

Wedding Policies and Guidelines

The following policies and guidelines govern all weddings celebrated at Saint Boniface Catholic Church. They have been developed on the basis of over 100 years of weddings that have been celebrated in this historic church. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that your wedding will be a beautiful and prayerful occasion. When reserving the church, both the bride and groom must affirm that they have read and will abide by these guidelines. Please read them carefully and completely. At the same time, don't be overwhelmed; you can consult this document as things come up in the coming months. Read to the end for a few reminders to help keep things in perspective when the stress of planning feels overwhelming.

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak in reference to Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:31-32)





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A Few Important Things Up Front

A Catholic Wedding

By choosing to have your wedding at Saint Boniface, you are expressing your desire to begin your married life in an act of Christian worship celebrated before God and the community according to the rites of the Catholic Church. Not just a beautiful building, Saint Boniface is first and foremost a house of prayer dedicated to the glory of God. All weddings will take place in accordance with the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, the liturgical book which governs all Catholic weddings. The priest or deacon responsible for your marriage preparation should ensure that you are familiar with the wedding liturgy. If you have any questions about what may or may not take place within the wedding ceremony, please ask – do not assume! All decisions regarding the wedding liturgy are at the discretion of the St. Boniface staff and the presiding priest or deacon.

Fees

The fee to reserve the church is \$1,750. A deposit of \$875 is required to secure the reservation, with the remaining \$875 due one month before the wedding. Special consideration will be made for active members of the parish and others in special circumstances. If finances are an issue, we are willing to meet with you to discuss your situation.

The \$1,750 fee includes compensation for the wedding assistant, organist, and cantor along with the church reservation. It does not include any fee for the presiding priest or deacon. A gift for the presider in consideration of his time and travel is certainly welcome but not expected.

Scheduling

While Saturday is the most popular day on which to get married, there are other possibilities you may wish to consider, keeping in mind the availability of your family, guests, and presider. Saturday weddings typically start between 2:00 and 5:00 PM. It may also be possible to celebrate your wedding on Friday or Sunday.

Note that a Sunday wedding would be incorporated into the parish's normal celebration of Sunday Mass. This means, for example, that options for readings and music would be limited and the priest's vestments would be the color of the current liturgical season. However, this would be a generous way to allow the parish community to share the celebration of your wedding with you. Any fees associated with such a wedding would be minimal.



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Saint Boniface will only reserve the church for weddings at least six months in advance in order to allow adequate time for marriage preparation. Any exceptions must be approved by the Saint Boniface staff.

Set me as a seal upon your heart. (Song of Songs 8:6a)

Who's Who In Your Wedding

Bride and Groom

Of course the two most important people at the wedding are the ones who are getting married! In general, at least one member of the couple must be a fully-initiated Catholic (i.e. has received the three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) in order to be married at Saint Boniface. Please discuss any questions regarding this with your presiding priest or deacon.

You do not need to be a registered parishioner of Saint Boniface to be married at Saint Boniface. Registered parishioners do, however, receive preferential treatment regarding dates and fees for reserving the church.

Presiding Priest or Deacon

The presiding minister for your wedding must be a Catholic priest or deacon in good standing. Typically couples invite a priest or deacon whom they know to preside at their wedding, but the St. Boniface clergy is willing to discuss the possibility of presiding as well.

Please confirm with your desired presider that they are available and willing to preside as far in advance as possible. When reserving the church, you must confirm that you have a firm commitment from a priest or deacon to preside at the wedding and to direct your marriage preparation process. The presider is expected to be present at the rehearsal.

In order to preside at your wedding, your presider must submit a letter of suitability from their bishop or religious superior (they will know how to take care of this) and must be qualified in accordance with civil and church law. He is responsible for working with you to complete a suitable program of marriage preparation and ensuring that nothing prevents you from marrying according to the norms of the Catholic Church. Presiders are expected to abide by these wedding guidelines and to celebrate the liturgy in accordance with the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* and (for a Nuptial Mass) the third edition of the *Roman Missal*.



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Witnesses

Traditionally referred to as the best man and maid/matron of honor, these two individuals are the official witnesses to the bride and groom's exchange of consent. They may be accompanied by other groomsmen and bridesmaids; the number of each is up to you.

Other Liturgical Roles

In addition to the bride and groom, presiding priest or deacon, and official witnesses, a number of other people may be involved in the celebration of the wedding liturgy. If possible, it is recommended that you choose people who already have experience in these roles.

- **Lectors:** Lectors proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture during the liturgy as well as the petitions during the General Intercessions. You may choose up to three people to serve in this role: one for the first reading (usually from the Old Testament), one for the second reading (from the New Testament), and one for the petitions (following the homily). All lectors should receive a copy of their assigned text ahead of time and should have practiced reading their text aloud before the rehearsal.
- **Servers:** Altar servers assist the presider in the sanctuary during the course of the liturgy. One or two altar servers are encouraged, especially for a Nuptial Mass. Those chosen should have some previous experience of serving at Mass.
- **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:** If Holy Communion will be distributed at your wedding, you may invite two or three people (depending on the number of guests you expect to receive Communion) to assist the priest with the distribution of Holy Communion. All individuals serving in this role must be commissioned in their home parish.
- **Ushers:** At your discretion, you may ask a few people to assist with handing out programs, seating guests, or other duties.
- **Flower girl and ring bearer:** Children must be at least five years old to walk in the procession or stand with the bridal party. Younger children may be led up the aisle by an older child or adult.
- No animals (other than service animals) or signs may be in the procession.

Guests

Your guests at the wedding are not mere spectators, nor should they attempt to duplicate the job of the professional photographer and/or videographer you have hired. Your guests are there to pray for you and with you, to witness your exchange of vows, and to celebrate your joyful day. Please encourage your guests to be present through their reverent attention and active participation in the liturgy and discourage them from taking photos or videos during the wedding. You may want to keep these points in mind when designing your wedding program.



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Saint Boniface Staff

- The parish office manager will be your primary contact person regarding scheduling, fees, and paperwork. She can answer any questions you have about the process and help you to get in touch with anyone you are unable to contact directly.
- The parish wedding coordinator will meet with you to help you select the Scripture readings and plan other details of the wedding liturgy. A wedding assistant will be assigned to supervise the rehearsal and the wedding itself to make sure that the needs of you, your family, friends, and guests are accommodated and that the wedding proceeds in an organized and prayerful manner.
- The organist and director of music will play the organ for your wedding and will be your contact person when it comes to all music for the wedding. He will work with you to select music and can help you to arrange additional musicians if you desire.
- The pastor and associate pastor are available regarding any spiritual needs you may have as you prepare for your wedding. They can also discuss the possibility of presiding at your wedding if necessary. The pastor has authority over all activities occurring on Saint Boniface property and will make the final decision in any dispute.

Let marriage be honored among all. (Hebrews 13:4a)

Important Practicalities

Music

Because your wedding will take place in a church in the context of the sacred liturgy, all music for the wedding must be sacred – that is, oriented to the worship of God. Secular love songs, old family favorites, and popular celebratory tunes are not appropriate for the wedding liturgy – but they would be perfect at the reception!

The parish organist and director of music will assist you in selecting music and will play the organ for your wedding. He will also arrange for a cantor to sing at your wedding. If you wish to have other musicians perform at your wedding, he can work with you to arrange for them.

Paperwork

Before the wedding, baptismal certificates for both the bride and groom (or the Catholic spouse if the other spouse is unbaptized) must be obtained and sent to Saint Boniface. The Archdiocese of Louisville requires the completion of two forms, the M-A and M-B, for both the bride and groom. The minister preparing you for marriage or the parish staff can assist you with



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obtaining and completing the necessary paperwork. Also, it is the couple's responsibility to apply for and receive a marriage license from the county clerk's office one month before the wedding.

Please bring all marriage paperwork and the civil marriage license to the rehearsal. The license will be signed by the bride, groom, presider, and witnesses (best man and maid/matron of honor) immediately following the conclusion of the wedding. All paperwork, including the license, is to be left in the sacristy. The parish office staff will ensure that the license is mailed on the next business day.

Rehearsal

A rehearsal usually takes place the evening before the wedding at 6:00 PM and generally lasts from 30 minutes to an hour. All members of the bridal party, lectors, servers, and anyone else with a role in the liturgy must attend the rehearsal.

The Wedding Day

Saint Boniface does not have a dressing area, so the wedding party should arrive at Saint Boniface already dressed. The bride and bridesmaids may wait in the tower room at the back of the church; the groom and groomsmen may wait in the sacristy at the front of the church (accessible through the sanctuary).

The following are prohibited anywhere inside the church or on church property:

- Food and snacks
- Smoking (including e-cigarettes and vaping)
- Alcoholic beverages (see below)
- Illegal drugs or other substances

IMPORTANT: On the wedding day, neither the bride, nor the groom, nor any member of the wedding party may consume alcohol or use any other mind-altering substances prior to the wedding. The members of the wedding party must be sober for the wedding to take place. VIOLATION OF THIS RULE MAY RESULT IN THE CANCELLATION OF THE WEDDING.



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A few other details:

- The church parking lot is unable to accommodate buses or limousines. These vehicles must be parked on the street. The wedding assistant can ensure that space in front of the church is reserved for these vehicles.
- Weddings need to start on time. The seating of the grandparents should take place a few minutes before the scheduled time of the wedding.
- The assembly will be asked to stand at the beginning of the procession.
- Receiving lines are not practical following a wedding at Saint Boniface. At the end of the ceremony the wedding party will proceed immediately out the front doors of the church, come around the side, and reenter the church to sign the license and begin taking group pictures.

Flowers and Decorations

Florists and others involved in decorating the church should contact the Saint Boniface staff to schedule a time to decorate the church. All decorations must conform to the following guidelines:

- Furnishings in the sanctuary (altar, ambo, candlestands, presider's chair, etc.) may not be moved.
- The congregation's view of the altar, ambo, presider's chair, and the exchange of consent may not be obstructed.
- Due to the danger of slipping on the hardwood floors, aisle runners are not permitted.
- Bows or other decorations placed on the pews must be tied, not taped.
- Rice, confetti, birdseed, etc. may not be thrown either inside or outside the church.
- All decorations must be removed before leaving the church. Please be considerate of the parishioners and staff of Saint Boniface by leaving the church in the same condition in which you found it.

Photographers and Videographers

Photographers and videographers must contact the Saint Boniface staff prior to the wedding. All persons serving in these roles are expected to conduct themselves with integrity, respect, and professionalism. They should comply with all instructions given by Saint Boniface staff and the presider as well as the following guidelines:

- Flash photography is permitted only during the entrance and exit processions.
- During the liturgy, photos may be taken from behind the congregation or from the sides of the first six rows of pews.
- Only persons exercising a liturgical role may enter the sanctuary during the wedding liturgy.



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- All video recording must be discreet. Bulky recording equipment must be stationary.
- Group photos may be taken for up to 45 minutes following the wedding. All should be respectful when posing, mindful that they are in a sacred space.
- Please discourage your family and guests from taking photos or videos during the liturgy.

This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. (John 15:12)

Final Reminders

Your wedding will last at most around an hour; your marriage will last the rest of your life. It is easy to get overwhelmed with the stress of planning an elaborate wedding, rehearsal dinner, reception, honeymoon, etc. Do not let those things distract you from what is most important: seeking God's grace as you prepare to form a lifelong covenant with your future spouse. With that in mind, here are a few reminders to help you keep things in perspective:

- How much you spend on your wedding does not determine how strong your marriage will be.
- Weddings are not a competitive sport.
- Your interior attitude matters much more than any external appearances. In five, ten, or fifty years, no one will remember the color of the centerpieces at your reception. They will remember your love and joy as you entrust your lives to each other and to God.
- There are only two people getting married at your wedding: not your parents, not your future in-laws, not your friends, and not the photographer. While being charitable and hospitable to all your guests, do whatever you need to do to make your wedding day one that you and your spouse will look back on with fondness, not regret.
- Don't forget to invite Jesus to your wedding (see John 2:1-2). Pray regularly with your future spouse. Attend Sunday Mass together. Meditate on the Scripture readings you have selected. Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) shortly before your wedding day.
- No wedding goes perfectly according to plan. That's OK... it's what gives you funny stories to tell on your anniversary.
- Finally... take a deep breath. It will be OK. Really.

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)



Saint
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CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Saint Boniface Catholic Church

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