

*St. Martin of Tours
3720 St. Martins Place
Cincinnati, OH 45211
513 661-2000
513 661-1432 fax*

Dear Bride and Groom,

Peace and all good things to you!

On behalf of our parish community of St. Martin of Tours, we want to extend our congratulations and prayers on the occasion of your engagement.

The celebration of your wedding will be one of the most important events in your life. It will be a time when you reflect how God has brought you together in love and how that love has matured to the point of making a life long commitment. It will also be a day when you celebrate the future and how this permanent commitment will change your two lives and make you one in love and responsibility for each other in the sacrament of marriage.

Your wedding day is a sacred day and we want to do everything to help you celebrate in a prayerful and sacred manner. It should be a day of great joy and celebration because of God's presence which will be reflected in your love for each other and for your families.

We hope that these guidelines will help set the tone for a wedding celebration that is filled with God's presence and blessings.



ST. MARTIN OF TOURS MARRIAGE & WEDDING GUIDELINES



Who may be married at St. Martin of Tours Church ?

In our Catholic tradition the celebration of the sacraments always takes place within the context of a faith community. We pray and worship together as a body of believers deeply committed to our loving God.

For that reason, we request that either the prospective bride or groom be a registered member of our parish. The opportunity to be married here is also extended to brides and grooms whose parents or grandparents are currently registered members of the parish. In addition, if you live in the territorial boundaries of the parish, you are most welcome to be married at St. Martin, but we do ask that you register and become active members of the parish.

Beginning the Wedding Preparation

As soon as you decide to marry we ask that you contact the Parish Office at 661-2000 to begin the preparation process. If possible, it is preferable that preparation begin a year before the wedding will take place. However, you should contact us at least six months in advance of your desired date. A meeting will be scheduled with the priest or a member of the Pastoral staff. At that meeting, the date of your wedding will be confirmed and the planning/preparation process will be explained.

Time of the Wedding

Weddings here at St. Martins may be celebrated on most Friday evenings usually at 5:30, 6:00 or 6:30 p.m. Saturday weddings can take place in the morning and early afternoon. However, because of our parish confession and the Saturday Vigil Mass, we do not schedule Saturday afternoon weddings later than 2:00 p.m.

Preparing for the Sacrament

As part of your preparation, you will be asked to attend the Archdiocesan Pre-Cana Program or participate in the Engaged Encounter Weekend. Information on each of these programs will be given to you at the initial planning meeting.

Sacramental & Civil Documentation

Our sacramental life began when we receive the Sacrament of Baptism. As part of the process of preparing for the sacrament of matrimony you will need to obtain a baptismal certificate from the parish or church where you were baptized.

The state of Ohio requires that all couples being married within the state obtain an Ohio marriage license. This license can only be obtained 60 days or less from the actual date of the wedding. We will provide you with a detailed brochure about how to apply for the license.

Wedding within or Outside Mass?

The celebration of a Mass is not required to make a wedding “Catholic”, but normally a wedding between two baptized Catholics takes place during Mass. The Mass itself, Word and Eucharist, provides the full context for Christian marriage.

When a baptized Catholic marries a person baptized in another Christian denomination, a Mass cannot be 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 wedding ceremony since the non-Catholic party and family would not be able to share in the Eucharist. Marriage is a unifying sacrament, and therefore it is more pastorally sensitive to celebrate the wedding liturgy outside of Mass in a Liturgy of the Word Service. Mass is not permitted if either the bride or groom is not baptized as a Christian.

Wedding Rehearsal

The rehearsal for the wedding takes place in the Church usually on the evening before the ceremony. However, a different evening or time may be necessary if there is a conflict with other scheduled liturgical celebrations or events in the parish.

Please encourage all members of your wedding party to be on time for the rehearsal which will normally last about 45 minutes. All those who are in the wedding party, along with the lectors (readers) and ushers should attend. The rehearsal is an important time to set a prayerful tone for the celebration of the sacrament of marriage.

Music for the Wedding

The primary purpose of music in any liturgy is to support the communal liturgical prayer of the Church. The beauty of liturgical music will be an important part of your prayer and that of the community on your wedding day.

Angela Birkhead-Flight (522-4116 or angela.flight@gmail.com) is the Music Director here at St. Martin’s Parish and she coordinates the music for all liturgical celebrations. She will be pleased to provide the music for your wedding. There is no additional fee for her services since music is included in the Church donation. However, whether you wish for our music director to play for your wedding or not, ***she must be consulted concerning the selection of music and musicians for the ceremony.*** Please contact her at least 3 months before your wedding.

If you wish to have other or additional musicians at your wedding, for example, a soloist or instrumentalist, Angela can provide you with recommendations. The fees for these additional musicians should be paid directly to the individual(s).

St. Martin parish has a Contemporary Ensemble group who are available for weddings. If you are interested, you may call Jean Ann Tucker at 661-7834.

At the initial planning meeting, you will receive a music packet to help you in your selection of music for your wedding liturgy.

Decorating the Church

Flowers: Flowers can be used to create a festive atmosphere but should be placed in moderation so as not to overwhelm the sacred space of the sanctuary. Usually the best placement of flowers is on the high altar. You are responsible to order the flower arrangements for your wedding and we ask that you have the florist deliver the flowers *to the church no earlier than two hours before the ceremony*. If fresh cut flowers are used, you are welcome to leave the flowers in the church for the benefit of the entire parish that weekend.

Please note that **neither fresh nor artificial petals may be dropped on the floor by the flower girl**. The marble on the church floor stains very easily and *walking on the petals causes a safety concern*.

Aisle Runner: An Aisle Runner is not recommended for safety reasons. The runner tape often comes loose causing the cloth to bunch up and resulting in the danger of tripping during both the entrance and recessional processions. *It poses a safety concern for the wedding party and invited guests*.

Bows on pews: If bows are to line the main aisle, they should be fastened with ribbons or elastic. Wire, tape or rubber bands are not to be used.

Rice, Birdseed, and Confetti are not permitted to be thrown either inside or outside the Church. We kindly ask for your help in maintaining the beauty and cleanliness of the church building and grounds of St. Martin Parish.

Unity Candle: The unity candle is not part of the official Catholic Marriage Rite of the Church and is therefore optional. If the candle ceremony is included in your wedding liturgy, the candles and candle holder arrangement/stand must be obtained from the florist or purchased from a Church goods/Religious Articles store.

Pictures and Videos

Your photographers and videographers are welcome but we ask that they respect the sacramental nature of the wedding ceremony. For that reason all photographers including videographers ***must speak to the wedding coordinator*** prior to the start of the ceremony concerning the parish photo guidelines.

Pictures may be taken one hour before and ½ hour after the ceremony.

Flash photography is permitted only during the processional or recessional. **No flash photography may be taken after the bride reaches the altar**. It is requested that the photographer only take processional photos from the pews and not enter the sanctuary area during the wedding ceremony. Care should be taken not to stand in the middle aisle during the processional and not to stand in front of the presider and the servers.

The photographer may take pictures from the choir loft, but must stay on the designated side of the loft-opposite the piano and away from the organ console. This is so the music director has freedom to move about the loft when changing from organ to piano and also allow the musicians to concentrate on their ministry without distraction.

Care and discretion must be used by the photographer in staging pictures in the Church and on the Church grounds. Suggestive and inappropriate pictures have no place in a sacred house of worship.

Respect of a Sacred Place

Please do not bring food or drinks into the Church building before the wedding ceremony or to the rehearsal. In a spirit of respect for the sacredness of the Church space, and as a courtesy to the bride and groom and their families, 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 from the wedding party.

Presider

The ordinary presider at your wedding would be the parish priest. However other priests or deacons whom you know are most welcome to be the presider or a concelebrant at your wedding.

Servers

There are normally two servers for a wedding within a Mass. Servers are not needed for a Wedding Ceremony. If you have a family member or a friend who is a trained server, they are welcome to serve at your wedding. If you would like the parish to provide servers, please contact Deidre Re, the parish secretary at 661-2000. ***We ask that you include \$20.00 extra with your church donation to provide stipends for the servers.*** The parish will then give each server \$10.00 on the day of you wedding.

Donation/Fee

The customary wedding donation/fee is \$300.00. The church donation/fee is kept low because you or your parents have already supported the parish for many years. If there is a genuine financial hardship that would prevent you from making a donation/fee, please let us know.

We ask that the donation/fee be made to the parish two months before the wedding payable to St. Martin of Tours Church.

As stated earlier in these guidelines, there are no additional fees for our music director's services unless you bring in outside musicians who need to practice with her. A brief rehearsal that starts one hour before your wedding is included as part of the music directors' services. Normally this is sufficient if your additional musicians have professional training. If any additional practice is needed, the fee is \$50.00 per hour, with a one hour minimum. Fees for outside musicians are individually set by them. As previously mentioned, all third party fees are to be paid directly to the individual(s).

Questions

Please feel free to call the parish office at 661-2000 with any questions that you may have. Prior to your wedding rehearsal one of our wedding coordinators will contact you to review your plans and offer any assistance or guidance that you may need. Two coordinators will also be present at the rehearsal and on the day of the wedding to help facilitate the ceremony.

Postscript

Our parish pastoral staff and wedding coordinators sincerely desire to make the celebration of your wedding as prayerful, beautiful and meaningful as we possibly can. We offer our support and guidance and wish you well in preparing for your wedding day.

God's Blessings!
St. Martin of Tours Parish Community



Loving God,
You have made the bond of marriage a holy mystery, a symbol of Christ's love for the Church.
Hear our prayers for this couple who are about to be married.
With faith in you they will pledge their love for each other.
May their lives always bear witness to the reality of that love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord
Amen