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*Celebrating Your  
Marriage at  
St. Michael  
Catholic Church*



*14327 Highland Avenue  
Orland Park, Illinois 60462  
(708) 873-4610  
www.saintmike.com*

## **GUIDELINES FOR WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS**

**(Tear off and give this copy to your photographer or videographer.)**

St. Michael Catholic Church is a house of worship where the community gathers to pray. Even though you have been hired by the bride and groom to perform a service for them, the atmosphere of prayer and reverence must be preserved in our church at all times. This church building is not a photographic studio. The movement of a photographer or the glare of portable lights can be the biggest distraction to the prayerfulness of a wedding. Please refrain from the use of flash photography during the ceremony. So that you may effectively provide the wedding couple with the service they desire, we present these guidelines.

### **VIDEOGRAPHERS/PHOTOGRAPHERS MUST CHECK IN WITH THE WEDDING COORDINATORS UPON ARRIVAL AT THE CHURCH**

- During this time of pandemic, photographers should arrive no more than 1/2 hour before the wedding. Before the ceremony, pictures are not allowed in the church, nor in the sacristy areas (the rooms where the priest/deacon gets ready for the Liturgy)
- Church furnishings are not to be moved and no equipment can be placed on church furnishings, especially the Altar, Baptismal Font and servers' tables.
- Video cameras on a tripod in a fixed position off the altar platform are allowed.
- Cameras and/or video cameras are not allowed on the altar platform and photographers/videographers must remain on the floor; only available lighting is to be used. This will add to the dignity of the occasion and will assist the gathered community in participating more fully in the wedding liturgy.
- We ask that no photography or videography be taken from the choir gallery without first consulting the Music Director.
- Picture taking is allowed for 15 minutes after the liturgy. All must be out of the church 15 minutes after the end of the wedding. No picture taking is allowed in the Narthex before or after the wedding.

**We sincerely appreciate your cooperation with these guidelines.  
THANK YOU!**

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*Dear Engaged Couples,*

*When you were Baptized, you entered into a loving relationship with God and God's Church. By choosing to celebrate your wedding at St. Michael Catholic Church, it is evident that you want God to remain a part of your life as you make a new, loving commitment to one another through your marriage. The Faith Community of St. Michael Parish is committed to making your wedding day memorable and prayerful for all. As with the other sacraments, preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage is not a luxury or an option, but a serious responsibility. To help facilitate the planning of this joyous event, you will find the following guidelines helpful.*

*Most importantly, we want you to know that the prayers and support of the people and staff of St. Michael will be with you in the busy days of preparation for your wedding day and in the many happy days and years of married life that will follow. The Prayer for Engaged Couples on the next page is our prayer for you. We hope you and your family will pray it, too.*

*We invite you to call on us in times of joy and in times of need, and may God bless your marriage and the new life that you are about to begin together!*

*The Priests, Staff and People  
of St. Michael Parish*

*September 2020*

## Prayer for Engaged Couples

*God of love,  
throughout the ages — from generation to generation—  
you have loved your people,  
and you sent Jesus,  
that in him we might recognize your love for us.*

*Help all engaged couples  
as they prepare to marry in Christ.  
Give them a pure and generous love  
and help them to be prayerful and faithful.  
Bless their marriages and their families  
and lead them always to lives of peace.*

*We pray that in good times and in bad,  
they will grow in love for each other.  
In their struggles let them rejoice  
that you are there to companion them.  
In their needs may they know  
that you are near to assist them.  
In their joys, let them see  
that you are the beginning and the end  
of a happy and prosperous life.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen*

### THE INITIAL CONTACT

Couples wishing to be married at St. Michael will meet with one of our priests or deacons. **No plans for the wedding (booking halls, etc.) should be finalized until you have talked to a priest or deacon to determine that you may be married in the Church.** (If either of you will not have reached your nineteenth birthday by the date of the wedding, no wedding date can be set until the couple has been interviewed.)

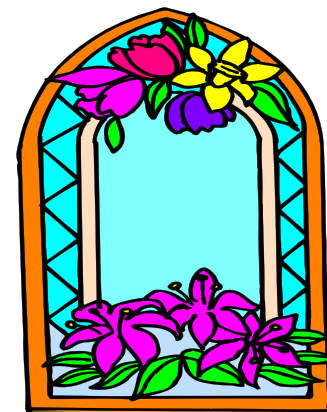
### TIMES FOR WEDDINGS

Weddings at St. Michael are scheduled on Saturdays no earlier than noon and no later than 2:30 PM. Friday afternoon and evening weddings are also permitted. Because of the heavy weekend Mass schedule, the celebration of Baptisms, and the other pastoral needs of the parish, **weddings are not scheduled on Sundays.** Couples are allowed use of the Church for 1/2 hour after their wedding.

No weddings may be scheduled during Holy Week (Palm Sunday weekend through Easter Sunday).

### WEDDING OPTIONS

- **ROSES FOR THE PARENTS** presented at the Rite of Peace. This rite should not be given undue prominence over the elements which surround it. If chosen, the flowers are placed near the maid of honor before the liturgy until needed.
- **BOUQUET FOR THE HOLY FAMILY** presented after Communion (or at a ceremony without Eucharist, after the exchange of vows and rings). If this option is chosen, we encourage *that you consider both* the bride and groom to join in prayer before the Holy Family as a sign of their unity and desire to become a Holy Family themselves. The flowers are placed near the maid of honor before the liturgy until needed.
- **AISLE RUNNER.** (not allowed during this time of pandemic) . In normal times, the parish does not provide a runner for the center aisle, and use of a runner is optional. Please notify your florist that our aisle is 68 feet long. **A 75 FOOT RUNNER IS SUGGESTED.** Should you choose to have a runner, please assign someone from your group of family and friends to take it with you after the wedding.
- **UNITY CANDLE.** If a unity candle is desired, the bride and groom provide their own unity candle and two dripless white dinner candles. The parish does not have a unity candle stand available for your use. Unity candles are placed on a table near the altar, but never on the altar. They may be purchased at a religious goods, candle or card shop or online.
- **OTHER ADDITIONAL RITUALS.** Any additional elements not listed here are to be discussed with the presiding priest or deacon before being added to the wedding or with the facilitators at the wedding liturgy planning workshop.



## BASIC CHURCH REQUIREMENTS

### AFTER THE WEDDING

If one or both of you were registered at St. Michael as part of your parents' household, you will be deleted from your parents' records as of the date of your wedding. If you wish to remain a part of St. Michael Parish, you will need to register as a new household with your new name, address, and phone number. If one of you is already registered on your own, you will need to update your registration with the parish office. Please call the receptionist at 708-349-0903 for instructions on registering or to make changes. If you will not be continuing as a St. Michael parishioner, you will need to register with your new parish.

### THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

**Rehearsals for Saturday weddings are usually scheduled at 6:00 PM on the evening immediately before your wedding.**

**Rehearsals for Friday weddings.** Due to choir rehearsals during the choral season, wedding rehearsals for Friday weddings are scheduled earlier than 6 PM on Thursday evening.

The scheduled time for your rehearsal was included in the letter confirming your wedding date. If you must change your assigned rehearsal time, please contact Marcia Farrell in our Parish Office at 708-873-4610 before making arrangements for a rehearsal dinner.

**All must arrive promptly for your rehearsal.** This is a necessity because of the wedding coordinator's schedule and other parish events. Rehearsals usually last about one hour. Your entire wedding party and anyone who is to exercise a liturgical role in the wedding liturgy (readers, etc.) must attend the rehearsal. Please decide before the rehearsal how you wish to pair your attendants for the entrance procession and mark that on your wedding planning worksheet. This worksheet is used by the coordinator in conducting your rehearsal.

**We remind you that even during the rehearsal, all are in the presence of the Lord. All behavior during the rehearsal must be dignified and reverent.**

**A NEW BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE WITH RECORD OF CONFIRMATION** (if you have been Confirmed) issued within six months prior to your wedding date--not your original baptismal certificate. This is required for each baptized person (bride and groom). In an interfaith marriage, the baptized non-Catholic must also present proof of baptism. Please note: to get a proof of your Baptism/Confirmation, simply call the parish where you were Baptized or Confirmed and have them send the records to you. You will need to know at least the year you received the sacraments. If you were Baptized/Confirmed at St. Michael, we will have your records. You will need to provide the priest with the date you received each sacrament here at our parish.

**INTERFAITH MARRIAGES** require proper permissions and/or dispensations from the Chancellor's Office of the Archdiocese.

**A PRE-NUPTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BOTH BRIDE AND GROOM** completed in the presence of a priest or deacon.

**TWO MARRIAGE AFFIDAVITS FOR EACH PERSON MAY BE REQUIRED** to determine freedom to marry in the Catholic Church. The priest or deacon will advise you if they are needed.

**TWO WITNESSES**, usually the best man and maid of honor, are required.

**AN ONLINE "FOCCUS" (Facilitating Open Couple Communication Understanding and Study) Inventory** must be completed as soon as possible after booking your wedding date. This instrument is designed to identify areas where further discussion is recommended for the couple to increase readiness for marriage. Results of your FOCCUS are discussed with you as a couple by one of our FOCCUS coaches.

**PROOF OF ATTENDANCE AT AN APPROVED MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM** either at St. Michael or offered through the Archdiocese. This is in addition to FOCCUS. During this time of pandemic a virtual pre-cana offered through the Archdiocese of Chicago is taking the place of our regular parish marriage preparation class.

## CIVIL REQUIREMENTS

**A MARRIAGE LICENSE** must be obtained prior to the wedding from one of the Cook County Clerk's offices. There is no requirement for a blood test or physical exam. ***Both persons must appear together in person with the \$60.00 license fee, proper photo identification and proof of age.***

The wedding license will be issued the day you apply, but you must wait at least one day before you are married. The license remains valid for 60 days after it is issued. The wedding license should be presented to the parish office prior to the day of wedding. The license will be filled out by the priest or deacon presiding at your wedding. The Church will send it to the Bureau of Vital Statistics for registry. For more information, go to [www.cookcountyclerk.com/service/marriage-licenses](http://www.cookcountyclerk.com/service/marriage-licenses) (There may be delays during the pandemic, so apply as early as you are able.)

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Engagement is both an exciting and a stressful time. The excitement comes from the anticipation of formally committing oneself to an intimate relationship. The stresses come from fears of making such an awesome commitment, from the many and varied reactions of others, and from the wedding arrangements. Couples may be tempted to use the time of engagement solely as the time to plan and arrange the ceremony and reception. The Catholic community strongly urges a couple to use the engagement period as personal preparation for the days and years that follow the wedding celebration.

### The Sacrament of Christian Marriage

*“Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of matrimony, signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church. (Ephesians 5:30) The spouses thereby help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and by the rearing and education of their children. And so, in their state and way of life, they have their own special gift among the people of God (1 Corinthians 7:7).”* —Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, #11

### FORMAL PREPARATION

1. As soon as you meet with the priest and your wedding date is officially set, your email addresses (required) will be used by us to register you for the FOCCUS inventory online. Once you are registered for FOCCUS you will receive an email from FOCCUS, Inc. with instructions for logging on and completing the inventory. This cost is included in your wedding fee.
2. After St. Michael receives your FOCCUS inventory report from FOCCUS, Inc. you will be called by one of our certified married coaches to go over the results with you as a couple at your convenience.
3. In addition to FOCCUS, as soon as possible after booking your date, your must attend one of the following Marriage Preparation Programs. Your choices include:
  - St. Michael's Marriage Preparation (One session—no cost)  
**Not now being offered due to restrictions on in-person meetings at the parish during this time of pandemic.**  
*For the next four you can find more information or register at [www.familyministries.org](http://www.familyministries.org)*
  - an Archdiocesan Virtual Pre-Cana Class ...<https://pvm.archchicago.org/lifelong-formation/marriage-and-family-ministries/getting-married>
  - An Online On Demand Catholic Marriage Prep Class (approximately 8 hours to complete- \$195)
  - a One in Christ Seminar (2 full days-\$250)
  - If you live out of town and can do none of these, you must attend a similar program in another Parish or through another Diocese and supply proof of attendance to us.
  - For more information about the Church's teachings on contraception and natural family planning (NFP) see [www.familyministries.org](http://www.familyministries.org) 2 hour NFP classes (\$49) are offered at various locations in the Archdiocese and online at [learnNFP.com](http://learnNFP.com)

## FLOWERS/ DECORATIONS

Arrangements for flowers are to be made by the bride and groom with their own florist.

**ANY FLOWERS OR OTHER DECORATIONS IN THE SANCTUARY ARE NOT TO BE MOVED. THIS INCLUDES LITURGICAL BANNERS/ HANGINGS AND ALTAR CLOTHS. YOU MAY ADD TO WHAT IS ALREADY THERE.** Cut flower arrangements or potted plants are acceptable.

**NO FLOWERS OR CANDLES ARE ALLOWED ON THE ALTAR AT ANY TIME.** At most times of the year, we would prefer if you take your arrangements with you after the wedding.

During this time of covid, nothing is allowed to be placed in the pew area (this includes no pew bows or runners, etc.)

If you are concerned that the Church decorations will not coordinate with the colors of your wedding or if you wish to donate your floral arrangements to the parish following the wedding liturgy, please call the Worship Director at the Worship Office, 708-873-4652, before ordering flowers or choosing a color scheme, so that your flowers will coordinate with the color and style of the liturgical decorations of that particular time of year.

Our church is amply decorated during the Advent Season (4 weeks before Christmas), Christmas Season (Christmas Eve through and including the second Sunday of January), and the Lenten/Easter Season (Ash Wednesday through Pentecost--which is celebrated six Sundays after Easter).

Flower petals should not be scattered at this time. We must keep all extraneous things out of the environment for sanitation purposes.

### FLOWER STANDS

The parish does not have flower stands for your use. Flowers are usually placed on the floor in front of the altar and/or ambo. Depending on other liturgical décor, you may be able to place flowers on the low brick wall behind the altar. Your florist may provide flower stands/pedestals, but make sure they are not too tall and that your floral arrangements will not block the view of the altar. Arches and large candelabras are not allowed.

## USHERS

The principal task of the usher is to make everyone welcome and to seat people together in the front of the church. Please discuss seating arrangements with the wedding coordinator on the night of the rehearsal. (The first few pews should be reserved for the wedding attendants and immediate family members.) All guests are to be seated at least ten minutes before the starting time of the wedding. The parents of the bride and groom will be seated last. Guests arriving late will quietly seat themselves. During this time of covid parish greeter/ushers will be seating everyone socially distanced.

## PARISH POLICIES

To maintain the dignity of the celebration of this sacrament, the following parish policies will apply both on the wedding day and on the night of the rehearsal.

- **THE USE OF ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED AT ANY TIME IN THE CHURCH** by persons participating in the rehearsal or in the wedding liturgy/ceremony (before, during or after the occasion). This includes the wedding party, guests and others connected with the wedding. These substances and their use are inconsistent with the atmosphere of respect and reverence that ought to prevail.
- The bride or groom should not drink before the wedding. Consumption of alcohol impairs your judgment and affects your ability to enter into this covenant.
- Loud or unruly behavior in or around the church is inappropriate at any time.
- Throwing of rice, confetti, or birdseed in the church or outside on church property is not allowed. Use of firecrackers and sparklers is strictly prohibited both inside and outside.
- Bubbles may be used outside. Small bells may be rung both inside and outside.
- We have been advised by environmentalists that balloon launchings can cause serious problems for the wildlife in the area. McGinnis slough across the street is a designated Audobon Migratory Site and many birds live there. We ask that you consider this before releasing balloons. No balloons are allowed inside the church.

## RECEIVING LINE

A receiving line after the Mass/ceremony is not allowed during this time of covid. Picture taking is also limited to 15 minutes and only pictures with specific people will be allowed inside the Church. All guests will be escorted directly out of the church following the wedding. No gathering in the Narthex is allowed.

## PERSONAL SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

We invite you to prepare spiritually for the wedding day and for your married life by regular prayer and weekly attendance at Sunday Mass. We strongly encourage you to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in preparation for marriage, especially shortly before the wedding day. Confessions are heard regularly on Saturday afternoons from 3:00-4:00 PM or you may make an appointment with a priest.

## WEDDING LITURGY AND MUSIC PLANNING

**(currently not being offered during this time of pandemic—  
Planning for the liturgy will be done virtually with the worship director  
and music director)**

We love to celebrate joyful events in special ways. The actions, words, rituals, and music of the wedding liturgy underline and heighten the importance of your wedding as a sacrament of the Roman Catholic Church. The rites are distinguished by a noble simplicity.

*Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which (itself) is the sacrament of unity. Therefore, liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church. They manifest it and have effects upon it; but, they concern individual members of the Church in different ways.* —Vatican II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, #26

Marriage, whether at Mass or at a Liturgy of the Word without Eucharist is celebrated after the reading of the Gospel and the Homily. Please keep in mind that all liturgical celebrations in the Church are first and foremost, acts of worship of God through the Son, in union with the Holy Spirit. It is not just my wedding, but God's worship. Secondly, a marriage rite celebrated in the Church accomplishes a work commanded by God, namely the union of man and woman in the bond of matrimony. The priest or deacon will determine with the couple if a Mass or a Liturgy of the Word is most appropriate.

The couple will receive at their first meeting with the priest, a book entitled United in Christ. This book contains an outline of the wedding Liturgy, be it a Mass or Service, with choices of appropriate scripture, prayers and ritual options. As your wedding date gets closer, the priest will discuss these options with you.

**Please go through this book again before you contact the** Worship Director and Music Director, who will answer questions regarding your options.

## WORSHIP BOOKLETS (PROGRAMS)

Worship booklets are not provided by the parish, but can be useful in helping guests participate in the spoken and sung responses.

## READERS AND GIFTBEARERS

You may wish to have family members or friends proclaim the Scripture readings and intercessions (petitions) during the wedding liturgy or present the gifts of bread and wine (if the marriage takes place during a Mass). Those chosen to read need to be good at reading and speaking in front of a group. Poor reading of scripture can minimize the effect of the Scripture's proclamation. Those you choose to read should attend the wedding rehearsal.

## WEDDING MUSIC

*Music in worship enhances and adds a dimension of meaning words alone cannot give."* Music in Catholic Worship, #24

Music at weddings is an integral part of the Christian worship of the whole community gathered for the celebration and prayer. Music, whether vocal or instrumental, during the wedding liturgy should be sacred rather than secular and appropriate for Catholic worship. It must be of sound theology, scripturally based and appropriate to the liturgical celebration and season. The music should at times allow for congregational singing, and be in keeping with sound liturgical practices.

Our parish Music Director (708-873-4627) assists you in selecting music for your wedding liturgy, whether or not he will be the musician at your liturgy/service. Samples of music are played at the Wedding Liturgy Planning Workshop. Couples should make every effort to attend a workshop. If a couple wishes additional musicians (besides organ and/or piano) and or musical groups, these can be arranged through the director. If the couple is using musicians other than those on staff at St. Michael, the couple must still meet with the Director of Music for a review of music. Outside musicians must consult with St. Michael's Music Director to ensure that the music complies with parish guidelines.

## WEDDING DAY ASSISTANCE

For your convenience, the bride and bridesmaids gather in one Ministry Room off the Narthex. The groom and groomsmen gather in the other Ministry Room off the Narthex. The restroom off the narthex provides ample counter space for your wedding party. Wedding coordinators will conduct your rehearsal and are there early on the day of the wedding to welcome guests, answer any questions, provide for your needs, and ensure the orderly flow of the liturgy.



## FEES

All fees are due in the parish office one month before your wedding along with your completed wedding liturgy planning sheet. Questions regarding fees can be directed to the parish office or the worship director. Please write one check made payable to St. Michael Parish to cover the church, music, cantor and/or soloist. Gratuities for the two altar servers should be in cash placed in two envelopes marked Altar Server. (no altar servers are allowed during this time of pandemic)

## VISITING PRIEST/DEACON

Upon request, permission may be granted for a priest/deacon friend or priest/deacon family member to celebrate the Wedding Liturgy. However, before contacting a priest or deacon not associated with St. Michael Parish, you must first contact one of our priests.

## INTERFAITH WEDDINGS

Ministers are welcome to attend and assist at interfaith marriages in accordance with ecumenical guidelines. Since Eucharist is a sign of the reality of oneness in faith, life and worship, we encourage interfaith couples to witness their vows in the context of a liturgy that does not include the celebration of the Eucharist.

## GUIDELINES FOR THE RECEPTION OF COMMUNION

**FOR CATHOLICS:** As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should be in the state of grace and normally should have fasted for one hour.

**FOR FELLOW CHRISTIANS:** We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the wedding Mass as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this celebration will draw us closer to one another. Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not invited to Holy Communion. Speak to your priest regarding exceptions.

**NON-CHRISTIANS:** We also welcome to the celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While they do not join us in Holy Communion, they are united with us in prayer.

**FOR THOSE NOT RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION:** All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to come forward in the Communion procession for a blessing with hands crossed over the chest as a sign of their desire for a blessing.