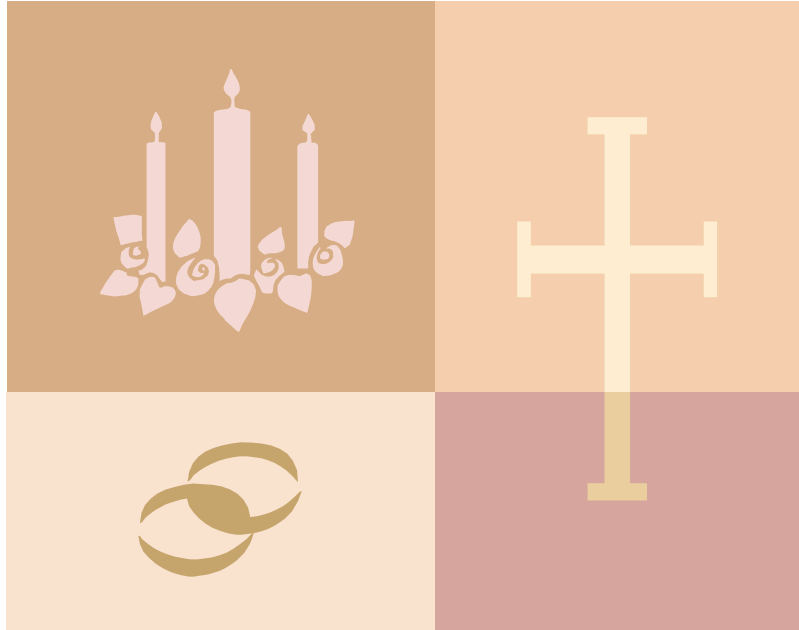


# Wedding Procedures



St. John the Evangelist Church  
689 Ritchie Highway, S.E.  
Severna Park, MD 21146  
(410) 647-4884

# CONGRATULATIONS!

*We are delighted that you are planning to get married and that St. John the Evangelist Parish is part of your plans.*

*This booklet is presented to you in order to help you plan your wedding celebration. Wedding arrangements are certainly necessary and important, but we hope that you never lose sight of the fact that Marriage is primarily a Sacrament – a sacred sign of your love for each other in Christ. Christ abundantly blesses this love and in this Sacrament enriches and strengthens you so that you may assume the duties of marriage in mutual and lasting fidelity. One of the best ways to prepare for a happy marriage is to pray together for God’s blessing on your marriage.*

*Pray alone and together for your marriage and for each other. Make time to attend Mass each weekend. Since this is a new beginning in your life, we encourage you to ask forgiveness of God for all your past sin and to open your hearts to new life with him. Catholics are encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in preparation for marriage.*

*Please accept our sincere best wishes and prayers for a happy married life together. The Pastoral Staff of St. John’s wants your wedding to be filled with a sense of God’s presence. In this spirit, we present to you our parish policies regarding marriages celebrated at St. John the Evangelist Church.*

**1. OFFICIAL MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSES** are required for all couples who plan to be married at our parish. Such conferences are scheduled regularly throughout the Archdiocese. Exact dates, times and locations may be obtained from the priest or deacon who assists you with your marriage arrangements. (These conferences are primarily and essentially a preparation for marriage.) It is important that these be attended shortly after you have met with the priest or deacon.

**2. PLACE AND CELEBRANT OF YOUR MARRIAGE:** The marriage usually takes place in the parish of the bride, if both bride and groom are of the Catholic faith. In marriages where one of the parties is not of the Catholic faith, the parish church of the Catholic party is the usual place for the ceremony. You are free to choose any priest or deacon assigned to the parish to officiate at your wedding. A priest relative or a priest who is a close personal friend of either party is always welcome to officiate at your marriage. All the proper forms should normally be filled out by a priest of St. John's Parish. In all situations, consultation with one of the priests at the parish (St. John's) where the marriage is to take place must occur at the beginning of the arrangements.

If one of the parties is of a faith other than the Catholic faith, a minister of their faith may certainly be invited to be present in the sanctuary and, to some extent, participate in the ceremony. If there are significant reasons, you may apply for a dispensation to the Archbishop to have the marriage ceremony performed in a church other than a Catholic church. However, all other preparations must be made with the Catholic parish and the necessary requirements must be fulfilled.

To reserve the church we ask a **\$100 non-refundable deposit** when the date is set. The deposit is part of, and not in addition to, the church fees.

**3. WEDDING LITURGY:** Many options are permitted in the new marriage rite which enable the bride and groom to structure as personable a ceremony as possible - various entrance rites, choice of prayers and readings, different forms for the exchange of vows, the wedding candle ceremony, arrangements for the procession with the gifts of bread and

wine, greeting of peace and selection of the music. If both the bride and groom are of the Catholic faith, the celebration of the sacrament of matrimony should normally take place at the liturgy of the Mass. It is permissible for the marriage to take place at Mass when one of the parties is not of Catholic faith. The priest will gladly assist you with your choice. It may be more suitable for the couple of different faiths to be married with simply the ceremony. The normal structure of a wedding is as follows:

- Entrance Procession
- Opening Hymn (optional)
- Greeting by the Celebrant
- Opening Prayer
- 1st (Old Testament, by a lector)
- Responsorial Psalm (recited or sung)
- 2nd Reading (New Testament, by a lector)
- Alleluia and Verse (recited or sung)
- 3rd Reading (Gospel, by a priest or deacon)
- Homily
- Marriage Rite (Lighting of the Wedding Candle within the rite - optional)
- Instrumental Recessional (optional)

**IF THE WEDDING IS PERFORMED AS A NUPTIAL MASS:**

The celebration continues as follows:

- Prayer of the Faithful
- Offertory Procession
- Rite of the Preparation of Gifts
  - Eucharistic Prayer
  - Nuptial Blessing
  - Communion
  - Closing Prayer and Blessing
  - Dedication of Flowers (optional)

- Closing Hymn
- Instrumental Recessional (optional)

**IF THE WEDDING IS A CEREMONY:**

- Prayer of the Faithful
- Nuptial Blessing
- Prayers of Blessing
- Dedication of Flowers (optional)
- Instrumental Recessional (optional)

**CONCERNING FLOWER GIRLS AND RING BEARERS:** In order for the marriage ceremony to retain its dignity and sense of the sacred, only children 5 years or older are permitted to serve as flower girls or ring bearers.

4. **IF SOMEONE HAS BEEN AWAY FROM THE SACRAMENTS FOR ANY PERIOD OF TIME,** it is recommended that he or she participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation before participating in the Sacrament of Matrimony.
  
5. **BANNS OF MARRIAGE:** Prior to the marriage, the announcement of your wedding is published three Sundays preceding your marriage in the church of the bride and groom. Arrangements are made through the priest or deacon. Banns may be published even when one of the parties is not of the Catholic faith. A Catholic who lives in another parish should contact their parish to arrange for the publication of the banns.
  
6. **OFFICIAL WITNESSES:** The witnesses (best man and maid/matron of honor) may be of any faith. However, they must be in good standing with their particular faith community.

7. **LECTOR:** It is proper for a lay person to proclaim one or several of the readings. You may wish to arrange for two lectors as there are usually two readings. If qualified to do so, it is recommended that members of the families or of the wedding party fulfill this role. The final reading, which is always the Gospel, must be proclaimed by a priest or a deacon. Whoever proclaims a reading should be present for the rehearsal and have a copy of the reading to rehearse with.
8. **ALTAR SERVERS:** The priest in charge of liturgy will appoint altar servers unless the bride and groom request to have a relative or close friend fulfill these roles. If they are not of the parish, they must be present for the rehearsal. It is customary to offer each of the altar servers a financial gift.
9. **WEDDING MUSIC:** The Music Director should be contacted immediately after the wedding date and time are set. This is the responsibility of the couple. All music for any wedding ceremony must be arranged and approved of by our Director of Music, Kevin Clemens, contact number (410) 679-2271. He will assist you with the choices of music and a soloist, if you request one. He must grant permission for a guest organist to play the organ. It is the Director of Music's responsibility to determine if the music selected is suitable for a church wedding. The Director's decision in these matters is final.
10. **TIME OF THE WEDDING:** Weddings being planned for a Saturday should be scheduled between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Wedding arrangements for any other day will have to be discussed with the priest as there are sometimes other parish scheduled events (i.e., Baptism, etc.). Weddings are to be scheduled two hours apart in order that everyone has the necessary time to properly celebrate their wedding.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *No weddings are permitted on Sundays* due to the limitation of time and already scheduled services. The wedding party must leave the church building by 3:45 p.m. if the wedding takes place on a Saturday.

**11. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

(1) A **baptismal certificate** is required for each Catholic party and it must be of recent issue, i.e. issued six months prior to the date of the marriage.

(2) A **marriage license** is also required and may be obtained at the Anne Arundel County License Bureau in Annapolis. Please direct any additional questions you may have by calling (410) 222-1434. A blood test is **not** required in Maryland. You should apply for the license about a month in advance.

(3) A **Marriage Preparation Certificate**, indicating that you have completed with Pre-Cana, Engaged Encounter, or the Sponsor Couple program of marriage preparation as required by the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

**12. FLOWERS:** Any family who wishes to have flowers placed in the sanctuary for their wedding should make their own arrangements through a florist of their choice. You may wish to have two arrangements placed on each side of the altar. If desired, arrangements for a white runner for the aisle of the church can be made through the florist. *The length of the aisle is 75 feet.* Any flowers placed at the altar are considered a gift to the church and may not be removed after the wedding. You are asked to consult with the priest as to the appropriate time for the flowers to be delivered. At no time are flowers permitted to be set on the altar itself. *If you choose silk flowers for the altar, these may be taken home with you.*

**13. WEDDING REHEARSALS:** The exact time and date are to be scheduled at your visitation with the priest or deacon. All who are participating in any manner in the wedding should be present.

**14. PUNCTUALITY:** *It is very important that the rehearsal and wedding start promptly at the appointed time.* It is in poor taste and bad manners to keep all the persons concerned waiting for an unnecessary length of time. It is also inconsiderate of the other weddings and rehearsals which can be seriously affected by the late arrival of a

previous rehearsal or wedding. The priest or deacon may also have scheduled appointments.

**15. PHOTOGRAPHY:** Any photographer or videographer should be aware of the sacred nature of the marriage ceremony and should conduct him/her in such a manner as not to be a distraction. Pictures/video may be taken during the ceremony. The following rules are to be strictly obeyed in order to preserve the sacredness and dignity of the marriage service.

- (1) The photographer/videographer should never delay the start of the ceremony.
- (2) The use of flashbulbs or auxiliary spotlights during the marriage service is never permitted.
- (3) The photographer/videographer is never permitted in the sanctuary area during the marriage service.
- (4) The photographer/videographer should never dash in and out of the wedding procession to take individual pictures. Such pictures can be taken after the wedding service.
- (5) There is usually a limited time allowed for formal pictures after the wedding service or receiving line. During this time, respect for the church as a sacred place should be observed.
- (6) The formal taking of pictures inside the church must be completed a half hour before the next wedding might be scheduled to begin. The church must be cleared by 3:45 p.m. (on Saturdays).
- (7) The photographer or videographer should check with the priest or deacon officiating at the wedding before the service to review these regulations. The couple being married should make sure the photographer or videographer is well aware of the regulations when arrangements are being made.

**16. OFFERINGS:** It is in good taste and customary to present an offering to the parish on the occasion of your marriage. This assists with such costs as the electricity, heating, air conditioning, maintenance, etc.

- a. The ordinary offering for a wedding of a family registered in the parish and supporting the parish through the envelope system is \$250.00.
- b. Anyone who is not registered, not supporting the parish through the envelope system, or is not a member of the parish, is asked to present an offering of \$500.00.
- c. It is a time-honored custom to present an offering to each of the altar servers.
- d. The Director of Music/Organist receives a fee of \$200.00. If a soloist is engaged, the fee is \$150.00
- e. The Sacristan receives a fee of \$50.
- f. You may make a personal gift to the priest or deacon, particularly if he is not from St. John the Evangelist. Gifts to clergy are strictly optional.

All of the required offerings must be presented to the priest or deacon at the time of the wedding rehearsal. They should be in separate envelopes marked accordingly. If there is any financial hardship, you should consult with the priest or deacon and adjustments will certainly be made. No one will ever be denied any of our services due to financial difficulties.

**17. ADDITIONAL ACCOUTERMENTS:** No rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals or any other item may be thrown inside or outside any building on the parish grounds. Insurance regulations prohibit this type of activity.

**18. SUMMARY OF FEES:**

***CHURCH:***

Registered and supporting parishioners \$ 250.00

Non-registered, non-parishioners \$ 500.00

***SACRISTAN:*** \$ 50.00

***MUSICIANS:***

Organist \$ 200.00

Cantor/Soloist \$ 150.00

***ALTAR SERVERS:***

Suggested fee per server (2) \$ 10.00

***CELEBRANT:*** Couple's Discretion

**19. REMINDER:** It is essential that the following be presented to the priest or deacon at the time of the rehearsal:

- a. Your choices for the liturgy unless they were presented earlier;
- b. The marriage license and return envelope;
- c. All of the offerings in envelopes labeled according to the person for whom it is intended as noted above.