

Wedding Ceremony Guidelines

◆ The safety of children is of the utmost priority. Please inform all guests that they must provide vigilant supervision of their children at all times while on church property. This includes both outside and inside the church. Although our lovely church and its grounds are inviting for children to run or play, we value their safety and ask you to supervise them at all times to avoid possible injuries.

WEDDING PARTICIPANTS

We encourage the participation of family members and friends as bridal party participants and/or to serve in a liturgical position (ushers, lectors, bringing up the bread/wine, etc.) during the ceremony.

Please note: A worksheet reflecting the following participant guidelines will be provided so you can submit for approval.

The following are the guidelines to follow for all participants regardless of their role.

Bridal Party

Adult Participants

- ◆ There is a maximum number of 6 couples (total of 12 people) allowed in the bridal party procession. This includes best man/maid of honor, bridesmaids and groomsmen.
- ◆ We welcome cultural celebrations, e.g. lasso, coins, veil, bible, rosary, etc. however these “sponsors” must be included in the total number of bridal party participants allowed should they wish to process down the aisle. If cultural celebration participants are in addition to the maximum 12 allotted, these participants will not process down the aisle but rather be seated strategically to be called forward when the time comes to bless these cultural articles. Please note: Any items involved in the special cultural celebration are the responsibility of the couple for purchase and handling.
- ◆ A minimum of two (2) main adult witnesses typically known as the “Best Man” & “Maid of Honor” are required to participate on the day of the wedding ceremony. All other attendants are welcomed, but not necessary. The two main witness names will be entered in the Church Marriage Record and included on the church marriage certificate. These two witnesses are to be included in the total number of participants allowed (12).

Child Participants

- ◆ Children asked to serve as ring bearers (1 max) and flower girls (2 max) must be at least 5 years old, which is the determined age at St. Martha that allows the children to follow direction and walk easily unassisted down the main aisle. We recommend that after taking part in the procession, the young children participants sit with family members for the duration of the ceremony.

Liturgy Participants

Although it is preferable that those wishing to serve in the liturgy be Catholic, there are certain exceptions that can be made to allow other Christian participants within the couples family or circle of friends to serve. Please speak to our Wedding Coordinator with regards to those exceptions.

All those participating in liturgical roles MUST be 18 years or older.

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DRESS CODE

When selecting wedding attire, please keep in mind that the wedding ceremony is a sacred celebration which takes place in the sanctity of a church before God and the community gathered. For that reason, all wedding attire must be modest in nature and respectful for a religious celebration.

The bride and groom are responsible for informing their bridal party, as well as their respective guests, of what is appropriate attire for a church wedding.

For Men

For the groom, groomsmen, and all gentlemen in the wedding court and guests, a formal suit and tie is encouraged, or slacks and a dress shirt that is appropriate for a celebration that takes place in the sanctity of a church in the presence of God. Any distracting, immodest, or inappropriate colors or clothing will not be permitted.

Although most weddings are semi-formal, dressing too casual (e.g. shorts, jeans, flip flops, t-shirts, etc.) is not permitted. At minimum, dress attire should be your "Sunday Best."

For Women

All dresses must be knee length or below. Dresses that are low cut in the front or back, or are very revealing of cleavage, are not permitted. In the spirit of Christian modesty, shoulders should be covered at all times. In the event that the dress is sleeveless, shoulders can be covered with a jacket/bolero style cover. Shawls are not allowed as they tend to slip down and risk immodest exposure of cleavage.

Photography Dress Code

After the Wedding Ceremony has concluded, the bridal party is permitted to remove their jackets/boleros only AFTER the initial pictures with the clergy (priest/deacon) have been taken.

Please Note:

Should the Wedding Ceremony Coordinator and/or presiding clergy deem someone to be inappropriately or immodestly dressed, we reserve the right to ask that person to refrain from participating in the processional and/or in the Wedding ceremony.

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FLOWERS & DECORATIONS

The following guidelines will assist you in choosing your decorations. If you are having a professional florist, please make sure they are aware of these guidelines.

A period of 1/2 hour (30 minutes) has been allotted for placement of flowers, pew decorations, etc. before the start of your ceremony.

In many cases, we are NOT able to accommodate more time due to events occurring prior to a wedding, especially on Saturdays.

Guidelines

- ◆ Due to time/space limitations, all flowers/decorations must be brought on the same day of the wedding, already prepared and ready to be placed. We are unable to hold flowers in advance for liability reasons.
- ◆ Natural or synthetic flowers are allowed as floral decorations for the church.
- ◆ Flowers or any other decorations are NEVER permitted to be placed on top or around the altar.
- ◆ There are two (2) arrangements allowed on the front corners of the sanctuary area, either at the bottom of the steps or at the top. Exact placement can be given by Wedding Ceremony Coordinator.
- ◆ Existing flowers, decorations, and furniture in the church may not be moved.
- ◆ During our Lent/Advent seasons, couples will have to work around the seasonal colors already placed in the church and these colors cannot be changed or removed.
- ◆ Pew decorations must be secured with ribbon, pipe cleaners, string, elastic bands or professional flower pew clips. The use of tape, staples, nails, tacks, wire, regular clips or clamps are NOT permitted to avoid damage to pews and church furniture.
- ◆ The church Altar Candles surrounding the altar area are the only candles permitted for use in a wedding ceremony. No other candles, including the Unity Candle, or open flames are permitted for decoration purposes.
- ◆ Nothing shall be placed on the floor of the main aisle (or other existing aisles) as this can pose a threat to the safety of all guests, or can be an obstacle in case of an emergency.
- ◆ Flower girls may NOT throw any articles, including flowers, petals, leaves, etc., real or artificial, down the aisle as they process in. They may carry a basket with flowers as they walk in, but nothing may be thrown onto the ground.
- ◆ All flowers and decorations must be removed immediately after the wedding ceremony ends within the allotted 1/2 hour for takedown/clean up.
- ◆ St. Martha's is not responsible for any items that may be forgotten, misplaced, or left behind on the pews or in the bridal rooms after the wedding ceremony. Bringing any outside decorations or wedding articles is at your own risk and your personal responsibility.