

Wedding Guidelines for St. Richard Catholic Church

A wedding is a celebration wherein the Sacrament of Matrimony is performed. Most people choose a wedding to highlight this special day of marriage and faith. St. Richard is happy to assist in preparing and performing weddings that are both joyful and faith-filled.

A Wedding in St. Richard Catholic Church is intended for active members of the parish. An active member of the parish (“parishioner”) is one who has been registered in the parish for at least one year before the date of the wedding, supports the parish with annual tithing of no less than \$500.00 annually, is of service to the parish, and participates in the sacraments according to the teaching of the Church. Adult children of active parishioners under the age of 23 are also eligible to be married as “parishioners” at St. Richard, if they are practicing Catholics.

A Catholic who is not a member of the parish (“non-parishioner”) is also welcome to be married at St. Richard if they are a practicing Catholic and have no previous marriages without annulment.

Instructions:

Scheduling the wedding:

- *A request for wedding dates must be made at least 6 months in advance of the wedding.
- *No one may arrange a wedding date unless they have already firmed up a presiding minister.
- *A date cannot be reserved over one year in advance.
- *Couples may choose Catholic clergy from other parishes, but the presiding minister must commit to performing the ceremony and get a proper dispensation from the pastor of St. Richard. Priests from other dioceses must present a “celebret” (suitability form) to St. Richard before they are allowed to perform the service. Presiding clergy must agree to celebrate the service/Mass under the guidelines provided by the parish and be obedient to the directives of the Diocese and Church.
- *The clergy of St. Richard are not required to attend or con-celebrate the ceremony in case of visiting clergy nor are they responsible to celebrate the wedding if the contracted clergy does not fulfill the obligation to attend.
- *In some cases, a non-Catholic minister may be permitted to preside alongside Catholic clergy at a wedding ceremony.
- *Any outside minister who is not Catholic (or Christian) must be approved by the pastor before contracting his/her services.
- *Weddings are not to be scheduled on Sundays or for the two-week period beginning the week before Christmas or Easter and ending one week after Christmas or Easter unless there is an emergency for the sacrament (ie: deployment for military service). In such case, there will be no wedding ceremony but a simple exchange of vows with no fanfare.
- *Weddings scheduled during Lent are to be simple to reflect the penitential season.
- *Wedding ceremonies are traditionally celebrated on Saturdays.
- *They may be celebrated either at 1:00pm or 6:00pm. After 6:00pm, the wedding Mass celebrated will be the Vigil Mass for Sunday.
- *There may be only one wedding per day unless there are extreme circumstances dictating otherwise.
- *Divorced persons cannot be scheduled until annulments are granted.

Marriage preparation:

- *Marriage preparation is coordinated with the pastor.
- *Preparation should be scheduled at least 6 months in advance of the wedding so banns may be posted.
- *It is required that the couple undergo adequate preparation for the sacrament of marriage. Part of the preparation is taking courses or making a pre-marital retreat sponsored by the Jackson Diocese or another Diocese. The retreats vary in cost and the minister in charge of your preparation will direct your options. There may be costs for the retreat and counseling which the couple is responsible to pay.
- *The parish also provides access to the FOCCUS compatibility assessment exam.

Liturgical notes:

Liturgy:

- *The Liturgy, whether celebrated as a Mass or Wedding Ceremony, is to be performed under the guidelines of the current liturgical norms of the Catholic Church, the Diocese of Jackson and St Richard Church. The Liturgy will have the proper texts (Old Testament, Psalm, New Testament and Gospel) as suggested by the liturgical norms. There shall be no deviation, regardless of circumstance or presiding minister, from the ordinary form of the celebration.
- *Strict regard for the Catholic altar and sanctuary shall be respected. The couple and the wedding party are reminded that the celebration reflects the sacredness of the marriage and will follow strictly the liturgy of the Church.
- *There is to be no altering of the Church space. The altar and all furniture are to remain fixed as well as the statuary and other elements of Catholic worship. This includes not disturbing candles, chancel furniture, and altar cloths.
- *Flowers are welcome to be displayed in the sanctuary on the back wall, in front of the blessed mother statue and in the baptistery. Flowers are not to be placed on the pews, along the walls, in the aisles or any other place that has not be designated. Sizes of flowers/vases are in the “flower guidelines”.
- *The wedding Mass is celebrated when both bride and groom are practicing Catholics. It is highly encouraged that when one party is not Catholic, there is no celebration of Mass out of respect to the non-Catholic and to focus on the commonality of faith rather than the division in the body of Christ. The Mass will not be altered or changed to reflect the personality or preferences of the bride and groom or presider. The dignity of the Sacrament will be respected.
- *The Church offers guidelines in preparing the readings and music for your wedding. These guides are available to you from the wedding coordinator and the music director.
- *Wedding service bulletins/programs are the responsibility of the bride and groom.
- *Only Catholic ceremonies will be performed at St. Richard.
- *For wedding Masses, all ministers of the Word and Eucharist should be Catholics in good standing. Altar servers must also be practicing Catholics. For a wedding outside of Mass, the presiding minister should attest to the appropriateness of the ministers.

It is crucial to have your marriage license on hand at the rehearsal so that it may be ready for the wedding. There will be NO wedding if there is no license.

*Due to the solemnity of the event, it is not permitted to use children under the age of 5 as part of the wedding party, including ring bearer or flower girls.

*The couple may have up to 10 attendants each (10 groomsmen, 10 bridesmaids)

*Only the maid of honor and the best-man are allowed to stand on the altar with the couple during the ceremony. All other attendants will stand or be seated outside of the altar space.

*Couples are to ensure the behavior, dress and decorum of the wedding party is appropriate for a church setting.

Service Music:

Marriage is a sacrament of the Catholic Church and music should be in keeping with this act of worship. Therefore, every effort is made to provide music that expresses both the reverence and the joy of the occasion. The couple should make an effort to contact the parish organist/pianist as soon as the wedding date is planned. The bride and groom are likely to have the best possible music for their wedding if they rely upon the experiences and judgment of the parish organist/pianist. If the parish organist/pianist is unable to play, an alternate organist/pianist may be found.

If a vocalist or accompanying musicians are invited, they should consult with the parish organist/pianist to ensure compatibility in style and form. All musicians are required to practice with the parish organist/pianist before the wedding. There is also an additional fee for extra musicians.

If music is used, then the selections are to be made from the list of approved musical pieces assembled for weddings. No deviations are permissible without the pastor's approval.

Rehearsals:

- * Rehearsals of weddings are under the direction of the officiating minister and the wedding coordinator.
- * All members of the wedding party are to be present at the rehearsal.
- * Rehearsals will begin on time and go no longer than one hour. If rehearsal goes over an hour due to tardiness or negligence on the part of the wedding party, the wedding deposit will not be returned.

Photographs and video:

*Due to the size and scale of the church, all photographers are to consult with the parish wedding coordinator in advance. The integrity of the service and the dignity of a worship space will be respected, and the guidelines produced by the parish coordinator will be respected.

*Photographers are to be finished with the wedding photos no later than one hour before the service begins. The post-wedding photos are to be completed within 30 minutes of the end of the ceremony.

Dressing/Waiting Areas:

*An area for the bridal party is available in the parish center. Please let the wedding coordinator know if you will be using this room so it can be open.

*No food and drink are allowed in the designated rooms (except water) but absolutely no alcohol or illegal drugs will be permitted on the premises.

Additional Notes:

- *Couples are encouraged to remember the solemnity of this sacrament and urge their wedding party to treat the occasion with dignity. Any lewd activities, including drunkenness, foul-language, obscene decorations indoors, outside and on the automobiles, are not tolerated under any circumstance.
- *Any rented or borrowed items are to be returned by the wedding party. If any items are left in the parish center or Church over 24 hours, they will be disposed of.
- *The parish takes no responsibility in returning rented items or personal items. Additionally, any garbage left in the parking lot or parish grounds will result in non-refund of the deposit.
- *Parking for guests is available. After the wedding ceremony, all vehicles should vacate the parking lot. If any vehicles are left overnight, the Parish reserves the right to tow the vehicles to allow for Sunday parking. St. Richard is not responsible for any damage done to vehicles left overnight in the parking area.
- *Any infraction of the civil law or any inappropriate behavior of any kind will result in the termination of the ceremony. All fees will be non-returnable in such case.

General Use:

- *There is no general fee for the use of the sanctuary for active parishioners.
- *An active parishioner is one who has been registered in the parish for at least one year, supports the parish with tithing (\$500.00 annually or more) and/or service and participates in the sacraments according to the teaching of the Church
- *There is a non-parishioner fee for the use of the sanctuary.

Parish Wedding Coordinator

- *Each wedding will have a parish wedding coordinator. The coordinator will meet with the couple before the wedding to go over all policies and procedures.
- *Outside wedding coordinators are not allowed to assist in the Church wedding coordination.
- *The parish coordinator will be present for the rehearsal and wedding. They will also be available to tour the sanctuary with the couple before the wedding. There is no substitute for this service.

Musicians:

- *The church organist/pianist will play for all weddings.
- *If someone other than St. Richard organist is used, an automatic consultation fee is to be paid to the St. Richard's organist/pianist for music selection and monitoring the use of the piano/organ.
- *If another organist/pianist is requested, they must be a certified organist/pianist and approved by the parish organist/pianist. If the organist/pianist wishes to practice prior to the ceremony, they must arrange a time through the Music Director.
- *The Organist/Pianist and Music Director should be contacted as soon as a date is approved by St. Richard church to ensure their availability.
- *The church does not set the fees for outside instrumentalists or vocalists. However, they will need to be approved by the Music Director at St. Richard Church. A consultation fee of \$50.00 will be assessed if the Music Director is not contracted to play at the wedding.

Foley Hall

The parish offers Foley Hall as a venue for the reception if the bride and groom choose to use it.

- *Decorations may not be affixed to the walls.
- *Flowers or any other impediments to motion cannot be placed on the floors.
- *The couple may decorate the hall as they choose but they are responsible for cleaning up and ensuring the hall is in good shape before they leave.
- *Music may be provided for the reception. There is to be no dancing nor any staging for live music.
- *Alcohol may be served by licensed bartenders contracted and paid for by the couple. St. Richard will not allow alcohol to be served otherwise.
- *St. Richard does not permit alcohol to be served to minor adults or children.
- *The couple must be vigilant that any minor adults or children are in a safe environment during the reception. St. Richard will not be responsible for any malicious activity between an adult and minor during the reception.
- *If alcohol will be served, the couple is also to provide insurance for the event at their expense.
- *Professional security is to be provided by the couple and are to be contracted through the entire duration of the reception until all guests have left the facilities.
- *The reception in Foley Hall for the 1:00p.m. ceremony must be completed no later the 3:30 due to 4:00 parish mass.
- *The reception in Foley Hall for the 6:00pm ceremony must not continue past 9:00pm including clean-up.
- *The parish will provide supervision of Foley Hall at the couple's expense. The supervisor will be responsible for familiarizing the couple with the kitchen, the hall and the guidelines of use.
- *Caterers and outside vendors much comply to the direction of the Parish Foley Hall supervisor.
- *Any infraction of the civil law concerning the reception will be the responsibility of the couple: noise level, public drunk, underage drinking, etc. St. Richard will not incur any responsibility for any illegal activity.

Fees Schedule

- *All fees for use of the church or parish hall and all payments to the organist/pianist, maintenance crew and coordinator are due two weeks (14 days) preceding the wedding and should be given to the parish administrator. No exceptions are allowed. Not paying results in forfeiture of the facilities' use.
- *Brides and grooms customarily give gifts to or pay those who serve as ministers or altar servers at the wedding. The Church is not responsible for assigning payment to or paying readers, servers or Eucharistic ministers for services.

There is no fee for the clergy, but an honorarium commensurate with other fees is suggested.

***Church Fees
(General Use)***

Non-Parishioner	Parishioner	
\$ 600.00	\$ 0.00	Sanctuary fee
\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	Wedding Coordinator (flat fee)
\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	Organist/pianist fee <i>(includes consultation fee)</i>
\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	Music Director consultation/use of piano, organ (applies if outside piano organist is used)
\$ 500.00	\$500.00	Church Deposit (non-refundable if guidelines are broken. 50% refundable if all is in order)

Reception Fees for Foley Hall

\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	Foley Deposit (non-refundable if guidelines are broken. 50% refundable if all is in order)
\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	Reception Attendant

I have read and agree to the terms set forth by St. Richard.

Contracting Party:

Date: