

St. Albert the Great Catholic Church



Wedding Guidelines

2420 St. Albert Drive, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin 53590
837-3798

Useful Contact Information:

Msgr. Donald J. Heiar, Pastor608-837-3798, ext. 1

Deacon Joseph Stafford608-712-7066
joe@saintalberts.org837-3798 ext. 2

Paula Horn, Pastoral Ministry.....608-837-3798 ext. 3
paula@saintalberts.org

Parish Office608-837-3798

Cecile Gregory, Director of Liturgy & Music608-837-3798 ext. 7
cecile@saintalberts.org

FOCCUS Couple _____

Wedding Coordinator _____

To locate a Catholic Parish in another city:www.masstimes.org

Diocese of Madison Office of Family Ministry.....www.madisonfaithandfamily.org

Congratulations to you and to your families as you prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage. Along with our best wishes, we offer our assistance in helping to make your wedding day a joyous one. We also wish to be of assistance to you in the years that lie ahead.

This booklet will explain and clarify the specific requirements regarding your wedding here at St. Albert the Great. While we have tried to answer many of the questions you might have, please feel free to call the staff at the parish office for further assistance.

Sincerely in Christ,

The Pastoral Staff

PARISH MEMBERSHIP

One or both of you must be a **registered, practicing member** of our parish for a **minimum of six months** (exceptions may be made after discussion) before contacting us about your wedding, unless one of you has a parent who is currently an active member of the parish. If you are a member of another Catholic parish, a *Letter of Permission* from your parish priest must accompany your request for marriage here.

SCHEDULING THE DATE AND TIME

Please notify the parish at least *six* months prior to the date on which you would like to schedule your wedding. The sooner you make your request, the greater the possibility of obtaining the specific date that your desire. It is advisable to secure your wedding date at the church before you make arrangements with other venues. The pastor or deacon of the parish is the usual presider of the sacrament of marriage. However, priests or deacons who are friends or relatives may concelebrate.

Weddings are usually celebrated on Saturdays. However, you may select other days, including Friday evenings. Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays, on Holy Days, or during the Season of Lent.

The *latest* possible time that a wedding can be scheduled on *Saturday* is *1:00/1:30 p.m.* Because of other regularly scheduled uses of the church, the wedding party, guests, and associates will only be allowed use of the church until *3:00 p.m.*

The Nuptial Mass is celebrated when both parties are Catholic.

PREPARATION PROCESS

The Marriage Preparation Process is designed to help you deepen your love for one another and for the Lord Jesus. Through your preparation, you will discover your strengths as well as areas of potential conflict. This process includes:

1. Completion of the *Premarital Checklist*
2. Completion of the diocesan *Prenuptial Questionnaire*
 - * A *Baptismal Certificate* for both parties is required. Catholic certificates “with all available notations” must have been issued within six months prior to the wedding. Parish contact can be made through www.masstimes.org.
 - * If your wedding is to be an *interfaith marriage*, the Catholic party must promise that he/she will continue to practice their faith. This includes the responsibility of doing all in your power to have children baptized and raised as Catholics.
3. Attendance at *2 Diocesan Marriage Preparation Days* is required. The dates and times that these days are offered are available through the Diocesan Family Ministry Office at: (608) 821-3175 or www.madisonfaithandfamily.org or from Paula Horn. On-line registration is available. Pre-registration is required.
4. If your marriage is to be an *interfaith marriage*, additional instructions are needed to ensure that the party of the non-Catholic faith understands the Catholic Church’s teaching on Sacraments, etc.
5. Completion of the FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding, & Study) process with a trained parish couple. You will be assigned a FOCCUS couple by the Pastoral Minister. The FOCCUS couple will contact you to set up a first meeting date.
6. The actual planning of your Wedding with the presider and the Director of Liturgy and Music.

LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT

Church

All weddings are celebrated in our parish church, which seats about 950. The church is a gathering place of worship. We ask that you foster the spirit of prayerfulness and respect while you are here.

Changing, moving or displacing any of our church furniture and decorations is not allowed. We request that you inform everyone associated with your wedding of this requirement. Before you leave, make sure you pick up the things that were left behind: booklets, ribbons, bows, etc.

Throwing of rice, etc.

The throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, etc. is not allowed. This creates a safety hazard and a maintenance problem. *Nobody* (flower girls, junior bridesmaids, etc.) is allowed to throw anything on the floor of the Church or on the outside parish grounds. This *clearly includes flower petals* in the bridal procession. Your respect for our Church and Parish grounds is appreciated.

Candles

At the rehearsal, or before if possible, make arrangements as to the number and kind of candles you want to use. If you are having a Unity Candle, purchase it and bring it to the rehearsal, or have the florist deliver it with the flowers. There will be a table provided for the Unity Candle. *Do not put the Unity Candle on top of the altar.*

Flowers/Green Plants

You are welcome to use flowers and arrangements for the ceremony. If you are ordering from the florist, be specific as to what you want and where the flowers should be placed. Put the stands out after the rehearsal.

The parish deserves recognition and it is desirable that you donate the flowers to be used for the weekend Masses. Mention this so we know how to plan for the weekend.

Runners

The use of aisle runners is not allowed, because of safety concerns

USHERS

In addition to the seating of guests, it is the duty of the ushers to insure that program, boxes, bows, and the aisle runner (if used) etc. are picked up after your wedding. The church should be left in the same condition that it was prior to your wedding. Dumpsters are located in the lower level parking lot.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Please let the Pastoral Minister know the name of your photographer/videographer. Some members of this profession have shown disrespect for our rituals and guidelines and their return is not encouraged, due to their lack of cooperation and discretion in the past. Your photographer and/or videographer ***must consult with the celebrant on the day of your wedding.*** At that time, the presider will inform them of any restrictions for photographs and video taping during your ceremony. No pictures should be taken in church beyond 3:00pm since we need to prepare for the weekend. Again, we stress that it is your responsibility to communicate to your photographer/videographer that no church furnishings and/or decorations are to be moved or tampered with. The sacredness of the space and the sacredness of the occasion dictate that picture taking should be respectful and reverential. Thus, the level of everyone's voices should also reflect this reverence.

MUSIC FOR YOUR WEDDING

The first step in planning the music for your wedding is to schedule a meeting with the Director of Liturgy & Music. This initial meeting is used to give you a sense of where in the ceremony music is needed and to offer guidance and suggestions as you begin to pick the types of music and musicians that will be a part of your wedding. Some couples have no idea where to begin, and others have quite a few ideas about what they want. Regardless of how clear your ideas are about music for your wedding, **all couples must meet with the Director of Liturgy & Music prior to scheduling any and all musicians.**

The principle pianist/organist is the Director of Liturgy & Music, but there are times when a couple may wish to involve a family member or friend in providing prelude music (part of the music) for their Wedding Liturgy. These requests can be discussed and accommodated, providing said guest musician(s) is capable. At St. Albert the Great visiting singers are allowed one song, with the remaining (sung) music to be sung by a parish cantor. All music involving a sung text must reflect God's love rather than simply your love for each other. Some visiting musicians may prefer to sing and also to provide their own accompaniment, usually using a piano. Please be aware that this is not allowed here at St. Albert, as singing and playing are each separate liturgical actions. You should also be aware that using CDs or other forms of **recorded music is not permitted** before, during, or after the wedding ceremony.

It is the **cantor's** responsibility to proclaim the parts of your Liturgy that are typically sung and to invite and engage the response of all who have gathered to celebrate with you. As you worship here at the parish, you will have a chance to become familiar with the cantors of St. Albert. They are available to schedule for your Wedding Liturgy and are also on the list.

Musicians' Fee Schedule

The typical fee for the services of the Director of Liturgy & Music, or other listed musicians providing organ/piano accompaniment, coordination, and planning is: \$150.00. This fee includes one planning meeting and one rehearsal with cantors and other musicians prior to your wedding. If additional rehearsal(s) are needed due to the involvement of guest musicians or other circumstances, this fee may be increased in consultation with the wedding couple, or decreased due to special circumstances. If additional planning meetings are required, the fee could also increase.

The typical fee for the services of the cantors and other musicians is \$125.00 each. This fee includes rehearsing with the accompanist, if needed, and may be increased if additional rehearsals are needed.

Note: Musicians typically do not attend the Wedding Rehearsal. It is required that all musicians' fees be paid prior to the beginning of your wedding ceremony.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

These laypeople have the role of making sure that all details of the liturgy run smoothly and that they are in accordance with the practices of the faith community of St. Albert. The Pastoral Minister assigns a coordinator to a couple. The coordinator and the couple meet at least three times: with the priest/deacon in the liturgy planning, at the rehearsal, and the wedding day. They will be the contact for the couple for all the details surrounding the liturgy: decorations, keys, etc. The fee for the coordinator is in the range of \$100-\$125.

PRIEST/DEACON (PRESIDER)

It is not necessary to have a typed outline for the parish presider, but it is important that the reader have the Scripture reading at the pulpit ahead of time and that they not carry it up in a folded state. It is the responsibility of the couple to do this.

Before printing the program, make sure that you have finalized the choices of readings, music, etc. with the presider. Music and lyrics are copyrighted materials and permission to print them in the program must be obtained from the publisher unless the music is in our parish hymnal.

There is no charge for use of our parish church since you and/or your parent are a *registered member of the parish and committed to parish stewardship*. It is appropriate to give your parish presider a gift in recognition of his part in the wedding. The range of the gift starts at \$100.00 to \$200.00.

SUMMARY OF FEES

It is the parish custom to give wedding fees/stipends before the wedding takes place. This can be done ahead of time by mailing them or giving them at the rehearsal.

Priest/Deacon: \$75.00

Wedding Coordinator: \$125.00

Organist/Keyboard: \$150.00

Cantor: \$125.00

Other instrumentalists: \$125.00 - \$150.00, each

The fee for the parish pianist/organist includes the wedding liturgy, one planning meeting with the couple and if applicable, one with a guest soloist. If additional meetings are requested by the couple or additional rehearsals with a cantor or guest musicians are needed, **\$25.00** per half-hour session will be added to the base fee.

REHEARSAL

The time for rehearsal is set with the presider. We ask that you and the other people involved be prompt.

Please bring your marriage license to the rehearsal. Give it to the presider at this time. Your rehearsal is the time that you, your wedding party, ushers, family members, etc., will be receiving specific instructions regarding your actual wedding ceremony. Thus it is not possible for musicians to rehearse/perform during this time period. It is suggested that musicians' rehearsals take place prior to your wedding rehearsal. The church can be reserved for musicians' rehearsals by contacting the parish office.

On the day of your wedding, there are rooms adjacent to the church that can be used by the wedding party to dress before the ceremony. Your wedding coordinator can show them to you. Customarily, the men are already dressed when they arrive at church.

ETIQUETTE

Food and Beverages

It is not acceptable to bring any food, soda, water bottles, etc., into the church. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on church grounds. The church is a house of prayer and thus the space is sacred and should be treated as such. Please avoid any embarrassment by advising your guests of this requirement.

Gum Chewing

Gum/tobacco chewing is not permitted in the church. While nervous people may need something to help them get through exciting times, it is very difficult to communicate with people who are chewing gum, tobacco, etc. Videos and pictures will show mouths chewing and ruin the images that you will want to cherish in the future.

Control of Small Children

The sacred space of the church belongs to all age groups, but rehearsals and weddings are special moments that need small children under control. Running around in the aisles and in the sanctuary area are not appropriate.

Pictures & Video Taping

Please ask your photographer/videographer to check with the priest/deacon regarding what is acceptable and what is not. It is never acceptable to use flash photography once the wedding ceremony has begun. Also, movement (such as walking around while taking photographs) during the wedding ceremony is not permitted. Please communicate these guidelines to your (paparazzi!) wedding guests as well.

It is important for the bride and groom to introduce their parents to the presider if he does not already know them.