

Planning Your Wedding Ceremony



ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

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INTRODUCTION

You are in the midst of a beautiful love story and have decided to take your commitment to the next level by embracing the sacrament of marriage. As you prepare for your wedding day, it's essential to remember that the ceremony holds great significance. It's a celebration of your love and reflects the Christian values that define marriage and family life.

The Catholic Church acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual and the special bond you share as a couple. Therefore, it encourages you to participate actively in planning and customizing your wedding ceremony. You have the opportunity to select from a wide range of Scripture readings, prayers, blessings, and other meaningful elements that resonate with your personal journey.

It's important to remember that while you may choose certain parts of the Mass, the liturgy and ritual of the church cannot be changed. The sacred religious ceremony should not be turned into a theatrical performance.

Remember, this is a sacrament that connects you more closely to God, whom you are asking to seal your union until death. By wholeheartedly loving and cherishing each other, we invite God to dwell within us. It is in this mutual love that His divine love is perfected.

May your love for one another and your commitment to God's love bring you endless joy, blessings, and fulfillment in your journey as a married couple.

Here is some advice on how to plan your Wedding

MUSIC FOR YOUR CEREMONY

Music plays an important role during the celebration of the Mass. When considering your music, you will need to select a musician/vocalist and discuss with him/her the songs that are appropriate for your wedding liturgy. **Not all songs can be played in church, and secular music, such as pop songs, is not allowed.**

Please note that here at St. Joseph the Worker Parish, we have professionally trained musicians who provide music for liturgical celebrations. If you decide to involve an extra musician or vocalist, they will need to adhere to our rules and instructions. An additional fee will be incurred, as you will be responsible for both our musician/vocalist and the extra one. You can choose from one of the following professional musicians:

Lino - 416-779-1645

Marylou - 647-609-8291

Ignited - 647-890-4094

Michelle - 416-828-8071

Fees are to be discussed with them personally.

IMPORTANT NOTE: We ask that you use only parish musicians for your wedding ceremony, as they are familiar with our sound system levels.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The liturgy of the Word is very important as we are called to listen and reflect on God's words. As such, it is important, when selecting your readers, that they deliver God's words in a way that is clear, concise and easy to understand.

You will be responsible for choosing people (either family or friends) who are preferably recognized lectors within their parish to read the first and second readings and the universal prayer or prayers of the faithful.

We have prepared a PDF booklet that contains recommended readings for weddings. You can select an Old Testament reading, a New Testament reading, and one of the three sets of prayers of the faithful (A, B, or C).

Please remember to bring your chosen readings and any relevant information to the wedding rehearsal and give them to the priest.

Keep the following in mind when choosing your readers:

Choose a reader who speaks clearly, is a recognized lector, and is comfortable speaking in front of a large group. Familiarity with the Mass and reading with meaning is also important.

ORDER OF SERVICE

The following outline is the basic Order of Service for your wedding ceremony:

ENTRANCE RITE

Procession (Groom, Bridesmaids, Bride)

Opening Prayer and Gloria

LITURGY OF THE WORD

OPTION A (Two reading)	OPTION B (One reading)
FIRST READING From the Old Testament	FIRST READING From the Old Testament
RESPONSORIAL PSALM (usually sung by the singer)	RESPONSORIAL PSALM (usually sung by the singer)
SECOND READING From the New Testament	-----
GOSPEL	GOSPEL
PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL (A-B-C)	PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL (A-B-C)

Note: The first and second readings and the Prayers of the Faithful are usually done by a friend or family member.

The responsorial psalm and the gospel acclamation are usually sung by the vocalist. He/She will discuss this with you.

RITE OF MARRIAGE

After the homily of the priest:

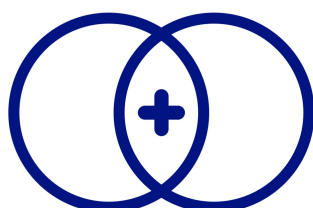
- Exchange of vows
- Blessing of Rings
- Universal Prayers (Prayers of the Faithful)

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

- Offertory
- Consecration
- Our Father
- Nuptial Blessing
- Sign of Peace
- Communion

CONCLUDING RITE

- Final Blessing
- Signing of the Register
- Recessional



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section deals with questions that arise in the planning of the ceremony:

What is the fee for the church?

The church offering is **\$500.00**; you can bring it to the wedding rehearsal or the parish office.

Are we responsible for obtaining a marriage license?

YES, you will be responsible for obtaining a marriage license through City Hall. You should obtain your license no earlier than 90 days (3 months) prior to your wedding date. You are then required to bring the documentation to us for completion, which you will be required to sign, along with your witnesses, on the day of your wedding.

Does the church allow the throwing of confetti, rice, blowing of bubbles, etc?

Throwing rice or confetti is prohibited within or outside the church. Bubbles are allowed in the church parking lot.

Is the church hall available to rent in order to provide lunch for the wedding guests?

No. Typically, the Parish has other activities on Saturdays, so the parish hall is not available during that time.

What is an acceptable dress for the bride and bridesmaids?

It is important to remember that your wedding mass is a sacred occasion, and excessive secular attire can detract from its significance. Therefore, when selecting dresses for the bride and bridesmaids, it is recommended to opt for modest styles that are not overly revealing. A wrap is also recommended. Throughout the wedding ceremony, it is necessary to cover the shoulders of strapless dresses with wraps, which can be removed during the reception.

How many flowers should be brought to the church?

We suggest no more than two baskets/arrangements of flowers to be placed beside the altar.

Are runners permitted up the centre aisle?

We advise against using a runner on the church floor for safety reasons and to maintain the ambiance. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Can we present flowers to the Blessed Mother?

We strongly suggest to avoid it because it's not part of the liturgy. However, should you choose to do so, we suggest no more than six stems of flowers usually presented by the couple prior to the signing of the register.

Does the church provide the unity candle?

No, the unity candle is not necessary for the wedding ceremony and is not permitted. It is redundant and not an essential part of the liturgy, given that the vows, rings, and Eucharist already signify unity.

Are cultural traditions allowed at a Catholic wedding?

Cultural traditions can be incorporated into the wedding liturgy, provided they are in harmony with the sacred nature of the sacrament and do not overshadow the essential elements of the liturgy itself. The Church recognizes the value of cultural expressions and allows for certain adaptations, but they must be done with the approval of the Pastor.

Are flower petals allowed to be dropped on the way up the aisle?

No, that is also not part of the liturgy and is not allowed. While some may see it as a romantic gesture, we go to church to be faithful and seek God's blessing, not to be romantic.

Can we have candles set up down the aisle?

No. Candles are not allowed to be placed down the aisle.

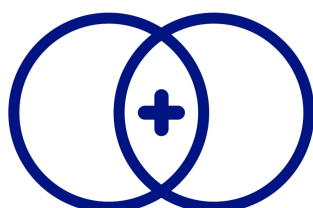
Is a wedding always celebrated with a Mass?

Mass may not be celebrated in mixed marriages where one party is not Catholic. This is because the Eucharist is a symbol of unity in faith, which would not be possible in a mixed marriage where the non-Catholic party or their family members cannot receive communion. Mass is prohibited in all cases of disparity of cult. A wedding that includes the celebration of the Eucharist typically lasts from 45 minutes to one hour, while a wedding without the celebration of the Eucharist lasts for approximately 30 minutes.

What age is appropriate for Ring Boy/Flower Girl?

Please remember that this is a wedding, not a show. Only children of school age (**6 years and older**) should be chosen to participate in the bridal party. Younger children may have difficulty paying attention, become unsure of what to do, feel scared and overwhelmed with so many people looking at them, and may need to be accompanied down the aisle by an adult.

NOTE: It is not necessary to have a ring boy or a flower girl. If you don't have anyone to fill the role, simply have the Best Man carry the rings.



Who should attend the wedding rehearsal?

The following individuals only are required:

- Bride and Groom
- People involved in the ceremony (Bridesmaids, Ushers, Readers)
- Parents of the Bride and of the Groom

Can we bring in an outside priest to celebrate the Mass?

If you would like a priest who is not assigned to our parish to celebrate a Mass, you must inform our office and obtain permission from the Pastor. Please be aware that you will be responsible for compensating the priest directly for their service. Additionally, please ensure that the priest you request has faculty to celebrate mass in the Archdiocese of Toronto and is licensed in Ontario to perform weddings.

NOTE: EVEN IF YOU BRING YOUR PRIEST, THIS CHURCH'S WEDDING RULES WILL REMAIN THE SAME.

Should we go to confession if we are having a Mass with the Eucharist?

The answer is most definitely **YES**. This should be done a week before the wedding during the parish's scheduled confession times. It will not be done at the rehearsal.

What are our ushers expected to do?

Ushers are expected to be just that: ushers. They are responsible for getting your guests seated in the church. They are not to be the center of attention or upcoming comedians making their debut in the church.

What are acceptable video & photography practices?

If your hired crew has experience with weddings at St. Joseph the Worker, they should be familiar with the requirements. It is important to note that this is a sacred space, and therefore, they will not be allowed to draw attention to themselves in any way during the wedding ceremony. **During the Eucharist, and especially during the readings, homily, and consecration, they must stay away from the front and remain still.** This is especially important for the videographers, who are not allowed to go to the sanctuary. They should speak to the priest on the wedding day if they have any questions or concerns.

NOTE: As you are the one hiring the photographer, please advise your guests to refrain from taking pictures during the ceremony as it takes away from the sacredness of the Mass and only draws attention to themselves.

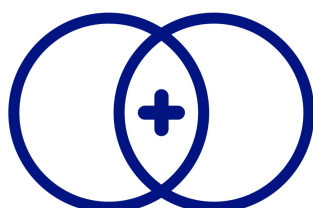
Smoking in the church

Smoking in the church is absolutely forbidden. If you or your guests need to smoke, please do so at least 50 meters from the front door.

What about parking for bus rental and limo?

Upon completion of the ceremony, it is imperative that all guests exit the church parking lot immediately upon boarding their respective vehicles, bus or limo. We kindly request that any champagne toasts be made while departing for the photo shoot. This is particularly crucial for the first wedding of the day, as it will greatly alleviate traffic and parking issues for subsequent weddings.

NOTE: Please do not block the church's main entrance driveway with your bus or limo, as this is the only way to enter and exit. Also, do not block the garage door, as priests need to be able to leave as needed. Violating this policy will result in your limo or bus being towed at your expense. Thank you for your cooperation.



MARRIAGE CLASS INFORMATION

To get married in the Archdiocese of Toronto, you need to take a marriage course before your wedding.

It's best to take the course at our parish, where trained couples will prepare you and give you a valid certificate at the end. The course usually starts in October. Please contact the Parish office for dates and availability.

However, if you have an emergency or exceptional circumstances, here are other options for marriage classes. We recommend contacting them directly to check availability, costs, and registration:

QUEEN OF APOSTLES RENEWAL CENTER

1617 Blythe Road
Mississauga, ON
TEL: 905-278-5229
Email: office@qoa.ca

CATHOLIC FAMILY SERVICES (Central office)

1155 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON
TEL: 416-921-1163
Website: www.cfstoronto.com



May your marriage be a long adventure in personal growth.

May you have true friends to stand by you in joy and sorrow.

May you be deeply involved in the events of your times.

May you take time to reflect on the wonder of being.

May you see your children's children to the third and fourth generations.

May you come to old age and grey hair in peace and contentment.

May you always be kind to each other.