

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI PARISH
1066 26th Street – Sacramento, CA 95816
916-443-8084
www.stfrancisparish.com

MARRIAGE POLICY

BASIC REQUIREMENT FOR A CATHOLIC WEDDING

- The official form for a Catholic person to marry in the Catholic Church is for the ceremony to be witnessed by a Catholic priest or a deacon and two witnesses.
- With the appropriate permissions, a person who is not Catholic may marry a Catholic person in the Catholic Church.
- With the appropriate permissions, a non-Catholic minister may be invited to participate in the Catholic marriage service.
- Official witnesses of the marriage may be non-Catholic.

WHO CAN GET MARRIED AT ST. FRANCIS...

- St. Francis of Assisi parishioners (registered)
- Catholic parishioners of other parishes (inside or outside the Diocese of Sacramento)

INITIAL CONTACT

- Those interested in getting married at St. Francis should contact the Parish Office at least six months in advance of the desired wedding date.

CELEBRATION OF CEREMONY BY VISITING PRIEST OR DEACON

- A priest or deacon from another Catholic parish (inside or outside the Diocese of Sacramento) may celebrate a wedding at St. Francis.
- A priest or deacon from another Catholic diocese, must present a Letter of Good Standing from his home diocese.
- Normally, the visiting priest or deacon will prepare the required paperwork and preparation of the couple. The required paperwork must be submitted to St. Francis at least 6 weeks prior to the wedding date.
- Normally, the visiting priest or deacon will conduct the wedding rehearsal and the wedding ceremony in collaboration with the wedding coordinator of St. Francis.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following documents are to be provided by the couple to be married:

- **Baptismal Certificate** of the Catholic party(s) issued within the last six months. The certificate must include “notations” of First Eucharist, Confirmation, and Marriage (if any) clearly identified on the back of the baptismal certificate. If there are no notations in the baptismal register, the issuing church should write “no notation”. Baptismal certificates can be obtained by either calling or writing the church of baptism. A certificate of baptism is also required of a non-Catholic Christian.
- **Confirmation Certificate** of the Catholic party(s). Confirmation certificates can be obtained by calling or writing the church where the Sacrament of Confirmation was received. Catholics who have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation may want to consider doing so prior to being married if it presents no inconvenience. Parish staff can provide information regarding the diocesan Adult Confirmation process.
- **State of California Marriage License**. The license should be presented to the priest at, or prior to, the rehearsal. Unless the license is present, the wedding cannot occur. The license will be signed by the priest and two witnesses at the end of the wedding. It is the responsibility of the parish staff to mail the completed license to the county office following the wedding.

The following documents will be prepared by the priest or deacon who will be witnessing the Marriage:

- A **Letter of Freedom (Form B)** completed by two separate witnesses for each party.
- A **Pre-Nuptial Inquiry (Form A)** completed by each of the engaged.
- **Permission for a Mixed Marriage** (for a Catholic to marry a person baptized in a non-Catholic Christian denomination).
- **Petition for Dispensation for Disparity of Worship** (for a Catholic to marry a non-baptized person).

SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

- **CEREMONY**
In general, weddings are celebrated only on Saturdays at **11:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m.**
- **REHEARSAL**
In general, the rehearsal is scheduled on the Friday before the wedding at a convenient time for the couple, the priest and the wedding coordinator.

FEES

- For **registered parishioners** the fee is \$800.00. A non-refundable deposit of \$250.00 is requested at the time of scheduling the wedding.
- For **parishioners of other parishes** (inside or outside the Diocese of Sacramento), the fee is \$1,500. A non-refundable deposit of \$300.00 is requested at the time of scheduling.
- The balance must be been paid in full at least 30 days prior to the wedding.
- The fee for the use of the church does not include the stipend(s) for the musician(s). A pianist/cantor who both plays the piano and sings is normally \$250.00. There is an additional charge of \$150.00 each for additional accompanists, such as a violin, or cantor. Stipends for all musicians are payable to them directly and due at the rehearsal.
- If a family wishes, a separate donation may be made directly to the priest or deacon who officiates.
- For marriage preparation done at St. Francis for weddings taking place at another church, the fee is \$150.00.
- For marriage preparation for a Convalidation, the fee is \$200.00.

FORMAL MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Every engaged couple wishing to be married in the Diocese of Sacramento – whether a first-time marriage, a convalidation, or a re-marriage – must attend a formal diocesan-approved marriage preparation program to prepare themselves for the Sacrament of Matrimony. Ideally, this should be completed during the first four months of their preparation.

There are three approved formal marriage preparation programs in the Diocese of Sacramento:

- **Parish-based marriage preparation program.** St. Francis does not currently have a parish-based program. A couple may attend a parish-based program offered in another parish.
- **Engaged Encounter Weekend.** This is a weekend retreat experience presented by two married Catholic couples and a priest. It is designed to help engaged couples self-reflect, communicate, understand their sexuality, etc. The main thrust of the weekend is personal reflection and dialogue. The retreat is offered five times per year at local retreat center. For more information and to register go to <http://SacEE.org>.
- **Online Marriage Preparation.** For engaged couples unable to attend either a parish-based marriage preparation program or the Engaged Encounter weekend, an online course is available. This interactive course lasts from one week (minimum) to three months (maximum) depending upon the couple's pace. Each couple is assigned a personal instructor who follows them throughout the course. For more information or to register, go to <http://www.catholicmarriageprep.com/course-info/online-pre-cana>
- **Premarital Inventory and Natural Family Planning Training.** Both of these are required by the Diocese of Sacramento and are available online.
 - Registration for The Premarital Inventory called Prepare/Enrich is available at <https://www.catholicmarriageprep.com/course-info/premarital-inventory> Register for Choice One.
 - Registration for the Natural Family Planning Training is available at <https://www.catholicmarriageprep.com/online-n-f-p-training> Register for the Self-paced Online process.

LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

Planning the liturgical celebration is an essential part of the preparation for the wedding day. Guidelines supplement the norms for wedding celebrations found in the Catholic Church's official Rite of Marriage.

- Weddings are only held in the church which reflects the sacredness of the event. Only the diocesan bishop can give permission to hold a wedding celebration outside the parish church; such permission is not granted in this diocese.
- The marriage ritual offers options for readings and prayers within the ceremony. The wedding coordinator or the presiding priest or deacon will help you to make these choices.
- Wedding programs for the assembly are produced by the couple and are optional. They should be designed to include the order of service and responses of the liturgy to allow for participation of all present.

BASIC OUTLINE OF THE RITE OF MARRAGE

Prelude

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Processional

Greeting

Opening Prayer

Gloria (if Mass is included)

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

Psalm Response (Sung)

Second Reading

Gospel

Homily

Prayers of the Faithful

RITE OF MARRIAGE

Exchange of Consent

Blessing and Exchange of Rings

Our Father

Sign of Peace

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST (if Mass is included)

Presentation of the Gifts

Communion

CONCLUDING RITE

Closing Prayer

Nuptial Blessing

Final Blessing

Recessional (Music)

MUSIC

- Decisions about choice and placement of wedding music within the liturgy will be discussed with the Music Director at St. Francis. Contact John Iosefa by email at johni@stfrancisparish.com or 916-443-8084 x103. Even if a couple will be using outside musicians and/or cantors, it is customary to coordinate with the Music Director at St. Francis.
- All music is to be live rather than taped.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

CHURCH DECORATIONS

Some decorations are permitted. Setting them up and cleaning them up is your responsibility. Please check with the Wedding Coordinator as to when and what you may set up for your decorations. Aisle runners are not permitted.

For weddings during Lent, the sparse environment of the season is respected (an abundance of flowers and decorations would not be appropriate), and the music should be subdued and reflective of the season.

Seasonal parish decorations may not be taken down or moved for any reason.

FLOWERS

Please check with the Wedding Coordinator. Have your florists work with your Wedding Coordinator as to the placement of flowers. No flowers are to be placed on the altar itself but may be around the altar. **No flower petals (real or artificial) are to be strewn down the aisle at any time by anyone.**

FACILITIES FOR DRESSING

Brides may use the "Brides Room" near the restrooms at the side of the church. The Wedding Coordinator will show you the room after your rehearsal. Cleaning up immediately after the wedding is your responsibility. If there is another wedding scheduled after yours, you will be asked to clear the room 15 minutes before you leave for your ceremony. We have no dressing facilities for men except the men's restroom. All items left in these rooms are at your own risk. Nothing should be left in the room the night before the wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY

Official photography or videography are allowed but are not to interrupt the flow of the liturgy. Videographers must remain stationary and may at no time be in the center aisle. Please advise the wedding coordinator if you are going to have the ceremony videotaped.

If photos are taken before the liturgy nothing is to be moved in the Church for the purpose of photographs.

Couples are encouraged to have pictures taken before the ceremony so that they may be present to the guests after the liturgy. Pictures should cease thirty minutes before the liturgy begins to provide time for setting a prayerful atmosphere. If pictures are taken after the ceremony, allow enough time so that the picture taking will not interfere with other scheduled activities. In general, a wedding at 11:00am will have the church available until 1:00pm; a wedding at 2:00pm will have the church available until 4:00pm.

PARKING

There is a parking lot behind the church. Parking on the streets is metered from 8:00 am until 10:00 pm Monday through Saturday.

RICE, BIRDSEED, CONFETTI

Rice, birdseed or confetti are not to be thrown after weddings; they are potential hazards to persons and animals.

CLEAN-UP

The couple is responsible for clean-up including leftover programs, bows, flower boxes, etc. It is helpful to designate trustworthy persons to be responsible for cleanup.

ALCOHOL

No alcohol is allowed in or around the church building or bride's room. Use of alcohol or drugs by the persons to be married impairs the validity of a marriage. Attendees under the influence of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises regardless of their relationship to the bride and groom. If there is drinking in or about the Church or the bride or groom is under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the wedding the wedding will be cancelled.

RECEPTIONS

The Parish Hall is not available for receptions.