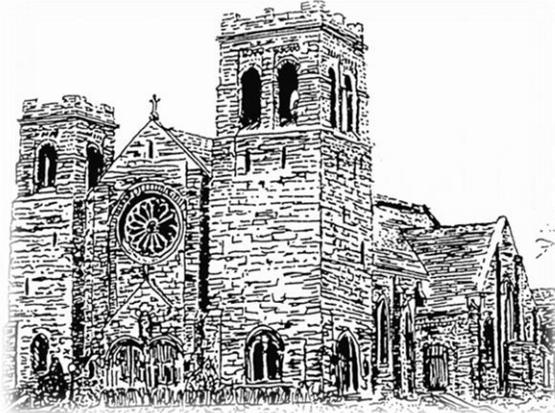


Wedding Guidelines

*Saint Catharine of Siena Church
2848 Fischer Place
Cincinnati, Ohio
45211*



A wedding is one of the most significant days in the life of a man and a woman. It is, above all, a liturgical celebration that needs to be reverent, prayerful and moving. The liturgy should be designed as a worship experience so that all may give praise and thanks to the Lord as they witness the exchange of the wedding vows. For in marriage God reveals his love in the love of husband and wife.

These guidelines have been prepared to help the bride and groom in the preparation and celebration of their wedding. Please read them carefully. May the Lord bless you as you prepare for the blessed day.

WHO MAY BE MARRIED AT ST. CATHARINE? The prospective bride or groom must be a registered member of the parish who is living within the territorial boundaries of the parish. The children of registered members who have been away at school or who have moved from home may also be married at St. Catharine provided their parents are still active members.

WHEN TO BEGIN. Marriage preparation should begin at least six to ten months before the wedding date. Engaged couples must participate in the large group Saturday Pre-Cana Marriage Prep Program or the small group weekend Engaged Encounter Program. They must also respond to the FOCCUS Pre-Marital Inventory. This instrument will help them understand their strengths and weaknesses as a couple. The pastor or a parish staff member will be happy to explain these programs.

TIMES FOR THE CEREMONY. Weddings may be celebrated on most Friday evenings of the month usually at 6:00 or 6:30 PM, on Saturday morning before or at 12:30 PM and Saturday evenings at 6:00 or 6:30 PM. *We must be very careful NOT to schedule weddings on a holy day of obligation or during Holy Week.*

WEDDING WITHIN OR OUTSIDE MASS? The Mass is not required to make a wedding “Catholic,” but normally a wedding between two baptized Catholics takes place during Mass. When the Mass is celebrated the priest will help the couple choose scripture readings and ministers for the ceremony. *Lectors, the petition reader, the gift bearers and extraordinary minister(s) of communion must be practicing Catholics who are commissioned to do those ministries.*

When a baptized Catholic marries a person baptized in another Christian Church, the Mass is not celebrated without permission from the Archbishop’s office. This rule ensures that both the Catholic and non-Catholic party and their families feel equally comfortable and included during the ceremony since the non-Catholic party and family cannot share in the Eucharist.

When a baptized Catholic marries a non-baptized person Canon Law does not allow the Mass to be celebrated. The pastor will be happy to explain these guidelines in greater detail and answer any questions.

MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY. St. Catharine is eager to offer all engaged couples the services of its Director of Music. He will help you choose music for the various parts of the liturgy within or without Mass. Only liturgical music may be used at St. Catharine. Popular songs from the radio, Broadway show tunes or Christian/secular concert music, once permitted before or during the ceremony, are now not permitted at all. These are best reserved for the reception. Musical selections in church must reflect scriptural or sacramental themes and guarantee that the celebration retains a religious tone. The Director of Music will also help you secure the services of additional musicians if so desired. Striving for simplicity and good taste in the choice of music for your wedding will help your guests participate during the ceremony and keep the celebration joyful and prayerful.

FLOWERS ETC. You are responsible to order the **flower arrangements** for your wedding, *if you choose to have them.* However, there are restrictions as to where they may be placed in the sanctuary, e.g., *no flowers may be placed on the main altar itself.* The wedding coordinator, pastoral minister or pastor will explain other restrictions. Flowers for a liturgical celebration are a gift for the Lord, and it is customary to leave them after the ceremony for the use of the faith community. The white **aisle runner**, while not required or even recommended for our church, is permitted. Tell your florist the runner needs to be 35 YARDS long. You can consult with the parish wedding coordinators about the fee for using the parish **aisle candles** if you want them for your wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHY. Photographers should check with the wedding coordinator or priest before the ceremony about the parish wedding photo guidelines. Flash pictures are permitted during the opening and closing processions. Pictures without flash may be taken during the ceremony from the balcony or the back of church. If video is used the videographer must be stationary so as not to distract from the liturgy being celebrated. After the ceremony please limit your photo time to one half hour.

REHEARSAL. You will need to schedule a rehearsal time with the priest or deacon presiding at your ceremony. The rehearsal usually lasts about 45 minutes *if only the members of the wedding party, parents of the bride and groom and liturgical ministers attend.* Other guests may meet you afterwards for the rehearsal dinner and other events.

DONATION/FEES. The customary wedding donation is **\$250** (custodial services, building expenses and parish Music Director/organist fee). Please make your donation on or before the rehearsal date to avoid confusion at the time of your wedding. If there is a genuine financial hardship that would prevent you from making a donation, bring it to the attention of the pastor or deacon presiding at your ceremony.

The *bridal party* is responsible to pay outside musicians and/or vocalists who have been contracted for the wedding ceremony.

RESTRICTIONS. We kindly ask for your help in maintaining the church building and grounds of St. Catharine Parish. Please do not allow anyone to throw *rice or birdseed* on the parish property. You may not drop *rose petals* down the aisle during the opening ceremony or use *balloons* or *blow bubbles* at the closing. Please do not bring *food* or *drink* into the building before the ceremony. As a courtesy to the bride and groom and to their parents and grandparents please *save the drinking of alcoholic beverages for the reception.* **We reserve the right to confiscate alcohol brought onto parish property, and to exclude anyone who has been drinking or is rowdy, disrespectful or disruptive from the wedding party.**

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

Saint Catharine of Siena Church 661-0651
Pastor (Fr. Dattilo)..... extension 3005
Music Director (Rick Foegler)..... extension 3003
Pastoral Minister (Therese Hibdon)..... extension 3006
Parish Secretary (Kathy Hafele)..... extension 3001
Wedding Coordinator (Roberta Ackerman).....574-4995

Feel free to call the parish with any questions or concerns you may have. We sincerely desire to make your marriage ceremony as prayerful, beautiful and meaningful as we possibly can. We offer our support and wish you well in preparing for your wedding day.

Congratulations from Saint Catharine of Siena Church!