

THE BASILICA OF  
SAINT MARY  
OF THE ASSUMPTION



# GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS

Revised: June 2017  
Marietta, Ohio

**A Message to Engaged Couples**  
**Planning a Wedding at the Basilica**

*We at St. Mary's congratulate you on your decision to make a commitment to each other through the Sacrament of Marriage. Your wedding is meant to be a happy and meaningful celebration, one that you will long remember.*

*Now that you have decided to marry, you will undoubtedly be putting a great deal more time and effort (and hopefully a lot of prayer) into planning and preparing for the wedding ceremony. Therefore, we offer these guidelines and instructions to help facilitate your preparation for your life-long commitment of love and fidelity to each other as a married couple, as well as the celebration of the wedding day itself.*

*We have the responsibility of assuring that weddings celebrated at the Basilica adhere to liturgical standards. In choosing the Basilica as the place for the celebration of your wedding you also choose to abide by the policies governing the use of the facility.*

*May the Lord bless your preparations for this holy vocation!*

*V.Rev. Msgr. John Michael Campbell  
Rector of the Basilica*

*Feast of the Baptism of the Lord  
10 January 2016*

*“Today, there are those who say that marriage is out of fashion... They say that it is not worth making a life-long commitment, making a definitive decision, ‘for ever’, because we do not know what tomorrow will bring. I ask you, instead, to be revolutionaries, I ask you to swim against the tide; yes, I am asking you to rebel against this culture that sees everything as temporary and that ultimately believes you are incapable of responsibility, that believes you are incapable of true love.” (Pope Francis)*

---

## PRELIMINARY REQUIREMENTS

---

### **General Wedding Requirements**

- Minimum Six-month Preparation Period (during which you will complete 'Pre-Cana' or an Engaged Encounter weekend)
- Baptismal Certificate from the Church where you were baptized
- Witnesses (they do not need to be Catholic)
- Meeting with the Rector or the Parochial Vicar
- One member of the couple must be a baptized Catholic in good standing
- Both members of the party must be free to marry in the Catholic Church

### **Scheduling a Wedding**

#### **Parishioners**

Please do not set a precise date for your marriage/reception plans until you have a 1) meet with one of the priests at the basilica and 2) confirmed a date on the parish calendar. Please remember that your first choice of date and time may not always be available. The normal time for weddings is 1:00 PM on Saturdays. Weddings may not start after 2:30 PM so as to not interfere with Confessions and the Saturday Vigil Mass. When a marriage is celebrated during Advent or Lent or other days of penance, the couple must take into consideration the special nature of these times. Due to certain services throughout the year in the Basilica, particular days may not be available for weddings. Please also consult one of the priests about annulments before booking if they are needed. Once a date is booked, the couple must notify the Director of Music.

#### **Non-Parishioners**

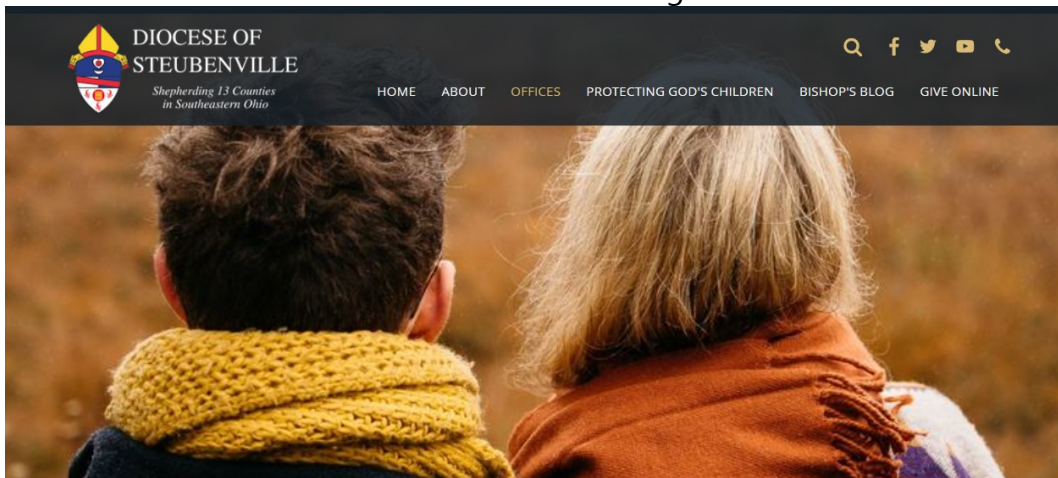
If a couple is not a member of the parish, they first must meet with their proper territorial pastor. Once approval has been obtained, please call the Parish Office to schedule an appointment with one of the priests at the basilica. At that appointment, please bring with you a non-refundable deposit in the amount of \$250, which is required to reserve the date for the wedding. See below for total fees. Weddings are normally scheduled for Saturdays at 1:00PM and may start no later than 2:30PM. Due to certain services throughout the year in the Basilica, particular days may not be available for weddings. The proper pastor must officiate the wedding and oversee the marriage preparation process. Once a date is booked, the couple must notify the Director of Music.

### Marriage Preparation

Two websites to explore are:



#### Diocese of Steubenville - Marriage Formation



Marriage preparation involves meetings with the priest/deacon who will preside at the celebration, and attending either a Catholic Engaged Encounter weekend ([www.engagedencounter.org](http://www.engagedencounter.org)) or the parish-sponsored marriage preparation day called Pre-Cana. Dates for Pre-Cana are announced in the Basilica bulletin.

A great variety of websites, books and articles are available to assist you in establishing a strong foundation for a life-long and joy-filled marriage. You are strongly encouraged to take time to avail yourself of these resources listed in “Diocese of Steubenville: Resource Guide for Marriage Formation”

<https://ecatholic-sites.s3.amazonaws.com/21165/documents/2018/11/Resources%20for%20Marriage%20Formation.pdf>

### Order of Celebrating Matrimony

*Between two baptized, practicing Catholics:*

Since the sacrifice of the Mass is the center of Catholic life, marriages celebrated between Catholics are generally celebrated after the homily and before the general intercessions (petitions). Thus the planning of the entire Mass – not just the wedding rite – is of great importance for the bride and groom. In extraordinary circumstances, the wedding of a Catholic couple may take place outside of the Eucharist.

*Between a Catholic and non-Catholic:*

In marriages involving a Catholic and a person of another religion, the wedding ceremony takes place without Mass. This is especially true if discomfort, misunderstanding or hostility would occur if the Eucharist were celebrated. However, the marriage between a Catholic and non-Catholic may be celebrated within Mass. However, the wedding of a Catholic and a person of another religion is best celebrated at a wedding in the context of a Liturgy of the Word (Scripture service). This is the preferred option at the Basilica. You may appoint someone to read the first reading, the second reading, and the General Intercessions (petitions), provided he/she is a competent reader.

### Reverence

It is important to remember that a marriage in church is first and foremost a spiritual ceremony. You should keep a reverent attitude and spirit at all times in the church. An interior and exterior quiet should be maintained out of respect for Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament.

**BE ADVISED:** Yelling, loud talking, and children running at the rehearsal, before the marriage ceremony, or after the ceremony ***is strictly forbidden*** out of reverence for the Real Presence of Christ in the Tabernacle. Absolutely no alcoholic beverages or other controlled substances are permitted on parish property either before the rehearsal or the wedding. Intoxication automatically invalidates a marriage. ***The priest celebrant reserves the right to refuse to marry a couple because of intoxication or discovery of alcohol or other controlled substances on church property.***

## Attire

A wedding is a very important day in your life and you want to be sure that you are dressed appropriately. As the ceremony takes place in a Basilica, the dignity and sanctity of the space must be preserved. To that end, there are certain restrictions on dress.

- Bride and Bridesmaids: No plunging necklines and shoulders must be covered while in the Basilica. Also, dresses should come down to at least the knee.
- Groom and Groomsmen: A tuxedo is the norm. A suit is also acceptable.

## Music and Scripture Readings

In order to enhance your wedding with the best possible compositions and to allow the full, active, and conscious participation of the people gathered, the Basilica parish follows the directives given by the Catholic Church in regards to music and Scripture Reading.

In order to plan your wedding ceremony, you ***MUST*** meet with our Director of Music to help oversee your musical selections. Other instrumentalists or soloists are permitted, but the coordination of the music must be done with the Basilica's Director of Music. Please do not make any liturgical and/or musical arrangements until you have spoken with the Director of Music. Audio samples of music suitable for weddings at the Basilica can be found at: [www.stmarysmariettamusic2.org](http://www.stmarysmariettamusic2.org) under the "Weddings" tab. The scripture readings are also available to view and choose from. Please fill out the two worksheets: "Music selections" and "Scripture selections", and bring to your meeting with the music director.

NOTE: There are certain musical selections that are not appropriate for Catholic ceremonies (such as the wedding march, "Here Comes the Bride" from Wagner's "Lohengrin" and Mendelssohn's Wedding March from "A Mid-Summer's Night Dream"). Please check with our music director to ensure that your musical selections are appropriate.

## Flowers and Decorations

Flowers and other plants may be placed about the sanctuary and the nave of the church, provided that they do not interfere with the movement of the ceremony. If the wedding takes place during a liturgical season where decorations are already in place, these decorations must remain in place. Please consult the priest for further instructions and clarifications, especially regarding decorations in the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent.

The priest-celebrant must also approve extra candles/candelabra or special cloths. Remember to have someone available to clean up all debris in and around the basilica.

If you place special flowers and plants in the sanctuary, they are to remain for the weekend Masses.

### Symbols of Unity

A “unity candle”, “unity sand”, birds (or other live animals), or any other symbols of unity are not permitted during the Rite of Marriage. These “symbols” are not a part of the Rite of Marriage in the Catholic Church.

### Rice, Confetti, and Flower Petals

For both aesthetic and safety reasons, the Basilica does *not* allow dropping or throwing of bird seed, rice or confetti inside OR outside the Basilica. The use of a runner is also prohibited.

Ribbon or Paper Streamers and Flower petals may be strewn provided they are collected and disposed of immediately following the ceremony. (Be advised that you must provide the person or persons to clean up the debris after the wedding.) Bubbles and bell ringing are permitted.

### Wedding Coordinator

The use of a Wedding Coordinator can be helpful in both the preparations for and execution of a wedding. The only approved Wedding Coordinator for use in the Basilica is Marcia Stewart of Ash-Hanson Flowers and Wedding Innovations. Her contact information is:

Phone: (740) 376-2679

E-mail: [marciaweddings@suddenlink.net](mailto:marciaweddings@suddenlink.net)

Website: [www.marciaweddings.com](http://www.marciaweddings.com)

### Photographs and Videotaping

Photographers and Videographers must never be an intrusion into the ceremony. Pictures may be taken during the ceremony without the flash but must be taken from behind or beside the congregation. At a Wedding Mass, no photography is permitted during the Eucharistic Prayer (beginning with the singing of the “Holy, Holy, Holy” and ending after the “Great Amen”).

Photographers or videographers (professionals as well as family members and friends) are NEVER permitted in the sanctuary at any time during the ceremony. Please consult with the music director before assigning a photographer to the choir loft. Pictures may be taken before and after the ceremony, **but no pictures are permitted past 3:30 P.M.** This allows those who come to Basilica for the Sacrament of Reconciliation quiet time for prayer and recollection.

### Preparation Rooms

A preparation room for the bride and her attendants is available on the side of the vestibule. A preparation room for the groom and his attendants is the social hall downstairs. It is the couple’s responsibility to make sure these rooms are left in good condition. These areas need to be vacated no later than 3:30 PM.

Please remember to have all personal items and litter removed after the ceremony. If this is not done, a fee of \$100 will be charged for cleanup.

---

## PARTICIPANTS IN THE WEDDING CEREMONY

---

### **Minister of the Wedding**

Typically, the Rector or Parochial Vicar officiates for weddings at the Basilica. If the couple are not parishioners, their proper territorial pastor must officiate.

If a Priest or Deacon is to witness the marriage who is not assigned to the Basilica parish, the couple must meet with the Rector at least six (6) months prior to the wedding for approval. The visiting cleric must also meet with the Rector for approval. If the cleric is incardinated outside the Diocese of Steubenville, he must make sure he has submitted a letter of standing to the Diocese of Steubenville ninety (90) days prior to the wedding. The cleric must also have a wedding license in the State of Ohio. If the cleric fails to do this he will not be properly delegated to witness the wedding in this parish and the marriage will be INVALID.

### **Attendants**

Attendants should be those people who hold special relationships to the couple. The maximum number in the wedding party may not exceed a total of 14 people (Bride, Groom, and eight (12) total bridesmaids and groomsmen). Flower-girl and Ring-bearer must be at least four (4) years of age.

### **The Wedding Cantor (Music Leader)**

All weddings at the Basilica are to have a cantor. Couples should be aware of the importance of having a cantor at their wedding who will be able to minister in the primary forms of pastoral music making; namely psalms, hymns and acclamations. In many cases, the wedding cantor will also sing solo literature appropriate to the wedding liturgy. At other times, a parish cantor will be present to animate the assembly's song and another soloist (perhaps a friend of the couple) will be present to sing solos. While this person may be a fine singer, he or she may not be trained in the ministry of the cantor; thus the need for a trained cantor in addition to the singer. Under normal circumstances, only trained cantors from St. Mary Basilica are permitted for weddings at the Basilica. We have a number of very talented cantors available for weddings. Please see the list of cantors on page 10. It is the couple's responsibility to contact the cantor and secure the wedding date with them. Cantors will set their own fee for your wedding.

If you have a strong desire to have another person fulfill the role of cantor, he or she must be a trained and experienced cantor at a Catholic Church. Additionally, this must be approved by the Basilica Music Director who will require a rehearsal with the guest cantor. The Music Director's fee for this special rehearsal will be compensated at \$15 per each half-hour.



## Wedding Program / Worship Aid

All Marriages at the Basilica are to have a program, or worship aid. Programs should be functional and help the assembly to participate in the marriage ceremony. After your meeting with the music director, a finished program template will be sent you. It will already include your music and reading choices, along with any music needed for congregation participation. The couple only needs to type in the wedding party names, and have the program printed through a local print shop. The Music Director reserves the right to make any changes necessary before printing.

---

### REMUNERATIONS

---

- Organist/Music Director\*:
  - \$175.00 Marriage Ceremony without Mass
  - \$200.00 Marriage Ceremony with Mass
  - Special Conditions for Weddings during the Christmas & Easter Season
    - Marriage Ceremony with Mass, within the Octave (8 days) of Christmas or Easter: \$400
    - Marriage Ceremony without Mass within the Octave (8 days) of Christmas or Easter: \$300
  
- Priest: No offering is required, but the customary offering is \$100
  
- Servers: A customary offering is \$10
  
- Cantors: Varies - contact your cantor.
  
- Basilica Fee:
  - Parishioners: If either the bride or groom is a registered member of the Basilica Parish, attending weekly, and contributing regularly for at least one (1) year prior to booking there is no charge for a wedding.
  - Non-Parishioners: For Non-Parishioners there is a \$1000 fee. \$250 is due at the time of booking. The proper territorial pastor of the couple must also officiate the wedding.
  
- Instrumentalists:
  - Trumpet: \$125
  - String Duo (Violin & Cello):
    - \$375 Marriage Ceremony with Mass
    - \$320.00 (1 hour) Marriage Ceremony without Mass
  
- Handbell Choir: \$300

**Basilica Parish Office**

(740) 373-3643

[info@stmarysmarietta.org](mailto:info@stmarysmarietta.org)

[www.stmarysmarietta.org](http://www.stmarysmarietta.org)

**Organist/Music Director**

John Ontko

(740) 350-4224

[ontkotb6794@gmail.com](mailto:ontkotb6794@gmail.com)

[www.stmarysmariettamusic2.org](http://www.stmarysmariettamusic2.org)

**Wedding Coordinator**

Marcia Stewart of Ash-Hanson Flowers and Wedding Innovations

Phone: (740) 376-2679

E-mail: [marciaweddings@suddenlink.net](mailto:marciaweddings@suddenlink.net)

Website: [www.marciaweddings.com](http://www.marciaweddings.com)

**Basilica Cantors**

Jean Cech (740) 374-3423

Melissa Corcoran (740) 703-7294

Bill Haas (740) 706-0387

Cheryl Nau (740) 516-1319

Karen Parlett (304) 464-4080

Jennifer Simmons (740) 374-6866



## DIOCESE OF STEUBENVILLE

### MARRIAGE CHECKLIST

*This checklist is provided for the use of couples preparing for marriage. Pastors may choose to modify this form (or create their own form) to accommodate the needs of their individual parishes, provided that they include all the requirements of the Marriage Formation Policy.*

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_ Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Priest or deacon preparing you for marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

Priest or deacon officiating your marriage ceremony: \_\_\_\_\_

Planned location of marriage ceremony: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **FIVE STEPS TO PREPARE FOR MARRIAGE**

---

##### **Step 1 - Meetings with Priest or Deacon**

*Six to twelve months prior to the anticipated wedding date, the engaged couple will meet with the priest or deacon who will be preparing them for marriage. The forms (or similar) found in appendix C of the Diocesan Policy are completed with the priest at this time.*

- Initial Meeting
- Subsequent Meetings (if needed)

##### **Step 2 - Comprehensive Introduction to the Theology of the Body\***

*The engaged couple must complete an introduction to the Theology of the Body.*

- Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_ Material or Program Used: \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Step 3 - Marriage Life-Skills Workshop or Retreat**

*The engaged couple must attend an approved marriage life-skills workshop or retreat. A certificate of completion is to be placed in the couple's file.*

- Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Step 4 - Course in Natural Family Planning\***

*Each couple must attend a diocesan-approved course in natural family planning. A certificate of completion is to be placed in the couple's file.*

- Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Method Learned: \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Step 5 – Music and Ceremony Planning with the Music Director - Finalize Preparations**

*Approx. 3 months prior to the wedding date, the engaged couple will meet with the music director/organist. Any final preparations with the priest who will be officiating at the wedding should be completed and all necessary documentation received.*

- Meeting with Music Director/Organist completed
- Any final preparations completed / all documentation received?

#### **OTHER DETAILS**

---

- State of Ohio Marriage License (must be presented to the priest at the wedding rehearsal)
- Copies of Baptismal Certificates (necessary only if you were not baptized at St. Mary Basilica)
- Letter of permission (from the pastor of a non-parishioner marrying at the Basilica)
- Decree(s) of Annulment (if Applicable)
- Written Approval of Delegation (if Applicable)
- Date for Wedding Rehearsal established

\* See the website of the Office of Marriage, Family and Respect Life for options: [www.diosteub.org/family](http://www.diosteub.org/family)