



**ST. FRANCIS of ASSISI
PARISH
GUIDELINES FOR
MARRIAGE PREPARATION**

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Mentoring Couples

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Wedding Coordinators

Terry and Carol Comer(937) 433-3764

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CONGRATULATIONS!

We are excited to be walking with you on your journey towards your wedding day and further onto a beautiful, life-long marriage! These guidelines will give you a brief explanation of what you need to know to make your wedding ceremony beautiful! Please refer to your wedding packet for greater detail.



THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

"The sacrament of marriage is not a social convention, an empty ritual or merely the outward sign of a commitment. The sacrament is a gift given for the sanctification and salvation of the spouses, since "their mutual belonging is a real representation, through the sacramental sign, of the same relationship between Christ and the Church. The married couple is therefore a permanent reminder for the Church of what took place on the cross; they are for one another and for their children witnesses of the salvation in which they share through the sacrament."

Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia

YOUR CHECKLIST

- ✓ Make the initial contact with your priest/ deacon at least six months before your wedding to get acquainted and start the process.
- ✓ After your initial visit, the Marriage Ministry Coordinator will contact you regarding your mentor couple and the next steps in your preparation.
- ✓ Participate in the Engaged Couples Blessing at Mass with other engaged couples. This is a simple Rite of Blessing with the assembled community at one of the 11:00 a.m. Sunday liturgies in February and September. It gives the community of St. Francis not only a chance to know who is getting married, but it also gives us the chance to pray for you!
- ✓ Attend a Pre-Cana Retreat or Engaged Encounter Weekend.
- ✓ Meet with the parish Wedding Coordinator.
- ✓ Meet with the parish Music Director .
- ✓ Schedule the final meeting(s) with the priest or deacon. Fees and gratuities should be paid at this time.

PAPERWORK NEEDED BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

- Baptismal Certificate(s) issued within 6 months of your wedding from the parish of your baptism.
- Genesis, Ruah Woods, or Engaged Encounter certificate.
- A NFP class certificate

Please check the Marriage Preparation page of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati website for available options and days. This is a wonderful retreat opportunity for you and your fiancé!

Marriage License obtained from Montgomery County Probate Court (937-225-4656). Call this number right away to verify that this is the correct Court through which to apply. Please give your license to your Priest/Deacon **within 60 days of your wedding.**

THINGS TO KNOW

The Date: All wedding dates are tentative until you meet with your Priest or Deacon to establish a firm date and time.

The Time: Your wedding may be any day of the week including Sunday (at one of the regularly scheduled weekend Masses). If Saturday is your preferred day, 2:00 p.m. is the ideal time. Another consideration on Saturday, 5:00 p.m. (at the regularly scheduled Mass).

The Celebrant: Ordinarily our Priest or Deacon will officiate at your wedding. A visiting priest is always welcome at St. Francis. There may be occasions when a priest friend of the family is the celebrant or co-celebrant. Please discuss this with the Pastor of St. Francis so he can participate with you in extending the invitation.

Wedding Mass: A wedding between two baptized Catholics is usually celebrated within Mass.

Liturgy of the Word: An interfaith marriage is usually celebrated within a Liturgy of the Word (without Communion). In this way all guests may participate fully in the

entire wedding ceremony. A marriage between a baptized Catholic and a non-baptized person would always take place in the context of Liturgy of the Word. A visiting minister/rabbi would be welcome to participate. Please discuss this with your Priest or Deacon so he can participate with you in extending the invitation.

Use of the Church: The Church and other requested rooms will be available to you (in most instances) two hours prior and one hour after your wedding.

Banns of Matrimony: It is an ancient custom to publicize a marriage in the parishes of the marrying parties for the purpose of discovering any impediments to the marriage. Your Banns will be published in the parish bulletin for three consecutive weeks prior to your wedding.



Wedding Coordinator: The parish Wedding Coordinator's primary responsibility is to assist you and your family in such a way that you are free to concentrate on the spiritual aspects of your wedding. Several months prior to your wedding date, a coordinator will contact you to schedule a time to meet and acquaint you with the facilities at St. Francis and to discuss arrangements for your particular celebration. The coordinator will be on hand to guide you and your wedding party through the rehearsal and to be with you on your wedding day to help the day run as smoothly as possible.

Music: The music for your wedding is an important part of the celebration and its primary purpose is to help people pray. You will need to meet with the Music Director who will answer your questions and assist you with the selection of sacred and liturgical music. Music selection is based upon the guidelines of the Worship Office of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Plan to meet with the Music Director after the first meeting with your priest/deacon. It is preferred that parish musicians provide the music for your wedding. They are familiar with parish wedding guidelines and the instruments and equipment used at St. Francis.



You may choose to integrate instruments such as flute, trumpet, and/or violin into your ceremony. The music director has a list of talented musicians who can be available to play at your wedding.

You may want to consider utilizing the adult choir.

Guest musicians who are competent and experienced are welcome as soloists (either vocalists or instrumentalists) with prior approval of the Music Director. Guest musicians not being accompanied by the Music Director must submit, in writing, a list of the planned music. The Director will need to approve the selections at least six weeks before your wedding.

It is customary to pay the musicians involved in your wedding since this work falls outside of their regularly contracted work with the parish.

MORE TO KNOW

Flowers: If you wish to have a floral arrangement for your wedding, please consider a simple one. Flowers or plants may not be placed in front of the altar or ambo. This space needs to be accessible so that people can freely move around.

During Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter, our worship space is prepared to enhance the liturgy in a seasonally appropriate way. Therefore, during these times, our flowers, greenery or hangings must remain in place.



Aisle Runner: Because of safety concerns, the use of an aisle runner is not permitted.

Reception Line: If time allows, you may have a receiving line. Please remember you have just one hour in the Church after your ceremony ends. We must be punctual as other weddings and/or Mass follow your special day.

Tobacco and Alcohol: Smoking is only permitted outdoors. No alcohol of any kind is permitted on church property. Since alcohol impairs your ability to make decisions, the priest/ deacon could refuse to marry you if it seems you are intoxicated. Please postpone your celebratory toasts until after the ceremony.

Photography and Videography: Photographs may be taken, flash or otherwise, before/after the ceremony and as the bridal party is entering and leaving the worship space. Once the sacrament begins, the photographer is limited to the back four pews. No flash may be used during the Mass. We ask that they do not walk around during the ceremony in order to maintain the dignity and religious aspect of the celebration.



Departure Traditions: Traditionally rice or other items are thrown onto the newly married couple as they leave the church. Unfortunately this tradition can cause safety hazards. Therefore only the use of bubbles is permitted outside the building.

Additional Details: Have someone responsible for: Pinning on corsages and boutonnieres.

Removing personal items from the dressing rooms after your wedding (The rooms will be locked during the ceremony for security).

Removing any flowers, vases, arrangements, bows or candles that you wish to keep (The wedding coordinators will discard anything left behind).

Guest book signing and picking up the book and pens after the ceremony.

Distributing programs at the entrance doors beginning 1/2 hour before the ceremony and collect any programs remaining in the pews after the ceremony.



SUGGESTED FEES & GRATUITIES

Church: An offering to the parish on behalf of the couple is appropriate. An amount of \$500 (\$300 for registered parishioners) will be appreciated to assist with the maintenance and utility costs for the church. The check should be made payable to St. Francis of Assisi Parish.

Marriage Mentoring: FOCCUS Fee—\$20.00 made payable to St. Francis of Assisi Parish.

Presider: Gratuities to presiders are graciously accepted. **You may write a check to your presider* or give cash.** *If you would like to give a gratuity to Fr. Brian, please make the check payable to St. Francis of Assisi Parish.

Music Director: Included in the Music Director's fee is a private consultation with you, preparation and rehearsal time, bookings for additional musicians (if desired), sound equipment setup in addition to providing the music for your wedding. The fee for this service is \$200. The check should be made payable to St. Francis of Assisi Parish.

Parish Musicians: The fees for additional musicians vary. Trumpet players—\$65 to \$100; other instrumentalists—\$50 to \$100; vocalists—\$50 to \$75. Information about available talent and their fees will be discussed and agreed upon during the planning meeting with the Music Director.

Altar Servers: Depending on the size of your wedding, one or two altar servers are required to assist the deacon or priest. Unless you have specific servers in mind, the wedding coordinators will arrange for altar servers. A gratuity of \$10 each, in cash, is recommended.

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