

Saint John the Evangelist Catholic Church

Indianapolis' original Catholic parish and former PRO-CATHEDRAL

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WEDDING POLICY

for Weddings in 2011

Staff

<i>Wedding Coordinator:</i>	<u>Mrs. Bridget McClellan</u> (317) 635-2021 x22	bridget.mcclellan@stjohnsindy.com
<i>Wedding Hostess:</i>	<u>Mrs. Eileen Ahrens</u> <i>home</i> (317) 271-0387	eileen.ahrens@stjohnsindy.com <i>work</i> (317) 635-2021 x52
<i>Director of Music & Liturgy:</i>	<u>Mr. Tom Nichols</u> (317) 635-2021 x23	tom.nichols@stjohnsindy.com

Scheduling a Wedding

1. The initial contact is to be made by either the Bride or the Groom. The church staff works with the couple.
2. No weddings will be booked *less than* 6 months before the anticipated wedding date.
3. No weddings will be booked *earlier than* January 1 of the year preceding the wedding (for example, January 1, 2010 was the earliest that a 2011 wedding could be booked).
4. When contact is made, the Wedding Coordinator:
 - a. verifies availability of the requested date/time
 - b. informs the couple that the parish welcomes them and will pray for them as they prepare for their wedding
 - c. informs the couple that the date/time will not be officially placed on the parish calendar until the non-refundable church stipend (**\$1,100**), the signed **Wedding Request Form**, the **Marriage Preparation Agreement** and the **Officiating Clergy Form** have all been received
 - d. issues to the couple the Wedding Packet, containing all of the necessary forms
5. It is the responsibility of the couple to secure the services of a Catholic priest or deacon to preside at their wedding, and to make arrangements to complete a marriage preparation program.

6. When the stipend check and all the signed forms have been returned to the Wedding Coordinator, the date/time of the wedding and its rehearsal will be officially noted on the parish calendar and a confirmation letter will be sent to the couple.
7. Our parish Director of Music & Liturgy, **Tom Nichols**, serves as the chief musician for weddings, with rare exceptions. The couple is responsible for scheduling a meeting with Mr. Nichols so that he may assist them in selecting appropriate music and guide them in the preparation of an appropriate wedding program/worship aid for use during the wedding. See the **Wedding Music Policy** for further details.
8. After the wedding has been scheduled, all logistical questions should be directed to the Wedding Hostess, **Eileen Ahrens**. The Wedding Hostess will schedule a meeting with the couple approximately 3 months prior to the wedding, to review and finalize detailed plans for the wedding rehearsal and liturgy.

Allowable Dates & Times for Weddings

1. **Saturdays at 2:00pm only** (access to church allowed 12:45pm – 4:00pm)
2. **Saturdays at 10:00am only** (access to church allowed 8:00am – 11:15am)
3. **Friday afternoons at 3:00pm only** (access to church allowed 1:45pm – 5:00pm)
4. No weddings are scheduled for Saturday evenings, Sundays, nor Holy Days.
5. No weddings are scheduled during the liturgical seasons of **Advent** and **Lent**.

The Wedding Liturgy – Mass or Ceremony?

1. When both parties are Catholic it is usual for the liturgy to be a Mass. When a Catholic marries a baptized non-Catholic, the liturgy is to be a Ceremony. When a Catholic marries a non-baptized person, the liturgy must be a Ceremony.
2. The priest or deacon leading the marriage preparation, or the St. John staff, will provide the couple with the wedding planning booklet *Together for Life* or a similar document to assist in preparing for the liturgy.
 - a. Using that resource, the couple will select prayers, scripture readings, vows and blessings to be used in the liturgy.
 - b. The Lectors (people proclaiming the scripture readings) should be given a copy of their readings to review prior to the rehearsal. At the liturgy, the readings will be proclaimed from the church Lectionary.
 - c. St. John has available appropriate Prayers of the Faithful (petitions) to be used at wedding liturgies.
3. It is suggested but not necessary to have Altar Servers at a wedding, especially a Mass. Couples should confer with their Presider about using servers and are responsible for recruiting their own servers. Couples should consult the wedding hostess about albs available for servers.

Rules Governing the Use of the St. John Facilities

St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, the oldest parish in Indianapolis, is a place of historical significance as well as one of beauty, quiet and reflection. We welcome all visitors and enjoy extending hospitality of wedding parties. We do expect that all visitors be respectful of our historic church and its furnishings. The following rules are to be observed:

1. **No alcoholic beverages are permitted on the premises at any time.** Any such items found will be confiscated. Any person deemed under the influence of alcohol at a rehearsal or wedding will be required to leave.
2. **It is the responsibility of the couple to assure that their wedding party have an opportunity for an adequate meal before coming to the church on the day of the wedding.** Food is not allowed in the church. Bottled water is the only allowed drink.
3. **All members of the wedding party must arrive at St. John dressed in their wedding attire. Dress for all persons in the wedding party should be appropriately modest and suitable for a sacramental liturgy.**
4. The center section of the Narthex (west vestibule) will be partitioned off with screens to provide a private space for the Bride and bridesmaids prior to the liturgy. The Groom and groomsmen will have privacy in the sacristy, off the sanctuary, along with the Presider. Personal items left in the narthex will be put in a room in the back of the church Nave during the liturgy. The church is not responsible for any personal belongings left in the church.
5. **The church sound system is to be used exactly as provided.** No “hook-ups” to the existing system, nor any independent sound system, is permitted. The videographer may provide a recording microphone for the Groom and/or Presider with their permission. A recording microphone may be placed on the speaker in the Sacristy with permission of the Wedding Hostess.
6. **Photo and video cameras may be placed only where permitted as explained in the Photo/Video Policy.**
7. Aisle runners are not permitted at St. John.
8. **No receiving line is allowed at St. John after a wedding.** This includes dismissal of guests from their pews by the couple.
9. The large center West Portal doors facing Capitol Avenue may be opened after a wedding. They may not remain open for any extended period of time during hot or cold weather.
10. The church staff will arrange any required sanctuary furnishings (i.e., chairs and kneeler for the couple and Presider) in an appropriate manner. Other sanctuary furnishings and seasonal liturgical decorations anywhere in the church must remain in place. No additional furnishings nor candelabras, except the Unity Candle, are permitted in the sanctuary.
11. If there is time for a ceremonial exit, only small handbells or bubbles may be used.
12. **The church must be cleaned and vacated,** including removal of all personal items and decorations, **no later than 4:00pm** for Saturday afternoon weddings; **11:15am** for Saturday morning weddings; and **5:00pm** for Friday afternoon weddings.
13. **Children must be in kindergarten or older to participate in the wedding party. Children must be age 10 or older to be in the sanctuary.**
14. Two restrooms near the south entrance to the church (the parking lot entrance) are provided for the use of visitors. Please note that the restrooms are very small and may not be accessible for the Bride on the day of the wedding.

Necessary Civil and Sacramental Documents

1. The Couple and the Presider are responsible for completing all necessary civil and sacramental documentation.
2. The marriage preparation file, including any necessary permissions or dispensations, is to be completed and arrive at St. John at least two weeks prior to the wedding.
3. Couples are responsible for providing baptismal certificates issued within 6 months of the wedding, to the person responsible for forwarding the marriage preparation file to St. John.
4. The couple is responsible for obtaining a civil marriage license and certificate, and bringing those documents to the rehearsal. The license should be filled out with the couple's personal information prior to the rehearsal. After signature by the couple, Presider, and witnesses, the license will be returned to the clerk of courts by the Wedding Hostess. The certificate will be given to the couple.

If the Bride or Groom is a resident of Marion County, or if both the Bride and Groom live outside of Indiana, the license should be obtained in Marion County. If residence is in another Indiana county, the license should be obtained in that county. Couples can consult the local Clerk of Courts website for details.

The Wedding Rehearsal

1. Rehearsals are typically scheduled for the day before the wedding. The first wedding to be scheduled on a given Saturday will have its rehearsal on **Friday at 6:00pm**. The second wedding scheduled on a given Saturday will have its rehearsal on **Friday at either 3:30pm or 7:30pm**.
2. If the Wedding Liturgy is scheduled for **Friday afternoon (3:00)**, its rehearsal will be scheduled for **Thursday at 6:00pm**.
3. The Wedding Hostess will be present for both the rehearsal and the wedding liturgy, to assist.
4. Wedding rehearsals begin promptly at the scheduled time. Couples are responsible for assuring that they and their wedding party arrive at the church at least 15 minutes prior to the start of a rehearsal. Rehearsals take no more than one hour.
5. The rehearsal is conducted by the Presider, assisted as needed by the Wedding Hostess.
6. **The following persons are expected to attend the rehearsal:**
 - the **Wedding Couple**
 - the **Best Man** and **Groomsmen**, the **Maid/Matron of Honor** and **Bridesmaids**
 - **Flowers Girls** and **Ring Bearers**, if any
 - **parents** of the couple
 - **grandparents** of the couple (if they are part of the wedding procession)
 - the **Lectors** (people proclaiming the Scripture readings)
 - (*only if Mass is celebrated*): the **Offertory Gift-bearers**, **Eucharistic Ministers**, and **Altar Servers**
 - **Ushers**, **Greeters**, and **Wedding Planner** (if applicable)
7. Music is not performed at the rehearsal, so it is not necessary to have hired musicians present.

Guidelines for Decoration/Florists

St. John is a beautifully appointed church, and little additional decoration is needed. As noted previously, all existing furnishings and liturgical decorations are to remain in place. **Any additional floral arrangements must not restrict movement in the sanctuary nor obstruct the view of the assembly. Guests must always be able to see the altar table, ambo (lectern), the couple and the Presider.**

1. Any florist of the Couple's choice may provide floral arrangements and wedding party flowers.
2. No decorations of any kind may be placed on the altar table, including the Unity Candle.
3. **No decorations other than small pew bows may be used in the aisles of the church. This includes flower petals on the floor (except those thrown by the Flower Girls as part of the procession).** Pew bows must be hung using materials that will not damage the pews, such as ribbon or coated floral wire. Clips do not work on the St. John pews. Couples should bear in mind that the St. John aisle is narrow, so that large pew decorations can be a safety hazard.
4. Wreaths may be hung on the outside doors, weather permitting. They must hang only from existing hooks on the doors.
5. Couples should consult their Presider for permission to include a Unity Candle in the liturgy. Couples are responsible for providing the Unity Candle, the side tapers from which it will be lit, and holders for all three candles.
6. **Sand ceremonies or other non-sacramental actions are not permitted at St. John.**
7. All decorations not to be left for the use of the church must be removed immediately after the liturgy. If decorations are to be left, please advise the Wedding Hostess in advance.
8. **The wedding party is responsible for clean-up of any petals that are thrown in the aisle.**
9. **The church is not available for decorating until the time designated for access to the church:**
 - **12:45pm** for Saturday afternoon weddings
 - **8:00am** for Saturday morning weddings
 - **1:45pm** for Friday afternoon weddings

Photo/Video Guidelines

1. Photographers and videographers have access to the following areas of the church during the procession and the wedding liturgy:
 - a. in the main aisle behind the last row of guests
 - b. corners of the North and/or South Transepts
 - c. designated areas of the Choir/Organ Gallery
2. **The following areas are not available for the set-up of equipment:** the Sanctuary, Sacristy, gothic Pulpit, Rectory and parish offices.
3. **The church is not available for photos or video until the time designated for access to the church:**
 - **12:45pm** for Saturday afternoon weddings
 - **8:00am** for Saturday morning weddings
 - **1:45pm** for Friday afternoon weddings
4. **An announcement will be made prior to the procession requesting guests to turn off phones and beepers, and to refrain from taking flash photos or rising from their seats to take photos.**

Parking

1. The St. John parking lot is available to the wedding party and guests, for both the rehearsal and the wedding. **There are approximately 40 parking spaces available in the lot.**
2. **Parking in the St. John lot is on a “first come, first served” basis.**
3. **All couples are required to use the services of our Parking Lot Attendant for the wedding liturgy. The cost is included in the wedding fee.**
4. **All vehicles must be removed from our lot after the rehearsal and after the wedding.**
5. There are other parking options available near the church, such as the **Plaza Park Garage** (on Capitol Avenue, just north of the church) and the **World Wonders Garage** (just east of the church, entered from Illinois Street or from Maryland Street). Guests staying at downtown hotels should be encouraged to park at their hotel.

Music

1. Our Director of Music & Liturgy, **Tom Nichols**, usually directs the music and serves as the organist and/or pianist.
2. Couples should contact the Music Director to arrange a 1-hour consultation to select appropriate music for their wedding liturgy.
3. The Music Director can also secure for you the services of a cantor, vocal soloist, and instrumentalists, if desired.
4. The Music Director will also assist in producing the layout of the wedding program/worship aid for the benefit of the congregation.
5. Please see the **Wedding Music Policy** for more details and fee info.

Stipends

1. As a sign of gratitude for the time and expertise offered by the Presider, it is appropriate to provide a stipend to that priest or deacon. A suggested amount is \$200.
2. If Altar Servers are used, it is appropriate to offer them a stipend of \$25.
3. If the marriage preparation is done by a priest or deacon who is not presiding at the wedding, it is appropriate to offer them a stipend as well. A suggested amount is \$150.