

ST JOSEPH CHURCH WEDDING GUIDELINES

Scheduling a Wedding Date: A verification is needed from the priest or deacon that he is responsible for your marriage preparation before a wedding date can be confirmed. Refer to "[The First Steps to the Altar](#)" form on our www.stjosephchurch-no.org

Wedding Times: Fridays and Saturdays, based on availability and the liturgical season. Please contact the Wedding Director at 504-522-3186 to schedule your preferred date and time.

Rehearsal Times: Wednesday or Thursday evenings between 4:00pm and 7:00pm. Rehearsal dates and times must be agreeable with the church and the priest or deacon who will be officiating at the wedding. Friday rehearsals cannot be scheduled earlier than 6 months prior to your wedding to allow a Friday evening wedding.

Fees: The fee for the use of the church is \$2,200.00, which includes the services of a wedding sacristan and a parking lot attendant. A non-refundable deposit of \$1,100.00 is required upon booking the church. The balance of \$1,100.00 is due no later than 30 days prior to the day of the rehearsal. The fee does not include any additional costs of musicians, cantors, florists, photographers, or any stipend for the priest or deacon witnessing the wedding vows

The church will open 1 hour before your wedding to allow time for florists, musicians and guest arrival. It will remain open 1-1/2 hours from the scheduled time of your wedding ceremony.

The church is open 30 minutes prior to the rehearsal time. One (1) hour is scheduled for the rehearsal from the time it is booked.

Seasonal Decorations: We cannot move or remove seasonal decorations to accommodate individual weddings, especially for photo taking. For weddings scheduled during Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter or Pentecost, or other High Feast Days, consult the Wedding Director.

SJ Church Wedding Sacristan: The church will provide a wedding coordinator/sacristan to assist you during the rehearsal and wedding. The fee is included in the church rental fee, in addition to a parking lot attendant.

Aisle Runners are **not** allowed, as stipulated by the Archdiocesan insurance company. Please also inform your guests and members of the wedding party to refrain from throwing rice, seeds, flower petals, bubbles or confetti in the church or on the church porch or steps, for the same reason.

No entrances to pews or aisle ways are to be blocked or cordoned off in any way at any time. We do not allow tape, wire, metal clips or adhesive materials to decorate for securing bows or other decorations on the pews. Only LED Candles may be used in floor lanterns or aisle candelabras, and are to be removed immediately following the ceremony. Wax candles are not permitted.

Floral Decorations: It is not mandatory to leave flowers in the church; however, we would appreciate any floral arrangements placed on the Main Altar to remain there, with the exception of the Lenten Season. Any pew markers and other decorations should be removed immediately following the ceremony.

Photos and Videos: Prior to the rehearsal please inform the St. Joseph Wedding Coordinator if photos are to be taken after the wedding ceremony. **Due to various time constraints and other obligations, photos may be limited. Drones are not permitted.**

Punctuality: We appreciate your cooperation so as to ensure that both your rehearsal and wedding begin on time out of respect for everyone involved. **Groomsmen are to arrive 45 minutes before the ceremony, and the Wedding/Bridal Party participants 15 minutes prior to the wedding.**

Music: The sacred nature of your wedding liturgy requires the use of approved ministers of music and the selection of appropriate music. Upon booking your wedding, we ask you to immediately contact our Music Director, Michelle Richards, at musicadamore@cox.net. She also sings/plays at our 10AM Sunday Masses, if you wish to meet her in person.

Rules for Music Liturgy for the Wedding Sacrament at St. Joseph:

1. As Director of Music Ministry for St. Joseph Church, Michelle Richards will handle all the hiring and securing of musician contracts/subcontracts for weddings at St. Joseph Church to make things easy for our bride and grooms and assure quality musicians who play together often, who are knowledgeable about the Catholic Wedding Sacrament and know our sound system / technological equipment. This also assures things run very smoothly during the ceremony between Priest, our provided parish wedding coordinator and musicians.
2. The two musicians necessary to celebrate the wedding sacrament are the accompanist and cantor. Additional instrumentation can provide a beautiful compliment. Wedding clients are required to hire one of our approved Parish Accompanists and Cantors for the Wedding Sacrament. If you'd like a friend or family member to take part musically, we will find ways to incorporate them as that adds such a special touch but our cantor and accompanist take the primary role as does the wedding coordinator provided by St. Joseph Church. (Musicians Fees are not included in the church contract.)
3. All music selected for the Sacrament must be approved by the Catholic Church. Absolutely no secular music will be allowed. Anything that has text must be scripturally based whether sung or played instrumentally. Music cannot be linked to anything considered inappropriate to the teachings of our faith (IE: Secular Theater). A music liturgy form will be provided to you and should be filled out and submitted back to Michelle Richards for approval.

Please email Michelle Richards at musicadamore@cox.net or call her at 504-628-5232 shortly after signing the church wedding contract so she can help you with all your music needs.

Maintenance Disclaimer: St. Joseph Church is a sacred and historic building. There may be times when unforeseen circumstances force us to attend to maintenance and other repairs. In extreme instances it may involve the possibility of scaffolding or other materials which cannot be removed.

☒ Consult the presiding priest or preparing deacon if you plan to have a wedding without Mass/Eucharist, as in the case of a mixed marriage.

☒ **Alcohol is not permitted in any part of St. Joseph Church, or anywhere on the church property.**

⌘ Parking is included for your guests in church parking lot during the rehearsal and wedding times. The parking lot attendant will be on the premises for your rehearsal and wedding. There is also a handicap entrance to the church by way of an elevator. It is located on the So. Derbigny street side of the church.

⌘ These guidelines are to serve as a means to allow us to work closely with you, while respecting the Liturgy and Sacraments of St. Joseph Church.

Obtaining a Louisiana Marriage License: <https://www.usmarriagelaws.com/marriage-license/louisiana/clerk-of-court/parish-requirements#> . **It is very Important to bring the civil marriage license to the wedding rehearsal, if the officiant doesn't already have it beforehand.**