



CATHEDRAL OF  
THE MOST  
SACRED HEART  
OF JESUS

WEDDING GUIDELINES

VERY REVEREND FATHER DAVID BOETTNER, PASTOR  
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Congratulations!! We are so excited that you have chosen the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus to celebrate the beginning of your marriage. We look forward to working with you and your families to help you prayerfully and joyfully receive the Sacrament of Marriage.

Because we believe that marriage is a sacrament, we see your visible love and faithfulness as a witness and an effective sign of God's love and care for all people. The following guidelines are intended to help you have a beautiful wedding and to assist you in becoming that sign to the world of God's love.

We will include you in our prayer intentions as you prepare for your marriage and we can't wait to walk with you on this journey to your wedding day and beyond.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. David Boettner". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light-colored rectangular background.

Very Reverend Father David Boettner  
Rector, Sacred Heart Cathedral  
Vicar General

## **General Requirements:**

Please accept our congratulations on your engagement! You are planning to be married in the Catholic Church. A Catholic wedding is much more than a social event. It is a sacrament in which a man and a woman become husband and wife in the presence of God, the wedding officiant, and your family and friends. From the Rite of Marriage: "Dear friends, you have come together in this church so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love in the presence of the Church's minister and this community.

The parish staff at Sacred Heart Cathedral will walk with you every step of the way as you plan for your special and sacred day. Your preparation will reflect the principles that govern Catholic liturgical celebrations.

## **Eligible Wedding Couples:**

Either the bride or the groom must be a practicing Catholic and registered at a parish. Both parties must be free to marry in the Catholic Church.

## **Second marriages:**

If either person has been married before, a death certificate or a declaration of nullity must be presented before setting the date of the wedding.

## **The place of the wedding:**

Permission to be married in a non-Catholic church must be obtained from the Bishop's office. Non-Catholic clergy will be welcome to assist at an ecumenical or interfaith wedding, at the discretion of the rector. The priest or deacon preparing you for marriage will assist in asking for any necessary permission or dispensation.

## **Scheduling a wedding:**

Before setting a date for your wedding, it is required that you plan an initial meeting with a parish priest or deacon. It is recommended that this meeting take place as soon as possible and at least six months before your wedding. This will be one of a series of meetings that will allow both you and the priest to get to know each other as well as discuss the vocation of Marriage. The gathering of documentation, as well as planning the wedding celebration will occur at these meetings. Even if you are inviting visiting clergy to officiate at your wedding, a meeting with the parish priest is required.

## **Wedding Times**

Wedding celebrations are scheduled as follows. Please note wedding parties are given access to the Cathedral 30 minutes before the start of their wedding until 90 minutes from the scheduled start of their wedding.

Saturdays at 2:30 and 7 pm.

Weddings are not celebrated during the season of Lent, Sundays, Holy days of Obligation or any national holidays.

Celebrants do not charge for weddings. An honorarium is customary, but not required.

### **Use of church:**

Church fees are due 14 days before the wedding. Financial limitations will not preclude a wedding at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

### **Parishioner (contributing) for over one year:**

\$500 (non-refundable, includes clean up/staff fee)

### **Non-contributing or registered less than one year:**

\$1,000 (non-refundable, includes clean up / staff fee)

### **Non-parishioner (with Pastor's permission):**

\$1,500 (non-refundable, includes clean up / staff fee)

### **Organist Fee:**

\$150

### **Cantor Fee**

\$150

### **Guest Celebrant:**

If a couple would like a priest or deacon from another parish to preside at the wedding, the couple must have this priest submit a request to the Pastor of Sacred Heart. To preside at a wedding at Sacred Heart, a priest or deacon must be in good standing with his parish and provide proper documentation to the Pastor.

## **Marriage Preparation**

Diocesan policy requires a six month preparation period before the wedding can take place. During the six month preparation period you will:

- Discuss any dispensations or permissions necessary.
- Obtain a newly issued copy of your sacramental records from your Church of Baptism dated within the last six months.
- Complete freedom to marry forms.
- Attend an engaged encounter weekend
- Meet with the priest for preparation sessions and complete the FOCCUS Pre-Marriage Inventory
- Meet with the Wedding Coordinator to plan your ceremony.
- Obtain marriage license.

More information can be found on the Diocese of Knoxville website:

<http://dioknox.org/marriage-preparation-and-enrichment/>

## **Spiritual Preparation**

Your devotion to God and involvement in a church community will add to the strength of your relationship. If you live in the area, we hope you will worship with us often here at Sacred Heart, before and after your wedding day. Please contact the parish office for registration. For numerous opportunities to learn more about your faith here at Sacred Heart Cathedral, go to <http://shcathedral.org/cafe-adult-faith/>

## **Document Checklist**

- Certificate of completion from an engaged encounter
- Baptismal Certificate
- Catholics: You must contact your parish of baptism to obtain a recent copy of your baptismal certificate. The copy must be no more than six months old.
- Baptized non-Catholics: must present proof of baptism
- Have the certificate sent to the priest or deacon performing your ceremony.
- Wedding Celebration sheet
- Signed wedding policy agreement
- Document checklist
- Sacred Heart Detail Information Sheet

## **Planning your Wedding Celebration**

The staff of Sacred Heart Cathedral will work with the couple to plan a wedding celebration that is meaningful, beautiful and in keeping with the best of Catholic liturgy, theology, and spirituality. In the rite of matrimony, a couple celebrates the love they have for one another. They also dedicate this love to God while being supported by the love of their families and the worshiping community. A whole liturgy is a communal act of worship that gives glory to God, so it is essential that the choices of readings, prayers, music, and customs foster the full and active participation of the congregation.

## **Wedding Mass or Rite of Ceremony**

When two practicing Catholics marry, they may celebrate the Rite of Marriage within a Mass. When a Catholic and a person of another faith marry, they generally celebrate the Rite of Marriage within a Liturgy of the Word, ensuring that their family and friends can comfortably participate. A discussion will be held with the priest/deacon to determine the most appropriate and comfortable Rite.

## **Families of Engaged Couples:**

Families of engaged couples are often participating in the planning process. Please note that Church staff cannot make arrangements with the families of the engaged couple, but only with the couple in concert with the priest.

## **Liturgical Planning**

### **Choosing Readings**

You will receive a book, *Together for Life* by Joseph M. Champlain, which gives you a complete outline of the ceremony and which contains all the readings and prayers from which you may choose.

There is a convenient selection form in the back of the book which you should fill out and return to either the priest you are working with or the wedding coordinator at least one month before your wedding date; this form is used to prepare the readings and prayers for your wedding liturgy. Copies of the readings and General Intercessions will be available at the rehearsal for your readers.

The use of readings which are not taken from Scripture and the use of so-called "original vows" composed by the couple are not permitted by Church law. The wedding coordinator will happily provide you with an electronic or hard copy of the readings so that your reader can prepare with the exact text as the day of your celebration.

## **Adaptations to Wedding Ceremony**

A Catholic wedding Mass or ceremony must comply with the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. Requests for adaptations to the ceremony, however minor, must be made in writing to the wedding coordinator no less than one month before the wedding date. All final decisions regarding weddings at the Cathedral are the responsibility of the Pastor.

## **Unity Candle and other symbols**

Within Catholic liturgies, candles primarily refer to the light of Christ and baptism; the Easter candle, lit at the Easter Vigil, is the central candle in the sanctuary. The lighting of the Unity Candle may be observed at the wedding reception; its lighting can be incorporated into the blessing before the meal. As for other symbolic gestures refer to the Adaptations to Wedding Ceremony above and to the current edition of "The Order of Celebrating Matrimony."

## **Choosing Music**

As marriage is a sacramental occasion, all music for your wedding must be sacred and appropriate for a worship service. Please note: pre-recorded music is not used in the Cathedral.

## **Director of Liturgical Music**

Glenn Kahler [gkahler@shcknox.org](mailto:gkahler@shcknox.org)

## **Organist**

Robert McCarter [rmccarter@shcknox.org](mailto:rmccarter@shcknox.org)

It is your responsibility to contact Mr. Kahler and Mr. McCarter for a consultation regarding music selections for your special day. This initial contact should be made as soon as possible after confirming your wedding date with our parish office.

If you should desire to have an additional vocal or instrumental soloist, please communicate this is your consultation meeting. If a cantor is needed for a sung Mass or wedding service, Glenn Kahler will assist you in making arrangements.



### **Wedding Attire**

When choosing wedding attire, your choice must reflect the dignity of Christian marriage. Some styles are more appropriate for evening wear than they are for a sacred event held in a holy place. All wedding attire should be modest. Low necklines and high slits are not in keeping with appropriate guidelines for a religious service.

Suits or tuxedos worn by groomsmen must be suitable for a religious service as well, and not distract from it. "Costume" style tuxedos or accessories (i.e. tennis shoes) are not appropriate for a sacred event held in a holy place.

### **Best man and maid of honor (witnesses)**

State law dictates that official witnesses, the Best Man, and Maid of Honor must be at least 16 years of age.

### **Bridesman and groomsman**

The bridal party ought to comprise family and friends who love the couple and will support them as husband and wife.

### **Ushers**

It is recommended to have ushers in addition to groomsmen. Groomsmen are often busy with photographs as the guests are arriving and therefore unable to seat them. Ushers are also able to assist guests at the beginning and end of the ceremony. Our recommendations are to have one usher for every fifty guests.

### **Children in the wedding party, ring bearer, flower girl**

We recommend that children in the wedding be at least six years of age. If children are included in the wedding party, please be mindful of their unique needs and plan accordingly.

**Flower girl** ~ Please note petals must be picked up immediately following the conclusion of the ceremony.

**Ring bearer** ~ Please do not put the wedding rings on the pillow carried by the ring bearer.

The best man and/or maid of honor should be responsible for the rings.

## **Readers**

If you choose to have your Marriage celebrated within a Mass, a Catholic should proclaim the readings. If you decide to use the Rite for Celebrating Marriage outside of the Mass, other non-Catholics may proclaim the readings. The reader for the Prayers of the Faithful may be Catholic or of another Christian faith.

When choosing readers, please choose people who have had experience with reading in their own parishes. Select someone with a strong, clear voice with excellent enunciation. They should be coached ahead of time and will be allowed time to practice with the Cathedral's microphone during rehearsal.

## **Other ceremony participants**

If a couple is celebrating with a wedding Mass, there is an opportunity to include two people to bring up the gifts (bread and wine) at the Preparation of the Altar, and one or two people to assist with distributing Holy Communion. People who distribute Holy Communion must be Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in their own parish.

## **Additional Catholic Clergy**

Should the engaged couple have Catholic priests or deacons among their family or friends, the couple is most welcome to invite the clergyman to participate in the ceremony. The priest or deacon can contact the Wedding Coordinator to make arrangements.

## **Ministers of other Christian Denominations**

We welcome ordained women and men of faith to the wedding celebration. A fantastic opportunity to include an ordained friend or family member is at the "Prayers of the Faithful," which leads the community in prayers for the couple.

## **Wedding Consultant**

If you are utilizing the services of a wedding consultant, please advise him or her that the wedding rehearsal and wedding ceremony are the responsibility of the Cathedral staff

## Wedding Rehearsal

Your presider will schedule your rehearsal. Rehearsals are generally scheduled the evening before your wedding and should take no longer than one hour. It will start and end on time, so please plan accordingly.

The wedding rehearsal is not the rehearsal for musicians. Any necessary rehearsals should take place at another time arranged through the Wedding Coordinator.

Please ask all who have a specific role in the wedding to arrive fifteen minutes before the rehearsal is to begin.

The rehearsal is not a social event, but its purpose is to assist the wedding party with understanding their role at the ceremony so that on the wedding day, all can fully participate.

Those who attend the rehearsal are those who have a role in the wedding celebration.

They are:

- Bride and Groom
- Maid / Matron of Honor and Best Man
- Bridesmaids
- Groomsmen
- Ring Bearer and Flower Girl
- Parents (involved in procession or ceremony)
- Ushers
- Readers
- Gift Bearers
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

Please help us maintain the reverence and dignity of the Lord's house by informing members of the wedding party to refrain from chewing gum and imbibing in alcoholic beverages before the rehearsal and wedding ceremony. Anyone coming to the church intoxicated will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony, including the bride and/or groom.

Please bring the marriage license to the rehearsal. In the event, the license is forgotten the couple must designate a volunteer to retrieve it during the rehearsal, and it must be delivered before the end of the rehearsal.

## **Wedding Coordinator**

The wedding coordinator will help you plan your wedding and ensure they and/or the wedding guild will be present at your rehearsal and wedding. They will also keep the celebration running smoothly, and serve as a liaison between the church and your wedding party. Contact info: Scott Barron ([sbarron@shcknox.org](mailto:sbarron@shcknox.org)).

## **On your wedding day**

When you arrive on your wedding day, you are entering holy ground; Sacred Heart requests that the activity before, during and after your wedding maintain a peaceful and prayerful environment. Jesus Christ dwells here. May His presence fill you with peace and joy on your wedding day.

## **Bride's room**

A bride's room is available. Please make arrangements with the wedding coordinator to ensure sufficient setup time. The Cathedral cannot promise access to the bridal suite more than one (1) hour before the start of the wedding. The purpose of the bridal suite is to be a final preparation area.

All personal belongings and trash must be removed from the Bride's room prior to the ceremony. Please assign someone to ensure that this room is left clean and clear. The Sacred Heart staff cannot assume responsibility for items left unattended.

## **Groom:**

Sacred Heart will provide a space for the groom.

## **Important Items of Concern**

Working closely with your Wedding Coordinator will ensure your wedding liturgy and the activities which surround it comply with the guidelines of Sacred Heart Cathedral. Additions to the liturgy, such as a "unity candle" are not permitted. Please refer any questions from your florist, photographer, and videographer to the wedding coordinator.

Some of your guests may not be familiar with our Catholic tradition of gathering in silence upon entering the church. All your guests, including the wedding party, even at rehearsal, should be instructed that the Church is a sacred place and that conversations should be kept to a minimum.

## **Altar Server**

Should you desire an altar server, this can be arranged. It is customary to provide a stipend for each altar server.

## **Proper disposition**

It is a matter of church law that exchange of marriage vows requires full consent of one's will. To this end, we wish to be clear that the use of alcohol (or other chemical mind-altering substances) is regarded as impairing the full and freely given consent required for a valid sacrament. Consequently, we will not permit alcoholic beverages in or on church grounds. A bride or groom who has consumed alcohol and/or other substances prior to their arrival and appears impaired will necessitate the delay of the sacrament until an appropriate time.

## **Flowers and Decorations Policy**

We welcome your efforts to beautify the worship space for your wedding. Please share these guidelines with those assisting with flowers and decorations.

It is a long-standing tradition that the flowers placed in the church for your wedding are an offering of thanksgiving to God. For that reason, your flowers should remain in the church after the wedding. To help you keep your expenses down, we encourage couples with weddings on the same day to coordinate their flowers and share the cost. The wedding coordinator will be happy to assist you with these arrangements. If, for some reason you are not planning to use the arrangement of fresh flowers for your wedding, please inform the wedding coordinator prior to the wedding.

--Please note that if you do plan your wedding your a special liturgical season, the church --sanctuary may be enhanced with seasonal arrangements which cannot be altered or removed.

--Pew decorations are permitted, but nothing may be taped or pinned to the pews. Your florist will be able to suggest an alternate method.

--It is our experience that aisle runners can cause several problems at the wedding ceremony, one of which is falling. Therefore, aisle runners are not permitted.

--Due to the risk of fall or injury and the need for cleanup, we do not allow the throwing of confetti, birdseed, rice inside or outside of the church.

--All decorations must be removed from the church immediately following the ceremony. This is the responsibility of the wedding party unless arrangements are made with the florist.

## Photography Policy

Below are special instructions for your photographer and videographer. They are printed in separate pages so that you may distribute them to your providers of service.

To provide a meaningful remembrance of the liturgy and sacred vows, we do allow photographs to be taken in the church. To make sure your marriage liturgy will be a prayerful experience for you and your guests, we ask the following regarding taking photographs and videography:

Photographers/videographers are not allowed in the sanctuary. There are no exceptions.

Flash photography is only allowed during the processional and recessional. All other videos and photos will be with existing/natural light only. Drones are not permitted in the Church!

When the sacrament of matrimony is celebrated within the holy sacrifice of Mass, no pictures are permitted during the consecration.

We ask that all movement be discreet so as not to intrude or draw attention away from the experience or mood of the ceremony.

It is the responsibility of the photographer to help the wedding party keep a sense of reverence during the picture taking.

To facilitate the flow of picture taking after the ceremony, once the newly married couple arrives at the rear of the church in the recessional, the Wedding Coordinator will direct the bride and groom and the bridal party back to the sanctuary to begin taking pictures immediately.

Because of the time-sensitive nature of the weekend schedule in the church, we ask that you wait to greet your guests until after the pictures are taken.

## Wedding Policy Agreement Form

After having read the SHC Wedding Policies guide, I understand the policies regarding weddings performed at Sacred Heart Cathedral. I agree to follow these policies as stated and will see that members of the wedding party understand and follow the policies as well.

I understand that nothing is officially on the master calendar until:

- a.) preliminary meeting with the SH celebrant
- b.) approval of wedding date by Sacred Heart



I understand that I am responsible for the following:

- To schedule a meeting with the Sacred Heart wedding coordinator to further discuss guidelines, fees and other plans for the wedding.
- To complete premarital counseling sessions with the officiating minister or someone he has approved
- Keep scheduled appointments with wedding personnel and Sacred Heart celebrant
- Provide all remaining facility fees to either Wedding Coordinator, --Celebrant, or Parish office no later than thirty (30) days prior to the wedding date.
- Provide the marriage license to the officiating license to the officiating minister at the beginning of the wedding rehearsal.

I understand that it is my responsibility to see that the church facilities and properties are left in the same condition in which they were found.

I understand that all alcoholic beverages and illegal or controlled substances are strictly prohibited on the Sacred Heart property. I understand that all buildings are "smoke-free."

I understand that the wedding policies are subject to change at the direction of Sacred Heart Cathedral.

By my signature, I agree to comply with all Cathedral policies and procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Bride) \_\_\_\_\_ (Groom)

## **Bride Certificate Checklist Groom**

Baptismal Certificate

First Communion Certificate

Freedom to Marry Testimony

Dispensation

Copy of annulment

Other