacher's lounge will be locked by the parish wedding coordinator as soon as the wedding begins.

Because St. Mary Church is not responsible for lost or stolen articles, we encourage all members of the bridal party to place personal belongings in a secure place outside the church prior to the start of the wedding (e.g., their cars).

Photography/Videography

We welcome all professional and amateur photographers and videographers to the wedding liturgy. In order to maintain the dignity of the sacred space and sacramental celebration, we ask that these guidelines be followed.

Before the wedding, photography is available as soon as the church opens, ninety minutes before the liturgy begins. However, pictures must cease thirty minutes before the start of the wedding. We ask that all formal photography (with studio equipment such as screens, props, etc.) take place at a location other than St. Mary Church.

During the wedding liturgy, we ask that flash photography be used *only* during the processional and recessional. (That is to say that flash photography and spotlights are not permitted at any other time during the liturgy. *Please note this policy in your wedding program for your family members and guests!*) The photographer is welcome to step into the center aisle briefly for a limited number of photos during the processional and recessional, but he or she must not hold up the liturgy in any way.

Because photographic equipment of any kind is not permitted in the sanctuary during the wedding, we suggest that stationary video cameras be used in the balcony of the church (where there are live audio feeds from the church's sound system).

After the wedding, all photography or videography must be completed one hour following the completion of the liturgy.

We ask that photographers and/or videographers sign the enclosed contract and return it to the parish secretary three months prior to the wedding. If there are any questions or concerns, both the parish secretary and parish wedding coordinator are available.

Fees

There is a non-refundable reservation fee of \$200 due two weeks after the couple's initial meeting with the priest or deacon.

In addition to the reservation fee, there is a fee of \$500, which provides compensation for the celebrating Priest/Deacon, organist, cantor, servers, and parish wedding coordinator. This also helps to cover the cost of preparation materials. This fee is due two weeks prior to the scheduled date of the wedding.

Please note that if there is additional St. Mary clergy present at the wedding liturgy, there is an additional fee of \$100 per clergyman. If there is a visiting minister, couples are asked to provide compensation for that minister as they see fit.

Fees for additional musicians are arranged through our parish Director of Music, Mr. John Blasko: 740-363-4641 ext 120 - jblasko@delawarestmary.org and are an additional expense to the couple and the couple's responsibility.

Fees may be mailed or delivered to the parish office and credit card payments are accepted. All checks are to be made payable to St. Mary Church and distribution of fees will be managed through the parish office.

**MARRIAGE PREPARATION CONTRACT
ST. MARY CHURCH, DELAWARE**

(RETURN TO PARISH OFFICE WITHIN 2 WEEKS OF FIRST MEETING WITH DEACON OR PRIEST)

GROOM

BRIDE

Name _____

Name _____

Address _____

Address _____

City _____

City _____

State _____

State _____

Home Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Email _____

Email _____

Religion _____

Religion _____

Present Parish _____

Present Parish _____

Clergy Performing Wedding _____

Date of Wedding _____

Time of Wedding _____

\$700 (total)- (\$700 minus \$200 reservation fee with remaining \$500) ministers fee due, plus additional fees, if applicable, due on _____ (please insert date which is two weeks prior to scheduled wedding date). (date)

We have read and agree to abide by St. Mary Church Wedding Guidelines. Our \$200, non-refundable, reservation fee is included with this contract.

Signature of Bride _____

Signature of Groom _____

Today's Date _____

-Please return this form along with deposit to Mrs. Conroy at the parish office, 82 E. William St., Delaware, OH 43015, within 2 weeks following your initial visit with our Priest or Deacon.

***POLICIES FOR FLORISTS
ST. MARY CHURCH, DELAWARE***

We welcome all florists, professional and amateur, to enhance the church for wedding liturgies. However, the following policies must be read, signed, and returned to the parish office three months prior to the scheduled wedding date.

- The florist may begin the placement of flowers and decorations an hour and a half prior to the wedding.
- St. Mary Church provides décor for the various liturgical seasons: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Ordinary Time. The decorations in the sanctuary of the church during Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter cannot be altered by the florist. (The clergy at St. Mary are available for questions regarding this matter: 740-363-4641.)
- The florist may not remove, relocate, or change any objects or furniture in the sanctuary (e.g., candles, candle stands, chairs, and statuary).
- The florist may not place decorations on the main altar.
- The florist may not use arches (floral or otherwise).
- The florist may not bring additional candles or candelabra into the church. Candelabra are not available.
- The florist may not use tacks, nails, wire, tape, or pins. (Pew bows and pew hangers are acceptable.)
- The florist may not hang fabric swags or ribbons between pews.
- The florist may not provide isle runners.
- The florist must heed the discretion of the parish wedding coordinator when arranging all flowers and decorations.

Additional Notes:

If the couple plans to take roses to their parents during the wedding liturgy (Mass only), they will need a single rose for each parent present.

The couple may choose to leave two arrangements of flowers for the church for use in the sanctuary after the wedding.

I understand and agree to abide by these policies.

Name of Florist _____ Email _____
Daytime phone # _____

Signature of Florist _____ Date _____

Name of Bride and Groom _____

Signature of Bride and Groom _____ Date of Wedding _____

Please keep a copy of these policies for reference and please **return one copy to Mrs. Conroy no later than one month prior to the wedding date.** Further questions may be directed to Mrs. Janet Conroy at the parish office: 740-363-4641 ext 101 or email: jconroy@delawarestmary.org.

**POLICIES FOR WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS
ST. MARY CHURCH, DELAWARE**

We welcome photographers and videographers, both professional and amateur. However, the church itself is not a studio, but rather a sacred place in which a community of believers worships. We ask that all photographers and videographers keep this in mind before, during and after the celebration of marriage. Moreover, the following policies must be read, signed, and returned to the parish office three months prior to the scheduled wedding date.

- Photographers and videographers may set up no sooner than one and a half hours prior to the scheduled time of the wedding. Photography and videography before the wedding liturgy must be completed thirty minutes prior to the scheduled time of the wedding. All photography and videography must be completed and equipment removed no later than one hour after the conclusion of the wedding.
- During the wedding liturgy, photography and videography may be taken from the side aisles, rear of the church, or choir loft. (Please note that, if positioned in the choir loft, the photographer or videographer may not obstruct the organist's view of the altar. Moreover, choir chairs must be returned to their original place if they are moved in any way.)
- Pictures may be taken during the processional and recessional. That is, the photographer may step into the center aisle briefly for a limited number of photos. The photographer may not hold up the processional or recessional.
- Flash photography may only be used during the processional and recessional. At no other time during the liturgy may flash photography be used.
- Formal portraits with studio equipment (i.e., screens, backdrops, props, etc.) are not permitted in the church. Simple lighting may be used before or after the wedding liturgy.
- No church furnishings may be moved for pictures.
- Photographers and videographers may not enter the sanctuary.
- St. Mary Church is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged equipment.

I understand and agree to abide by the photography and videographer policies of St. Mary Church.

Name of Photographer _____ Email _____
Daytime phone # _____

Signature of Photographer _____ Date _____

Name of Videographer _____ Email _____
Daytime phone # _____

Signature of Videographer _____ Date _____

Name of Bride and Groom _____

Signature of Bride and Groom _____ Date of Wedding _____

Please keep a copy of these policies for reference and return one copy to Mrs. Conroy no later than one month prior to the wedding date. Further questions may be directed to Mrs. Janet Conroy at the parish office: 740-363-4641 ext 101 or email: jconroy@delawarestmary.org.