

Wedding Regulations

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SETON PARISH

November 15, 2014



SETON PARISH

600 Hill Road, N.

Pickerington, OH 43147

Wedding Regulations

Dear Friends:

Congratulations! We welcome your inquiry about marrying at Seton Parish. It is a privilege for us to assist you as you prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage in our parish.

The Catholic Church esteems marriage as very sacred – one of the seven sacraments of the real presence of Christ among us. Sacred Scripture compares marriage to the covenant of God with us. Saint Paul says the union of husband and wife is a sign of the union of Christ and the Church.

In witnessing your marriage, our Church community wants to uphold and support you faithfully for the rest of your lives as you grow together in God who is Love. We undertake this ministry with you now, as you begin preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage. This document outlines the procedure we need to follow. We look forward to serving you as we share our faith together.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. James A. Klima
Deacon Hector J. Raymond
Deacon Joseph A. Checca

INTRODUCTION

We at Seton Parish want your wedding to be a faith-filled, beautiful and memorable occasion. Our wedding preparation program has been designed to assist you in preparing your wedding Mass or ceremony in our parish. This document is your first source of information about the wedding preparation process and for planning your wedding liturgy. Please read these pages carefully as they are designed to assist you in the process. If you have any question, please do not hesitate to call.

WHO MAY OFFICIATE AT YOUR WEDDING?

Normally, the parish priest/deacon who has assisted in your preparation for marriage will officiate at your marriage ceremony. Priests who are your relatives are welcome to officiate at the wedding in one of two ways: he may concelebrate the ceremony or he may be the principal officiant if it is arranged with the parish priest. It is understood that the principal officiant conducts the marriage preparation process. Therefore, you will want to consult with priest relatives very early in the preparation process before you make a decision.

WHO MAY BE MARRIED AT SETON PARISH?

Church law guarantees active, registered members of the parish, who are in good standing, with the faith and morals of the Catholic Church, the right to marry in their proper parish church.

SETTING THE DATE AND TIME

You should make an appointment with a priest or deacon at least six months prior to the anticipated wedding date. Due to the number of weddings at our parish, it is advisable for you to contact the priest or deacon as soon as possible in order to ensure the desired date and time of your wedding. If either of you has been married previously, and divorced, you will have to obtain an annulment; a process that may take a year or longer to complete. No wedding date may be scheduled until the annulment is obtained.

A date may be placed on the parish calendar only after an initial interview with a priest or deacon.

Weddings are celebrated on Saturdays at either 11:00am or 1:30pm. Rehearsals are scheduled the night before the wedding between 5:00pm and 7:00pm.

You, as a couple, can expect to attend a series of interviews with a priest, deacon and a married couple to assist you in your preparation for marriage. You will be asked to take part in discussions of topics related to personal history, communication skills, married and family life, and the religious dimension of marriage.

Documents needed for Marriage

1. Baptismal Record

A copy of your baptismal certificate issued in the last six months is required for the wedding file. You will need to contact the parish of your baptism and ask them to send a copy of your baptismal certificate with the parish seal stamped on it. Non-Catholics are encouraged but not required to produce a baptismal certificate.

2. Certification

We require your participation in our parish sponsored “Couple-To-Couple” marriage preparation process. In the event circumstances prohibit such participation, we require certification of attendance at an “Engaged Encounter Weekend.” Certification of attendance at a “Pre-Cana” session may be approved by the parish clergy.

3. Marriage License

The civil license for the marriage is to be presented to the officiating clergy at the time of the rehearsal. You must apply for a marriage license in the county of your residence. Marriage licenses are valid throughout the State of Ohio beginning five days after the date of application until sixty days from the date of application.

PREPARING THE LITURGY

A Church wedding is both a personal and a communal event, but even more importantly, a sacred ritual of the Church. As such, the religious nature of the ceremony must be carefully preserved.

Your wedding is a part of the faith life of our parish. You, as the ministers of the Sacrament, have chosen freely to express your love and commitment to each other. The Rite of Marriage is centered around the exchange of vows and the blessing and exchange of rings. This ritual best conveys the Church’s desire to witness your vows, to strengthen your fidelity to them, and to support you prayerfully in your life together. As with all liturgical celebrations, the full and active participation of all those present is desirable. Ordinarily, the Rite of Marriage takes place in one of two contexts: within Mass for two baptized Catholics or outside Mass if either the bride or groom is not Catholic. Customs not contained in the rite of marriage are prohibited in the Church but may be appropriate at the wedding reception.

Readings

The Rite of Marriage includes selected scriptural readings and prayers. You may choose those that are most expressive of your understanding of marriage. Selections are included in this packet.

Environment

Very simple decorations are needed to enhance the beautiful liturgical space of our church. Normally, two live flower arrangements placed near the altar are sufficient for a wedding. Flower arrangements should be designed to be seen from 360° and their height cannot extend above the top of the Altar. The flowers are to be kept in the Church for all the weekend Masses. Seasonal decorations (e.g. Advent, Christmas and Easter) provide the environment for all Weddings during those seasons. No decorations are to be placed on the Altar.

For safety reasons, the use of candelabra, lamps, floral displays with candles, and the use of an aisle cloth are prohibited.

The dressing room for the bride and her attendants is our Quieting Room located off of the Gathering Space adjacent to the wedding aisle doors. It is open two hours prior to the time of the wedding. For security reasons, the wedding party is responsible for removing all of their belongings, decorations, etc. **before** the start of the wedding. It is advisable to assign someone who is not a member of the wedding party to clean up the room prior to the wedding.

If you wish to select children to be a part of the wedding party, they must be at least 5 years old. The immense space of the Church and its acoustics create an environment in which very young children can be a distraction.

Music

Only liturgically appropriate music may be used at weddings. All music, sacred or of a classical nature must be approved by the Director of Music. All weddings will utilize the parish organists and cantors.

Popular and secular music is not always appropriate music for use during the Wedding Mass or Ceremony. This also applies to vocal or instrumental music played during the prelude.

You may contact the Director of Music through the parish office to set up an appointment to plan the music for your Wedding.

MINISTERS FOR THE LITURGY

The officiating priest or deacon gives final approval to all plans for the celebration of the wedding liturgy, including those suggested by a professional wedding consultant. The professional wedding consultant should restrict his or her planning to the non-liturgical activities of your wedding (e.g. rehearsal dinner, reception, etc.)

Family and Friends

Friends and relatives of the couple may participate in the liturgy in various roles. You may wish to select individuals to serve as Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, Servers, and Gift Bearers at the liturgy. So that these ministers feel comfortable, they should be properly trained and should attend the rehearsal. Decisions about ministers may be made when the liturgy is planned with the parish clergy.

OTHER DETAILS

Food/Beverages

No alcoholic beverages are permitted on the Church property prior to and after the wedding. We request that food, beverages or gum not be brought to the Church grounds or into the Church. Exceptions are strictly for receptions held on Church property and only in pre-designated areas.

Photography

Photographers are welcome to take pictures before and during the ceremony. (See Rules for Photographers and Videographers). If you wish to have posed pictures taken after the ceremony, you must complete them within 30 minutes. In order to avoid distractions, those taking pictures and/or video recordings are asked to check with the clergy at least 30 minutes before the celebration to arrange for locations for pictures. All picture taking must be completed by 12:30p.m. for 11:00a.m. weddings and 3:00p.m. for 1:30p.m. weddings.

The Unity Candle

The practice of lighting a unity candle to symbolize the uniting of two individuals or families is not part of the Catholic wedding liturgy. It is liturgically inappropriate and prohibited for the following reasons:

Within the Catholic liturgy, lit candles represent the light of Christ, not an individual or family;

The union of the couple is ritualized in the wedding liturgy by the exchange of consent, vows and rings, the nuptial blessing, and within a nuptial Mass, by the sharing of the Eucharist. This non-liturgical custom of lighting a unity candle would be more appropriate at the wedding reception.

Inappropriate Secular Customs

Secular practices such as the use of rice, birdseed, confetti, balloons, bubbles, etc. are not consistent with both the sacred nature of the Catholic wedding liturgy and the sacred space of the Church environment. These secular customs are more appropriate for the arrival or departure of the wedding couple at the reception.

SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE SPECIAL ATTENTION

1. ***Cohabiting couples*** present a concern for the Church. Living together before marriage seriously compromises the teaching of the Church on the Sacrament of Marriage. The decision to live together deliberately or inadvertently shows disregard for the sacred nature of the marriage vocation and covenant. Couples who insist on living together are eligible to marry in the Church but may be required to demonstrate their regard for the Sacrament of Marriage in some manner during the preparation process.
2. ***Pregnancy is another concern.*** If pregnancy affects the timing of the marriage, the couple may undertake preparations in the usual manner. If the pregnancy affects the decision to marry, the couple may be asked to delay setting a date until it is established that both bride and groom are able to give full and free consent to the responsibilities and obligations of marriage.
3. At least ***one party*** to a Catholic marriage must be an ***active, practicing Catholic***. Sometimes a couple that does not regularly practice their faith approaches the Church requesting a wedding date. Often the preparation period for marriage will be extended so that the couple may demonstrate their good intentions, begin active practice of the Catholic faith, and restore their connection to the community of faith.
4. ***An annulment is required for anyone who has been previously married.*** This applies to both Catholics and non-Catholic. If either one of you has been married before, you need to inform the clergy at the first meeting. The priest or deacon will be happy to explain the process and will be ready to help you begin the application for the annulment.

INTERFAITH MARRIAGES

We strongly encourage that an interfaith marriage be celebrated without a Mass. When non-Catholic family members and guests are unable to receive the Eucharist we have a celebration which makes visible the signs of our division when the wedding liturgy itself is intended to give signs of unity – the unity of the bride and groom, the unity of Christ and the Church. That is why it is best in these circumstances to celebrate the wedding without a Mass.

If either the bride or the groom is not Catholic and would like to have a minister from their own church participate in the ceremony, they are welcome to invite him/her. This should be arranged beforehand with the parish priest or deacon so that suitable hospitality may be extended to the participating minister.

FEES AND STIPENDS

Facility Usage Fee

The facility usage fee for anyone other than active registered parishioners is \$500.00.

Parish Priest and Deacon

The stipend for the clergy is a donation made in view of the time and service the clergy has provided in the preparation process. It is customary, but not required, to offer the clergy \$150.00 for his assistance.

If visiting clergy concelebrate or assist at the wedding liturgy, an additional, separate stipend is negotiated between the visiting clergy and the wedding couple.

If a visiting priest or deacon presides at the wedding liturgy, an additional, separate stipend is negotiated between the visiting clergy and the wedding couple. The parish priest or deacon who provided the wedding preparation will be present to assist the visiting clergy and it is customary but not required to offer the parish clergy \$100.00 for his wedding preparation assistance.

Director of Music

The stipend for the parish organist is \$150.00. The fee includes meeting with the couple to plan and select wedding music, practice time with the parish cantor, and personal practice time.

If there is a visiting soloist (instrumental or vocal), the stipend could increase based on rehearsal time that is necessary with the soloist.

The stipend for the parish cantor is \$100.00. This person will be chosen by the Director of Music, unless the couple has a specific requirement.

We ask that all stipends are paid prior to the ceremony.

Visiting organists are permitted, as long as they are qualified and experienced in Catholic Liturgy.

Servers

It is customary to give servers \$20.00 each, if they are needed.

Parish Activity Center

The rates for the Parish Activity Center can be obtained by calling the Parish Office during office hours at 614-833-0482.