



**PARISH WEDDING GUIDELINES**

Congratulations! We are delighted that you have chosen to celebrate your wedding at St. Leonard Catholic Church.

Planning a wedding is an exciting endeavor, but it is important to remember that the wedding liturgy is first and foremost a sacrament and an opportunity to offer praise and thanks to God. The information in this document will help you to better understand the policies that govern the wedding preparation process at St. Leonard.

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### **CLERGY**

There are three clergy at St. Leonard Parish who witness the Sacrament of Matrimony:

Fr. Pat O'Loughlin, Pastor    [frpatoloughlin@stleonards.org](mailto:frpatoloughlin@stleonards.org)    262-679-1773

Rick Wirch, Deacon    [wirchr@archmil.org](mailto:wirchr@archmil.org)    262-679-4882

Larry Ramsey, Deacon    [LarryRamsey12@yahoo.com](mailto:LarryRamsey12@yahoo.com)    414-550-6039

A. A visiting priest or deacon may preside at your marriage service. Please discuss this option with the pastor before consulting with the priest or deacon you have in mind. If the priest or deacon is from outside the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, they must provide a letter of suitability from their Superior or diocese.

### **DAYS, DATES AND TIMES**

A. Weddings are normally scheduled on Saturdays at 1:30pm.

B. Weddings may be scheduled on other weekdays depending upon availability of the church facilities, staff, and clergy.

C. Weddings are not scheduled for Sundays.

D. Weddings are not scheduled on national holidays or holy days of obligation.

### **PREPARATION TIMELINE**

A. Call the parish office (262-679-1773) as soon as possible after your engagement has been announced to discuss possible wedding dates. **DO NOT** book a reception venue before confirming a wedding date with the pastor.

B. Meet with the pastor to:

1. determine whether you are eligible to be married in the Catholic Church
2. consider whether a wedding Mass or a wedding ritual is appropriate
3. confirm (if possible) the date and time of the wedding and to designate a priest or deacon to preside
4. inform you of the policies of the Church and of the parish regarding your wedding ceremony
5. provide you with information about the required marriage enrichment and FOCCUS program requirements
6. supply you with resources for planning your wedding liturgy (i.e., Together for Life)

**NOTE:** If either the bride or groom has been married previously and has not been granted an annulment by the Catholic Church, see the priest immediately.

**A wedding date cannot be set if an annulment is needed.**

C. Meet with a FOCCUS facilitator couple (*this will be arranged 6-7 months prior to wedding date by the parish Pastoral Associate*)

1. The assigned FOCCUS facilitator couple will contact you to schedule a series of required meetings.

D. Complete the Archdiocese of Milwaukee Online Marriage Preparation Conference Enrichment Program for the Engaged as soon as possible (the Archdiocese recommends that you register six to twelve months before your wedding date). To register, go here: <https://www.archmil.org/MarriagePreparation> and scroll down to **Step 2 - Sign up for the Archdiocesan Online Marriage Preparation Conference.**

E. Select scripture and prayer options for the wedding liturgy from *Together for Life*.

F. Meet with the parish Director of Music to select music for the wedding liturgy (*at least three months before the wedding*).

G. Contact the priest/deacon who will preside at your wedding for a final planning session (*about 2-3 months before your wedding*).

H. Attend the wedding rehearsal (*usually the evening before the wedding ceremony at either 5 pm or 6 pm ~ your choice*)

**DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BEFORE THE WEDDING CEREMONY**

A. As soon as possible, the bride and groom must each obtain a copy of a newly issued **baptismal certificate** that has been issued within the last six months. *An original baptismal certificate or an older copy will not suffice. A new baptismal certificate* may be obtained, usually at no cost, by calling the church of baptism and requesting a baptismal certificate for purposes of marriage. This certificate should be mailed directly to St. Leonard.

B. **Catholic Church documents** concerning any previous marriages. C. A **certificate** documenting completion of the *Marriage Enrichment Program*. D. A **report** issued to the pastor from the FOCCUS facilitator couple.

E. The **signature page** (final page of this packet), signed by both the bride and groom and returned to the pastor.

F. **Marriage license:** Call the Waukesha County Registrar of Deeds if you have any questions. There is a one-month window of time to get your license before the wedding. *Bring your license to the rehearsal.*

### **LITURGICAL GUIDELINES**

A. Your wedding ceremony can include the celebration of the Eucharist (full Mass), or it can take place without the Eucharist (ritual).

A wedding without the Eucharist is recommended, especially if:

1. The bride and groom are from different religious traditions.
2. Many of the wedding guests are not Catholic and would have difficulty participating in the liturgy (*non-Catholics cannot receive the Eucharist*).
3. The bride and groom have not attended weekly Mass in a long time.

B. Liturgical ministers for a wedding ceremony that **does not include the Eucharist**

1. A priest or deacon may preside at a wedding ceremony without the Eucharist. Priests or deacons from outside the parish may celebrate your marriage service; however, you should discuss this option with the St. Leonard pastor before consulting with the priest or deacon you have in mind.
2. One to three readers (*who are comfortable with public speaking*) to proclaim the scripture readings and prayers of the faithful.
3. Two ushers (*men or women*). See page 10 for more details on the usher's role.

C. Liturgical ministers for a wedding ceremony that **includes the Eucharist (full Mass)**

1. A priest from outside the parish may preside or concelebrate at your wedding Mass. Please discuss this option with the St. Leonard pastor before consulting with the priest you have in mind.
2. One to three readers (*who are comfortable with public speaking*) to proclaim the scripture readings and prayers of the faithful.
3. Two ushers (*men or women*). See page 10 for more details on the usher's role.
4. Two gift bearers to bring the bread and wine to the altar.
5. One or two practicing Catholics who have been Confirmed to help distribute Communion.

D. Church facilities

1. Our bride's room is in the Gathering Space and available for use.
2. The church is normally opened 90 minutes before the wedding ceremony.

E. Decorations in the church

1. Floral arrangements and decorations should not be placed on the altar and must not distract or obstruct the view of the wedding service.
2. Parish decorations in the church should not be moved or displaced. 3. Aisle runners are strongly discouraged.
4. Bows and/or flowers may be attached to the ends of the pews but must be removed after the ceremony. Care must be taken to ensure that the finish on the pews is not marred. Adhesives such as tape are not allowed for this reason.

F. Wedding rehearsal

1. The wedding rehearsal should precede the rehearsal dinner (*if there is one*). 2. The following people should attend the wedding rehearsal:

- a. Bride and groom
- b. Parents and/or stepparents of the bride/groom
- c. Best man and maid (matron) of honor
- d. Groomsmen and bridesmaids
- e. Ushers
- f. Flower girls and/or ring bearers
- g. Readers
- h. Communion ministers

3. Please bring the following items with you to the wedding rehearsal:

1. The marriage license
2. The wedding program (See **Musical Guidelines** pages 6-7 for more details)
3. The Unity Candle (*if you wish to use one*)

o **NOTE:** St. Leonard does not provide unity candles.

G. Additional Notes

1. Wedding consultants are welcome; however, they are not allowed to change or alter any elements of the wedding liturgy.
2. St. Leonard provides two volunteer wedding coordinators to assist with your wedding ceremony and rehearsal.

## **MUSICAL GUIDELINES**

### **A. Choice of musicians**

1. St. Leonard employs a musician who is trained and competent in liturgical music. All weddings must use the services of the parish Director of Music.
2. If desired, you may request that family members or friends participate in your wedding as musicians; however, they must be approved and directed by the parish Director of Music.
3. St. Leonard Congregation can provide a variety of qualified musicians to assist with your wedding, including vocalists (cantors) and instrumentalists (guitar, flute, etc.) from our parish's music ministries (subject to availability).
4. You are responsible for compensating any additional musicians or vocalists outside of the parish Director of Music.
  - a. A fee of \$75 per parish musician should be submitted to the Director of Music no later than one week prior to your wedding date.
  - b. Compensation for family/friend musicians is provided at the discretion of the couple.

### **B. Choice of music**

1. After you have selected the scripture readings and prayers for your wedding liturgy (see **Preparation Timeline** (F), page 3), you should meet with the parish musician to discuss your choice of music. **You must meet with the St. Leonard Director of Music at least three (3) months prior to your wedding date.**
2. There are many songs available in both traditional and contemporary styles, but all musical selections must respect the sacred nature of the sacrament being celebrated and must not distract from the ceremony. Songs containing vulgarity or references to sex, drugs, alcohol, etc. will not be permitted.
3. Pre-recorded music is **not** allowed at any point in the wedding ceremony.

### **C. Orders of worship / wedding programs**

1. St. Leonard employs the use of projection screens to display the readings, songs, and prayer responses used in the wedding ceremony. Therefore, a printed order of worship or program is not required.

2. If you wish to make a program, the Director of Music will help you construct the appropriate format. The program must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Music and presiding priest/deacon **prior to printing. You are responsible for all printing.**

3. Copies of the program should be brought to the wedding rehearsal.

### **Wedding Music Selection Notes**

**Preludes (3)** – Pre-ceremony music as guests are seated. 15 minutes prior to service. ■

Note: Parents, grandparents, etc. will be ushered in during the last prelude.

**Processional (Bridal Party)** – Covers clergy and bridal party's entrance.

**Processional (Bride)** – Covers bride's entrance.

**Responsorial Psalm** – Sung between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> readings. Led by cantor/accompanist.

**Gospel Acclamation** – Sung prior to reading of Gospel.

1. Suggested: "Celtic Alleluia" – Christopher Walker

**Unity Candle (Optional)** – Background music while candle is lit (*usually 30-60 seconds*).

**Presentation of Gifts** – Sung hymn during preparation of gifts and altar (*Full Mass only*)

**Mass Parts**- Sung acclamations during Eucharistic Prayer (*Full Mass only*)

1. Suggested: "Mass of Creation" – Marty Haugen

**Communion**- Sung hymn during the distribution of Holy Communion (*Full Mass only*)

**Ave Maria (Optional)** – Sung after Communion while the couple presents flowers to the Holy Family statue.

**Recessional**- Covers exit of wedding party and congregation.

**Bryan Staedler, Director of Music**

**Email\*: [bryan.staedler@stleonards.org](mailto:bryan.staedler@stleonards.org)**

**Phone: (262) 679-1773 ext. 27**

**\*Email is preferred method of contact**

## **GENERAL ETIQUETTE**

A. All guests and participants in the wedding liturgy should exercise appropriate behavior in the church for both the wedding rehearsal and ceremony. Because

B. St. Leonard is a place of worship where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved, so the conduct and attire of the wedding party and guests should reflect the sacredness of this space.

### 1. Conduct

- a. There should be no shouting, loud noise, or improper conduct on church grounds or inside St. Leonard.
- b. Food and beverages are not allowed in the church.
- c. Smoking is not allowed on the church property.
- d. Alcohol may not be consumed on the church property (*including the parking lot*) at any time before, during, or after the wedding rehearsal or ceremony. **Failure to observe this policy may result in the postponement or cancellation of the wedding ceremony.**
- e. Lack of sobriety by any guest or member of the wedding party will not be tolerated. Intoxicated individuals will be asked to leave the premises, and the wedding will not continue until the individual has left.
- f. Except for certified service animals, animals are not allowed in the church.
- g. Rice, confetti, etc. may not be thrown at any time.
- h. Photographs and videography should not distract or hinder the action of the wedding ceremony. Professional photographers and videographers must follow the **Guidelines for Photography and Video Recording** in this packet.

### 2. Dress Code:

- a. The Church does not provide specific guidelines for how couples (*or the rest of the wedding party*) should dress for weddings; however, common sense should be applied when considering wedding attire. Avoid clothing that will distract from the liturgy.
- b. Out of respect for the Sacrament, **very low-cut or revealing outfits should be avoided.**



c. Arriving in robes, night gowns, petticoats, etc. on the grounds of St. Leonard is not allowed.

### **GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING**

*A copy of these guidelines should be given to your photographer and/or videographer.*

A. Saturday weddings are typically scheduled to begin at 1:30pm. The church building will be open 90 minutes prior to the service.

B. We ask that the church space be vacated no later than 3:30pm to allow confessions and preparation for the 5pm weekend Mass to take place. This means that all post-wedding photography must be complete, and all personal items must be removed from the church by 3:30 PM.

C. A prayerful atmosphere must be maintained during the wedding liturgy. Therefore:

1. All decisions regarding the use of photography during the wedding liturgy are subject to the approval of the priest or deacon who will celebrate the wedding.
2. Photographers and videographers are expected to act in a professional and courteous manner. Care must be taken to prevent distractions or obstruction of view during the wedding liturgy.
3. Photographers and videographers are not allowed in the sanctuary (*raised altar area*) or the musician's area during the liturgy.
4. Moving or climbing on any church furniture (*especially the altar*) is strictly forbidden.
5. Flash photography is **not** allowed during the wedding liturgy. Flash photography may only be used during the entrance procession and recessional, or before/after the wedding ceremony.
6. Photographers and video recorders may not signal, direct, stop, or alter the flow of people processing into or out of the church.
7. All posed pictures should reflect a basic respect for the church as a house of prayer. Distasteful or disrespectful photographs will not be tolerated.
8. Photographers and videographers are welcome to attend the wedding rehearsal if they have any questions regarding these guidelines.

### **USHER DUTIES**

#### A. Duties before the wedding liturgy:

1. Arrive at church at least 30 minutes before the liturgy.
2. Place copies of the wedding program (*if there is one*) where the wedding party will be seated.
3. Greet guests in the Gathering Space and direct them to the pews while distributing copies of the program.
4. Formally seat select relatives immediately before the processional.
5. Do not prop outer doors open on hot days, since this diminishes the effectiveness of the air conditioner.

#### B. Duties during the wedding liturgy:

1. Remain present in the main church, near the doors. Watch for latecomers and assist them in finding a seat if necessary.
2. Direct guests to the restrooms and water fountains as necessary.
3. Offer appropriate help if someone should become sick.
4. Formally usher guests out of their pews after the wedding party has processed out.

#### C. Duties after the wedding liturgy:

1. Return all chairs, kneelers, tables, etc. to their places.
2. Check the aisles and pews and remove any trash (Kleenex, wedding programs, etc.).

### **PARISH MEMBERSHIP AFTER YOUR WEDDING**

A. We encourage you to join a parish near your residence after your wedding. The staff of St. Leonard Parish can help you determine the name, address, and phone number of that parish.

B. You are most welcome to remain members of St. Leonard. If desired, you will be asked to fill out a parish census form as a new family! Please call the parish office and let us know your plans for parish membership.

**WEDDING FEE**

A. The suggested donation is \$400, made payable to St. Leonard.

1. The Church will **never** refuse a wedding because of financial constraints. If you are experiencing financial hardship, please discuss with the pastor.

**B. NOTES:**

1. The parish wedding fee covers the stipends for the celebrant and Director of Music, as well as facility usage.

2. If additional clergy or family/friend musicians are asked to participate in the wedding ceremony, compensation is provided at the couple’s discretion.

3. If parish musicians (*not including the Director of Music*) are asked to participate in the wedding ceremony, a fee of \$75 **per musician** should be submitted to the parish Director of Music no later than one week prior to your wedding.

**Thank you! Congratulations and blessings  
to you as you start your new life together.**

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**I have read and agree to abide by the policies  
on pages 1 – 11 of this packet.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
***Bride Signature Date***

\_\_\_\_\_  
***Groom Signature Date***