

# Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Church

## Wedding Guidelines

A wedding is a simple ceremony lasting only a few minutes;  
A marriage is a lifetime commitment of sacrificial love in a solemn and sacramental covenant.

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[www.stpaulcc.org](http://www.stpaulcc.org)

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Dear Wedding Couple,

Thank you for your interest in marriage in the Catholic Church and at Saint Paul the Apostle. We look forward to working with you in the coming months and guiding you through your church arrangements for your special day.

While we understand the need for advanced planning and confirming dates with reception locales, florists, photographers and others, it is imperative that you meet with Father Joseph Mack before any dates at the Church can be confirmed. Please contact Chris Vandegrift at 294-4696 ext 211 to make arrangements to meet with Father Joe .

Congratulations on your impending marriage.

Peggy Connolly  
Ruth Anne Smith  
Wedding Coordinators

## General Information

### Who can be married at Saint Paul the Apostle?

To receive the Sacrament of marriage, at least one of the parties seeking to be married must be Roman Catholic and a registered, active, and participating parishioner of Saint Paul the Apostle.

### Who should we contact first at the church?

Your first call should be to parish office to set up a meeting with the pastor, Father Joseph Mack.

### When is the church available for weddings?

- \* Saturday's between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM and 7:00 PM

### When is the church not available for weddings?

- \* Any time during Lent.
- \* Any time the church has been scheduled for other events.
- \* Any time the parish staff deems it necessary that no weddings be scheduled.

### How do we reserve the church ?

- \* Contact the parish Wedding Coordinator, Peggy Connolly, **a minimum of six months before the desired wedding date** to verify that a chosen date and time are available.
- \* Parish membership and participation must be confirmed.
- \* Reserve and secure your date by completing a Church reservation Form and remitting a non-refundable deposit of \$100.00.

### When is the wedding rehearsal?

- \* Rehearsals are usually held the evening before the wedding between 4:30 and 5:30. The wedding party should arrive 15 minutes early so that the actual rehearsal can begin on time.
- \* Rehearsals will last no longer than one (1) hour.

### What if the bride and/or groom have been married before?

A *Declaration of Nullity* must be provided at the time of your booking to demonstrate you are now free to re-marry in the Catholic Church. This applies to all forms of previous marriage, whether by a judge, a religious leader in another faith tradition or common law.

### What are the wedding fees?

Your wedding fee assists in covering the expenses incurred by the parish in helping you to celebrate your wedding day, including the many hours of priest and staff time needed to prepare and celebrate your wedding .

## Wedding Fee Schedule



It is required that all couples complete either the:

- ~ Charlotte Diocese, one Saturday premarital program(\$99.00) or
- ~ St. Paul the Apostle Parish 4 session premarital program (\$50.00).

These programs are designed to deepen your awareness of the challenges of living together in a Christian Marriage.

**6. A North Carolina Marriage License.** Due in the Church office on the Monday before the wedding.

In Guilford County, the marriage license is obtained from the Register of Deeds.

To obtain a license both the bride and groom must be present with a social security card and valid drivers license (or other picture ID) and \$60.00 in cash.

- ~ In Greensboro the office is located in the Guilford County Courthouse at 201 South Eugene Street, lower ground level, Room LG53.
- ~ In High Point the office is located in the Courthouse at 505 East Green Drive, Room 132.

**Letter of Delegation from a visiting priest or deacons diocese. Please advise Father Joe if you would like a visiting priest or deacon to officiate at the wedding, or to assist. In addition to the letter, the name, church address, and telephone number of the visiting priest or deacon must be provided before delegation will be granted to celebrate the wedding.**

## St. Paul's Wedding Policies

### I. Introduction

*"The Liturgy is the source and summit of the Christian life, and from it flows the Church's power and strength because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross." (Sacrosanctum Concilium, Vatican Council II)*

The Wedding Liturgy is a sacred rite asking God's blessing upon the words shared, and commitment made by the bride and groom in the presence of family and friends.

### II. General Principles

Out of respect for God, the house of God and the sacredness of the wedding ritual, a few things need to be explicitly understood and accepted without exception:

- ~ Saint Paul the Apostle Church is not a 'venue' it is not rented, it is the house of God, a house of worship where you are asking to witness your love and promise to each other.
- ~ Respect, decorum and dignified behavior will be maintained and observed at all times by you, your wedding party and all your guests in regard to the church property, building, sanctuary and the entire staff.
- ~ Punctuality for the rehearsal and ceremony is presumed.

### III. Specific Issues

~ **The Wedding Rehearsal** will be held the evening before your wedding, and is an important part of the preparation for the ceremony. It allows members of the wedding party to become familiar with the environment of our church building and with the roles they will assume as part of the Liturgy. The person directing the rehearsal will begin by giving a brief overview of the liturgy for those who may be unfamiliar with a Catholic wedding.

Those who should be present for the rehearsal in the church are, the bride and groom, both sets of parents, step parents etc., grandparents (optional), bridesmaids, groomsmen, ushers, readers, Eucharistic ministers and gift bearers. Any children in the wedding party must be accompanied by a responsible adult. All others should be asked to meet you at the site of your rehearsal dinner.

Please remind your wedding party they **MUST ARRIVE ON TIME** for the rehearsal and preferably 15 minutes early. Remember this is the time for your rehearsal not a time for catching up with friends, chatting or even making decisions.

Please be aware that musicians may not be present at the wedding rehearsal.

~**Alcohol consumption** ( on/in the church property) during the rehearsal or prior to the Mass/ceremony on your wedding day is forbidden and could potentially jeopardize the validity of the marriage. This is a religious ceremony and house of worship, failure to comply with this policy by you, your guests or visitors will result in the forfeiture of your privilege to celebrate the sacrament of marriage at Saint Paul the Apostle.

~ **Outside Professional Consultants are unnecessary**— should you retain one the will operate solely within the permission and instructions of the parish Wedding Coordinator, who has complete oversight of the ceremony, sanctuary and celebration of your wedding at Saint Paul the Apostle. Outside Consultants will adhere to the policies of this handbook.

~ **Photographers and Videographers** and their assistants will respect the sacredness of the religious event, and the church as a house of worship. They will act and behave discreetly and reverently. All photographers and videographers must meet with our Wedding coordinator before the ceremony to review the following procedures:

During the Ceremony:

\* Flash photographs may not be taken, or extra lighting equipment used while the ceremony is in progress.

\* No photographers or equipment are allowed in the altar area during the ceremony.

After the Ceremony (for approximately 20 minutes)

\* The wedding party may return for pictures.

\* Flash and other lighting equipment may be used at this time.

~**Flowers and Decorations** for the church should be discreet and complementary to the

church's décor. Less is always more.

- \* Floral arrangements may never be placed on the altar itself (a symbol of Christ).
- \* Floral arrangements may be placed on the back wall but out of the site line between the priest/deacon, cantor, readers and congregation.
- \* Any stands or pedestals used must be provided by the florist. All properties of the florist should be removed immediately following the ceremony. The church cannot be responsible for storage and must be removed after the Mass/ceremony.
- \* Church decorations or arrangements already present due to the liturgical season (Christmas, Easter etc.) may not be moved or removed.
- \* Pew end decorations may be used, utilizing plastic pew clips, ribbons or elastic bands.
- \* Altar candles may not be moved or removed. Unity Candles are not part of a Catholic wedding and may not be used.
- \* If your flowers are in memory of family and you leave them at the church for the weekend masses, your memorial will be recognized in the weekend bulletin. Advise the Wedding Coordinator.
- \* Floral deliveries should be made a minimum of 1 1/2 hours before the ceremony. The florist may contact your Wedding Coordinator to arrange a specific time.
- ~ **Changing Facilities** are not available at the church. The wedding party will therefore need to come already dressed in wedding attire.
- \* The groomsmen are to arrive no later than 45 minutes prior to the ceremony, to escort arriving guests to their seats.
- \* The groom and groomsman will gather in a room on the opposite side of the church from the bride and her attendants.
- \* The bride and her attendants no later than 5 minutes before the scheduled time for the ceremony. They will be escorted from the limo to the church. If you choose to arrive earlier the bride and her attendants will gather in the library.
- \* The church cannot be liable for any items left in these rooms during the ceremony.
- \* All rooms must be left in the condition you find them.
- ~ **Wedding Music** will be planned jointly by the couple and Terry Hicks, Director of Music. Please contact Terry at least two (2) months prior to the ceremony to discuss your music and the musician fees.
- \* Remember the Sacrament of Marriage is a liturgical celebration. Therefore one of the

basic principals that should guide you in your selection of music is whether the music is indeed liturgical music. Popular songs and secular music, is best used at the reception.

\* Canned/pre-recorded music is never allowed.

\* Instrumentalist (trumpet, violin, flute, harp etc) may be used upon approval of the Director of Music and will be arranged by the Music Department.

## The Wedding Liturgy

The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage, is not a private family function, nor is it merely a social affair or a personal expression of your love for one another. It is not a show or performance but an action of the entire church in whose presence you commit yourselves to one another. Therefore it is important that all present are encouraged to fully participate by being able to see, hear, speak, sing and pray.

### I. Mass with Communion VS. Marriage Ceremony

After meeting with Father Joe, the couple will determine if the marriage will be celebrated in the context of a Nuptial Mass (with Communion) or a Marriage Ceremony ( without Communion). The determining factor is the religious background of the bride and groom, and which liturgy best accommodates the assembled guests allowing them to most fully participate and celebrate the couples unity.

### II. Best Man and Maid/Matron of Honor

Both must be at least 18 years old and at least one must be a practicing Catholic.

### III. Readings

You will be provided the book *Celebrating Marriage, Preparing the Roman Catholic Wedding Liturgy* edited by Paul Covino, which along with various prayers, blessings, the structure of the celebration within a Mass or as a ceremony, and appropriate scripture readings for a wedding. You will select three readings, one Old Testament, one New Testament and a Gospel. Non scriptural readings or poems are never permitted in place of the scriptures.

### IV. Ministers of other Christian Denominations or Faiths.

Weddings held at St. Paul's are celebrated according to the worship books of the Roman Catholic Church. Appropriate adaptations can be made however if a minister of another Christian denomination or a Rabbi participates in the celebration.

### V. Wedding Programs

A Wedding Program will assist your guests to more fully participate and worship together. While program guides can be provided the program is the responsibility of the couple.

## Contact Names and Numbers

St. Paul's Parish Office	294-4696
St. Paul's Fax	294-6149
<u>Clergy</u>	
Father Joseph Mack	294-1696 ext 211
Deacon Gordon Forester	
Deacon Larry Lisk	
Deacon Mike Martini	
<u>Director of Liturgy/Wedding Coordinator</u>	
Peggy Connolly	294-4696 ext 219 453-1746 cell
<u>Director of Music</u>	
Terry Hicks	406-0571 cell <a href="mailto:TRHicks@gmail.com">TRHicks@gmail.com</a>
<u>Music Coordinator</u>	
Estelle Bowman	294-4696 ext 224

### Checklist

- Initial Meetings/Contacts
  - Father Joe
  - Director of Liturgy/Wedding Coordinator
  - Director of Music
  
- Set Date and Time
  - Wedding
  - Rehearsal
  
- Documents
  - New Baptismal Certificates
    - Groom
    - Bride
  - North Carolina Wedding License
  
- Pre-Cana Program