

Wedding Guidelines for Sts. Bridget and Gabriel Parishes

Updated 6/6/15

Congratulations!

Let me, be among the first to congratulate you on your upcoming wedding, and for deciding to be united as one within the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. Your decision to be married in the Catholic Church is a beautiful decision because you and your future spouse are created in the image and likeness of God and are making the decision to live your life according to God's plan. It is our hope that these "Wedding Guidelines" will help in your planning and preparation for making a lifelong commitment to one another within the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

Peace,
Fr. Dustin Boehm

Prior to setting the date of marriage and beginning marriage preparation:

- The couple must be active in the life of their Catholic parish for at least 3 months
- The couple must meet with the pastor in order to coordinate dates and discuss the process of marriage preparation.
- The security deposit must be paid in order for the agreed upon date to be reserved in the parish's calendar.

Requirements of Marriage Preparation:

- The couple agrees to meet with the pastor/administrator at least three more times. More meetings may be required by the pastor/administrator or upon the request of the couple.
- The couple agrees to complete online the FOCCUS Inventory.
- The couple agrees to meet with an assigned *Sponsor Couple*. These meetings will serve to help the engaged with various practical aspects of lifelong marriage in the Catholic Church. The substance of these meetings will center around the results of their FOCCUS Inventory.
- The couple agrees to participate in a *Tobit* or *Pre-Cana* marriage preparation retreat. The pastor/administrator can help in registering for one of these retreats.
- The couple agrees to remain open to learning about and practicing *Natural Family Planning*, rather than artificial contraception.
- The couple agrees to raise their children Catholic.
- The couple agrees to go to Mass each Sunday and Holy Day.
- The couple agrees to make regular use of the Sacrament of Confession.
- The couple agrees to fostering and practicing a daily prayer life – both individually and together as spouses.
- The couple commits to a life of Christian sacrifice and charity.

The Sacrament of Marriage

The importance and meaning of marriage is revealed all throughout Sacred Scriptures. The Bible “begins with the creation of man and woman in the image and likeness of God and concludes with a vision of the ‘wedding-feast of the Lamb.’”¹ Marriage is a gift from God intended for our benefit in this life so as to reach everlasting life in heaven. Marriage receives its meaning and significance not from us, but from God, the author of creation. For from the beginning, after God created man and woman, he blessed their union and commanded them to “be fruitful and multiply.”² Through this commandment, man and woman become one flesh in a covenant of mutual and lasting fidelity.

The Most Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is the perfect community of love from which all unity flows. God, who is love, and who created out of love, calls each person to love and be loved. In a special way he calls a man and a woman together in the covenant and communion of marriage so that the love between a husband and a wife can become “an image of the absolute and unfailing love” that God has for each and every human being.³ Christ further raised the dignity of marriage as he taught his followers about the permanence of the marriage bond: “what God has joined together, let no one separate.”⁴ This bond is more than a mere agreement, contract, or even a civil marriage. This bond is a permanent and lasting covenant ordered for the good of the spouses, for the building up of the Kingdom, and for the spread of the Christian faith. The Sacrament of Marriage, moreover, is a reflection of Christ’s redemptive love for the Church, and the Church’s loving obedience to Christ.

The marriage of two baptized Christians is a sacramental marriage. Through this sacrament Christ offers the couple, who are now united in spirit and in flesh, *a special grace* to deepen their love and “strengthen their indissoluble unity.”⁵ Christ dwells with them as their strength to sacrifice for one another, to forgive one another, to obey one another, to bear each other’s burdens, and to love one another as Christ loves the Church.⁶ Although not sacramental, the marriage bond between a Catholic and a non-baptized person is still recognized as a lasting bond and is ordered by God in the same way toward deep love and sacrifice.

The unity of marriage is directly related to the conjugal relationship.⁷ The conjugal relationship of husband and wife consummates the marriage and continually renews the couple’s promise of mutual fidelity. This relationship nurtures and brings about unity. It requires the total gift of self to one’s spouse and can only be

¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraph 1602.

² Genesis 2:1.

³ CCC, paragraph 1604.

⁴ Matthew 19:6.

⁵ CCC, paragraph 1641.

⁶ CCC, paragraph 1642.

⁷ CCC, paragraphs 1643-1654.

described as chaste and permanently exclusive: Christians mate for life. The conjugal relationship is a physical, spiritual and emotional relationship. Through this union, two become one flesh, which by its very nature must be always open to the possibility of children. Children are the crowning fruit of marital love through which the couple assumes the responsibilities of parenthood. The inability to procreate children in no way precludes a fruitful marriage, for the ability to nurture life and build up the Kingdom comes in many forms.

Through this sacrament, a man and a woman freely pledge themselves together in a sacred and permanent bond. Aided by Christ, and guided by the Holy Spirit, husband and wife together seek the good, promote life and share their faith so to join the company of angels and saints praising God at the eternal wedding-feast.

Wedding Times:

- Friday Weddings:
 - Rehearsal on Thursday at 6:00pm
 - Weddings on Friday beginning no later than 6:00pm
 - St. Bridget Church will be opened at 2:30pm. The church must be cleaned and vacated by 8:30pm.
 - St. Gabriel Church opened at 3:30pm. The church must be cleaned and vacated by 8:30pm
- Saturday Weddings:
 - Rehearsal on Friday at 6:00pm
 - Weddings on Saturday beginning no later than 2:00pm at St. Gabriel and no later than 1:30pm at St. Bridget
 - St. Bridget Church will be opened by 10:30am and must be cleaned and vacated by 6:00pm
 - St. Gabriel Church will be opened by 10:30am and must be cleaned and vacated by 4:00pm

Remunerations – Fees, Stipends, and Donations:

- Marriage Preparation:
 - FOCCUS Inventory: \$ 15.00 (Paid to the parish)
 - Pre-Cana Retreat: \$56.00 (Paid at registration)
- Security Deposit: \$ 300.00 (Paid to the parish, see page 11)
- Cost of musicians: \$100 - \$350
 - See pages 12-15 for instructions
- Servers: \$ 20.00 each (Paid to the parish)
- Facility Rental: (Paid to the parish)
 - Church: \$250.00
 - This fee is waived if one of the engaged is a registered parishioner and/or their parents are registered and active parishioners
 - St. Bridget Weddings:
 - Rectory: \$25 p/hour

St. Ambrose Meeting Room: \$25 p/hour
St. Gabriel Weddings:
Parish Library: \$25 p/hour
Parish Meeting Room: \$25 p/hour

- Recommended Donations
St. Gabriel or St. Bridget Parish: \$ 200.00
Pastor/administrator: Nothing is expected

All payments that are directed to the parish, should be mailed or dropped by the parish office of the parish that is hosting the wedding. If the couple chooses to drop off the payment in person, this should be done during business hours.

Necessary Documents for Marriage Preparation:

1. Each of the engaged must provide recently dated sacramental records. In order to obtain them, please contact the parish at which you were Baptized. If you were Baptized Catholic, please inform that parish that you are seeking to get married and to please provide all “notations” on the sacramental record. Request that the records be mailed to you (not our parish). Once you receive those records, please drop them by St. Gabriel’s parish office in an envelope addressed to the pastor/administrator. Please note that your original Baptismal certificate will not be sufficient.
2. If the couple is not already civilly married, they must apply for a marriage license. In Indiana this can only be done 60 days out or less from their wedding date. The couple must apply through the county office in which one of them lives. For example, if both live in Union County, the marriage license cannot be obtained through Fayette County. Rather, it must be applied for through the Union County Clerk’s office. Bring this license with you to the wedding rehearsal. However, if the couple lives outside of Indiana, the license must be applied for and obtained through Fayette County Clerk’s office.
3. If the couple is already civilly married, please provide a certified copy of your marriage certificate. In Indiana, certified copies can be obtained by contacting the clerk’s office of the county in which the marriage took place.
4. If either of the engaged is *not* a parishioner at Sts. Gabriel or Bridget parishes, a letter of good standing from the pastor of parish at which that person is a member must be provided for the wedding file. Please have it sent to St. Gabriel Parish, attention Fr. Dustin Boehm.

Marriage Preparation for “Out of Parish” Weddings

When a couple lives outside of the parish where they wish the wedding to occur, the preparation process should be initiated in the parish where the Catholic party or one of the Catholic parties resides. All the requirements of the parish where the preparation is taking place should be followed. The couple must leave time so that the marriage file can be prepared in time for the church where the wedding will take place to receive and review it. If you are being prepared elsewhere to be married at

our parish, please have the priest overseeing the preparation contact the pastor to coordinate this process.

The Catholic Rite of Marriage

Because marriage is a Sacrament, the normal place for a Catholic wedding to be celebrated is in a Catholic Church, since the church more fully represents the ongoing sacramental life of the individual and the Catholic community. If the bride and groom are both Catholic, the wedding can be at the parish church of either party. If only one member of the couple is Catholic, the marriage is usually at the parish of the Catholic party. A couple can, for good reason, request that their wedding be at another Catholic parish. Having weddings at non-Catholic churches can be requested for a good reason; for example, if one of the individuals is not Roman Catholic and is actively engaged in the life of their own particular church community. A wedding outside of a church building is not permissible.

Between Two Baptized and Practicing Catholics

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the "Foundation and confirmation of all Christian Practice".⁸ Therefore it is right and proper for two baptized practicing Catholics to receive their Lord in Holy Communion whom they have invited into their married lives just moments before. Great care must be taken in planning the Nuptial Mass of the couple. The priest will assist with this aspect of the planning stages. Only in extraordinary circumstances should the wedding of a Catholic couple happen outside the context of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Between a Catholic and a non-Catholic

In cases where one party is Catholic and the other is of a different faith (Baptized or not), the wedding takes place outside of the context of the Mass. The reception of Holy Communion by one spouse and not of the other is seen to be a sign of great disunity; and thus not a good witness on the day of one's wedding. In planning for your wedding, you as the couple must be considerate of those attending this joyous celebration. Non-Catholic families often feel awkward and unwelcome at the celebration of Mass when they are unable to participate in its fullness due to their difference in faith. The rite of marriage outside of Mass is still a lovely, sacred and reverent moment of joy!

Visiting Catholic Clergy

When a couple requests that a visiting Catholic priest/deacon preside at their wedding, it is important that the parish be notified so arrangements can be coordinated. Requirements for weddings outlined in this booklet must be observed (*including all regulations on music, dress code etc.*). Be aware that Indiana requires all clergy officiating at weddings be authorized to do so by the state. If the Catholic clergy you choose to celebrate your wedding lives outside of Indiana, they may need to file a request with the state before being able to officiate at your wedding.

⁸ CCC., paragraph 2181

Non-Catholic Clergy

When one party of the couple being married is of another faith or denomination, their minister is welcome to participate in certain aspects of the ceremony with the priest. There are restrictions as to how the minister can participate in the ceremony. You may discuss any questions or concerns with the priest in the preparation process. Should there be special reasons to be married in a Church of another denomination, a dispensation to do so is required.

Reverence inside of the Church

- An over-arching theme to remember is that you are getting married in a Roman Catholic Church. As Catholics we believe that Jesus Christ is truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament, so out of respect for Him we ask that yelling, profanity, or loud talking not take place in the church building. We ask: Before, during, and after the rehearsal and Wedding itself that there be a reverential silence. This allows for a quick rehearsal, for preludes prior to your wedding to be heard, and for an overall prayerful atmosphere so that people (and yourselves) can focus on what is really important: your wedding.
- Cell phones are not to be used inside of a Catholic Church. Please remind your wedding party and family of this reverent custom.
- Food is not allowed in the church building. Water alone is allowed. No soda, snacks etc. Please communicate this to your wedding party.
- Along with the theme of reverence there can be no alcoholic beverages on the premises before or during your wedding. Also, since the free consent of the spouses makes marriage-if one or the other spouse has alcohol on their breath on the day of your wedding, the wedding will be cancelled for that day and rescheduled. Anyone in your wedding party who consumes alcohol before the wedding will not be permitted to stand in the wedding party during the wedding ceremony.
- While pictures are being taken before and after your wedding we ask that only those in the pictures be in the sanctuary. This ensures that reverence is given to the Blessed Sacrament and Sanctuary. It also ensures microphones and other furnishings are not tampered with. Modest dress is also to be worn for all pictures inside the church building before and after the wedding ceremony.
- Genuflecting to the Tabernacle – the place where the Body and Blood of our Lord is reserved – will be part of the opening procession. All are asked to show this simple form of reverence to our Lord. If one is physically unable, due to age or physical limitation, they are at least encouraged to bow out of respect and reverence.

Dress Code

On the day of your wedding you are encouraged to wear the color white; this is due to your baptism. On the day of your baptism you were clothed in a white garment, on your first Holy Communion you wore white, altar servers and priests at Mass wear white etc. White is the color of the saints in heaven. Brides are encouraged to wear a traditional white dress and grooms are invited to dress in white as well. The groom is not required to wear “all” white but at least a white shirt is recommended. A white tie, vest, jacket etc. is also a nice way to make reference to one’s baptism. The dresses on the bride and the bridesmaids are asked to be modest. Dress length should be at least at knee level. Tops of shoulders should be covered with sleeves or wraps/shawls and cleavage should be appropriately covered. This is a “Church” wedding taking place in a House of God, appropriate attire should be worn. This is also true for the photography sessions before and after the wedding- immodest dress is never appropriate in church. All bridesmaids and groomsmen will be asked to genuflect during the opening procession; please keep this in mind when dresses and shoes are picked out. If you have questions please feel free to ask.

People Needed for Your Wedding Liturgy

- *Readers:* You may ask two or three people to do readings at your wedding: One (1) person for the First Reading, One (1) person for the Second Reading, and One (1) person for the Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful). These people need to be able to read well, clearly, and loudly enough to be understood. The proclamation of the Word of God is of utmost importance in the Celebration of Marriage. Please be careful in deciding who is going to read God’s very Word. This position should not be given out of “kindness” or trying to honor a friend; but first and foremost honoring God’s Word. Think and pray about whom would read God’s Word the best. If you do not have a family member or friend to read the Church can provide a reader or the priest may proclaim the readings himself.
 - Practicing Catholics are required for the readings and preferred for the Prayers of the Faithful. The Prayers of the Faithful can be read by a non-Catholic. One person could fulfill all of these readings; it is not *required* to be split up into three (3) parts.
- *Gift Bearers:* You may select individuals to bring the gifts forward during the preparation of the altar. They must be practicing Roman Catholics.
- *Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:* If the amount of people attending your wedding requires, individuals who assist with the distribution of Holy Communion may be called upon. We do not distribute the Precious Blood at weddings, so please speak with the priest about this before asking individuals. The norm is that the priest is not in need of assistance.

- *Altar Servers:* Three (3) altar servers are required for the celebration of Holy Mass. If they are visiting servers, from another parish, they must be well trained. The parish can provide well-trained servers for you; if you do not have any in your family.
- *Musicians:* Couples are responsible for finding musicians for their wedding. Each wedding should at least have an organist/pianist and a vocalist. Please see page 12 for further guidelines and information

Scripture Readings for Your Wedding

Readings for your wedding will be discussed with you by the priest. He will give you a booklet with several choices for each reading. The two of you are encouraged to read them together, pray about them and decide which readings are best for your celebration. The texts that are given to you are official texts that the Church approves for Weddings; please do not manipulate the wording.

Attendants/Bridal Party and Groomsmen

Canon Law (The Catholic Church's Law) states that only two witnesses need to be present (The Maid of Honor and the Best Man), Canon 1108 S., 1. When choosing attendants keep in mind this is a special and important day for you as a couple, so only those people who hold pride of place in your life should be asked to be attendants. Less is more! Typically, children four years of age and under are too young to participate in the wedding.

Flowers and Decorations

These are general guidelines, should you have a special request, please contact the priest if there are questions. We are more than willing to work with you. The liturgical color for weddings is either white or gold.

The Church's life follows a Liturgical Year, therefore, each part of that year carries with itself a specific character, and decorations help convey that special character:

- *Weddings during the **Easter and Christmas Season:** There will already be flowers and plants placed in the sanctuary. They are not to be moved and nothing is to be added without discussing this with the priest.*
- *Weddings during **Ordinary Time:** Flowers and decorations may only be placed in-front of the altar and in-front of the ambo. Nothing is permitted impede the view of the altar or the ambo.*
- *Weddings during **Advent and Lent:** Due to the penitential character of these two seasons, we ask that you respect the Church's liturgical life, therefore, no flowers or decorations may be put in the sanctuary or the nave of the church. Ladies are allowed to carry flowers and men are permitted to have boutonnieres.*

The preference is that flowers be real and not artificial. Flowers must be potted or in a vase. If the pots have holes at the bottom, they must be set in a plastic/glass container.

We ask that **nothing** be affixed to the pews with wire, tape, sticky-tack, push-pins, etc. – this is harmful to the longevity of our beautiful church building. Clips for pew-bows can be purchased at a craft store.

Pew decorations may not hang over into the aisle ways.

Please ensure that no decorations cause any damage whatsoever to the church.

Rehearsal

The rehearsal date and time for your wedding will be arranged during one of the meetings you have with the priest. It is typically the evening (the night) before your wedding; but it can be days or the weekend in advance if that works best for your schedule. The rehearsal takes approximately 60 minutes.

The couple is permitted to store things out of the church on the night of the rehearsal. However, please check with the staff or priest in order to determine where things can be stored until the wedding. The parish is not responsible for anything that is stolen, lost or broken.

It is **necessary** that the Catholic spouse(s) receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (go to Confession) before the wedding ceremony. The rationale is that as you prepare to enter into a life long commitment that you do so with a clear conscience and in a state of grace. Therefore, couples may receive the sacrament on their own or from the priest celebrating the wedding before or after the rehearsal or prior to the ceremony. The priest will also make the sacrament available to the wedding party and guests; normally prior to the wedding during the taking of pictures. Please encourage your attendants to receive this wonderful sacrament.

Preparation Rooms

There are rooms for both the bridal party and the groomsmen. Although there is no charge for the use of the Church building for parishioners or the children of parishioners, there is a charge for these rooms- \$25 p/hour. It is your responsibility to reserve these rooms, if you plan on needing them, please make your reservations with the parish secretary during parish office hours. The payment for these rooms will be included in your wedding fees. These rooms should be clean and in good order when you arrive. It is your responsibility to clean up once the room is done being used. It is best to delegate this task, cleaning up, to someone not in your wedding party to be sure it is taken care of.

Specifics of the Rite of Marriage:

-The Procession

The Church teaches that the bride and groom are the proper ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony. As such, both parties should participate in the opening procession.

The norm would be as follows:

Grandparents, Grooms Parents, Mother of the Bride escorted by usher or family member, altar servers (3), Priest, Groom, the attendants two-by-two (a groomsman with a bridesmaid), the best man and maid of honor, flower girls and ring bearers, bride and her father.

-Aisle runners

Aisle runners are **not allowed** during a wedding. They are flimsy and tear easily. Often during the communion procession at Holy Mass they become a hazard for people who walk upon them. Individuals falling, tripping or getting hurt is a liability.

-Flower Petals

A flower girl may not sprinkle petals **unless** they are artificial petals. Real flower petals, once stepped upon, stain the church carpet.

-Unity Candle

The "unity candle" is not traditionally or authentically Catholic and is not permitted. The symbol of unity within a Catholic Marriage is seen in the exchange of vows, rings, reception of Holy Communion and the consummation of the wedding itself.

-Post Wedding

Throwing rice, confetti, flower petals, or birdseed is a maintenance issue. Use of these items is extremely discouraged. Bubbles and/or balloons are permissible, provided someone is present to clean up any messes immediately after it is done.

Photography and videography:

The Sacrament of Marriage is the most important celebration in the life of a couple. Because of this, couples are strongly encouraged to have professionals or knowledgeable friends on-hand in order to photograph "the two becoming one flesh." Here are some guidelines in order to help assist Photography and Videography:

1. Photographs and video provide a special keepsake for the occasion of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Obtaining these mementos, however, may not interfere with the Church's worship.
2. Photographers and videographers must respect the sanctity and solemnity of the ritual celebration, and therefore must conduct themselves in an unobtrusive manner.

3. Flash Photography:
 - a. Up to and including the entrance procession, the flash may be used.
 - b. During the ceremony the use of flash is prohibited.
 - c. The flash may be used again for the recession of the newlyweds.
4. Photographs and video may be taken from the choir loft, provided that they do not interfere with the musicians.
5. On the sides of the church, photographers and videographers may come as far forward as the first pew.
6. In the center aisle, photographers and videographers may come as far forward as the last row of guests.
7. Photographers and videographers may not:
 - a. enter the sanctuary at any point during the wedding ceremony
 - b. take photographs or video from the sacristy or confessional/storage room
 - c. stand on the pews
 - d. move any furniture including the candles and cross on the altar

Cleaning after the wedding:

It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure that all areas of used church facilities are clean and in working order. After the wedding, please have a designated group of people:

- Go through the church in order to take down any decorations, pick up wedding programs, ensure that the floors and carpet are clean, and that the bathrooms are in working order.
- Clean the rooms used by the bridal parties. Please make sure the floors are clean, tables wiped down, bathroom is in working order, and all items/food/drinks are not left behind. All trash must be taken out to the dumpster.
- Ensure that all lights are turned off, doors are locked and closed before departing.

Security Deposit:

Each couple is required to make a security deposit of \$300.00 to the parish at which the wedding is hosted. The deposit reserves the church for your date of marriage. Any violation of these wedding guidelines, damage done to property, or insufficiently cared for and cleaned facilities will result in the whole/partial forfeiture of the deposit. The security deposit will be mailed to the couple within 30 days of the wedding's completion. If part or all of the deposit is forfeited, an explanation will also be sent.

Wedding Music

Processional/Recession Suggestions

Canon in D	<i>Pachelbel</i>	
Hymn of Joy	<i>Beethoven</i>	
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desire	<i>Bach</i>	
Marche	<i>Gounod</i>	
Prince of Denmark March	<i>Clarke</i>	
Recessional Wedding March	<i>Mendelssohn</i>	
Bridal Chorus	<i>Wagner</i>	("Here Comes the Bride")
Trumpet Tune & Air	<i>Purcell</i>	
Water Music (excerpts)	<i>Handel</i>	

Other Classical Suggestions (Preludes)

Ave Maria	<i>Shubert</i>
The Gift of Love	<i>Folk Tune</i>
The Lord's Prayer	<i>Malotte</i>
The Love of the Lord	<i>Joncas</i>
My Soul Magnifies the Lord	<i>Purifoy</i>
The Prayer	<i>Sager/Foster</i>
Surely the Presence of the Lord Is in This Place	<i>Wolfe</i>

Psalms after 1st Reading

Psalm 33, "Happy the People"
Psalm 34, "Taste and See"
Psalm 118, "This Is the Day"
Psalm 128, "O Blessed Are Those"
Psalm 145, "I Will Praise Your Name"

Hymns during Wedding Masses **St. Gabriel Hymnal**

#463 Beginning Today
#693 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You
#525 Gift of Finest Wheat
#710 I Have Loved You
#466 Like a Seal on Your Heart
#622 Lord of All Hopefulness
#640 Love Divine All Loves Excelling
#650 Prayer of St. Francis
#499 One Bread, One Body
#644 Where Charity and Love
Prevail

Hymns during Wedding Masses **St. Bridget Hymnal**

#487 Christians Let Us Love One
Another
#398 God, Whose Love Is Reigning
O'er US
#450 Hear Us Now Our God and
Father
#379 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
#415 Lord of All Hopefulness
#391 Love Divine All Loves Excelling
#223 Songs of Thankfulness and
Praise