

*St. Patrick Catholic Church  
Wedding Guidelines*



***St. Patrick Catholic Church***  
***277 South 4th Street***  
***Memphis, TN 38105***

***Welcome to Saint Patrick Catholic Church!***

The staff at St. Patrick Catholic Church is happy to help you with the preparation of your wedding. Our policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage be of the best theological, liturgical and artistic quality and that it be a memorable moment in your life. Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Church recognize marriage as a union of one man and one woman, the most basic unit of human society. Through the marriage covenant, man and woman are “no longer two, but one flesh.” The meaning of this oneness is experienced in the intimate union of their persons and their actions. This union of marriage calls forth from spouses the mutual and complete giving of self, fidelity, permanence, and openness to children. The sacrament of marriage consecrates you to each other and strengthens the life you will share. The Church exhorts you to see in this union a reflection of the covenant between Christ and his Church. The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage is an action of the entire church in whose presence you commit yourselves to one another. Because the celebration of marriage is an act of worship, it is above all, communal. And because it is communal, every effort should be made to enable the assembly to participate in a full and active manner.

***General Policies and Procedures***

1. Before a date can be set it must be established that both spouses are free to marry. If either party has had a prior marriage, religious or civil, please contact a priest.
2. Couples who wish to be married at St. Patrick Catholic Church should contact the parish office no less than 6 months before the proposed wedding date.
3. **Parishioners:** There is a \$300.00 fee for the use of the Church for registered members of St. Patrick’s Catholic Church. Registered parishioners of St. Patrick (those having been registered and attending, participating, and supporting the parish for at least 6 months) need to make an appointment with a priest or deacon to discuss marriage preparation, as well as the date, time and place of the wedding. St. Patrick is not able to schedule the wedding until the presider has agreed to the date and time of the ceremony. Please note that a non-refundable deposit of \$100 is required before a date can be placed on the calendar. The priest or deacon who will officiate at your wedding is responsible for all paperwork, obtaining the necessary documents, and all required diocesan pre-nuptial counseling.

4. **Non- Parishioners:** There is a \$1000.00 fee for the use of the Church. All persons who are members of a parish in the Diocese of Memphis are welcome to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage at St. Patrick. Please keep in mind that permission of the Catholic party's pastor is necessary when marrying outside of one's home parish. Please call the church office to discuss setting a date on the St. Patrick Church calendar. Please note that a non-refundable deposit of \$200 is required before a date can be placed on the calendar. The priest or deacon who will officiate at your wedding is responsible for all paperwork, obtaining the necessary documents, and all required diocesan pre-nuptial counseling. Fees are not refundable for cancellations within 90 days of the event.
5. As a rule, Sunday weddings are not permitted in the Diocese of Memphis.
6. The clergy officiating at your wedding in conjunction with the Wedding Planner will conduct the wedding rehearsal. Visiting clergy are asked to lead rehearsals to familiarize themselves with the worship space and the policies of St. Patrick's.
7. Application for the civil license must be made in accordance with Tennessee state law. The marriage license should be brought to the rehearsal and given to the presider for its proper completion.
8. For marriages between a Catholic and a Non-Catholic the Rite for Celebrating Marriage Outside the Mass is recommended so that all may comfortably participate.
9. There are no limits or restrictions on the size of the wedding party, although the staff of St. Patrick's strongly suggest that children participating in your wedding be of sufficient maturity to process down the aisle without fear.
10. St. Patrick's requires the use of the parish Wedding Coordinator (\$250 fee, payable 30 days prior to the wedding date) for all weddings held in the church. The Coordinator may also be engaged to assist at the reception for an additional fee. Call the Wedding Coordinator, Helen Patterson 901-327-3483, to schedule a meeting to discuss the logistics of the wedding and the details of the contract.
11. The parish can recommend a pianist or organist if requested. Fee will be determined between the parties. Classical, sacred or liturgical music may be used during the wedding ceremony and will be approved by the Pianist-Organist and the Wedding Coordinator.  
  
If you wish to have a soloist sing at your wedding, an additional fee of \$100.00 will be charged if the organist and the soloist are required to meet in order to rehearse. If they are able to meet prior to the wedding rehearsal, the fee will be \$75.00.
12. The moving of any church furnishings such as the altar, chairs, or ambo is prohibited.
13. For safety reasons, rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals, balloons, etc. are not allowed in St. Patrick's or on the St. Patrick's campus. Due to the possibility of staining the floor, flower girls may carry flowers, but may not drop the petals. Due to the danger of slipping, the use of an aisle runner is not permitted.

14. The “Unity Candle” is not part of the Roman Catholic wedding rite. St. Patrick’s does not own a “Unity Candle” and its use is strongly discouraged. There are many symbols of unity already in the marriage rite, i.e., the exchange of vows and rings. We suggest the use of the “Unity Candle” at the beginning of the wedding reception. The use of so called “Unity Sand” is prohibited.
15. If you choose to have refreshments available for the wedding party, please keep them to a minimum and provide for cleanup. Beverages and food are not allowed in the church, sanctuary, sacristy, or vestibules. **No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the church building and no illegal drugs are permitted on the St. Patrick campus. All St. Patrick buildings are smoke free. Smoking is only permitted outside.**
16. A Security guard is mandatory for evening or night-time weddings; security is arranged by St. Patrick’s staff. The security fee is \$75 for the initial minimum 4 hour block, plus \$20 per hour for each additional hour.
17. Additional parking may be provided in the large parking lot across 4th Street from the church. Information and cost can be obtained from the Wedding Coordinator.

*If all of this seems overwhelming, it may be helpful to remember that these guidelines are the result of many years of experience celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage. Be assured that these guidelines arise out of our desire to help you prepare a wedding liturgy which will be prayerful, dignified and memorable.*

### ***Marriage Preparation***

Presuming you are a parishioner of St. Patrick’s Catholic Church and either the parish priest or deacon will officiate at your wedding, you should call the priest or deacon as soon as possible to arrange the initial meeting. Following this initial meeting, the Catholic party/parties will need to send for a **newly issued Baptismal Certificate** from the church where they were baptized. The church requires a new certificate as part of the pre-nuptial investigation and must be received before a marriage can be celebrated. Those who have been baptized in another faith tradition may provide a copy of an original certificate. Any needed dispensations can be arranged by your presider.

The Diocese of Memphis requires a priest or deacon to meet with the engaged couple for pre-nuptial counseling. The Diocese of Memphis also requires that all engaged couples participate in an approved marriage preparation program as well as a Natural Family Planning workshop. Pamphlets included in the folder you received from St. Patrick’s describe the programs that are available in the diocese.

If you live outside the Diocese of Memphis, check with the staff at your home parish about programs provided in your area. A certificate acknowledging the successful completion of one of the programs must be supplied to the priest or deacon presiding at your wedding.

### *Appropriate Music*

St. Patrick Catholic Church upholds the Roman Catholic Church's guidelines regarding appropriate music for all liturgical celebrations, including weddings. All texts must be suitable for use in the liturgy, are to be directed toward God (sacred) and be free of associations which render them inappropriate. While popular songs, film scores, and secular music have no place in the wedding liturgy, they may very appropriately be played or sung at your wedding reception. No recorded music or accompaniment tapes may be used at the wedding liturgy. The musician and wedding coordinator will work with the couple regarding appropriate music for the wedding ceremony.

If the wedding Mass is celebrated, certain parts of the liturgy are to be sung by all present: the Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen and a hymn during communion. Solos and choral selections are typically best used as part of the Prelude or at the Preparation of the Gifts.

### *Liturgical Environment*

St. Patrick Catholic Church is a place of dignity and prayer; it is a privilege to enter her doors to pray. We ask that you, the wedding party, and your guests respect St. Patrick and all other properties.

Since the Roman Catholic Church follows a liturgical calendar, there will be certain liturgical symbols and decorations present during the course of the church year (e.g., Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter). This seasonal environment is intended for all liturgical celebrations during that time of the year, including your wedding. The existing environment cannot be changed or removed for a wedding. Due to the penitential nature of Lent, weddings, while not forbidden, are highly discouraged. If you do choose to have your wedding during Lent, please note that during this season flowers can only be in the sanctuary (the raised platform where the Altar and Ambo reside) during the ceremony and the color purple that decorates the sanctuary and altar area cannot be changed.

Flowers used for the wedding celebration are not merely decorative but are offered for the further honor and glory of God. We suggest that the main flower arrangement from your wedding be left in the church. You may choose to dedicate your flowers in memory, in thanksgiving, or in honor of a relative or friend. That information can be given to the church secretary for publication in the parish bulletin.

### *Policies for the Florist*

- ❖ It is expected that the main arrangement of flowers remain in the church after the wedding.
- ❖ No aisle runner is permitted due to the danger of slippage on the tile floors.
- ❖ Bows may be attached to the pews with ribbons or plastic hooks. No pins, wire, or tape may be used.
- ❖ Entrances to individual rows may not be cordoned off.
- ❖ Flowers are not to be placed on the Altar.
- ❖ The Baptismal Font is reserved for the Sacrament of Baptism. Flowers may be placed on the floor in front or back of the font, but never on the font.
- ❖ The florist or the family is responsible for the removal of all boxes, paper and other debris related to the flowers.

- ❖ Decorations on the pews and all flower arrangements other than the main flower arrangement must be removed immediately after the wedding, either by the florist or the family. They may not be left overnight. The church will be locked after the photographer has finished taking pictures.
- ❖ Artificial flowers are not permitted.

### *Policies for the Photographer /Videographer*

- ❖ Depending on availability, the church may be used for the photo shoot before the wedding. Pictures taken in the sanctuary must be finished 30 minutes prior to the start of the liturgy.
- ❖ Tape is not to be used on the walls or floors.
- ❖ The liturgical environment is not to be altered in order to accommodate the photo shoot. No liturgical furnishings, e.g. candles, chairs, etc., are to be moved.
- ❖ St. Patrick Catholic Church is a house of worship at all times, and is to be respected as such during the photo shoot. Dress and behavior should be respectful.
- ❖ During a Nuptial Mass the photographer is to remain outside of the sanctuary (the raised platform where the Altar and Ambo reside) during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- ❖ The use of flash photography during any liturgical celebration, including weddings, is prohibited.
- ❖ Video cameras may be set up in the organ loft or in the back of church: No video cameras may be put in the Sanctuary for any reason.

**Persons using the church or the St. Patrick's Center are responsible for any damage to furnishings or equipment by anyone in the wedding party, the guests, or persons hired to provide services for the wedding. Any debris left by florists, either on the floors, in the pews or in the Sanctuary or the St. Patrick's Center, may result in the cancellation of any future services at St. Patrick's.**

**St. Patrick Catholic Church assumes no responsibility for any items left in or missing from the office building, the sacristy, the church, the St. Patrick's Center or any part of church property.**

ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH - WEDDING CONTRACT

I/We, the undersigned, enter into an agreement this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ with St. Patrick's Catholic Church to use the church for our wedding ceremony, in accordance with the policies and fee schedule stipulated in the attached St. Patrick's WEDDING POLICY& FEES, which we have read, understood and initialed.

For considerations under this contract, the lessee is defined as the undersigned bride/groom or their representative(s) while the lessor is St. Patrick Church.

In consideration of St. Patrick's Catholic Church allowing its building to be used by the lessee, the lessee hereby releases, forever discharges, and agrees to hold harmless St. Patrick's Catholic Church, the Catholic Diocese of Memphis, its Pastors, Officers, Agents, Employees and Members from any and all liability, claims or demands for personal injury, sickness or death, as well as property damage and expenses, of any nature whatsoever which may be incurred by the lessee that occurs while said lessee is using the St. Patrick's Catholic Church facilities. The leasee further hereby agrees to hold harmless and indemnify St. Patrick's Catholic Church, the Catholic Diocese of Memphis, its Pastors, Officers, Agents, Employees and Members for any liability alleged or incurred by said acts of the lessee and their invitees or guests as a result of the rental, including expenses incurred attendant thereto.

The Deposit and Use Fees itemized below are payable to St. Patrick's Catholic Church. This signed agreement is contingent upon payment of the deposit, the signing of the agreement, and the final payment as specified below. If any payment fails due to insufficient funds, cancellation of payment or failure to pay the user fee by the designated date, any previous deposit will be forfeited in accordance with the schedule set forth in the St. Patrick's Catholic Church WEDDING POLICY & FEES and this agreement is rendered null and void. If the designated Final Payment Date is not met, or the payment fails for lack of funds or other cause, the date and facilities will be made immediately available for other scheduling.

The Wedding Coordinator fee, and the St. Patrick's Pianist-Organist fee, shall be paid directly to the individuals, outside of this agreement.

Contracted Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Deposit & User Fees:	Registered Member (or)	Non-Regular Member
Deposit Required at Signing	\$100.00	\$ 200.00
Remaining Fee - Church	\$200.00	\$ 800.00

Deposit Paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date Paid: \_\_\_\_\_

Remaining Fee Due: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
90 Days before Wedding Date

Additional Agreement(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(If none, specify N/A)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Bride, Groom, or Representative (print)      Signature      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name St. Patrick's Representative (print)      Signature      Date