

*St. John the Evangelist Church
Long Green Valley*



Wedding Guidelines

*St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church
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Congratulations!

You have made a decision to unite yourselves in Christian Marriage. You have, no doubt, informed your family and friends and now come to this church to request preparation and prayer for the Sacrament you are about to receive.

We are pleased that you will celebrate this Sacrament at St. John Church. In order that we may be of greater assistance, we ask that you read this brochure carefully together. Share the information with your families, florist, and photographer.

Since a wedding is a celebration of the entire faith community, we invite you to become members of our parish if you are not already. We also know that many people wish to come back to the parish in which they grew up to celebrate their wedding and we welcome them to celebrate the wedding here, either in the main church or the historic chapel.

Scheduling Your Wedding

1. In order to prepare for your ceremony, you must contact the office at least six months prior to your desired date. At that time, you will be asked to schedule an appointment with the pastor to begin the process. After the initial appointment, the pastor will reserve the date for you.
2. A Catholic priest or deacon is welcome to preside for your wedding at St. John. Should that be your intention, the visiting priest will need to request delegation from the pastor and will need to confirm with the parish office the date to be reserved. Also, the visiting priest/deacon will be responsible for all the paperwork, instructions, rehearsal as well as the actual wedding. St. John Church will provide a sacristan to assist him and altar servers if requested.
3. You are welcome to have your ceremony in the Church or the historic Chapel. The historic Chapel holds approximately 100 guests. The church and chapel are both air-conditioned.

4. You may schedule your wedding any day of the week except Sunday. Due to our current Mass schedule, Saturday weddings can be scheduled between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Typically, your reservation is for 90 minutes starting from the time the wedding is scheduled to begin.
5. You will receive a wedding reservation agreement form. On this form we ask that you complete all information, indicate whether your ceremony will be in the church or the chapel and return it with a deposit of \$100.00. This will secure your reservation with us.

Marriage Preparation

1. All couples wishing to be married in the Archdiocese of Baltimore will need to participate in one of the marriage preparation programs. Specific information relating to these programs will be given to you by the officiating priest or deacon. You can also find the information through the Archdiocese of Baltimore at www.marriagemattersbalt.org. We encourage you to consider one of the weekend programs which gives you a chance to really focus on each other during the preparation period.

Required Records

1. Baptismal Certificates

- The Bride and Groom will need a current copy of their Baptismal certificate.
- The certificates will need to be dated within 6 months of the date of your wedding and by sealed by the church of baptism.
- You can obtain the certificates by contacting the churches where the Baptism took place and asking them to send it to the parish office.

2. Marriage License

- You will also need to obtain a marriage license through Baltimore County Court House at 401 Bosley Ave, Towson, MD. The phone number is 410-887-2607. Please note there is a 72 hour waiting period. Please arrange to provide the license to the officiating clergy at least four weeks prior to your wedding.

3. Dispensation

- If either the bride or the groom is not Roman Catholic, a dispensation is required. This is arranged by the priest or deacon who is taking care of the paperwork.

The Celebration

Your wedding ceremony is a sacred celebration meant to express your faith in God and your love for each other. If you have questions about your wedding ceremony, it is best to discuss them directly with priest or deacon that will be officiating at your ceremony. Below are a few guidelines for St. John parish.

1. Visiting Clergy

- A Catholic priest or deacon is welcome to preside at your wedding at St. Johns. If he is part of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, then he will just need to request delegation from the pastor. If he is from outside the Archdiocese of Baltimore, then he will need to be granted faculties from the Archdiocese of Baltimore to perform the ceremony.
- In such a case, the visiting clergy would be responsible for completing all paperwork, instructions, rehearsal and ceremony. They will also be responsible to make sure St. John Church receives all paperwork required for their records.

2. Music

- Once you have confirmed the date and time for your wedding, the next step is to contact the parish Director of Music, Douglas Byerly. You can reach him at 410-377-0651 or dbbyerly@aacc.edu.
- He will guide you in choosing the music for the ceremony so that it is within the norms of the liturgical celebration.
- Outside musicians are permitted with the permission of the director of Music.
- All music fees are arranged with and payable to Mr. Byerly.

3. Flowers

- Arrangements for flowers can be made directly with the florist of your choice.
- We ask that two weeks prior to the ceremony the florist arrange a time with the parish for the delivery and set up of the flowers at the church.
- We do ask that you do not use an aisle runner or any flower petals on the carpet.
- Also, be aware that you cannot use any tacks or tape on the church furniture.
- Flowers and decorations work best when you respect the church environment and focus on the wedding liturgy itself.

4. Photographing and Videotaping

- Due to the solemn nature of the ceremony, we ask that you do not have any flash photography during the ceremony.
- You are welcome to use flash photography for posed pictures after the service.
- The photographer/videographer should confer with the officiating priest or deacon prior to the wedding ceremony.

The Wedding Party

1. When planning your wedding, remember that it is a liturgical celebration and with that in mind, we recommend that ring bearers and flower girls be at least five years of age. If you should wish to use children under the age of five, we recommend that you discuss this with the officiating priest or deacon.
2. In keeping with the liturgical celebration of your wedding, please remind your bridal party that you are having a ceremony in church. Some suggestions to have them avoid would be gum chewing, any writing on the bottom of shoes, or alcohol on church premises.
3. Due to environmental concerns as well as safety regulations, throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals, releasing balloons, etc. is not allowed at St. John Church. Please be sure that your wedding party and guests are aware of this restriction.

4. If you are having a wedding coordinator for your service, their primary role is to assist you with the reception and overall experience. As for the actual wedding ceremony in the church, the presider is the coordinator and will assist you with any questions or ideas about the ceremony.

The Wedding Offering

1. The wedding offering to the church covers the use of the church building, utilities, staff assistance, resources for preparing the liturgy and preparing the church, and altar servers if requested by the presider.
2. St. John has a parishioner and a non-parishioner offering for weddings. A parishioner is considered any person who is registered with the parish and actively involved at least six months prior to the request for the wedding.
3. The parishioner offering is \$400.00 and the non-parishioner offering is \$600.00.
4. The wedding offering is for the use of the chapel and church. It is also customary to offer a personal donation to the priest and deacon who officiates at your wedding. This is appropriately done at the rehearsal.

Marriage Preparation Checklist

- Wedding Reservation Agreement
- Baptismal Certificates
- Baltimore County License
- Permission of pastor of another church (if needed)
- Marriage Prep Program –return certificate to priest or deacon
- Contact church musician
- Complete the “Together for Life Workbook”
- Confirm the rehearsal date and time
- Confirm the wedding date and time
- Coordinate with parish when the florist will be delivering the flowers