



## GETTING MARRIED AT ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS

We encourage you to read through this document in preparation for your wedding celebration at St. John of the Cross Parish. We have tried to answer most of your questions, however, please feel free to contact us at the [Parish Center at 708-246-4404](tel:708-246-4404) if we can be of any assistance.

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Altar Servers	3
Documents	5
Facilities	2
Fees and Offerings	3
Flowers and Decorations	7
Guest Deacons	2
Guest Priests and ministers	2
Handicapped Accessibility	2
Handicapped Parking	2
Parking	2
Marriage License	5
Marriage Preparation/Pre Cana	8-9
Music for your Wedding	10-11
Planning Timeline	4
Photography	6
Rehearsal Information	3
Sample Wedding Ceremony Program	13
Sample Wedding Mass Program	12
Safety Concerns	7
Videography	6
Wedding Coordinators	3
Wedding Times	2
Witnesses	3

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### WEDDING TIMES

Weddings at Saint John of the Cross Parish are celebrated primarily on Saturdays\* and are at 2:00pm or earlier. It is very important that weddings begin promptly to allow sufficient time to celebrate the liturgy which you are planning. In addition, time will be allowed following your wedding for photographs at the altar. (*\*While we are occasionally able to accommodate weddings on Friday evenings, we are not able to accommodate Sunday weddings.*)

### FACILITIES

St. John of the Cross Church has a seating capacity of approximately 800 and is fully air conditioned in the summer. In addition there is a gathering room in the church for the bride and bridesmaids and the sacristy area is available for the groom and groomsmen. These gathering areas are available for your use 30 minutes before your wedding. For your convenience, restrooms are situated near both gathering areas.

### HANDICAP ACCESSIBILITY AND PARKING

Saint John of the Cross Church is handicapped accessible from all its entrances. In addition, the entrance on the north end of the church nearest to Caroline Avenue has a push-button automatic door. A specially designated area for handicapped parking is located at the north end of the church, immediately adjacent to the building. **We kindly ask that limousines and buses not park in the handicap parking lot.**

### GENERAL PARKING

Our parking lot is quite large and can accommodate all of your parking needs. Your guests are welcome to use our church parking lots while attending your wedding. The lots are accessible from Wolf Road and Caroline Avenue. **Limousines and buses are asked to remain in the General Parking area when not making a drop-off or pick-up.**

### GUEST PRIESTS/DEACONS AND VISITING MINISTERS

Priests or deacons from other Catholic churches or ministers from other denominations are welcome to participate in your wedding celebration. Visiting priests (or deacons) who will preside at your wedding are invited to be present at the wedding rehearsal. Please inform us as soon as possible if a guest priest/deacon will celebrate your wedding or if a visiting minister will be present.

## **WITNESSES**

Two witnesses are required.

## **ALTAR SERVERS**

2 altar servers will be provided for your wedding. It is customary that a monetary stipend of \$10 - \$15 be given to each altar server by the Best Man at the end of the wedding.

## **WEDDING COORDINATORS**

St. John of the Cross Parish has established a ministry of wedding coordinators who will be present with you as you celebrate your wedding. Our coordinators are extensively trained to assist you. They will conduct your wedding rehearsal and on the day of your wedding be present to assist with all of the details of your wedding liturgy. **Photographers, videographers and florists should check in with the coordinators when they arrive.** *(Our guidelines and policies are given in this document. Please provide a copy of them to your photographers, videographers and florists.)*

## **YOUR WEDDING REHEARSAL**

Your wedding rehearsal is usually held the evening before your wedding and is an important part of its preparation. The rehearsal allows members of your immediate wedding party to become familiar with the church environment and with the public roles they will assume as part of the liturgy. The rehearsal will be conducted by two of our wedding coordinators. One of the coordinators will contact you the week before your rehearsal to discuss the specifics of your wedding liturgy and to answer any questions you might have. Please make sure that all the members of your wedding party (including children) are present for the rehearsal and that they arrive 10 minutes prior to the starting time of the rehearsal. The lectors (readers) and gift-bearers for your wedding should also be in attendance. Musicians are not normally present at the wedding rehearsal. The rehearsal will run approximately 1 hour. **Please call the Parish Center to schedule your rehearsal.**

## **WEDDING OFFERINGS/ FEES**

The offering for a wedding at St. John of the Cross is \$400 for parishioners and their daughters/sons. The church offering helps to defray the operation of the church building, set-up and clean-up of the facilities before and after your wedding, and other details. Financial limitations should not prevent a couple from celebrating a marriage in the Church so please contact one of the Parish Priests if finances are an issue. No part of the church offering is given as a stipend to the priest/deacon at your wedding. Those wishing to give a separate gift may do so. Fees are due one week before your wedding and can be sent to the Parish Center or paid online [here](#).

Fees for musicians are in addition to the wedding offering and can be found on the link [Your Wedding Music](#).

## PLANNING TIMELINE

1. Contact St. John of the Cross at least 6 months before your proposed wedding date to schedule an appointment with one of the parish priests. We suggest that you contact us as far in advance as possible and before you make other wedding plans. As part of your initial meeting, the priest will need to determine your freedom to be married in the Church. Freedom to be married in the Catholic Church is determined in part by the Baptismal status of the couple (at least one party must be a Catholic) and that neither the bride nor the groom is in a current marriage or has unresolved matters from a previous marriage.
2. If at the conclusion of your initial meeting with one of our priests it is determined that you are free to be married, your wedding date will be set. Wedding dates can be set through the next calendar year.
3. Generally, the parish priest/deacon with whom you meet at your initial meeting will be assigned to assist with your preparation. You may request a specific priest/deacon if you wish or invite a personal friend or family member who is a priest/deacon to officiate. The priest/deacon who will be arranging your wedding will help you begin to acquire the documents which will be needed for the official paperwork, help you to choose the most appropriate Pre-Cana for you to attend, give you information for completing an online Catholic Couple Checkup (See pages 8-9-) and set the timeline for your subsequent meetings.
4. After you have met with the priest/deacon arranging your wedding, call and schedule your Pre-Cana – either our PROMISE Pre-Cana or a Pre-Cana program offered by the Archdiocese of Chicago. (See page 8)
5. If either the bride or groom are Catholic and have not been confirmed, they should if at all possible attend an Adult Confirmation class and be confirmed prior to the wedding. The priest/deacon arranging your wedding can help you with this process. Information is also available about the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for brides or grooms who wish to become Catholic or who were baptized Catholic but have not completed the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation.
6. At least 5-9 months before your wedding, contact our Music Director, Jessica Koch to begin arrangements for the music for your wedding. Information on music planning can be found on the link [Your Wedding Music](#).

## WEDDING DOCUMENTS

The following wedding documents are necessary:

1. A **Baptismal Certificate\*** *less than six months old* must be submitted by each Catholic party. Non-Catholic parties are also asked to bring a record of Baptism.
2. **Two (2) Witness Affidavits** each for the bride and groom may be required which testify to baptismal status and the freedom to marry. Affidavit forms will be provided to you.
3. An official Canonical Document, the **Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire** will be completed privately with the bride, groom, and priest or deacon arranging your wedding.
4. A **Marriage Preparation Certificate** is to be submitted prior to the rehearsal date. You will receive a certificate after completing a Pre-Cana program.
5. A **Marriage License** from **Cook County** is to be presented at your rehearsal or at your final meeting with the priest/deacon celebrating your wedding.

*(\*To obtain a currently dated baptismal certificate, contact the church where you were baptized. If the church of baptism has been closed, contact the Archdiocese of Chicago Joseph Cardinal Bernardin Archives and Records Center at (312)534-4400, or <http://archives.archchicago.org/>*

**PLEASE COPY THIS PAGE  
AND DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER**

**PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPING**

Your wedding is a sacred celebration. All photographers and videographers, amateur and professional, are asked to show reverence for the celebration and the building in which it takes place. We ask that the following guidelines be observed.

- **All photographers and videographers should check in with the parish wedding coordinators before the wedding to review the guidelines and polices.**
- Flash photography and additional videotape lighting may be used during the entrance procession, the recession and during the presentation of flowers to the Blessed Mother. **Flash photography and additional lighting may not be used during the liturgy itself.**
- Videotape equipment must be unobtrusive and its placement will be determined in consultation with the wedding coordinators.
- Photographers and videographers and their equipment are not permitted within the tiled area around the Baptismal font, piano and organ. No equipment may be placed in proximity of this area that will obstruct the view between the musicians and the main altar. Additionally no equipment is to be set immediately behind the piano or organ bench.
- Except for the recession, videotape equipment must remain stationary.
- Taping or attaching microphones or any other audio/video equipment may damage church furnishings and therefore is not allowed.
- At all times photographers and videographers are cautioned against marring furniture by standing or placing camera equipment on the pews or other church furnishings.
- Time exposures may be made from the back of church during the celebration provided there is no noise or other distraction.
- Following the celebration, the wedding party may return for pictures. Flash and other lighting equipment may be used at that time.
- We remind you that photographs for the 1:00 p.m. wedding need to be completed by 2:30 p.m. and for the 3:00 p.m. wedding by 4:30 p.m. Please be aware that if your wedding starts late, the subsequent picture-taking time will be shortened accordingly.

**PLEASE COPY THIS PAGE  
AND DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR FLORIST**

**FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS**

In addition to flowers worn or carried by those in the wedding party, you may wish to place other floral arrangements in the church. When making preparations with your florist, please observe the following guidelines:

- **Florists should check in with the parish wedding coordinators before the wedding to review the guidelines and polices.**
- Floral arrangements may be placed near the altar platform, but may never be placed on the altar table itself.
- Low rise stands, vases or baskets are permitted on the floor in front of the altar provided floral arrangements are below the height of the altar table .
- If taller stands are to be used for floral arrangements, they must be placed toward the back of the altar platform so that sight lines between priest, cantor, lectors and congregation may be preserved. Your florist must supply any stands or pedestals.
- For safety reasons, the use of additional candles/candle stands (other than the Unity Candle – see below) is not permitted.
- Flower petals also pose a safety hazard and therefore are not permitted to be dispersed in or around the church.
- **Decorations may not be attached to the pews or other furniture by pinning, gluing, nailing, tacking, taping or stapling.** Decorations may be attached using elastic bands.
- There are 19 pews along the main aisle of the church.
- At the conclusion of your wedding, please remember to take those floral arrangements with you that you wish to keep.
- A cloth runner which extends the length of the main aisle will be provided by the church if desired. Only this heavy cloth runner (non-disposable) is permitted.
- **Depending on the time of year in which your wedding takes place, there may be church decorations already in place on the altar platform. These church decorations may not be moved or removed.**
- The altar candles and other furnishings in the altar area may not be moved or removed.

**SAFETY CONCERNS**

Rice, birdseed and flower petals are not permitted to be thrown in or around the church due to the safety hazards they pose. In addition, helium balloons are not permitted in the church and pose a risk to wildlife. We ask that you please refrain from their use as

well.

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

In your first meeting with the priest he will explain our 2 step marriage preparation process.

- Your completion of a *Catholic Couple Checkup*
- Your participation in a *Pre-Marital Preparation Program* called Promise or another Pre-Cana program in the archdiocese. (This is a requirement of the Church.)

Both programs are designed to deepen your awareness of the challenges of living together in Christian marriage.

As part of your marriage preparation, couples being married at St. John of the Cross are asked to take a *Catholic Couple Checkup*. The Checkup is an online relationship assessment that automatically tailors the content of the inventory to match the stage (dating, engaged, married) and structure (cohabiting, children, blended family, etc.) of a couple's relationship. The Couple Checkup is based on content from the widely used Prepare/Enrich program developed from 30 years of research at the University of Minnesota. These relationship inventories have been used by over 3 million couples around the world. This inventory compares and contrasts responses from both partners and categorizes the results into helpful categories and topics for discussion. The Checkup will help you identify your strengths and growth areas in your relationship, increase dialogue and motivate lasting behavior change.

Before you begin here are some *helpful tips*:

- Work separately as you complete the Couple checkup. Be open and honest with your responses to the inventory.
- Once you are both finished, you can print your Couple Report. Start by identifying and reviewing your relationship strengths as well as growth areas.
- Use the Discussion Guide along with your Couple Checkup Report to discuss your results and begin practicing new skills. Take about 30 minutes per day to discuss a topic and complete an exercise from the Discussion Guide.

### Getting Started

**First Person** clicks "Get Started" [here](#)

Step 1: Review / Accept the Terms and Conditions

Step 2: Enter your First Names, Emails, and a single Password

Step 3: Enter your payment. The cost is \$29.99 per couple.

Step 4: Save a copy of your Account Information: account number and password

Step 5: Complete your Couple Checkup

**Second Person** clicks "Login" [here](#)

Step 1: Enter the Account Number and Password received via email

Step 2: Complete your Couple Checkup

Step 3: Click View Results to open, save and print your report

Step 4: Print a Discussion Guide



### Your Results

You will receive your results soon after you both complete the inventory. Please send a copy of your results to your priest at St. John of the Cross. Father will then follow up with you.

Rev. Marc Reszel: [mreszel@stjohnofthecross.org](mailto:mreszel@stjohnofthecross.org)

Rev. Peter Galek: [pgalek@stjohnofthecross.org](mailto:pgalek@stjohnofthecross.org)

Rev. William Vollmer: [bvollmer@stjohnofthecross.org](mailto:bvollmer@stjohnofthecross.org)

A second part of your marriage preparation is to take part in a Pre-Cana program. At St. John of the Cross Parish our program is call Promise. The archdiocese also offers other Pre-Cana programs. Your priest will help you choose the best program for you to attend.

### Promise

Promise is the Pre-Cana or marriage preparation program offered at St. John of the Cross. The Promise Team is made up of married couple from the Parish. They lead engaged couples and share their experiences through discussions, exercises and presentations on the many facets of married life. Topics covered include: Expectations of Marriage, Communication, Dealing with Conflict, Finance, Sexuality, Children, In-Laws, and Marriage as a Sacrament.

### Upcoming Sessions:

The 2019 session has already been held. Please see the Family Ministries link below for information of the Pre-Cana program offered by the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Contact: Kerry Sheehan

708-246-1589

[Kerry\\_mulvaney@hotmail.com](mailto:Kerry_mulvaney@hotmail.com)

### Archdiocesan Pre-Cana Programs

In addition to our PROMISE Pre-Cana, the Archdiocese of Chicago offers other Pre-Cana programs. If you are unable to attend our parish program, you should discuss this with the priest/deacon who is assisting in your preparation. He will be able to guide you toward the best program for you to attend. Further information is available at <https://www.familyministries.org> or by calling (312) 751-8201.

## MUSIC FOR YOUR WEDDING

Jessica Koch

Director of Music Ministries

[jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org](mailto:jkoch@stjohnofthecross.org)

### Music Planning

Music is an essential part of the Roman Catholic tradition. When well-planned, music can help you to set the perfect mood and evoke powerful emotions. Jessica Koch, Director of Music Ministries at St. John of the Cross Parish, is the organist/pianist for all weddings in our parish, and she will help you to choose appropriate music selection for your special day. The emphasis must be on sacred and liturgical music – music based on scriptural sources which focus on the union of the couple within the context of the family of Christ.

Couples are urged to meet with the Director of Music 4-6 months before their wedding date. Before this meeting, it is suggested that you listen to some of the suggested selections for [Your Wedding Music](#) – most of which are available on iTunes or YouTube. The suggestions listed represent some of the best and most popular music for weddings. If you have musical desires that are not listed, please let the Director of Music Ministries know as early as possible to ensure that your requests find a liturgically appropriate place and that printed music is available.

When they meet with Director of Music Ministries, the bride and groom (and sometimes an additional family member or friend who wishes to take part) will discuss their musical desires with the Director of Music Ministries and finalize their music plans. At that time, the Director of Music Ministries can play some music for you, help you make decisions about instruments that would complement your selections, and answer any musical questions you might have.

### Organ and/or Piano

St. John of the Cross Parish boasts a wonderful pipe organ and a very high quality grand piano, placed in close proximity to one another in the church. Generally, the organist/pianist for weddings will move from one instrument to the other at their discretion, as dictated by the style of each piece of music. If you have preference for the sound of one instrument over the other, please let the Director of Music Ministries know at the time of your planning.

## **The Cantor**

In addition to an organist/pianist, every wedding will need an experienced cantor to lead the sung portions of the liturgy. There are a number of fine cantors/soloists on staff who are available to sing for weddings at St. John of the Cross. You may opt to use more than one singer at your wedding, as vocal duets and harmonies can be especially beautiful embellishments to your wedding music.

## **Outside Musicians/Additional Fees**

Should you have a strong preference for a cantor other than one of those on staff with St. John of the Cross parish, please consult the Director of Music Ministries as early as possible and before formally hiring anyone to ascertain the individual's skills and qualifications in leading Roman Catholic sung prayer. If a family member or friend will be singing for your wedding, he or she must make arrangements to rehearse with Jessica before the day of the wedding. Anyone without prior experience as a cantor in a Roman Catholic parish will be limited to singing one song. In the case of an outside cantor, an extra rehearsal will be required before the day of the wedding and the couple will be responsible for an extra rehearsal fee of \$50.00 to the Director of Music in addition to any fees their cantor may charge.

## **Additional Instrumentalists**

The Director of Music Ministries is happy to secure the services of one or more skilled and professional musicians (e.g. flute, trumpet, violin, cello, or harp) to enhance your wedding celebration according to your desires. Although piano and organ alone are beautifully simple, you may need other instruments to recreate the music in the same way you may have heard on a recording. These musicians are all independent contractors, and they set their own fees, ranging approximately \$200-250.

## **SAMPLE PROGRAM FOR WEDDING MASS**

PRELUDE

### **INTRODUCTORY RITE**

PROCESSIONAL

*music title & composer*

[OPENING HYMN]

*music title & composer*

GREETING

OPENING PRAYER

### **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

FIRST READING

*scriptural reference*

PSALM RESPONSE (cantor first, then all)

*text of psalm refrain & composer*

SECOND READING

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (cantor first, then all)

*Alleluia/Lenten acclamation*

GOSPEL

*scriptural*

*reference*

HOMILY

### **RITE OF MARRIAGE**

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS

[LIGHTING OF THE UNITY CANDLE]

*music title & composer*

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

### **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

PREPARATION OF THE EUCHARISTIC GIFTS

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

ACCLAMATIONS (sung by all)

*title of Mass setting & composer*

LORD'S PRAYER

NUPTIAL BLESSING

SIGN OF PEACE

LAMB OF GOD (repeat after cantor)

*title of Mass setting & composer*

COMMUNION

*music title & composer*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

[PRESENTATION TO

*music title & composer*

THE BLESSED MOTHER]

**CONCLUDING RITE**

FINAL BLESSING AND DISMISSAL  
RECESSIONAL

*music title & composer*

**SAMPLE PROGRAM FOR WEDDING CEREMONY**

PRELUDE

**INTRODUCTORY RITE**

PROCESSIONAL

*music title &*

*composer*

[OPENING HYMN]

*music title &*

*composer*

GREETING

OPENING PRAYER

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

FIRST READING

*scriptural reference*

PSALM RESPONSE (cantor first, then all)

*text of psalm refrain & composer*

SECOND READING

*scriptural reference*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (cantor first, then all)

*Alleluia/Lenten acclamation*

GOSPEL

*scriptural*

*reference*

HOMILY

**RITE OF MARRIAGE**

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS

[LIGHTING OF THE UNITY CANDLE]

*music title & composer*

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

LORD'S PRAYER

NUPTIAL BLESSING

GREETING OF PEACE

[PRESENTATION TO  
*composer*

*music title &*

TO THE BLESSED MOTHER]

**CONCLUDING RITE**  
FINAL BLESSING AND DISMISSAL  
RECESSIONAL  
*composer*

*music title &*