

MARRIAGE GUIDELINES & INSTRUCTIONS

SAINT MARY'S OF THE LAKE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Culver, Indiana 46511

FROM THE PASTOR...

Congratulations on your engagement! I am excited you have chosen to begin your married life together at St. Mary's of the Lake Catholic Church.

The information contained in this document is designed to assist you in your marriage preparations. Our desire is to help you in your plans, however, it is also important that you are attentive to these guidelines, as the mindful following of them will allow your marriage ceremony to be beautiful, memorable and run as smoothly as possible. Therefore, please be sure to read these pages carefully so that the day you enter into the lifelong commitment of Holy Matrimony may be marked by joy and peace with your family and friends.

Know of my prayers and support for you and may God's abundant blessings pour forth upon you in this most important time in your life.

Sincerely,

Rev. William A. Meininger

Pastor

SCHEDULING YOUR MARRIAGE

Marriages are to be scheduled at least one year in advance of the proposed date. In order to schedule a date for your wedding at *St. Mary's Church* or at the *Culver Academies Memorial Chapel*, you must meet with the pastor of St. Mary's and complete a marriage registration form. If the wedding is to take place at *St. Mary's Church*, at that time, you will be required to pay a \$50 deposit to hold your wedding date. That deposit amount will be deducted from the Parish fee due sixty days before your wedding.

If you have been previously married, you will need a declaration of nullity or an annulment. This must be done immediately before a firm commitment can be made.

You may be married at *St. Mary's Church* or *Culver Academies Memorial Chapel* if you are a registered member of the St. Mary's Parish or have the consent of the Pastor of the Roman Catholic Church in which you are currently registered. If you are not registered at a Catholic Church, your parish Church is considered that Church closest to your current residence. Your parish priest must forward a letter of permission to St. Mary's of the Lake. Due to parish needs, some weekend dates are not available.

Marriages in *St. Mary's Church* may take place at the following times:

- * Weekdays at any time if there is not a parish Mass already scheduled.
- * Saturdays between 1:00PM and 3:30PM.
- * Marriages may not be scheduled on major holy days, particularly on Christmas or Easter, or during Holy Week.

Marriages taking place in the *Culver Academies Memorial Chapel* celebrated by the pastor of *St. Mary's* cannot begin any later than 3:00 PM on Saturdays.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

All Roman Catholics being married in the parish boundaries of St. Mary's of the Lake are required to follow the regulations of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Like the other sacraments of the Church, marriage requires special preparation. The following is required:

- * You must schedule your marriage at least one year in advance of the proposed date.
- * You must successfully complete a Pre-Matrimonial Inquiry
- * You must meet with the pastor for preparation or provide a statement from your pastor indicating that you have completed a marriage preparation program.
- * Additional requirements may also exist if either person has been previously married, or if you plan to bring in your parish priest, or a priest from a different diocese.

DOCUMENTS & REQUIREMENTS FOR CATHOLIC PARTIES WHO ARE PARISHIONERS OF ST. MARY'S OF THE LAKE

The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend requires certain documents to be produced in order to have a Roman Catholic marriage. You are responsible for obtaining these documents, listed below. Each, with the exception of the civil marriage license, must be completed and returned to St. Mary's of the Lake at least four (4) months before the scheduled date of the ceremony. The receipt of these documents is the only way we can be sure that the marriage can be performed.

- A newly issued Baptismal Certificate for both the bride and the groom (if applicable). This certificate must be secured not more than six (6) months prior to the wedding and can be obtained by calling or writing the parish of your baptism. It must be stamped with the seal of the parish, signed by the parish priest, and dated within six months of the marriage date.
- First Communion and Confirmation data from the parish(s) where these sacraments were celebrated, noting the date of the reception of the sacraments. This information must be on Church stationary or certificate and be stamped with the parish seal.
- If there has been a previous marriage for either party (even if it took place outside of the Catholic Church), a death certificate, a "Declaration of Nullity" or a "Lack of Form" must be obtained.
- A civil marriage license must be brought to the rehearsal.
- A certificate (or its copy) stating that both parties have attended the Diocesan Marriage Preparation Workshop.

DOCUMENTS & REQUIREMENTS FOR CATHOLIC PARTIES WHO ARE NOT PARISHIONERS OF ST. MARY'S OF THE LAKE

Those who wish to celebrate marriage at *St. Mary's of the Lake* or the *Culver Military Academy* are responsible for contacting their own parish priest in order to collect the necessary documentation and complete a Pre-Matrimonial Investigation. (Typically, the same requirements for sacramental certificates required of St. Mary's of the Lake parishioners as above will apply, however, verify this with your parish priest.) The receipt of these documents is the only way we can be sure that the marriage can be performed.

Your parish priest must then submit the following to St. Mary's of the Lake at least three (3) months before the scheduled date of the ceremony:

- A letter of permission for you to be married with St. Mary's of the Lake parish.
- A Dispensation Form (if a mixed religion marriage)
- A copy of a completed Pre-Matrimonial Investigation with any necessary re-script.

You are responsible for submitting the following to St. Mary's of the Make at least four (4) months before the scheduled date of the ceremony:

- A certificate/letter (or its copy) stating that both parties have attended a Marriage Preparation program/course.
- A civil marriage license must be brought to the rehearsal.

VISITING PRIESTS

Couples being married at *St. Mary's Church* or *Culver Academies Chapel* are welcome to arrange for a priest from their home parish or family to witness their marriage. However, Statements of Suitability are required for all priests and deacons entering the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend for any public ministry. These statements should be sent by the priest's or deacon's ordinary to:

Rev. Mark Gurtner, JCL
Office of the Vicar General/Chancellor
Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, IN 46801

Also send a carbon copy to:
Rev. William Meininger
St. Mary's of the Lake Church
605 North Plymouth Street
Culver, IN 46511

Couples should be mindful that offering a monetary remembrance to a priest who travels to celebrate their wedding is appropriate. This should be provided to the priest directly, not through St. Mary's parish.

DETAILS OF THE CEREMONY DÉCOR, FLOWERS, ATTIRE, ETIQUETTE, ETC.

The Priest will direct you in planning the details of the wedding liturgy. Items such as floral decorations, personalized programs, etc. are not provided by the parish but are the responsibility of the couple.

INITIAL NOTES: For safety reasons, we cannot allow rice, confetti, bird seed, flower petals (real OR silk), potpourri, pennies, etc. to be thrown inside or outside the Church. White carpet, fabric, or paper aisle runners are prohibited from use as they also present a safety hazard when placed upon the terrazzo floor. As the "Unity Candle" is not a part of the Roman Catholic Rite of Marriage, its use is not allowed at *St. Mary's*. If the couple desires to employ this symbol of their new union, it is recommended that it be used at the reception.

FLORAL DISPLAYS

Floral arrangements and other appointments must work around the furnishings of the Church sanctuary and must not impede the movement of the priest during the Rite of Marriage. Church furnishings and liturgical decorations are not to be moved. It is typical - but not mandatory - that couples order 2-3 floral arrangements to be placed on either side of the Tabernacle, as well as in front of the Ambo during their wedding and that the arrangements are left for Sunday Masses. Flowers may not be placed on or in front of the Altar. If ordering flowers from a florist shop or other retailer they must be delivered either by the store or by someone selected by you - *at least 2 hours before your wedding begins*. As stated above, no flowers or petals of any kind (real, silk, etc.) can be dropped in or outside the Church. Flower girls may carry flowers or baskets, but may not drop anything.

PEW BOWS / FLOWERS

If using pew bows or flowers, you must purchase them through your florist or make them/purchase them on your own. If your florist provides them, verify that he/she will both deliver them AND SET THEM UP. If making or purchasing them on your own, you must bring them to your rehearsal. Regardless of how they are provided, they must be able to be affixed to the pews with ribbons or rubber bands. Wire and/or tape cannot be used to attach the bows to the pews. There are 14 pews on each side of the Church.

OTHER DÉCOR

Other wedding decorations such as signs, wreaths for doors, etc., are NOT permitted at the Parish. For inquiries about anything not mentioned in these guidelines, please ask the Pastor *prior* to purchasing/ordering the materials and or supplies.

ATTIRE

“Beyond fashion and its demands, there are higher and more pressing laws, principles superior to fashion, and unchangeable, which under no circumstances can be sacrificed to the whim of pleasure or fancy, and before which must bow the fleeting omnipotence of fashion. These principles have been proclaimed by God, by the Church, by the Saints, by reason, by Christian morality.”

POPE PIUS XII

It is most important to recall that a marriage ceremony is first and foremost a practice of religion, taking place in the House of God. Thus, modesty is ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED in both the dress and behavior of the bridal party and guests. One must ensure that the chosen attire for the bridal party meet the standards as clearly stated below.

MEN'S ATTIRE

While men's fashion's for wedding attire rarely call into question modesty, on occasion neatness is lacking. Whatever the style the clothing of the male members of the bridal party take, all items ought to be clean and presentable, including footwear. If hats are to be a part of the men's ensemble, they are NOT to be worn inside the church building, including in the vestibules and basement level hall. Hats may be carried by men.

WOMEN'S ATTIRE

Gowns and dresses for women ought to take into consideration the appropriate decorum for clothing worn in church. Gowns employing a “Sweetheart,” “V-neck,” “Scoop,” or other plunging neckline which reveals cleavage or leaves the shoulders bare may be worn only with a stole, wrap, or shawl of some sort. This applies not only to the bride's own gown, but to her attendants' gowns as well. All dresses must be of sufficient length so as to fall no higher than the knee.

BIRDAL PARTY & GUEST ETIQUETTE

We recommend that you remind or familiarize your guests with proper etiquette while visiting the church. ABSOLUTELY NO DRINK OR FOOD is to be brought inside the church proper, however water is permitted in the lower level parish hall for the bridal party. Electronic devices should not be brought into the church, or powered off and silenced completely. In deference to the professional photographer you have hired, and out of respect to the holy setting, guests should be asked to refrain from taking photos of any part of the ceremony.

CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BEFORE THE CEREMONY EITHER AT HOME OR AT THE CHURCH IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN. Intoxication on the part of the bride or groom can invalidate the marriage! Any member of the bridal party suspected of being intoxicated or acting disorderly will be required to leave the premises and will not be permitted to take part in the ceremony.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

Marriage is a most sacred vocation in the Catholic Church. Rules for photography and videography are intended to permit couples to remember their wedding day with photographs while celebrating the wedding in a dignified and religious manner. THESE RULES ARE NON-NEGOTIABLE. If the photographer/videographer intends to ignore them, he or she should not be engaged to work at the ceremony. As these expectations are non-negotiable, if the photographer and/or videographer violates the rules during the wedding ceremony or Nuptial Mass, the ceremony will be halted and the photographer/videographer will be required to leave. This applies to both professionals and amateurs alike. The bridal couple must ensure that these rules are communicated to the official photographer(s)/videographer(s) and to family members and other guests who might desire to use their cameras – including cell phones – at the wedding. Where the words photography and photographer are used below, it pertains equally to videography and videographers.

1. If the bride does not prepare herself in the parish lower level hall and arrives at the church already dressed, the photographer may want to photograph her exiting the vehicle. This is only acceptable up to 10 minutes before the ceremony. Any time after that, the bride is brought in immediately. Photographers are not permitted to delay her coming into the church by having her stop, by having the bridal party pose for photos, etc.
2. Movement from one side of the church to the other must be done via the cross aisle in the back of the church, not in front of the first pews or at / behind the altar.
3. Photographers are not permitted to position themselves in and/or work from a pew of the church. Pews are reserved exclusively for guests and witnesses to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacrament of Matrimony.
4. Photographers are not permitted to lie down, to sit down on the floor, to crouch down, or to position themselves anyway whatsoever in front of the first pews, except during the bride's entrance – immediately after which they are to step to the side aisle.
5. Photographers are not permitted to step into any part of the Sanctuary nor are cameras allowed in any part of the Sanctuary at any time. The Sanctuary, located in the front of the church, is distinguished from the main section of the church by a step up. Photographers may only enter the music area if the bride places flowers before the statue of the Blessed Mother. When doing so, photographers must stay along the side wall, behind the musicians. The music area consists of the area surrounding the piano, to the left of the sanctuary.
6. Photographers may walk up the center aisle to the 5th pew from the front in order to capture the exchange of rings & vows and must immediately leave that area afterwards. Except for that period, the center aisle may not be accessed forward of the 4th pew from the back of the church. Side aisles may be accessed IF the photographer remains stationary at the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd pew and does not move. The focus MUST be on the liturgy and photographers who move constantly are a distraction to worship.
7. Photographers must dress professionally for the wedding (and rehearsal, if attending) and must behave in a manner befitting a church setting. Chewing gum, eating, or drinking is not permitted in the church or chapel.
8. Flash affixed to a camera may be used except during the homily or the Eucharistic Prayer (when the priest is consecrating the elements of bread and wine), or during the reception of Holy Communion. Extra lighting may not be set up or used at any time.
9. A camera on tripod may be set up for videography in the center aisle of the church provided it is placed so closer than the 2nd pew from the back and that it is moved out of the way of the recessional immediately at the end of the ceremony.
10. Photographs may be taken in the church after the ceremony, but no one is permitted to stand or pose in any area behind the altar. Individuals may stand on the steps in front of the altar in a dignified manner for photographs, however no low, or perceived "humorous" poses are acceptable in church.
11. Drone photography is not permitted for any part of a wedding rehearsal or ceremony, including outdoors.
12. Photographers must sign acknowledgement of the rules and you must provide this signed document to the St. Mary's of the Lake Church 30 days before your wedding. A signed document is required for each wedding, even if your photographer has photographed weddings previously at the church. Your photographer must also check in with the priest celebrant to assure him that they are familiar with the rules.

FEES

Fees for services such as musicians and soloists are for time spent to enhance your wedding experience. The *Remembrance for Altar Servers* (full Mass only) is a courtesy to express appreciation for the young people who give of their time to serve the priest at your wedding Mass. The *Church Use* fee is SOLELY to cover the costs of lighting, air conditioning/heat, cleaning, etc. and only applies when the marriage is to take place at St. Mary's of the Lake Church. If you bring a visiting Priest to the parish or academy, it is customary to give a monetary token of appreciation. If you wish to give a monetary offering to the parish Pastor (if he is the one to witness your marriage), you may do so. There is a

discounted fee for couples who themselves are registered and active members of St. Mary's of the Lake Parish. To qualify for this reduced rate, the Bride and or Groom, must have been active members of the parish for at least 6 months by the time that you schedule your marriage ceremony with the Priest. An "active parishioner" is defined as one who submits a personalized parish offering envelope weekly (even if empty) or contributes via a loose check in the collection basket weekly. All fees must be paid in full in accordance with the due date on your payment sheet, and must be accompanied by the payment sheet provided to you by the Pastor.

SAINT MARY'S OF THE LAKE MARRIAGE FEES		
Church Use:	\$300.00	<i>(non-parishioners)</i>
	\$200.00	<i>(active parishioners)</i>
Remembrance for Altar Servers :	\$20.00	<i>(per server, usually 2 servers are used for a Nuptial Mass)</i>
Accompanist/Keyboardist:	\$250.00	
Cantor/Vocal Soloist:	\$75.00	<i>(if provided by parish)</i>

CULVER ACADEMIES MEMORIAL CHAPEL FEES
Couples must contact the facilities department of the Academies to schedule and be advised of current fees for use of the Chapel.

THE REHEARSAL

Couples should come prepared and on time for the marriage rehearsal, bringing along the readers, gift-bearers, ushers, and anyone else involved in the marriage ceremony. The Priest will provide you a CHECKLIST of items and persons to bring to the rehearsal. It's very important that everything and everyone on the list be brought.

Rehearsals are usually scheduled the evening before the wedding date at 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. The Pastor will schedule your rehearsal when you meet, and the Pastor will conduct the rehearsal at the appointed time.

The bride, groom, maid of honor and best man will be asked to arrive at least 15 minutes before the rehearsal start time.

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Immediately following the rehearsal, the bride (*if Catholic*) and groom (*if Catholic*) are expected to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Because the marriage is to take place in the Catholic Church, especially if the marriage is between two Catholics, the bride and groom are to be not only physically and mentally prepared, but spiritually prepared as well. An integral and thorough Confession prior to the reception of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony is absolutely necessary for Catholics. As an aide to fulfilling this most important piece of preparation, the Pastor will provide a detailed examination of conscience. The bride and groom should take time PRIOR to the rehearsal to examine their conscience thoroughly and prepare their Confession.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY GUIDELINES

SAINT MARY'S OF THE LAKE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Culver, Indiana 46511

**THESE GUIDELINES MUST BE REVIEWED BY ALL INDIVIDUALS PROVIDING
PHOTOGRAPHY OR VIDEOGRAPHY SERVICES AT YOUR WEDDING AND SIGNED.**

Couples being married at the parish church or Culver Academy Memorial Chapel are required to return this signed form to the Pastor AT LEAST 30 days before their wedding.

Groom's Name: _____

Bride's Name: _____

Date/Time of Wedding: _____ / _____ St. Mary's Church / Culver Academy Chapel
(CIRCLE ONE)

Photography/Videography Company Name: _____

Owner's Name: _____

Names of all photographers at the wedding: _____

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Blessed Mother. When doing so, photographers must stay along the side wall, behind the musicians. The music area consists of the area surrounding the piano, to the left of the sanctuary.

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7. Photographers must dress professionally for the wedding (and rehearsal, if attending) and must behave in a manner befitting a church setting. Chewing gum, eating, or drinking is not permitted in the church or chapel.

8. Flash affixed to a camera may be used except during the homily or the Eucharistic Prayer (when the priest is consecrating the elements of bread and wine), or during the reception of Holy Communion. Extra lighting may not be set up or used at any time.

9. A camera on tripod may be set up for videography in the center aisle of the church provided it is placed so closer than the 2nd pew from the back and that it is moved out of the way of the recessional immediately at the end of the ceremony.

10. Photographs may be taken in the church after the ceremony, but no one is permitted to stand or pose in any area behind the altar. Individuals may stand on the steps in front of the altar in a dignified manner for photographs, however no lewd, or perceived "humorous" poses are acceptable in church.

11. Drone photography is not permitted for any part of a wedding rehearsal or ceremony, including outdoors.

12. Photographers must sign acknowledgement of the rules and you must provide this signed document to the St. Mary's of the Lake Church 30 days before your wedding. A signed document is required for each wedding, even if your photographer has photographed weddings previously at the church. Your photographer must also check in with the priest celebrant to assure him that they are familiar with the rules.

I have read and fully understand the rules and regulations governing photography & videography of weddings at Saint Mary's of the Lake Church and Catholic ceremonies at Culver Academies Chapel. I understand that if any of these rules are not followed by me or any associate at any time during the wedding, non-compliant individuals will be asked to leave the church or chapel immediately.

SIGNATURE

DATE

Return this completed AND SIGNED form at least 30 days prior to the wedding date to :

bmeininger@stmaryculver.org
or
Saint Mary's of the Lake Catholic Church
605 North Plymouth Street
Culver, Indiana 46511