

Guidelines for Weddings at St. Albert the Great

Congratulations!

God has called you to this point in your lives where you wish to commit yourselves to each other before God in the Sacrament of Matrimony. We rejoice with you and want your wedding day to be truly special – the foundation of your life together.

In the Catholic Church, the exchange of vows between two people is not seen as a private affair, but as the public act of two believers pledging themselves to each other in the presence of the Christian Community. Marriage in the church is a Sacrament - a sacred sign that reflects the relationship between Christ and the Church. In light of this fact, we encourage you to use this time before your wedding not only to take care of the practical details, but also to deepen your relationship with God and one another through prayer, regular public worship and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In desiring to be married at St. Albert the Great Parish, you are required to have registered with the church no less than six months in advance of your marriage and be a member in good standing, actively involved in sharing your time, talent and treasure with the parish. You may also meet this requirement if your parent has been a member for at least one year.

The marriage preparation process can be at once exciting, stimulating, beautiful, exhausting, frustrating and scary. Our hope in publishing this booklet is to give you some basic guidelines and information that will assist you as you plan for your wedding day and for your married life together.

Church Requirements

The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament.

(Code of Canon Law, 1055)

Archdiocesan policy: A couple is required to notify their parish of their desire to marry at least 6 months prior to the wedding.

St. Albert policy: Any person interested in getting married at St. Albert the Great must either be a registered member or have parents who are registered members of the Parish for at least one year. Otherwise, there is a \$1,000 rental fee for use of the Church.

Freedom to Marry: For a marriage to be validly celebrated in the Catholic Church, both parties must be free to enter into marriage. If either of you has had a previous marriage (and the spouse of that marriage is still living), it will be necessary to discuss some details of that marriage with the Pastor to confirm that you can be validly married in the Catholic Church. If a previous marriage was terminated by the death of a spouse, the death certificate will have to be included among the documents requested as part of the preparation of your marriage.

Differing Denominations: If either of you is a baptized member of a Christian church other than Catholic, proper permission (Mixed Religion) must be obtained by the assisting priest from the Archbishop through the Chancery. If either of you is a member of a faith tradition other than Christian or has no religious affiliation, the proper dispensation (Disparity of Worship) must be obtained by the assisting priest.

If both the bride and groom are Catholic, they should celebrate their marriage in the framework of a Eucharistic Liturgy (Mass). When either of them is not Catholic, a marriage outside of Mass will be celebrated.

Marriage Preparation

1. Contact Laura Graven to schedule your wedding. (Contact page of phone numbers is included in the back of this packet)
 - a. Marriage may be celebrated throughout the year, however, because Lent is a penitential season, it is recommended that a wedding not be scheduled between Ash Wednesday (usually around the middle of February) and Easter Sunday. If, however, for some reason a couple decides they want to get married during Lent, they must respect and use whatever Lenten art and environment decorations are in place.
 - b. Weddings at St. Albert can be scheduled from 11:00 a.m. up to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday afternoons and must be finished in the church by 4:00. Friday evening weddings can begin from 5:30 to 7:00.
 - c. The rehearsal for your wedding is usually scheduled for the evening before the wedding day. The wedding party and the readers need to attend the rehearsal, which lasts about one hour.
2. Laura Graven will schedule an initial meeting during which the FOCCUS inventory will be taken. The FOCCUS inventory is a pre-marriage inquiry that seeks essential information regarding your background and your preparedness for marriage.

Other information that will be tended to at the initial meeting will be the filling out of the MA form and dispensations if needed.

The priest/deacon who officiates at your Marriage acts as the witness who accepts your vows in the Name of Christ and the Church. Another priest/deacon, especially if he is a relative or a longtime friend, may officiate at your wedding or concelebrate with the Pastor. A friend of the family, who is a minister of another denomination, may participate with the Presider according to Roman Catholic norms.

3. Have your baptismal certificate sent from the church of baptism directly to the Presider of your wedding. This should be done right away.
4. Once the above steps have been completed, you will be given information to schedule your marriage preparation. Your choices are as follows:
 - a. An **Engaged Encounter weekend**. To register for an Engaged Encounter weekend, go to www.engagedencounter.org.
 - b. **A sponsor couple program** that involves meeting for 4 – 6 weeks with other engaged couples and one or two married couples.
 - c. **Foundations for Marriage** is an Archdiocesan process that runs on a Saturday from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
5. Meet with Laura Sullivan, the Director of Worship and Music at least two months before your wedding to select the music. A CD will be made available of possible music for each part of your wedding where music is required.
 - a. Because the ceremony is a Sacrament, the music must be sacred in nature. This includes any prelude music or instrumental music at any time while church is in use for your ceremony.
 - b. We recommend you use the church organist, however, if you wish to use another organist/keyboardist, that person will first have to be approved by the Director of Worship. If for some reason the church organist is unavailable, the Director of Worship will select another organist.
 - c. We recommend you use a cantor from St. Albert the Great as they are skilled and knowledgeable at leading congregational singing in our worship space. If you decide to use another cantor, they must meet the following requirements to be approved.
 - i. They must have completed the cantor training certification.
 - ii. They must currently be serving as a cantor in a parish

- iii. They must be interviewed by the Director of Worship of St. Albert the Great
 - iv. Your cantor needs to be familiar with the worship space at St. Albert, comfortable with our sound system and know the process for the singing of the Responsorial Psalm, etc.
 - v. There will be only one rehearsal, one hour before the wedding with your cantor.
- d. You may have a guest vocalist in addition to the cantor. In this case, the cantor would lead the singing for all the service music required and the vocalist could sing a solo during one or more of the following times.
- i. Prelude
 - ii. Mother's Procession
 - iii. Lighting of the Unity Candle
- e. The Director of Worship and Music will help you in hiring any extra musicians. However, the wedding couple, not St. Albert the Great, will coordinate the fees to these extra musicians.

Flowers, Decorations and Assorted Items

The bridal party may use the Parent Chapel to dress for the wedding. There is a private restroom with a full-length mirror in that space.

The groom's party may use our St. Joseph's Room located to the right of the Sanctuary down the hallway.

Snacks and drinks are allowed in these spaces but **ABSOLUTELY** no alcoholic beverages are permitted anywhere within the worship space or on the grounds.

For your convenience, St. Albert has the following that is available for your use:

- + A white silk flower arrangement
- + A 5 ft. pedestal on which flower arrangement can be placed
- + Two floor standing 7-candle candelabra
- + Unity candle stand (you need only to provide the center candle which should have a 3 inch base, we provide the rest)

Please keep in mind these guidelines for the correct placement of decorations in the church.

- + The placing of flowers on the Sanctuary and on the ends of pews is permitted.
- + Decorations are not to block the view of the Ambo, Altar or Presider's chair.
- + Seasonal decorations, plants and furniture are not to be moved.

Aisle runners, silk flower petals, rice, confetti and birdseed are **strictly prohibited** because of safety concerns and insurance liability.

The ringing of small bells and/or blowing of bubbles are permitted outside of the church.

If bows are used on the pews, please tie them; no tape is to be used on wooden or glass surfaces, including pews, doors and windows.

Note: All decorations must be removed immediately after the ceremony.

People Needed for the Marriage Ceremony

+ Two readers are needed for the Ceremony. We strongly recommend that you select readers from among your relatives and friends who are trained Lectors or who are effective readers to proclaim the scriptures (2).

+ Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are needed.

+ Choose two or three people to carry up the gifts.

+ One Altar Server is needed if it will be a full Mass. Please secure a trained server. St. Albert can provide a server if need be, just let Laura Graven know.

Photography and Videography

Photography and Videography is permitted during your wedding. However, so that the photographer and videographer not be a distraction to the congregation or detract from the reverence appropriate to the wedding liturgy, we request that you familiarize them with the following regulations:

+ The photographer/videographer must not interrupt the progress of the entrance procession or position themselves where they will impede the movement of the members of the wedding party.

+ Photographers/videographers must exercise discretion both in the number of photos taken and in where they place themselves to take photos.

+ Pictures **without** a flash may be taken during the ceremony

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+ Flash pictures may be taken during the processional and the recessional only

+ Videographers are requested to take a stationary position outside the sanctuary (the altar area)

+Since lighting in the church is sufficient for video recording, additional lighting from a video-camera team is not permitted.

+Pictures may be taken in the church for two hours prior, and one hour following the ceremony.

+The Presider will be available for a picture immediately following the ceremony

Etiquette and other rules and regulations

Every effort should be made to begin your wedding on time.

Family and friends are expected to clean up after themselves and leave the church as they found it.

Marriage License

A marriage license needs to be obtained preferably 1 week before the wedding and no more than 1 month before.

Both parties must be present in order to apply for the license.

The marriage license is brought the night of the Wedding Rehearsal.

There are six locations where you may purchase your license: The Courthouse (574-5700) or any of the following branch offices: Outer Loop, Dixie Hwy., Jeffersontown, Middletown, West Branch and 9455 Westport Rd.

Fees

Presider:

There is no set fee for the Presider to officiate at your wedding. If, however, you wish to give a gift as a token of your appreciation, Laura Graven can help you with suggested amounts.

Organist Fee: \$175.00 and Cantor Fee: \$125.00

These two fees for your organist and cantor for the wedding should be paid the night of the rehearsal and given to Laura Graven.

Server Fee: \$20.00 – If we are providing the server, please bring payment the night of the rehearsal.

Rental for Reception

Parishioners can rent Willett Hall (gym), Visitation Hall (cafeteria) or the Parish Life Center for your wedding reception. Contact Kelly Evans for information, kevans@stalbert.org

In the Sacrament of Marriage, a man and a woman -- who at baptism become members of Christ and hence have the duty of manifesting Christ's attitudes in their lives -- are assured of the help they need to develop their love in a faithful and indissoluble union, and to respond with generosity to the gift of parenthood. As the Second Vatican Council declared: through this Sacrament, Christ himself becomes present in the life of the married couple and accompanies them, so that they may love each other and their children, just as Christ loves His church by giving himself up for her.

(Gaudium et Spes, 48; cf. Eph 5:25)

Important Contacts

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