

SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CATHOLIC CHURCH
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

Congratulations on your engagement and upcoming wedding! We are pleased that you have chosen Immaculate Conception Catholic Church for the celebration of your Marriage! To ensure that the rehearsal and ceremony go smoothly, we have prepared the following information and guidelines for you. If you have any questions about them, don't hesitate to contact the priest, deacon, or wedding coordinator.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

For your convenience a wedding coordinator will be appointed to assist you with the wedding rehearsal and ceremony. Your coordinator is familiar with all of the guidelines of our church and will be able to answer your questions.

MUSIC

Music is an important part of most weddings. We recommend that you contact any musicians and singers well in advance of the wedding day. We highly recommend that you contact our Director of Music, Mr. Paul Vogler (501-835-4323 ext. 21). He is familiar with the liturgical requirements of organ and vocal music for weddings in the Catholic Church.

If you choose to have someone else provide music, please contact Mr. Vogler in advance so that he can review the organ and procedures with your musician. There will be a \$75 bench fee applied for this review.

Regarding singers, we have several cantors in our parish that are very talented and professional. They are also familiar with the requirements of the services. All wedding consultations are held after the Sunday 5pm Mass on a mutually agreed upon Sunday.

Please note: we are not allowed to use secular music during religious ceremonies. If you are unfamiliar with popular religious music, the organist should be able to suggest some songs.

EXPENSES

Immaculate Conception Catholic Church does not charge registered parishioners a facility fee for the use of our church for weddings (the cost for Non-parishioners is \$250). There is a \$150 fee for the trained wedding coordinator. The main functions of the wedding coordinator include ensuring that the entrance procession goes smoothly and answering questions regarding decorations. The cost for various musicians and singers must be worked out with them individually since their costs differ slightly.

LEGAL DOCUMENTS

Anyone who marries in the State of Arkansas must obtain a marriage license from any Court House within the State. Usually, you have sixty days from the time you purchase the license to get married and return it to the Court House before there is a penalty. Please bring your marriage license to the rehearsal and give it to the minister so that he can fill it out. It will be returned to you after the ceremony. Please be aware that if the minister who is witnessing your marriage does not reside in Arkansas, he is required by law to obtain Minister's Credentials at any Court House within the State before he officiates your wedding.

FACILITIES

We have a beautiful church, built in 1970 and expanded and renovated in 1997. It holds about 950 people. We are very proud of our church and are grateful for the many people who have generously sacrificed in order to build it. Because we consider our church to be “God’s House,” we treat it with respect and invite you to join us in that respect. The following instructions will help—

✚ Church Information and Etiquette

- Please respect our policy of “No food, drink or water allowed in the church building.” For your convenience there is a water fountain located at the back of the church.
- The bride and her attendants may use the “bride’s room” to change clothes and prepare for the wedding. Please make sure someone clears the room immediately following the ceremony.
- Unfortunately, there are no facilities for the groom and his attendants to dress. We encourage them to arrive at the church in their formal attire.
- Since most marriages take place on weekends, the church should be left in condition suitable for Mass. Therefore, immediately after the wedding, someone from the bride’s or groom’s family should see to it that EVERYTHING brought into the church for the marriage is removed and all areas used (including the brides room) are tidied up so that the church is left as it was found. We do not have any personnel available to clean-up before the next service.
- It is highly suggested that personal items not be left unattended in the bride’s room or the back of church since we have no way of assuring their security.
- Smoking is prohibited in all of our facilities and on our campus.

✚ Church Decorations and Practices

- When working with the wedding coordinator on decoration, please do not move or remove parish liturgical décor, furniture or chairs.
- Throwing of bird seed, flower petals (silk or real), rice or other items to greet or bid farewell to the bride and groom in or outside of the church is NOT allowed. Bubbles, however, may be blown outside the church for a celebration sendoff.
- For the sake of safety and visibility, we do not allow aisle runners and arches anywhere in the church.
- For safety, the flower girl and/or attendants may not drop real or fake petals during the procession.
- If you wish to decorate the center aisle pews, aisle markers may be attached with *pew clips or rubber bands only*. NO TAPE OR PEW CANDLES please.
- All décor and floral arrangements must be approved by the priest or wedding coordinator.
- If your wedding will take place during a special liturgical season (e.g., Advent, Christmas, Easter, etc.) the Church will already be decorated and those decorations will remain even during the wedding. Please note—weddings are not normally held during the season of Lent (from Ash Wednesday until Easter).

Some couples have found that the elegant simplicity of the worship space conveys a reverence and beauty that requires little or no decoration. You may want to consider this beautiful simplicity for your wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO

Photographs and video of your wedding are a wonderful way to remember and savor your special day. Here is some information that will help ensure that your pictures and video are beautiful, yet not a distraction during the ceremony—

- ✦ Photographers and videographers should consult with the priest or wedding coordinator before at the rehearsal and/or before the ceremony.
- ✦ Please plan to take as many pictures as possible *before* the ceremony.
- ✦ Photographers will not be free to roam about the sanctuary areas during the actual celebration of your wedding.
- ✦ During the wedding liturgy portable lamps, reflective umbrella, etc. may not be used.
- ✦ During the ceremony, photographs may be taken from the rear of the church and from designated places *near* the sanctuary, but not *in* the sanctuary.
- ✦ Photographers and videographers should do nothing to distract or obstruct the view of those attending the wedding. Therefore, limited flashes will be allowed during the wedding ceremony.
- ✦ The bridal party should not be instructed to stop at any time during the procession for the benefit of the photographer.
- ✦ If you would like to have photos taken with the priest or deacon, these should be the first photos taken immediately after the ceremony, before any family photos.
- ✦ There is a 30-minute time limit for photographs following the ceremony.
- ✦ You are responsible for informing your photographer of our policies.

WEDDING PROGRAMS

Ceremony programs are not required for the wedding ceremony, however, should you decide to use one, the priest will be glad to proof-read it via email. Sample programs are available from the priest and will be emailed to you upon request.

REHEARSALS

A rehearsal for the wedding familiarizes all participants with the wedding ceremony and their respective roles. Here is some information that will help facilitate your rehearsal—

- ✦ Please make every effort to begin the rehearsal on time. For your convenience the door to the church will be open fifteen minutes prior to the rehearsal.
- ✦ The rehearsal will last forty-five minutes to one hour.
- ✦ Please bring your marriage license to give to the minister.

RECEPTIONS

The Dining Facility and Immaulata Hall are available for wedding receptions if you so choose. Evening receptions are to end by 11:00pm and the buildings must be vacated by 11:45pm because our alarm system will activate at midnight. If the alarm goes off, the police will be dispatched. The wedding party will be required to pay the “false alarm” fee that the police department charges.

Information about renting our facilities for your wedding rehearsal can be retrieved from our parish office. Also, the key for the hall should be picked up by 1:30pm on the Friday before your wedding. Keys are not distributed for the church. We have personnel that will unlock the church for you.