



***St. Patrick Catholic Church  
287 South 4th Street  
Memphis, TN 38126***

*Dear Engaged Couple,*

*I am pleased to welcome you to St. Patrick as you begin to consider celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony.*

*The celebration of a wedding is a sacred, joyful time for the bride and groom, for their families and friends, and for the local parish community. This celebration of love, of new beginnings, and of promise and hope for the future, makes this a grace-filled time in the lives of all those involved in the celebration. The Church celebrates the sacramental union of its members in the context of our prayer and liturgical life as Christians. This important Sacrament draws us more deeply into the mystery of God's love for us.*

*Great care is taken to see that the wedding liturgy is reverent, graceful, beautiful, and open to the movement of God's Spirit among us. Our celebrations of the Sacraments, Matrimony included, are always rooted in listening to the Scriptures so that we may be nourished and strengthened by God's Word. Always we celebrate the Sacraments as community. We gather our brothers and sisters in faith and ask for their prayerful support.*

*In this spirit, St. Patrick parish provides the following guidelines for celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony in the building which shelters the prayer of our community. It is important to note that celebrating a wedding here at St. Patrick does not mean that you have rented a church for personal use. Rather, the St. Patrick community is sharing their worship space with you for your special day. For this reason, we ask that you respectfully comply with the guidelines stated in this policy. Remember that these guidelines are intended to insure a reverent and joyful celebration of marriage within the context of the Church's prayer.*

*It is our sincere desire to assist you in making your celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony a meaningful and memorable one. May God bless you as you begin to prepare the celebration of your marriage, and may your happiness together know no limits.*

*In Christ,*

*Msgr. Valentine Handwerker (Fr. Val)  
Pastor*

## ***Welcome to St. Patrick Catholic Church!***

The staff at St. Patrick 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 Matrimony will be a memorable moment in your life. The Sacrament of Matrimony 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 this Sacrament 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 parties are free to marry. If either party has had either a religious or civil marriage, please contact your priest or deacon.
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 parishioners of St. Patrick Catholic Church. Fees are not refundable for cancellations within 90 days of the event. 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 \$500.00 fee for the use of the church. Fees are not refundable for cancellations within 90 days of the event. All persons who are members of a parish in the Diocese of Memphis are welcome to celebrate the Sacrament of Matrimony 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.
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 Parish Wedding Coordinator will conduct the wedding rehearsal. Visiting clergy (along with the Parish Wedding Coordinator) are asked to lead rehearsals to familiarize themselves with the worship space and the policies of St. Patrick Church.

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 Order of Celebrating Matrimony Without 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 strongly suggests that children participating in your wedding be of sufficient maturity to process down the aisle without fear or assistance.
10. St. Patrick Church requires the use of our Parish Wedding Coordinator (\$250 fee, payable 30 days prior to the wedding date) for all weddings held in the church. The Parish Wedding Coordinator may also be engaged to assist at the reception for an additional fee. Call the Parish Wedding Coordinator, Bambi Williams 901-483-6813, to schedule a meeting to discuss the logistics of the wedding and the details of the contract.

11. The parish will provide a musician and cantor for the wedding. Fees for this are \$175 for the musician and \$100 for the cantor. Classical, sacred or liturgical music may be used during the wedding ceremony and will be approved by the musician and the Parish Wedding Coordinator.

If you wish to have a soloist sing at your wedding, an additional fee of \$100 will be charged if the musician and the soloist are required to meet separately in order to rehearse. If they are able to meet prior to the wedding rehearsal, the fee will be \$75.

12. The moving of any church liturgical furnishings such as the altar, chairs, or ambo is prohibited. Note: This includes the Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) altar and Memorial Wall during the month of November.
13. For safety reasons, rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals, balloons, etc. are not allowed inside St. Patrick Church or anywhere on the St. Patrick campus. Due to the possibility of staining the floor, flower girls may carry flowers or baskets with petals, but may not drop the petals. Due to the danger of slipping, the use of aisle runners is not permitted due to danger of slipping or tripping.
14. The “Unity Candle” is not part of the Roman Catholic Sacrament of Matrimony. St. Patrick Church therefore does not own a “Unity Candle” and its use is strongly discouraged. There are many symbols of unity already in the Sacrament of Matrimony, e.g., the exchange of vows and rings.
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 narthex. **No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are permitted in the church building and 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 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 located at Martin Luther King Blvd. and 4th Street. Information and cost can be obtained from the Parish 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 Matrimony. Be assured that these guidelines arise from our desire to help you prepare your wedding liturgy which should be prayerful, dignified and memorable.*

### ***Marriage Preparation***

Presuming you have contacted a priest or deacon who is presiding at your wedding locally at least 6 months in advance of your wedding date, he should have informed you of diocesan guidelines for what is required of you before your wedding takes place.

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***

The overall atmosphere of a Catholic wedding must give witness to the joyful celebration of the Christian community. Although human, social and dramatic aspects have a real place in the wedding ceremony, the Christian dimension of marriage should take precedence and blend those other aspects within itself.

The task of selecting music to be used at a Christian wedding has been difficult for many prospective brides and grooms, as well as for the priests, deacons and musicians. It is sometimes difficult to draw a line between sacred music and secular music, church music and popular music. There are so-called “secular” songs which have a religious connotation; however, just because a particular song mentions God and/or love, does not make it automatically suitable for a wedding liturgy.

As you begin to make music selections, we encourage you to read the texts carefully. Do the texts speak of your love as a sign and reflection of God’s love? Will the texts remind the congregation that you believe marriage involves the two of you and God?

Certain “traditional” organ selections (e.g. the “Wedding March” by Wagner, known as “Here Comes the Bride” and the “Wedding March” by Mendelssohn) have inappropriate secular roots and have taken on trite associations through the years. We hear these selections used for soap-opera weddings, in TV commercials, and most of us even know the little jingle which children have associated with the tune ...” Here comes the bride, dah, dah, dah-dah ...” and are considered inappropriate for use at St. Patrick.

There are four types of wedding music:

- ❖ Music composed as liturgical music and therefore appropriate for use at weddings. This music is in agreement with all the liturgical directives for Catholic weddings. That is, the lyrics express a truly Christian view of love. In addition, the song fits, or is part of the liturgical action taking place and enhances (without delaying) the liturgical action of that moment.
- ❖ Contemporary music which speaks directly of the religious/spiritual dimension of love. This music is generally acceptable for use within the wedding liturgy, provided the song is used at the appropriate time within the service.
- ❖ Contemporary music which does not speak directly of the religious dimension of marriage, but implies it. This music can be used with discretion, but NOT during the actual wedding liturgy. These selections might be used before the liturgy (prelude music) or at the end of the service.
- ❖ Popular music which refers only to the physical/emotional dimensions of love. This music is definitely NOT acceptable for use at the wedding liturgy or in the church at all. The music and the texts of these songs do not display the basic characteristics of Christian love, that is, self-giving love which goes beyond the physical and emotional level. This type of music may be more suited for use at your wedding reception.

All of the music used for your wedding must make it clear that it is Christian love, a reflection of God's love for His people, which is celebrated in the Sacrament of Matrimony.

### ***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 Wedding Coordinator for publication in the parish bulletin.

### ***Policies for the Florist***

- ❖ It is expected that the main arrangement of flowers will 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.
- ❖ All flower arrangements, bouquets and boutonnieres should be delivered to St. Patrick at least one hour before the wedding begins.

### *Policies for the Photographer /Videographer*

- ❖ Depending on availability, the church may be used for the photographs/videos 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 the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony, the photographer is to remain behind the last row of pews.
- ❖ The use of flash photography during any liturgical celebration, including weddings, is prohibited.
- ❖ Video cameras may be set up in the organ loft or behind the last row of pews: No video cameras may be put in the Sanctuary for any reason.

**Persons using the church or the St. Patrick Center are responsible for any damage to furnishings or equipment by anyone in the wedding party, 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 Center, may result in the cancellation of any future services at St. Patrick Church or Center.**

**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 Center or any part of church property.**

ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH - WEDDING CONTRACT

I/We, the undersigned, enter into an agreement this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_ with St. Patrick Catholic Church to use the church for our wedding ceremony, in accordance with the policies and fee schedule stipulated in the attached **St. Patrick Catholic Church Wedding Guidelines**, 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 Catholic Church.

In consideration of St. Patrick Catholic Church allowing its building to be used by the lessee, the lessee hereby releases, forever discharges, and agrees to hold harmless St. Patrick 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 Catholic Church facilities. The lessee further hereby agrees to hold harmless and indemnify St. Patrick 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 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 Catholic Church Wedding Guidelines** 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 parish Wedding Coordinator fee, and the St. Patrick musician and cantor fees, shall be paid directly to the individuals, outside of this agreement.

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

Deposit & User Fees:	Registered Member (or)	Non-Registered Member
Deposit Required at Signing	\$100.00	\$ 200.00
Remaining Fee - Church	\$200.00	\$ 300.00

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 Representative (print)      Signature      Date