

Congratulations upon your engagement. The sacrament of Matrimony is a sacred and lifelong commitment. Marriage is a call to a lifestyle that is grounded in the love of God and spent in the service to others to promote the kingdom of God.

These are the guidelines for weddings held at the Church at St. Mary's of the Barrens.

SCHEDULING THE DATE

To schedule the date of the wedding preferably email the local house superior at St. Mary's of the Barrens at Josendorf@vincentian.org. You can also call the local superior at (573) 547-6533, ext. 257.

Ideally, weddings are scheduled one year in advance, but no less than six (6) months prior. Weddings are scheduled at 6:00 p.m. on Fridays, and on Saturdays at 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. When choosing a date, keep in mind the liturgical seasons of the Church year since Lent usually tends toward minimal decorations.

The scheduled date is tentative until St. Mary's of the Barrens receives the deposit check and a signed agreement form. Once these steps are complete the date then becomes permanent. If the date of the wedding needs to be cancelled or changed, the parties must contact the office of St. Mary's of the Barrens (see contact information above). The date can be changed to another available date without any additional charge.

OFFICIAL WITNESS

A couple celebrating their marriage at the Church at St. Mary's of the Barrens must provide their own priest or deacon. This official witness must sign this agreement at the time that it is submitted. He is also responsible for preparing the couple for marriage according to the policy of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

If the priest or deacon is not assigned within the Archdiocese of St. Louis, he must submit a letter of good standing from his local ordinary to the superior of St. Mary's of the Barrens who will forward a copy to the pastor of St. Vincent's Parish in Perryville. If there are any questions, he can contact the superior at Josendorf@vincentian.org.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Marriage preparation includes the program from the Archdiocese of St. Louis and a session on Natural Family Planning (see Marriage Prep Checklist from the Archdiocese of St. Louis). The couple is responsible for scheduling these dates. The couple will first meet with the priest or deacon who will be witnessing the wedding to learn the marriage preparation process and to complete the pre-nuptial investigation form and the Fully Engaged inventory.

FEES FOR WEDDINGS

The \$200.00 deposit will be returned in full IF the church and dressing room are left clean and in order. See other conditions below.

\$1,200.00 is required for the use of the church. This must be paid six (6) months before the wedding along with the deposit. This fee includes the service of a Church representative.

If the wedding is cancelled prior to the wedding date, the \$1,200.00 will be returned, but not the \$200.00 deposit.

If the date of the wedding needs to be cancelled or changed, the parties must contact the office of St. Mary's of the Barrens (use the contact information above). The date can be changed to another available date without any additional charge.

\$20 is recommended for each altar server. This offering is given directly to the servers. The couple may provide their own altar servers. If you do not have any altar servers to provide, please contact your Church Representative.

The Director of Music will inform you of the fee for music. This fee depends upon whether a group or a cantor sings and who is needed to play various instruments. Relatives and friends who are musicians or singers are welcome to play. They must work with the Director of Music to determine that the music is appropriate for a religious celebration. They will also need instruction on how to use musical instruments that belong to the Church.

The couple determines what offering they wish to give to the priest or deacon who will be the official witness.

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE

You will be assigned a Church representative from the Church. This person can answer any questions that you might have about this agreement or the use of the Church. The representative will coordinate the rehearsal for the wedding, as well as be present at the wedding to assist in providing a reverent and joyful celebration.

MUSIC

Music chosen must be liturgically appropriate and pastorally sound for the celebration of the sacrament, so that it emphasizes the religious dimension of marriage. Only sacred music may be used before and during the ceremony. Suitable processional and recessional are appropriate. Music chosen needs to be congruent with the liturgy and help the assembly to pray. All music must be approved by the church's Director of Music, Terry Rousseau. His contact e-mail is trousseau@svdepaul.org.

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals are held at 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. (if there is a second wedding on Saturday) the evening before the wedding. Please insist that all members of your wedding party be present and on time. If all are present, rehearsal can be completed within a half-hour. The rehearsal should be done reverently. One half of the deposit will be forfeited if the practice lasts longer than 1 hour.

DECORATIONS

For safety reasons, aisle runners and aisle candles are not permitted. Dropping of flower petals, real or silk, is not allowed during the procession. Pew bows may be used if they are tied in a manner that does not scratch the wood (no tape is allowed). Sanctuary furniture, candles, and seasonal decorations may not be moved. No flowers or other decorations are to be placed on top of the altar. Floral arrangements, plants, and candelabra may be used in the sanctuary if they do not block access to, or view of, the ambo (where the readings are done), altar, and presider's chair. A protective placemat is required so that candles do not drip on the altar or floor. Please ask your florist to remove all decorations, boxes, and trash after the wedding. No rice, birdseed, confetti, or balloons are permitted because they are hazardous to your guests and present clean-up problems.

UNITY CANDLE

The couple may use a unity candle. Please inform the church representative if you will have one at the wedding. Bring it to the rehearsal so that the church representative can place it for the wedding. A protective place mat is required so that candles do not drip on the altar or floor.

DRESSING AREAS

Labouré Hall in the Visitor Center may be used before and after the wedding by the bride and bridesmaids. The groom and the groomsmen meet in the sacristy in the rear of the Church. It is helpful to appoint someone to remove all trash, boxes, paper, etc. after the wedding. All rooms must be clean and left in good order and trash removed to receive a total return on the deposit for the wedding. Recycling containers are available. Absolutely no food or drink is allowed in the Church.

ALCOHOL/TOBACCO

Our campus is alcohol free and tobacco free. No alcoholic beverages are allowed in the Church or on the Church grounds before, during, or after the rehearsal or wedding. The consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs by the bride, groom, or members of the wedding party will result in the forfeiture of the deposit fee.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

It is understandable that you might want to record the wedding ceremony. It is important that the recording process does not distract members of the congregation from the act of worship. Please ask the Church representative to indicate those locations in the church which are most advantageous for videotaping and still photography. This step will prevent the professional you hire from roaming through the Church and interfering with the ceremony. He or she may not enter the sanctuary but may take video or pictures from the side pews. Flash photos taken by your guests must be kept to a minimum to avoid distractions during the ceremony.

The Church will be open for the taking of pictures before and after the wedding. The Church is available for three hours on the wedding day. It is open one hour prior to the wedding. It is also available for an hour after the ceremony for pictures and clean-up.

RECEIVING LINE

The Church has a small entrance. At the end of the celebration only the bride and groom should receive people at the Church entrance.

PROGRAMS

It is helpful to have a worship program printed for all who come to celebrate the liturgy with you. Having a worship program can also serve as a wonderful memento for you and for all who gather with you on that day. The point of the worship program is to help enable the assembly to pray and participate, especially those who might represent other religious faiths. It is a gesture of hospitality. The program need only include the basic order of the liturgy. It may include the readings from scripture or just the scripture references.

WITNESSES

A minimum of two people is needed to witness your marriage. Please take into consideration the age and duties of the ring bearer, flower girl, and junior attendants before you ask them to participate.

OFFICIAL RECORDING OF MARRIAGE

The marriage will be officially recorded at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Perryville, Missouri. All documentation gathered for the preparation such as the prenuptial investigation form, the FOCCUS inventory, the “Fully Engaged” inventory, and certificates for attending other programs must be filed at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Perryville, Missouri. When you need documentation of your marriage, please contact St. Vincent’s Parish.

All deacons and priests who are not assigned to St. Vincent’s Parish in Perryville MO need express delegation from the pastor of St. Vincent’s Parish.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Before entering the Sacrament of Matrimony, you are encouraged to receive the sacrament of penance. You may receive the sacrament on your own a few weeks prior to your wedding. Please inform the priest of your needs. Taking time to examine your Christian commitment prior to accepting your new role in the Church as a married person is a wonderful way to experience the healing, forgiveness, and grace Christ offers you. Allow Christ, who took part in the Wedding Feast of Cana, to be present and a part of your preparation, planning, and celebration!

Please note: We reserve the right to refuse any couple for any reason, especially if we judge their ceremony will not speak to the dignity of our grounds.