

St. Dismas Church

2600 Sunset Ave
Waukegan, Il 60087
Phone: 847-623-5050; Fax: 847-623-5292

Dear Couples:

We hope and pray that your wedding will be a joyful, spirit-filled celebration marking the beginning of a long and happy life together. This pamphlet has been prepared as an aid to you in preparing for this very special event.

The priest or deacon handling your wedding will discuss this pamphlet with you in detail at your first meeting. If, after reviewing this information, you have any questions or concerns prior to that meeting; please feel free to contact the parish office.

Your marriage is more than just a collection of details. Marriage for Christians is a sacramental celebration, a sign of God's love and fidelity for His people. As a married couple you accept the responsibility of being a sign of Christ's love for His Church. Consequently, your wedding liturgy should be a celebration of your faith, not just a nostalgic or picturesque way of getting married.

The days ahead will be very exciting and, at times, hectic. With all the details and commotion you will have to face, we hope you will find time to pray and reflect on this sacred time in your lives. The time and energy you spend in preparing your minds and hearts will be a great source of strength and nourishment for your continued growth in married life. As you begin your marriage arrangements, you will need the following information.

Required documents: (all documents should be received and completed at least two months prior to wedding date)

1. New, recently-issued (within 6 months of the wedding date) Baptism and Confirmation certificates for both the bride and groom. Baptized Christians of another tradition will need proof of baptism.
2. A Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire to be completed by the priest or deacon handling your wedding.
3. Two witness affidavits for both the bride and groom. These witnesses can be any reliable people who have known you for most of your life and can attest to your freedom to marry. Parents, siblings, or very good friends are the best choice. The affidavit forms will be given to you at your first meeting with the priest or deacon and are to be completed in the presence of a priest or deacon in the parishes where your witnesses reside.
4. Other special documents as required by your circumstances will be determined by the priest or deacon.

Marriage Preparation Program (Pre-Cana)

The Catholic Church is deeply interested in your marriage, not just your wedding. Consequently, you will be required to attend a Pre-Cana marriage preparation program sponsored by the Archdiocese of Chicago. Through group discussion, exercises and presentations, engaged couples are asked to concentrate intensely on the many facets of married life including effective communication, conflict management, and religious faith. The priest or deacon assigned to your wedding will assist you in selecting the program that is best for you and your schedule, but it will be your responsibility to make your own reservations.

Attendance at one of these programs is **NOT OPTIONAL**. Pre-Cana is an integral part of preparing for the sacrament of Christian marriage.

Personal Meetings With Your Presider

The priest or deacon handling your wedding will arrange the dates and times of these meetings with you. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the covenant nature of Christian marriage, complete required paperwork, and plan the wedding liturgy.

Civil Requirements

A valid Lake County marriage license is required for all weddings. This license must be obtained from the Lake County courthouse, 18 N. Court Street, in Waukegan. The number to call for information is 847-360-6568. The license is valid for 60 days. The marriage license must be delivered to the priest or deacon coordinating your wedding no later than one week prior to the wedding unless other arrangements are made with him.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

You must remember that you are receiving a Sacrament. It is a vital part of your preparation is to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. You are receiving a great sacrament and it is necessary that you are in the state of grace. Please plan ahead to make a good confession prior to your wedding so that you may reap the full sacramental benefits of this special day.

Wedding and Rehearsal Times

Weddings are usually scheduled on Saturday. Date and time should be coordinated with the priest. Set-up and pictures for a wedding may begin no earlier than 30 minutes prior to the wedding time unless other arrangements have been made in advance with the priest or deacon handling your wedding. Similarly, the wedding party and guests must be out of the church and parking lot no later than 45 minutes after the completion of the ceremony.

Rehearsals are scheduled and arranged in advance with the coordinator. Rehearsals will last approximately one hour. **All weddings and rehearsals must begin on time to avoid conflict with other events.**

Wedding Fees

The wedding stipend for use of the church is \$200.00. This stipend is due 30 days prior to the wedding date. There are additional fees for musicians.

Music

Mrs. Judy Zimmer (847) 336-3433 is the Church Organist and Music Director. She is an excellent musician and soloist. Judy has a wealth of experience in planning and performing liturgical music. She will assist you in choosing appropriate music for your wedding. If you choose another organist, it must be cleared with the priest/deacon coordinating your wedding. Judy's fee is \$200.00 and is due 30 days prior to the wedding date. **All music must be approved by the St. Dismas Music Director.**

Photography

Please ask your photographer to consult with your priest or deacon before the wedding begins. Your insistence that they adhere to church policies relative to photography is very important. They should be reminded that your wedding is an act of worship and that you expect them to respect the sanctity of the place and the event.

Flash photography may be taken during the processional and recessional, but **not** during the liturgy itself. During those times the photographer can come no closer to the sanctuary than midway down the main aisle. Any type of photography is permitted after the liturgy as long as the time limits are strictly observed.

Videography

The same general rules apply to videography as to photography with the following additions: stationary video equipment may only be set up off to the side of the sanctuary. No bright lights are permitted at any time during the liturgy. The videographer must consult with the Priest/Deacon prior to the wedding.

General Worship Space Concerns

Please be respectful of the church building and its contents, making sure that you leave it in a clean condition.

Please be respectful of people who may be in the church praying before or after your wedding, especially after the 2:00PM wedding, as the Sacrament of Reconciliation begins at 4:00PM.

We do not allow tape on the pews. Flowers/bows may be attached with rubber bands or string.

No ribbons/sashes draped between pews. There must be access into pews from both ends.

No flowers or candelabras are allowed on the altar.

No candles may be used in the procession or as decorations, other than the unity candle.

General Worship Space Concerns - continued

Please have flowers delivered no earlier than two hours before the ceremony.

For safety reasons we do not allow an aisle runner.

The scattering of rice, birdseed, or rose petals is not allowed.

Bubbles or balloons can be used outdoors only.

Horse-drawn carriages may be used but any clean up is the responsibility of the wedding party and must be done immediately.

We do encourage you to include a map in your invitation so that your guests can find the church.

No existing church decorations may be moved or altered in any way. Please remind your florist of this requirement. The Liturgical year is divided into seasons, each with its own color. You may wish to talk with your priest/deacon about the liturgical color and the type of decorations that will be in place at the time of your wedding.

The consumption of alcoholic beverages on Church grounds, prior to, during or after the wedding is strictly forbidden (no exceptions, no excuses).

If the consumption of alcohol is observed, your wedding will be delayed and you will forfeit the privilege of taking photographs after your wedding. I guarantee it.