



NEW PRAGUE AREA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

CHURCH OF ST. WENCESLAUS
New Prague, MN

Preparing for Your Wedding Day
Wedding Policies & Arrangements

Congratulations!

Your wedding day is one of the most important days of your life. The Church of St. Wenceslaus and its pastor are pleased to share this happy occasion with you and wish to do everything possible to make it a most significant and memorable experience.

Your desire to have a church wedding indicates that you see your marriage as a commitment made before God with an emphasis on the Christ-centered character of the ceremony. While there is much room for flexibility in a church wedding, the guidelines in this booklet are meant to make planning easier and make your wedding a more enjoyable day.

It is our sincerest wish that your wedding be holy and joyful and that your marriage be strong, a witness to divine love, and a blessing to all who know you!

Contents of this Booklet

Online Reference Guide

To Do List Before Wedding Day

Planning your Wedding Liturgy

Outline of Wedding Liturgy

Wedding Day Events

Wedding Fees & Donations

Online Reference Guide

<http://www.catholicweddinghelp.com>

For engaged couples planning a Catholic wedding or when searching for answers to Catholic wedding questions, the pastor at St. Wenceslaus endorses www.catholicweddinghelp.com. Our hope is that you will find it to be an extremely helpful website and includes a step-by-step guide to planning your wedding ceremony from Scripture readings to choosing music and vows, an informative Q&A tab, and an “Ask the Pastor” section that most couples find quite educational. Indeed the engagement period is a time to deepen your Catholic faith and the Church’s teachings of the Sacrament of Marriage.

To Do List BEFORE the Wedding Day

Tasks to do **BEFORE** your wedding day at St. Wenceslaus are:

1. Phone the parish office at 952-758-3225 or email info@npcatholic.org and inquire as to who has been designated as your Parish **Wedding Coordinator**. You will be given the coordinator’s name and contact information. Please contact your coordinator weeks in advance of the wedding day to schedule the wedding rehearsal’s date and time.
2. Secure a **marriage license PRIOR** to the wedding day and bring it with you to the wedding rehearsal. Present it to the wedding coordinator. A marriage license can be obtained from a Minnesota county courthouse no sooner than six weeks before the wedding day.
3. Contact the parish’s **Director of Liturgical Music** at 952-758-4207 at least **TWO MONTHS** before your wedding date. The Director will work closely with you on the selection of music for the wedding. Note the following Wedding Music Policies:

Wedding Music Policies:

- The Director of Liturgical Music will consult with you regarding the selection of music for your wedding. **Your selection of music MUST be approval by our Director of Liturgical Music.** All music should be submitted and approved at least two months before your wedding as a courtesy to the musicians.
- Vocal and instrumental music during the wedding (between the Processional and the Recessional) enhance and compliment the experience of prayer and worship of God.
- If the secular “pop” music is used, it must be approved by the Director of Liturgical Music and used only as Prelude music.
- Although it is largely a matter of musical taste, we recommend that Wagner’s “Bridal Chorus” (“Here comes the bride...”) not be used as a Processional. There are many other appropriate selections our Director of Liturgical Music can suggest for you.
- Pre-recorded music is prohibited.
- Congregational singing is encouraged by use of a Gathering Hymn immediately following the Processional.
- The Responsorial Psalm and Acclamations (the Gospel Acclamation, the Holy, the Memorial Acclamation, and the Amen) are to be sung.
- The “Lord’s Prayer” should not be sung as a solo unless it is sung at a time other than when it is sung or spoken by the assembly.
- The musicians and the wedding coordinator are to be paid prior to the ceremony. Musician fees will vary so check with your musicians.
- Wedding music may not be practiced or used during the rehearsal.

4. **Choose Lectors** for your wedding ceremony. Provide them with the texts of the Scripture readings and Prayers of the Faithful/Petitions (if used) to rehearse in advance. Encourage them to practice the readings prior to the wedding ceremony and to do a run through with the microphone in the church before the wedding day.

5. **Choose Eucharistic Ministers** to assist the priest on your wedding day unless your wedding is without Holy Communion. Speak with your coordinator well before the wedding day as to how many Eucharistic Ministers are needed. This will ensure a balance of Ministers to Communicants.

6. **Choose Ushers** and review Ushers' duties with them prior to your wedding day. We ask ushers to help with a number of things besides seating your guests. Note Ushers Duties below:

Ushers' Duties

- **BEFORE THE WEDDING:**
 - Ask the wedding coordinator if help is needed to set up for the wedding (chairs, kneelers, lighting candles, etc.)
 - When necessary, inform guests of photography policies, cell phone usage, etc.
 - Enforce ban on use of alcoholic beverages and smoking on church premises before, during, and after the wedding.

- **DURING THE WEDDING:**
 - Stay toward the back of church to direct latecomers to use the side aisles to their seats.
 - Assist anyone during the service: directing someone to the restroom, caring for someone who is ill, etc. (Restrooms are located in the church basement.)
 - There is a phone for emergency use in the west sacristy. There is a portable AED machine mounted on the wall at the farthest west church exit.

- **AFTER THE WEDDING:**
 - Assist the wedding coordinator and priest with any clean-up before leaving for the reception.
 - (Your personal attendant is asked to clean-up the Bride's Room before the wedding party goes to the church and return the Bride's Room key promptly to the wedding coordinator following the wedding ceremony.)

Planning your Wedding Liturgy

There are several resources to assist you while planning the liturgy of your wedding. www.catholicweddinghelp.com will carefully guide you through the process with options available at your fingertips. Or, you may have received a booklet called *Together for Life*. This booklet, like [catholicweddinghelp.com](http://www.catholicweddinghelp.com) offers suggestions for the options that exist while planning the liturgy. Both resources have lists of possible readings for the first and second reading as well as a Gospel reading and suggestions for the Prayers of the Faithful.

Selecting these elements is a great way for the bride and groom to prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage. We encourage you to spend time reading and praying over the scripture selections and discuss together the prayer intentions you would like to offer in the Prayers of the Faithful.

As you prepare for your wedding ceremony there are several places within the liturgy which you have options to choose from. These include:

- The First Reading *Old Testament*
- The Second Reading *New Testament*
- Gospel Reading *Matthew, Mark, Luke or John*
- Prayers of the Faithful *Write your own or see suggested texts at www.catholicweddinghelp.com*

You will also need to choose ministers for the following items:

Lectors

(for both a Mass and Liturgy of the Word Service)

1. First Reading
2. Second Reading
3. Prayers of the Faithful

NOTE: You can choose three separate lectors for the above mentioned areas, or one lector can do all three. Please remember to provide a copy of your selected readings to your lector(s) in advance so they may practice.

Gift Bearers

(for Mass only)

Designate two to three people to bring forward the gifts of bread and wine during the preparation of the gifts.

Eucharistic Ministers

(for Mass only)

There is a liturgy planning form online at www.catholicweddinghelp.com or in the back of *Together for Life*. It will be helpful to fill out the planning form for your ceremony (either Mass or Liturgy of the Word) and return it to the priest.

Outline of Wedding Liturgy

Many couples choose to provide a program to assist the guests in participating in their wedding liturgy. The following outline gives the order of the liturgy. Your wedding coordinator can provide samples and answer questions about the program.

Wedding with Mass:

Prelude:

Introductory Rite:

 Processional

 Greeting

 Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word:

 First Reading

 Responsorial Psalm

 Second Reading

 Gospel

 Homily

Rite of Marriage:

 Exchange of Vows

 Exchange of Rings

 Prayers of the Faithful

 Lighting of Unity Candle

(optional)

Preparation of the Gifts

Eucharistic Prayer

Communion Rite

 Lord's Prayer

 Nuptial Blessing

 Sign of Peace

 Lamb of God

 Communion

Final Blessing

Presentation of the Couple

Recessional

Wedding without Mass:

Prelude:

Introductory Rite:

 Processional

 Greeting

 Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word:

 First Reading

 Responsorial Psalm

 Second Reading

 Gospel

 Homily

Rite of Marriage:

 Exchange of Vows

 Exchange of Rings

 Prayers of the Faithful

(optional)

 Light of Unity Candle

(optional)

Nuptial Blessing

Lord's Prayer

Final Blessing

Presentation of the Couple

Recessional

Wedding Day Events

Rehearsal is usually held the evening before the wedding. It can be arranged with your wedding coordinator and can be set at a time that is mutually convenient.

Arrival Time of the wedding party is flexible. Inform your wedding coordinator of what time you plan to arrive at the church on your wedding day. St. Wenceslaus has a Bride's Room that offers the ability to dress and do hair and make-up on location if so desired. Please inform your coordinator of any other arrival times of say florists, decorators, musicians, etc.

Security of personal possession should be considered during the day. Please take care to lock valuables in the Bride's Room as the church is open and accessible to all. Please PROTECT YOUR VALUABLES. We allow free access to outsiders in the church building and for this reason we cannot accept the responsibility for any personal possessions left unattended by members of your wedding party, relatives, and friends.

Decorations can be provided by the wedding couple for the ceremony. If a Unity Candle is desired, the couple needs to provide it along with the candle stands. Candles must be on the altar area. Flowers may be attached to the pews using rubber bands, plastic hooks, or tied bows. Please do not use tape as it removes the varnish from our pews. If an aisle runner is used, please bring runner and packing tape to secure. The aisle is 124 feet long and there are 31 rows of pews.

Photographs may be taken before or after the ceremony as well as during the procession and recessional. We ask that flash photographs not be taken during the ceremony to maintain a prayerful atmosphere. Please feel free to ask your wedding coordinator any questions you or your photographer may have. Videotaping is allowed then videographer is not intrusive to the wedding liturgy.

Lunch is typically served by the wedding family to the wedding party in the church cafeteria. We ask that the food and beverages be served and consumed there. Water bottles can be brought

upstairs if needed. It may be helpful to assign someone to clean up and transport the leftovers.

Wedding Program Some couples print a “program” for their wedding liturgy. You will find templates of Catholic wedding programs at www.catholicweddinghelp.com. You may choose to print on your program one or two or none of the following examples:

REQUESTS OF THE CONGREGATION:

- *“Please kindly turn off all cell phones during the wedding ceremony.”*
- *“We ask our guests to not throw anything (rice) either inside or outside of the church.”*
- *“Given the acoustics of St. Wenceslaus Church, parents with small children may wish to be seated in the rear of the church in the event they wish to step outside should their child become uncomfortable.”*
- *“Flash photography may only be taken when the wedding party enters and exits the church. Flash photos may NOT be taken between those times.”*

Departure. Please check with the wedding coordinator before leaving for the reception, to insure all things have been cleaned up.

Ushers: Please do not to leave for the reception until they check with the wedding coordinating or priest concerning clean-up from the wedding.

Wedding Fees & Donations

Gift to the Parish It is customary for the bride and groom to give a monetary gift to the Church of St. Wenceslaus on the occasion of their wedding. For the bride or groom who is a parishioner, we encourage them to consider their wedding part of the normal service their parish community provides them. A small gift of \$50 would be appropriate in these cases. Financially independent brides and grooms returning to St. Wenceslaus may consider a larger gift to the parish of around \$250. Such a gift compensates the parish for cost of utilities. A gift of such size or more presumes that the couple can afford such generosity.

Gift to Priest or Deacon There is no separate fee for the presiding priest or deacon although a small gift is common and appreciated.

Wedding Coordinator A wedding coordinator will assist you in many details for your ceremony. Some of those ways are: by assisting in planning, scheduling rehearsal time, running the rehearsal, and helping to make your wedding day run smoothly. If you have questions regarding your preparations feel free to contact your wedding coordinator or the parish office if you do not yet have an assigned wedding coordinator. The fee for the wedding coordinator is \$150 and should be given to the coordinator at the beginning of the rehearsal.

Musicians should receive their fee before the wedding ceremony begins. An option exists for the Wedding Coordinator to receive musician payments the night of the rehearsal and then the Coordinator presents payments to musicians the next day.

Marriage License The marriage license should be applied for from the county prior to the wedding day, brought to the rehearsal, and presented to the Wedding Coordinator. At a later time the Best Man and Maid of Honor will be asked to sign it.

Thank you for your cooperation and May the Lord continue to bless you all your days.

Rev. Kevin I. Clinton

Pastor

Church of St. Wenceslaus

New Prague Area Catholic Community