



# *Covenant*

*Guide to the Celebration of  
the Sacrament of Matrimony*

*St. Peter Church  
Huron, Ohio*

Revised May 28, 2021

## **Impediments**

Alcohol and/or drugs are an impediment to marriage. If a bride or groom is found to be drinking and/or using drugs before the wedding, the wedding will be postponed to a later date. We ask that you take this seriously and enter the ceremony with a spirit of reverence. It should also be noted that if members of the wedding party have been drinking and/or using drugs before the ceremony, they will not participate in the ceremony. There will be no use of alcoholic beverages or drugs in any form on church property.

## **Civil Requirements**

The current civil requirements for marriage in the State of Ohio are as follows:

- The license may be issued the same date as the application if the court is satisfied.
- The license is valid for 60 days.
- Ohio residents may obtain a marriage license in any Ohio county. Non-residents of Ohio must obtain their marriage license from Erie County.
- The minimum age for marriage is 18 for males and 16 for females.
- The license can be obtained at Probate Court.

## **Required Documents**

Required documents needed at or before the wedding rehearsal are:

- Marriage License
- Planning Sheet & Participant Sheet
- Newly issued Baptismal Certificate with notations (as soon as possible)

There will be no rehearsal or wedding without these documents.

## Aisle Runner

**Because the main aisle is carpeted and out of concern for safety, the use of an aisle runner is prohibited.**

## Offerings and Fees

St. Peter Church promotes the concept of sacrificial thank you offerings at the time sacraments are celebrated. We suggest an **offering** of gratitude to God for His blessings in the form of a percentage of the cost of the wedding, **in the range of 2-4 percent**. This offering is usually made **before** the wedding

**A \$200 deposit is required at the time of reserving your date. This becomes part of the offering of gratitude given to the church.** A portion of the fee is for the parish Wedding Coordinator and supplying of a priest in good standing to preside at wedding. The fee for non-parishioners is \$400.

Fees for the organist, musicians, and soloists are arranged at the time you reserve their services. However, **those fees along with the server fee (e.g. \$20 to each server)** can be given to the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal for distribution to the proper people.

In contrast with earlier church practices, the priest or deacon **no longer receives the stipend (fee) for the wedding. It goes entirely to the parish.** A gift meant for the minister of your wedding should be clearly marked as such.

\*If you would like the presider to attend the wedding reception (if he is available) you will need to invite him - he will not assume he is invited.

## Celebrating Matrimony at St. Peter Parish

Weddings are special and joyful times for brides and grooms, for their families and friends, and for the parish community. The new beginning, the love, the promise hope of a wedding makes its celebration a special and grace-filled time in our lives. The Church welcomes its members to celebrate and solemnize their marriage in the context of our prayer as Christians. Indeed, so important is marriage in Christian life that it is called a Sacrament, an instrument of God's grace.

Our celebrations of the Sacraments, marriage included, are always rooted in listening to the Scriptures so that we can be nourished and strengthened by God's Word. We always celebrate the Sacraments as a community. We gather our brothers and sisters in faith and ask for their prayerful support. These celebrations are incomplete unless they are filled with song, with prayerful gestures and with silence in which we hear the voice of God in our lives.

In this spirit, St. Peter Parish provides the following guidelines for celebrating weddings in the building which shelters the prayer of our community.

## Marriage Preparation

1. During the introductory session with the pastor, a complete explanation of the program is given and a **specific marriage preparation plan** fitted to the needs of the couple is developed.
2. Contact the church office at 433-5725 to get in touch with the Music Director and Wedding Coordinator. It is important to meet with the Music Director to plan all music for the wedding. The music for the wedding should be planned at least six weeks in advance. The Wedding Coordinator will assist with rehearsal and wedding day schedules as well as review our guidelines. See the Wedding Coordinator section for more details.
3. Each couple is required to participate in the parish preparation program. Details will be given at the initial meeting with the pastor.
4. Couples are encouraged to participate in a Natural Family Planning information conference.

## Wedding Pictures

While the church is not a studio, there is certainly a place for tasteful photography. We ask that you convey the following limitations to your photographer and others taking pictures or videos.

1. During the ceremony, the photographer may not be in front of the pews, or in the sanctuary area.
2. Except for the processional and recessional, a flash attachment should not be used during the ceremony.
3. If you choose to have formal pictures following your ceremony, please be conscious of the time should there be another wedding scheduled. **(Be out of church at least one-half hour before the next wedding.)** For a 2:00 PM Saturday Wedding you must be out of church by 4:00 PM.
4. Video-taping is permitted as long as it is done from the loft or in the side aisles. **Videographers may NOT be in front of the pews.** The use of Flood lights is **NOT** permitted.
5. Photographers are not permitted in the main aisle at any time during the wedding - before, during or recessional.

## Rice/Flower Petals Throwing

**The use of rice or bird seed is prohibited.** We would suggest a more appropriate custom would be preparing an offering for the poor. This could be included at the presentation of the gifts during your wedding liturgy. For ecological reasons, balloons are also restricted from usage.

Bubbles, bells, or noisemakers are suitable substitutes for rice or bird seed. Please consider things that cannot be tracked into church. Thank you for your consideration.

**Flower petals - real or artificial - may not be thrown as part of the processional or recessional.**

## Music (continued):

Guest vocalists and musicians are welcome and are subject to these guidelines. Guest musicians are required to contact our Music Director so that they may have a better understanding of the wedding liturgy. It is the desire of all that the liturgy flows as smoothly as possible. Please keep in mind that when a guest organist plays for a wedding, you are asking our Music Director to step aside and sacrifice income that is a regular part of his livelihood. Therefore, it is appropriate for the Music Director to request a “vacating the bench” fee when an outside organist is used. In this case, the Music Director remains coordinator of the music selections.

## Church Etiquette

1. Of course, **NO** gum, **NO** eating, smoking, or **drinking** in any part of the church **including** the entrances, bride’s room or rest rooms.
2. **Be sure to clean up after yourselves, especially in the bride’s room, sacristy, and entrances.**
3. **Please DO NOT ADJUST the volume settings on the sound system.** The Wedding Coordinator will assist you with your needs.
4. All liturgical decorations are to be left in their proper place. **You may not move church decorations with- out prior approval.** Please contact our **Arts and Environment Committee Chairperson, Barb Andrzejczyk** to coordinate flowers. (433-4089).
5. The only items placed on the altar are those needed for celebrating Mass.

## Torches

Because the aisles of our church are carpeted, the use of torch candles is prohibited.

## The Ministers for the Celebration

In the Roman Catholic Tradition, the bride and groom minister the Sacrament of Matrimony to one another. A priest or deacon and at least two witnesses are also required to be present.

1. Ordinarily, the **music ministers** in the parish will provide the music for weddings celebrated in the parish. See the section on “Music” for further details.
2. Those who minister in the parish as **lectors** are available to serve in this capacity at wedding celebrations. They may be contacted through the parish Office Manager. If you wish to ask friends or family to serve as lectors, they are required to be at the wedding rehearsal so that they may practice in the worship space with the sound system. Since, most often, the congregation relies on **hearing** the Word of God, special care should be used in selecting lectors who can proclaim effectively.
3. When your wedding is to be celebrated during Mass, there may be a need for the service of **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.** Those who already serve in this ministry in the parish will be available to serve at weddings. Family members or friends of the bride and groom may serve as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion if they are commissioned in their parish.
4. The parish will supply **altar servers.** If you ask friends or family members to serve in this ministry, they should be present at the wedding rehearsal. Please let the pastor know as part of the wedding planning.

## Unity Candle

It is the policy of the Diocese of Toledo that a **unity candle or similar symbols are not to be used in the church.**

## Wedding Coordinator

St. Peter's provides the services of a Wedding Coordinator for all weddings to help you with the many details of a church wedding. This person will be with you at the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. They will be able to answer questions and assist in the specific details of the wedding. The Wedding Coordinator will prepare the worship space for your ceremony and help you in cleaning up the church following the wedding.

### Preparing For Your Wedding Liturgy

You are planning a sacramental moment in time where you have something to offer each other, to God and to the rest of the Church. This is a very special day for all involved. In order for your wedding liturgy to be celebrated with beauty, integrity, and prayerfulness, it must be well planned. The wedding liturgy should be the highlight of your wedding day.

Always remember that your wedding is the time of community prayer. As bride and groom you are not celebrating alone but with the whole worshipping community of family and friends. The people gathered for your wedding celebration need to be encouraged and invited to participate fully in the sung and spoken responses.

We offer resource material to assist you in planning your ceremony and we encourage the bridal couple to be creative in planning their wedding liturgy. This includes the choice of Scripture readings, the marriage vows and various prayers, the environmental setting, the role of the worshipping community and the music to be used at your wedding.

## Music

The primary purpose of music in any liturgy is to help the assembly pray. The music for your wedding liturgy or ceremony should be on the same high standard as any other liturgical celebration held within the Church.

The following guidelines should be carefully considered when planning your wedding music.

1. Since your wedding is a sacred event in a gathering of the church, which is a holy environment, your musical selections should reflect this understanding. The music at your wedding should celebrate the mystery of love between man and woman and God's love for us. Much **popular music is, therefore, inappropriate** for use in church and is often more suitable for use at the reception.
2. A good beginning point for the couple in planning their music is to first select their Scripture readings and then choose music that highlights these texts. The Wedding Coordinator or Music Director will also assist you in your planning, offering many possibilities and options, all appropriate to the sacred celebration.
3. If the wedding is celebrated during Mass, after the processional is completed, an entrance antiphon will be sung. This antiphon is meant to gather the entire assembly as one for the beginning of the rite. Singing the Gloria is also required.
4. The Music Director ordinarily serves as organist for all weddings. You will find the Music Director knowledgeable about the liturgy and about appropriate wedding music. If you need cantors/vocalists to lead the sung prayer, the Music Director can offer recommendations. All vocalists and musicians should be people who are trained and experienced in liturgical music. Here, they are not entertainers, but rather serve to foster a spirit of joy and lead the sung prayer of the gathered community.