



SAINT PAUL OF THE CROSS
— P A R I S H —

Wedding Guidelines

Congratulations!

Saint Paul of the Cross Parish congratulates you on your recent engagement. Moreover, we are honored that you have chosen to celebrate your wedding in our parish church. Your upcoming wedding is a source of pride and joy for the entire parish.

As you begin your preparations for marriage, please be attentive to the guidelines offered in this booklet. If any questions arise at any stage of the process, please feel free to contact the priest for clarification.

BEFORE THE WEDDING

Couples wishing to marry at Saint Paul of the Cross Parish must contact the parish priest at least 6 months prior to the anticipated wedding date. The priest will then schedule an appointment with the couple, the purpose of which is to ascertain whether both parties are able to marry within the Catholic Church.

At this first appointment, the necessary paperwork will be completed and a wedding date and time confirmed.

NECESSARY DOCUMENTS

Those to be married at Saint Paul of the Cross Parish will have to provide the priest with the following documents:

- 1) A recently issued baptismal certificate from the church where you were baptized.
- 2) Pre-nuptial witness affidavits are necessary in most instances. These forms will be distributed at the initial appointment.
- 3) A valid Pennsylvania Marriage License. Please note that the license is valid for 60 days from the date of issuance. The license should be turned into the priest approximately two weeks prior to the wedding date.

*Note:

If both the prospective bride and groom **reside outside of the Diocese of Pittsburgh**, then a priest from one of their local parishes must oversee their marriage preparation and **must complete all requisite paperwork**. Completed paperwork must be forwarded to the priest at Saint Paul of the Cross Parish in the customary manner through the local diocese **at least six weeks before the wedding date**.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM

All engaged couples must participate in an approved Marriage Preparation program. We strongly encourage couples being married at Saint Paul of the Cross Parish to attend our Pre-Cana program that is usually scheduled for the first weekend in March. However, if you are unable to attend the program, then other options offered at Catholic parishes are acceptable. A listing of several approved programs is available at <https://diopitt.org/marriage-preparation>.

PLANNING THE CEREMONY

Approximately 8-10 weeks before the wedding date, the couple should schedule an appointment with the priest to discuss and plan the wedding ceremony. At this appointment they will receive a wedding ceremony preparation form which identifies several options to be chosen by the couple. For example, you will have the opportunity to choose the Scripture readings for the ceremony. The suggested readings can be found in a small booklet entitled, *Marriage in Christ*, which you will receive from the priest.

WEDDING MUSIC

The music selected for your wedding ceremony should reflect the religious nature of the Sacrament you are receiving. Therefore, all music must be liturgical and sacred in nature. Secular love songs or romantic ballads from operas or shows will not be permitted.

All arrangements for your wedding music must be made through our

Music Director, Brendan Lowery. Please call him at 412-659-0470 or email blowery@stpaulofthecross.com, at least three months prior to the wedding date. In the event that you wish to use a different organist for your ceremony, a bench fee of \$375 must still be paid to our Music Director.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

Typically, the rehearsal is scheduled the evening before the wedding. It should begin promptly at the scheduled time and will last approximately 45 minutes. At the rehearsal the priest will have the help of a parish wedding coordinator who will assist with the set-up, procession and other practical details. It is strongly suggested that everyone participating in the wedding ceremony be present for the rehearsal. (This includes the Bridal Party, readers, offertory gift bearers, parents of the bride and groom, etc.)

If necessary, the Sacrament of Confession can be requested from the priest the evening of the rehearsal. However, it is advisable that the bride and groom go to Confession before the day of the rehearsal. Please consult the parish bulletin for Confession times or feel free to make a personal appointment with the priest.

CHURCH AVAILABILITY ON THE WEDDING DAY

The church will be available to you on your wedding day from 12:30pm – 3:00pm. Please share this time frame with your photographer so that he/she may plan accordingly.

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Flowers** - Flowers add to the festivity of a marriage celebration and are encouraged. Only fresh and natural flowers are permitted and should remain at the altar after the

ceremony. Flowers may be delivered to the church anytime after noon on the day of the wedding. Please see the church sacristan for more information on what types and sizes of floral arrangements are best suited to Saint Anne's or Saint Winifred's church.

- **Wedding Crash** – Wedding Crashes are not permitted.
- **Sacrament of Reconciliation** – Catholics are strongly encouraged to make a good confession prior to the wedding day.
- **Rice and Rose Petals** – We do not permit the throwing of rice, rose petals, confetti, bird seed, etc. either inside or outside of the church.
- **Children** – Children under the age of four should not be included in the wedding party. Very young children often become afraid and confused once the procession begins and may end up being a distraction during the ceremony rather than the enhancement intended.
- **Receiving Line** – Because of time constraints we discourage receiving lines in church after the ceremony and suggest they be held at the reception.
- **Food and Drink** - Please note that no food or beverages are permitted inside the church at any time.

OFFERINGS

Offering to the parish: \$200 for registered parishioners
 \$400 for non-parishioners

Organist and Cantor \$375 (Please make check out to
 Brendan Lowery)

If you wish, you may offer a token of your appreciation to: Priest:

Voluntary offering

2 Altar Servers: \$10 - \$20 each suggested

All monetary offerings, along with the Wedding Ceremony Preparation Sheet and Pennsylvania Marriage License should be turned into the priest at least two weeks before the wedding date.

CEREMONY PROGRAMS

A printed program for your wedding ceremony is optional. If you choose to distribute a program to your guests, please use the following template, depending on whether you are having the full Catholic Nuptial Mass or the Marriage Ceremony Outside of Mass.

MARRIAGE OUTSIDE OF MASS

Prelude music

Entrance Rite

Introductory Music (ProceSSIONal)

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: _____

Responsorial Psalm: _____

Second Reading: _____

Gospel Reading: _____

Homily

Rite of Marriage

Exchange of Consent

Blessing & Exchange of Rings

Petitions Nuptial Blessing

The Lord's Prayer

**Devotion to the Blessed Mother Final Blessing*

Recessional Hymn

*Optional

CATHOLIC NUPTIAL MASS

Prelude music

Entrance Rite

Introductory Music (Processional)

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: _____

Responsorial Psalm: _____

Second Reading: _____

Gospel Reading: _____

Homily

Rite of Marriage

Exchange of Consent

Blessing & Exchange of Rings

Petitions

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of Gifts Eucharistic

Prayer Lord's Prayer Nuptial

Blessing

Distribution of Holy Communion

**Devotion to the Blessed Mother*

Final Blessing

3/14/2025