

Holy Matrimony



We at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church hope that your wedding day will be a wonderful celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony and a day of great joy for you, your families and friends. The guidelines below should assist you in making all the elements of your wedding celebration at St. Elizabeth's a happy one. The information below will give you some idea of what has to be done to prepare for a wedding in the catholic church. The priest assisting you in preparing for your wedding will help you with the details.

How is the church reserved and a wedding date decided?

Please contact the parish office at 636-946-6717 (info@setonscene.org) at least six months prior to your wedding for preparation. Be sure that the church and priest are available for your wedding before you make final plans with others involved in the wedding or reception. Please don't book the hall before you have a firm date with the church. After meeting with the priest or deacon, the date will be confirmed.

When can weddings (and rehearsals) take place at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church?

Weddings are usually held on Friday evenings at any time and on Saturdays between 11:00 AM and 1:30 PM. Due to the regular use of the Church for confessions and Mass we will not begin a wedding any later than 1:30 PM on Saturday.

Although weddings may be held in Advent (the four weeks before Christmas) and Lent (the six weeks before Easter), we discourage weddings during these seasons. According to the liturgical law of the Church, weddings celebrated during Advent or Lent MUST observe the spirit of the season. The spirit of these seasons is a time of preparation marked by a simplicity of life. Weddings during Lent and Advent, therefore, ought to have simpler wedding parties with respect to their number and adornment. The music used at wedding celebrations at this time ought to reflect the character of the season. Whatever decorations have been put up in the

church during Advent or Lent, such as purple banners or advent wreaths, will not be moved or altered; those decorations represent the characteristic of the season for every celebration, including the sacrament of marriage.

The half-hour rehearsal time will be with the wedding party and others involved with the liturgy. **(Any musical rehearsal should take place at another time.)** It should be scheduled based upon the availability of the Church. Priority for scheduling Friday evening rehearsals will always be secondary to the scheduling of weddings on Friday evenings. Out of reverence for Christ present in the tabernacle, appropriate dress and conduct is expected at all times.

What about a Visiting Priest or Deacon?

The priests and deacons of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church ordinarily preside at all weddings; exceptions are made because a member of the family or a very close friend is a priest or deacon from elsewhere. The pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton can grant permission (canonical delegation) for a visiting priest or deacon to preside at a wedding in this parish.

If you desire to invite a non-Catholic clergyman to participate in the wedding liturgy, please speak with the pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton for verification. Non-Catholic clergy are permitted to participate in a Catholic wedding by their presence in the sanctuary, but they cannot preside at the liturgy. This means, among other things, that the Catholic priest or deacon must receive the wedding vows and impart the nuptial blessing.

Does the wedding include Holy Mass?

Weddings between two Catholics may be celebrated within Holy Mass, if both parties and their immediate families are in full communion with the Church and actively practice the faith by attending Sunday Mass.

Weddings between a Catholic and a non-Catholic are usually outside of Holy Mass. Instead, the Marriage Liturgy will include the Entrance and Introductory Rite, Liturgy of the Word (Scripture readings and homily), the Celebration of Matrimony (The Consent, Blessing and Exchange of Rings), Prayer of the Faithful, the Our Father, the Nuptial Blessing and Dismissal and Recessional.

Weddings between a Catholic and an unbaptized person are always outside of Holy Mass.

Who plans the wedding liturgy?

The priest or deacon who will be officiating at your wedding will assist you with the liturgical celebration and choices which are available, including the Scripture readings and prayers.

Who may Lector at our wedding?

The texts of Sacred Scripture are proclaimed from the ambo, and the person who performs this function is called a lector. Most couples choose one or two persons from among their families and friends to fulfill this role at the Liturgy. Those whom you select should be good public speakers and must be at the rehearsal to practice the proclamation in the church; all lectors must be Catholics in full communion with the Church.

Who plans the music?

Jeff Wisniewski (wisniewski@kenrick.edu) is our Music Director. Because the celebration of a wedding is a public liturgical action of the Church, only music which is truly sacred is permitted at weddings. Jeff makes all decisions about the music allowed at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, including permission to invite visiting vocalists and instrumentalists. He will review with each couple the various options which are best suited for your wedding. Jeff should be contacted no later than 2 months prior to your wedding.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton has a list of optional musicians/soloists. You are welcome to hire instrumentalists or singers from outside the parish, but you must speak with Jeff before arranging any outside musicians, whether hired professionals or volunteers from among family or friends. Fees for outside musicians are the responsibility of the bride and groom.

No recorded or automated music is ever permitted at the liturgy for any reason.

Are there any guidelines about the Bridal Gown and Dresses of Bridal Party?

Please remember that your wedding is a sacred and public act of worship taking place in a consecrated place of divine worship. All of your wardrobe selections should reflect the modesty and noble simplicity which the Church expects will characterize every part of the sacred liturgy.

How many Attendants may be in the Wedding?

The bride and groom are permitted up to eight attendants each, including best man and maid/matron of honor (exceptions may be made, but seating may be limited).

What are the various fees for a wedding?

The fees for a wedding at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church include:

(1) Donation to the Church:

Parishioners - \$300 (recommended)

Non-Parishioners - \$500 (required)

(2) Organist - \$225

(3) Cantor - \$125

(4) Altar Servers - \$15 (or more, if desired) cash gift per server, usually two

(5) Donation to the priest or deacon (optional)

The donation to the Church, if by check, should be made payable to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. The fees for the music, if paid by check, should be made to the individual(s). We ask that all the above payments in cash or check be submitted to the Wedding Coordinator before the wedding ceremony.

Couples for whom any fees would be a burden and who can demonstrate financial need are welcome to speak with the pastor about a reduction.

When can the Church be Accessed on Wedding Day?

Access to the Church will be allowed two (2) hours before the ceremony. Please coordinate decorating, dressing and pre-wedding photos to accommodate this restriction.

What about flowers and other decor?

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton welcomes flowers for the sanctuary of the church. The flower arrangements should be designed according to the needs of the sacred liturgy. Floral arrangements left in the church after the ceremony are appreciated.

The wedding party is responsible for making all arrangements for personal flowers, corsages, and boutonnieres to be worn or carried by anyone in the wedding. These should be brought to the church by the wedding party or be delivered to the church by your florist. If the florist delivers the flowers, they can be left in the vestibule on the table at the rear of the church. However, please notify the wedding coordinator of the delivery time.

Please do not affix decorations to any surface in church in a manner that could cause damage (any tape, glue, tacks, wire, etc. are prohibited). Any decorations may be tied with ribbon to the pews.

If needed, reserved pew markers are provided by St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Aisle runners, rice, bird seed, and balloons are not permitted either inside or outside the church at any time.

What about Candles?

The furnishings for the sacred liturgy are provided by the church; this includes all vestments, books, candles and candlesticks, kneelers, chairs, and other elements as needed.

The "Unity Candle," a recent innovation in some worship services, is not a part of the Catholic wedding liturgy of the Catholic Church, and it may not be used at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. The exchange of wedding rings is the symbol of the committed love and fidelity of one to another.

What about Photographs and/or Video?

Before the wedding, photographs or videos may be taken outside the church but NOT inside.

During the wedding, all photographs or videos must be taken from outside the sanctuary. The photographer should be instructed to be as inconspicuous as possible.

Video may be shot during the ceremony, but the videographer must be instructed to pick an inconspicuous spot and to remain stationary throughout the ceremony.

After the wedding, the photographer or videographer may pose the bride and groom inside the sanctuary. The entire wedding party may be posed outside the sanctuary.

All photographs and videos must be completed within 30 minutes of the end of the wedding. St Elizabeth Ann Seton has a strict 3:30 p.m. cut-off on Saturdays to allow for our parish sacramental schedule.

Where is the Bride's Room and Groom's Room?

The Memorare Room is on the lower level inside St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church. The bride and her attendants may use this room to dress. Please note, to avoid lost or stolen items, the bride may want to consider providing shopping bags for each attendant, and all personal belongings (shoes, clothes, makeup, etc.) could be locked in the trunk of a vehicle before the wedding begins.

The groom and groomsmen may meet in the Cry Room on the main level of the Church on the left, just past the restrooms.

What is the seating arrangement for the Bridal party?

Usually, the bride and groom kneel in the center of the sanctuary. On either side is a kneeler for the maid/matron of honor and the best man. If desired, chairs can be available for these four individuals to be seated. Please inform the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal.

Members of the bridal party will be seated to the far right and far left of the sanctuary. The first row of pews at center right and left will be reserved for the parents/grandparents.

What provisions are available for Handicapped Guests?

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church is handicapped accessible with automated doors facing the main church parking lot. Handicapped seating is also available. Please inform the Wedding Coordinator of guests with special needs.

Where are the Restrooms?

Restrooms are available in the vestibule of the Church. There are also restrooms available in the Church basement.

What about Food, Smoking, and Alcohol?

No food or drink (except water) is permitted in the church before, during, or after the wedding and rehearsal. Smoking and the use of chewing gum are also prohibited on the campus of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton at all times.

The wedding party is expected to refrain from using any alcoholic beverages (no open containers of alcohol) both before the rehearsal and the wedding. The priest or deacon celebrating the wedding reserves the right to remove from the church anyone under the influence of alcohol. Please remind everyone in the wedding party to preserve the sacred character of this event by not abusing alcohol.

Order of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony

Procession

Introductory Rites (*including* Gloria)

The Liturgy of the Word

Old Testament Reading

Responsorial Psalm

New Testament Reading

Gospel

The Celebration of Matrimony

Questions before the Consent

The Consent (Wedding vows)

Reception of the Consent by the priest (or deacon)

Blessing and Giving of Rings

The Prayer of the Faithful

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Nuptial Blessing (*after the* Our Father)

Reception of Holy Communion

[Presentation to Blessed Virgin Mary]

Recessional

