

# **Wedding Guidelines for The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception**

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception  
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Cathedral OF THE  
Immaculate  
Conception

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These policies and procedures are effective July, 2025



Best wishes and Congratulations! You are soon to be united as husband and wife in the Sacrament of Matrimony. With joy and thanksgiving, the Catholic Church welcomes you to celebrate and solemnize your wedding through your devout participation in worship and prayer.

Your union will be an intimate partnership of life and love. Your commitment, expressed in marriage vows and lived with lifelong generosity, will make God's love visible and present within our parish community. A Catholic marriage is therefore much more than merely a beautiful ceremony. A wedding in our religious tradition is a public act of worship, a public confession of faith, and a Holy Sacrament, instituted by Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.





## **Parish Membership**

Normally, either the bride or the groom must be a member of the Cathedral Parish. Other situations can be evaluated. One person of the wedding couple must be a registered parishioner within the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. We do not permit weddings if neither members are registered to a parish in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Couples must reach out to us.

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## **Wedding Times**

The time for weddings at the Cathedral are on Saturdays at 2:00pm. 2:00pm wedding may have the Church from 1:00pm until 3:45pm and these hours must include everything from set-up to photographs. There can be no receiving lines in the church because of time concerns. Weddings celebrated during Advent and Lent must be in keeping with the solemn nature of those penitential seasons. This means that while weddings are permitted at the Cathedral during these seasons, the wedding celebration will normally be more sedate and solemn in keeping with the penitential nature of the season. This will affect the decorations of the Church as well as the liturgical music.

### **REHEARSAL**

The wedding rehearsal times are ordinarily at 5:00 pm Friday evening.

At the rehearsal, the coordinator will walk through the wedding ceremony. If readers are present, they will practice the readings with our sound system. Our Pastor will likely not be present at the Rehearsal.

Bring your marriage license to the rehearsal so that it will be ready for your wedding day.

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## **Marriage Preparation Process**

The Cathedral follows the Diocesan Marriage Prep Course which can be found on the Diocesan website, labeled under Marriage and Family Ministries. You will have three meetings during the duration of your marriage prep. You will meet with Fr. Francis first, to help you begin your marriage prep course information. Your second meeting will be with Fr. Francis once you finish the course to discuss your experience. Lastly, you will meet with Ivan Miranda to discuss the wedding liturgy, along with any details/forms the couple may need to know.



## **Music**

Please contact the Director of Liturgical Music 3 months prior to your wedding. His name is Michael Dulac and his email address is [mdulac@cathedralfw.org](mailto:mdulac@cathedralfw.org). Our organist and cantors normally assist at all weddings celebrated at the Cathedral. Other qualified musicians may also participate with the approval and under the guidance of the Director of Liturgical Music. No contract with vocalists or instrumentalists may be made without the prior approval of the Music Director.

All Diocesan regulations for music at weddings must be observed.

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## **Clergy**

The priests of the Cathedral are the ordinary celebrants for parish weddings. A Roman Catholic priest or deacon in good standing who is a relative or friend of the couple may also be delegated by the pastor. However, additional paperwork might be required. Concelebrants are always welcome, but notice must be given to Father Francis Chukwuma ahead of the wedding via email, phone call etc. Visiting priests are required to work with the couple for liturgical planning of the wedding ceremony. If a Priest or Deacon are from another Diocese, they must send a letter of suitability, and this can be found on the Diocesan website under the Office of the Vicar General. You may contact the Pastoral Associate [imiranda@cathedralfw.org](mailto:imiranda@cathedralfw.org) with more questions.

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## **Wedding Coordinator**

Ivan Miranda is the Cathedral's parish wedding coordinator director. You may contact him with questions about your wedding at [imiranda@cathedralfw.org](mailto:imiranda@cathedralfw.org). The Cathedral will provide a Wedding Coordinator to be of service to the visiting clergy, e.g., to help at the rehearsal and the wedding. A coordinator from the parish will be assigned for each wedding. The Wedding Coordinator will ensure the proper implementation of our wedding guidelines and, as such, be the representative of the Rector. His or her decision in all matters is final. The Wedding Coordinator will make sure that the Cathedral is open ahead of time and that the facilities are available. He or she will provide directions as well as offer any assistance and any advice requested during the rehearsal. The Wedding Coordinator will serve as sacristan for Mass, setting items needed for Mass to be placed on the credence table. The Wedding Coordinator may be a commissioned Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, together with the priest, distribute Holy Communion to the faithful.



## **Mass or not?**

The Holy Eucharist is the Source and Summit of the Catholic Church. Therefore, weddings celebrated between two Catholics are almost always celebrated in the context of a nuptial Mass. Weddings which take place between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic are often not celebrated within the context of the Mass. The Sacrament of Marriage outside of Mass usually consists of the Liturgy of the Word, the exchange of vows, and then the blessing and dismissal. In order not to draw attention to the disunity that still exists among Christians, it is perhaps preferable not to celebrate a marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic with the Eucharist. This is best determined, however, in consultation with the priest witnessing your marriage. In all cases and at any Mass, however, only Catholics in the state of grace may receive Holy Communion. Marriages between a Catholic and an unbaptized person can only be celebrated without a Mass. We ask you to remind those who are not Catholic to not receive the Holy Eucharist and to either receive a blessing or remain in their pew.

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## **Bride's Room**

The bride and her attendants may dress in the south vestibule found in the back of the Church. We ask the bride & bridesmaids come in with make-up and details already finished. Please be respectful of the Church. We ask you to leave everything clean and orderly.

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## **Photography & Videography**

Photographers are welcome at the rehearsal and wedding ceremony. We ask that photographers try to keep a minimally invasive role. Entrance into the sanctuary is not permitted during the wedding ceremony. No flash photography, the main aisle should be open so that the procession is not hindered, photographers/videographers are not permitted to be in the choir loft/balcony area.



## Church Decorations

Seasonal sanctuary appointments such as sacred images, candle sticks, altar cloths, Advent Wreaths, the Paschal Candle, and other items used in the Liturgy may not be removed or rearranged.

Flower arrangements are allowed in the church with respect to the liturgical norms of the celebration/calendar. Flower arrangements are only allowed to be placed in front of the ambo/cantor stand. Any and all wedding flowers used by the Church in the sanctuary must remain. You are expected to remove any or all flower arrangements which you bring into the Church. Pew bows are allowed if they are not taped or tacked on the pews. Pew candles are not allowed.

The throwing of rice, confetti, bird seed, bubbles, balloons etc is never allowed either inside or outside the church or anywhere on parish property. Flower petals may be used in the procession, but we ask that someone from the family or friends be assigned to clean them after the ceremony. Aisle runners are not allowed at the Cathedral as they can pose tripping hazards.

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## Respect

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception is a church dedicated to the worship, glory and honor of Almighty God. So, we ask you to respect the sacred nature of the space, as well as the ceremony. While this is normally not an issue, it is important to state the following. Consumption of **alcohol, smoking, eating, drinking, gum chewing, or any other inappropriate behavior is not allowed within the precincts of the Church property.** The wedding liturgy is the prayer of the Church, and as such is a formal event. Clothing should be modest and appropriate. Also, gags and jokes will not be permitted. Refusal to cooperate with these rules could cause the cancellation of your wedding. Children are most welcome at the Cathedral. If you plan on having children in the wedding party as ring bearers or flower girls, please be sure to pick children with sufficient maturity to undertake such an important role in this solemn event.



# SUGGESTED FEES AND OFFERINGS:

The Cathedral does not charge fees for the celebration of sacraments. However, we appreciate your freewill offerings. Offerings for the use of the church, the priest celebrant, the organist, and cantor are generally recommended. The following are the normal recommended donations, but these donations are at the discretion of the giver. Offerings may be given to the wedding coordinator at the time of the rehearsal. We take Cash or Check.

The Church: \$250 (The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception)

Priest celebrant: The couple may donate to the priest as they wish.

Organist and cantor: \$300 (made out to Mike Dulac)

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## Document Needed

PRE-NUPTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE: This document determines your “freedom to marry” by asking if there are any legal impediments (according to Church and civil law) to your proposed marriage. You will fill this out with the priest on the first meeting.

AFFIDAVITS: These also acknowledge that both parties are free to marry. Bride and groom are asked to provide two witnesses each to fill out these forms in the presence of a priest or a parish representative. Parents or other family members most often serve as these witnesses. These forms can be filled out at the Cathedral or another Catholic parish.

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE: Please secure a recently issued baptismal certificate for each Catholic party. Certificates or letters for non-Catholic parties do not have to be recently issued. Please be sure to provide the affidavits and baptismal certificates at least one month prior to your wedding date.

OTHER DOCUMENTS: A marriage license issued by Allen County (or your county of residence) must be given to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal. Applications for a license must be made at least 24 hours before a wedding. Any offerings may be given to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal as well.



**\* By signing this document, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agree to abide by the Cathedral Guidelines. Failure to comply may result in the cancellation of your wedding \***

**X**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pastoral Associate or Priest

**Date:**

**X**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bride

**Date:**

**X**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Groom

**Date:**