



# Wedding Guidelines

Revised 5/2025

## **Congratulations on Your Upcoming Marriage!**

We rejoice with you as you prepare to enter into Holy Matrimony, a Sacrament of the Church. The celebration of Marriage is a unique moment in the life of the Church. The community is called to rejoice in a special way when a bride and groom commit themselves to each other in faith and love for life. It is a sacred period and time of prayer. When things become hectic know that you are being remembered in the prayers of many. Your wedding day will take a great deal of planning and we are here to help. We have lots of experience and are eager to share it with you.

This list of guidelines for the celebration of marriage at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish has been prepared to assist couples in preparing for a marriage ceremony which will reflect the Church's understanding of the sacredness of marriage, and her desire for a ceremony which is prayerful, festive, and appropriate to the dignity of matrimony.

### **Initial Planning:**

The regulations of **the Diocese of Columbus** require that arrangements for the wedding must be made at least six months in advance of the proposed wedding date. As certain times of the year are more in demand, often much more notice is advisable if a couple has need of a very definite date and time of marriage. *No date should be selected until after the first meeting with wedding coordinator.*

### **Use of the Church:**

St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish consists of 4 church campuses: St. Mary Campus, Holy Redeemer Campus, St. Peter Campus and Holy Trinity Campus. Members of our parish are able to choose which campus they prefer for their wedding depending on previously scheduled events or liturgies.

### **Time:**

A wedding date may be set only by approval of the pastor. Please first contact the Marriage Preparation Coordinator and have an initial meeting with a designated clergyman. Once the initial meeting has taken place, and "Form 1" is completed, the clergyman and pastor will decide on the acceptance of the proposed nuptial mass date.

Weddings may be scheduled for each church campus as follows:

Holy Redeemer and Holy Trinity Campuses: Saturdays between 11:00 AM and 1:30 PM. All photography must be finished by 3:00pm.

St. Mary and St. Peter in Chains Campuses: Saturdays after 11:00 AM

Ordinarily, weddings are not scheduled during Lent. If they are, they are to be planned in accord with the spirit of that season.

**Celebrant:**

A priest or deacon currently assigned to the parish will normally officiate at all liturgies of marriage taking place at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish. Exceptions to this rule will be made in writing at the discretion of the pastor. Any member of the clergy seeking to participate in a wedding ceremony, who does not have faculties within the Diocese of Columbus will be required to supply a written letter of suitability from their diocesan chancery or religious order.

**Process of Preparation:**

This process is designed to assist the couple in assessing their own readiness for marriage, to help them in their planning for living out the marriage commitment, and to make sure the prerequisites for a Catholic wedding are met. The priest or deacon who officiates at the Rite of Matrimony is normally the person to ensure that all preparations required by church law and policy are completed.

**Banns of Marriage:**

In the month prior to any scheduled wedding the *Banns of Marriage* will be printed in the parish bulletin each week, for a total of three weeks. The Banns will announce the names of the Bride and Groom and will additionally read: "If there are any known impediments to these unions, please contact our Parish Office. We wish these couples God's blessing as they celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage."

## To Schedule a Wedding at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish

- 1) Please contact the parish office, 740-354-4551, and a secretary will complete a marriage register request form which will be submitted for the Pastor's approval and clergy assignment.
  - a) The Wedding Coordinator will get back with you to advise if your date and clergy are tentatively available and Wedding Guidelines will be emailed to you.
  - b) The Wedding Coordinator will contact the couple and set the date for an initial meeting. Any contact after the initial meeting is the responsibility of the couple. At the initial meeting, clergy will share about the marriage process and couples can ask initial questions they may have from reviewing the Wedding Guidelines.
  - c) Once the initial assessment meeting is completed, clergy will advise the parish office you are free to begin marriage preparation and the wedding date is permanently placed on the calendar.
- 2) Additional meetings with clergy will be scheduled throughout the wedding preparation process.
- 3) Please note: The assigned clergy will not discuss wedding preparations with family members of the bride or groom in any capacity.

### Marriage Preparation Requirements:

- 1) Completion of Fully Engaged, for the couple's self-evaluation and counseling. This will be sent to you as a link which can be filled out online and should be completed separately within 1 month of the initial clergy meeting. After completing the Fully Engaged Inventory, *a mentor couple provided by the parish will be assigned to meet with you (2-3 times) to facilitate the process.* The mentor couple will send a report to the clergy, who will continue to meet with you as you prepare for your wedding.
- 2) Completion of the parish couple-to-couple mentor program. *The presiding minister will pair you up with a couple in the parish to discuss the results of the inventory.*
- 3) St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish secretary will obtain a Baptismal Certificate *issued within the past 6 months* by the church of baptism. For other Christian Baptism, a certificate is ideal, but other forms of written record are acceptable. These must be mailed to St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish – 514 Market Street, Portsmouth, OH 45662 (attn.: Marriage Prep).
- 4) Completion of one of the Natural Family Planning Courses offered by the Diocese of Columbus. These courses can be found on the Diocesan webpage.

- 5) Any previously married person must present a certificate of death of the previous spouse(s), or a decree of nullity granted by a Catholic Church tribunal. These should be sent immediately after the initial meeting with a member of Clergy.
  
- 6) A valid civil marriage license must be presented to the officiating clergy or to the wedding coordinator at the time of your last clergy meeting, but no later than at the time of the rehearsal.
  - a. **Time of Issuance of Civil License:** The marriage license is good for 60 days. If the marriage is not performed within that time, a new license must be secured. We strongly urge that you apply for your license the week before your wedding, in case of technicalities or complications.
  - b. **Application for License** must be made under oath by BOTH parties to the Probate Court of the county in which either resides.
  - c. **If neither is a resident of this state**, then the county where the marriage is to be solemnized (Scioto County for St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish) is the county in which you will obtain the marriage license. You will need: name, driver's license or birth certificate, date and place of birth, residence, occupation, father's name and mother's maiden name and a letter from the church requested 2 weeks in advance of your wedding, verifying the wedding will take place at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish.

### **Preparing the Wedding Liturgy:**

At their first meeting with the Wedding Coordinator, each couple will be given the book, *Together for Life*. This booklet explains each section of the Rite of Matrimony and includes selections for all the prayers and readings. The couple will work with the Wedding Coordinator to choose their readings, prayers and other options. Please see the fillable form on the last page of *Together for Life* and return it completed to the Wedding Coordinator at your initial meeting.

Musical selections for the Rite of Matrimony are to be arranged with, and approved by, the parish Director of Sacred Music. The Director of Sacred Music assists couples in the selection/planning of appropriate music for the wedding as well as planning a worship aid that enables all of the guests to actively participate in the Liturgy. More specific information about approved music selections can be found on our website.

**Additional Ministers:**

Friends and relatives of the couple may participate in the liturgy as readers, servers, or in other functions, if they so desire, provided that they are competent in the function they are to fulfill, they must be approved by the officiating clergy. The Gospel must be proclaimed by a priest or deacon. Flower Girls and Ring Bearers should be able and comfortable enough to walk down the aisle without undo hesitancy. *Flower girls only carry flower baskets or flower balls and may not drop anything on the floor.* (This includes petals etc.) Ring bearers only carry pillows with ornamental rings attached. The real rings are the responsibility of the Best Man.

**Wedding Coordinator/Director of Sacred Liturgy:**

The Parish wedding coordinator at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish, will meet with each couple prior to the wedding. The wedding coordinator will set up and coordinate with the couples on the day of the rehearsal and the wedding. Throughout the preparation process please contact the wedding coordinator with any questions you might have.

*Outside or hired wedding coordinators are not permitted in any capacity at the rehearsal or wedding ceremony.*

**Marriage Preparation Only:**

If the couple requests that a St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic cleric prepare them for marriage at another parish or in another state, a fee of \$125 will be assessed for the preparation.

**Rehearsal:**

Rehearsals are confirmed by Wedding Coordinator and scheduled with the Parish Office at the time of the tentative approval of the marriage request. The rehearsal time is 5pm on the Friday evening before the wedding. The rehearsal lasts 45 minutes. The wedding coordinator will be present and conduct the rehearsal. St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic staff musicians do not attend the rehearsal. Wedding rehearsals are restricted to those who are in the wedding.

- a) Wedding couple
- b) Bridesmaids/Groomsmen
- c) Any persons to be in the wedding procession
- d) Lector's
- e) Flower girls/Ring Bearers

### **Chart of Attendants:**

**Please return this information to the wedding coordinator at least 1 month prior to the rehearsal.**

The Wedding Coordinator will email you a copy of the Chart of Attendants in fillable form to fill out. Should you have any questions, please contact the parish office.

#### **Chart of Attendants (for traditional entrance)**

Please fill in the names of all who will participate in the wedding ceremony at church. Include the bride's attendants, the groomsmen and ring bearer or flower girl, if such are used. Remember the first bridesmaid and the first groomsman are paired together and so forth for the remaining bridesmaids and groomsmen.

#### **Additional Preparations:**

- 1) Photographers and videographers must see the wedding coordinator before the ceremony begins. Please read the accompanying guidelines for photographers, and then pass them on to your photographers.
- 2) Flowers and other decorations desired are arranged for and purchased through a florist, by the couple. Included with these guidelines is a sheet for florists. Please read it, and then pass it on to your florist. You should make arrangements with your florist for a delivery time the day of the wedding, and then let the wedding coordinator know their arrival time.
- 3) The brides and their parties may dress in designated rooms provided at each church campus. Please consult the wedding coordinator for further information.
- 4) The receiving line after a wedding is appropriately held at the place of the reception. Since other ceremonies take place at the parish church, time considerations demand that the receiving line not take place at the church. We also do not allow the bride and groom to greet guests or release row by row after the wedding is over. However, the greeting of guests can be appropriately done by the bride and groom as your guests are arriving for the Rite of Matrimony.
- 5) Unity Candle: At the request of the Bishop of Columbus the use of the unity candle *is not permitted*.

- 6) Aisle Cloth: Even though this may look nice, it is a safety hazard. When walked over, it gets many creases and folds that are easy to stumble over as the congregation leaves church. Therefore, its use is prohibited in the church at weddings. No exceptions will be made.
- 7) Candles at the ends of the pews can be a fire or tripping hazard and so are not permitted.
- 8) Altar appointments (chairs in the sanctuary, altar candles, etc.) are not permitted to be moved or disturbed in any capacity without the expressed permission of the pastor. No exceptions.
- 9) Invited guests and families should be informed that the throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, flowers or other materials is prohibited inside or outside each of our church campuses.
- 10) No food or drink may be brought into the church proper at any time. Please respect the sanctity of our worship space.
- 11) No alcoholic beverages are to be consumed on the premises the day of the rehearsal or wedding. **No exceptions are to be made for any reason.** *Any use of alcohol on church premises by anyone will jeopardize the wedding taking place.*
- 12) Smoking is prohibited within all buildings of St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish.
- 13) Any other activities that detract from the Rite of Matrimony are prohibited. These decisions are made at the discretion of the clergy, such as the carrying in of signs by flower girl and ring bearer.
- 14) During a Wedding Mass, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion *may* be needed (generally, EMHC's are not in use at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish). Only Commissioned EMHC's who are parishioners of St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish are permitted to fill this role.
- 15) All Weddings will begin on time. At the scheduled time, the bride should begin walking down the aisle. All other members of the wedding party should have already processed down by this time.
- 16) St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish is blessed to be able to live-stream weddings at our St. Mary and St. Peter Campus'. We have a camera system that will be manned during the wedding. A cost of \$150.00 will be assessed should you choose to livestream.



## Check List and Fees

(for use by bride and groom)

- \_\_\_ Schedule first meeting with clergy.
- \_\_\_ Received wedding guidelines and *Together for Life*.
- \_\_\_ If needed, certificates of death or decree of nullity provided to the Parish immediately following the initial meeting with clergy and mailed to St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish: 514 Market Street Portsmouth, OH 45662 (attn.: Marriage Prep)
- \_\_\_ Complete online FOCCUS within 1 month of clergy meeting.
- \_\_\_ Complete meetings with mentoring couple.
- \_\_\_ Register and complete NFP Course.
- \_\_\_ Mail certificates to St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish
- \_\_\_ Schedule meeting with Wedding Coordinator and Director of Sacred Music.
  
- \_\_\_ Certificates of baptism for non-Catholics mailed to St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish. If you are baptized Catholic, the secretaries will obtain your baptismal certificate for you. (attn.: Marriage Prep)
  
- \_\_\_ Valid Civil Marriage license presented to the wedding coordinator at last meeting or at the rehearsal.
  
- \_\_\_ All applicable fees paid in full to St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the wedding date.

### **Fees Paid:**

*Please note: all applicable fees must be paid a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the date of your wedding. Checks should be made out to St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish and should be mailed to the parish. Please include wedding date and last names of bride and groom in the memo line. Fee's are non-negotiable.*

*Any fees given to an individual other than St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish will be considered as a "gift" and not as a "payment."*

- \_\_\_ \$350 basic Music fee paid: date\_\_\_\_\_amount\_\_\_\_\_check #\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ other music fees as discussed with Director of Sacred Music.
  
- \_\_\_ \$200 Wedding coordinator fee paid.
- \_\_\_ \$350 for Clergy preparation.
- \_\_\_ \$150 (if livestreamed is desired).
- \_\_\_ \$125 (if marriage preparation only).
- \_\_\_ Altar server fee \$20 per server

## SAINT JOHN PAUL II SCIOTO CATHOLIC PARISH PHOTOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

We welcome photographers to the church, both for still photographs and videotapes. For a positive experience, we must ask that the following directives be followed. It is our firm belief that a wedding is a sacred ceremony - not a photographic production. Photographers should attempt to keep this in mind during the ceremony, and so remain as unobtrusive as possible. For posed pictures, photographers are asked to remember the sacred character of the church building. No bizarre, suggestive or "funny" poses are permitted.

The photographer should check in with the wedding coordinator upon arrival. The photographers should be as unobtrusive as possible during the wedding procession. A photographer is not permitted to stop the procession to obtain photographs of the individual bridesmaids. During the ceremony, except for the bridal processional and recessional, there is to be absolutely no flash photography. Also, there are to be no posed pictures taken at Mary's statue during the ceremony.

The photographer/videographer will never at any time during the ceremony be in the sanctuary proper (In Catholic terms, the sanctuary is the area including the steps and platforms leading up to the altar proper) or on the tile leading to the sanctuary space or the tile area by the cantor.

When the celebrant or readers are in the pulpit for the Proclamation of Scriptures, or the homily, photographers are requested to be seated and silent.

Photographers should never take it upon themselves to move furnishings, microphones, or other appointments in the church proper. In cases of absolute necessity, please check with the wedding coordinator.

Because of scheduling, photographers have 90 minutes from the start of the actual ceremony to complete all pictures and be out of the church and off the grounds with their equipment.

*If these instructions are not followed, we reserve the right to not allow your return for subsequent weddings.*

**BRIDE AND GROOM PLEASE GIVE THIS PAGE TO YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER(S)**

SAINT JOHN PAUL II SCIOTO CATHOLIC PARISH  
FLORIST GUIDELINES

We welcome florists and their assistants to Saint John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish. To assist you in your planning, we have the following requirements:

Since marriage is a sacramental celebration of the Church in which a couple enters into a lifetime covenant before God, floral arrangements should enhance the beauty of the celebration and not compete for attention.

In Catholic theology, the altar is the most sacred part of the church, reserved for the celebration of the memorial of the Last Supper. Only the needed bread, wine, vessels and ceremonial books are placed there. No flowers or other decorations of any kind may be put on the altar table, nor impede its view or the flow of movement around it. No flowers may rise higher than the altar if placed next to it.

The following are some appropriate options:

On either side of the altar

In front of the ambo (lectern)

On the far end corners of the steps leading up to the sanctuary space

In the narthex, by the doors to the church proper

If any existing plants or flowers around the altar are moved for the wedding, it is required that they be returned to their original location, since they are the floral environment for the celebration of the weekend liturgies.

If you do not plan to take your arrangements with you after the wedding, please inform the wedding coordinator.

There are to be no aisle runners, as they are a safety hazard.

Flower girls may not drop petals or other objects down the aisle in front of the bride, or at any other time.

Nothing should ever be taped to the church pews or other woodwork. Please use ties, ribbon or rubber bands.

*If these instructions are not followed, we reserve the right to not allow your return for subsequent weddings.*

**BRIDE AND GROOM PLEASE GIVE THIS PAGE TO YOUR FLORIST(S)**

## SAINT JOHN PAUL II SCIOTO CATHOLIC PARISH MUSIC FEES AND GUIDELINES

Our musicians look forward to enhancing your celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Music contributes a great deal to the celebration of the Catholic wedding liturgy and should express and support the fundamental understanding of the Catholic Rite of Matrimony. Music should be chosen that is **liturgical** (appropriate to the nature of the Roman Catholic liturgy), **musically aesthetic** (expressive & technically pleasing), and **pastoral** (helping the gathered community to pray & give expression to faith). Given these guidelines, the following music is inappropriate and therefore not permitted for weddings at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish:

--Any music that is secular in nature such that it neglects, obscures, or trivializes the sacred purpose of the liturgy and the holy union of the couple with each other and with Christ (e.g. Wagner's Bridal March

'Here Comes the Bride' or Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" are examples of this.)

--Pop music, music from movies or musical theatre music--such music should be reserved for the reception.

--Music that would recall sentimental/personal connections (ex.-the first song the couple heard together, etc.) Within a public worship service, such exclusive/limited references are inappropriate.

--Pre-recorded music is not permitted in any Roman Catholic liturgies as the liturgy is the living prayer of a particular assembly of the Church.

Please plan to meet with the Director of Sacred Music, **3 months prior to** your wedding date at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish for guidance on choosing music that is both appropriate and meaningful for your wedding liturgy. This meeting is generally scheduled in conjunction with our Wedding Coordinator. This meeting is for the bride and groom only. Please bring the "Together for Life" booklet & wedding guidelines that you received at your initial meeting with clergy. All music for your liturgy is to be chosen from the Appropriate Music for Catholic Weddings at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish guidelines that will be provided at this meeting and are available on our parish website. You will be guided in how to choose music appropriate to the wedding liturgy and in the development of a worship aid for your wedding that will enable the congregation to participate fully in your wedding mass or service.

The basic music fee for weddings at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish is **\$350**. The fee includes the planning session with the Director of Sacred Music, a cantor from St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish trained in Catholic liturgy, and the musical skills of our Director of Sacred Music. Please note that musicians do not attend the wedding rehearsal. The rehearsal is for the wedding party only.

*Our Director of Sacred Music, will generally play all weddings, unless otherwise approved.  
Other musicians may be considered with the approval of the Director of Sacred Music.*

Only currently active musicians at St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish who are trained cantors in Catholic liturgy are permitted to cantor weddings. Relatives or friends of the bride and groom are permitted to sing 1 or 2 prelude pieces prior to the liturgy **only** if they are pre-approved by the Director of Sacred Music. They must provide their own sheet music. All music selections must be finalized a minimum of 2 months prior to the wedding. Any non-St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish cantors must rehearse a minimum of 1 time with the Director of Sacred Music. A **\$65.00 fee** will be assessed for each rehearsal. Please contact the Director of Sacred Music, to set up a planning meeting, or with any questions you may have.