

Wedding Policies
of
St. Peter's Parish

4500 Duxhall Drive
Lincoln NE 68516
(402) 423-1239

Wedding Coordinator:
Michelle Kreifels
(402) 423-7044

Dear Friends,

Congratulations! You have chosen the Sacrament of Marriage as your lifetime vocation. What an important step you are taking in your life. You have probably spent many hours planning and dreaming of your wedding day and your life together. Now comes the time to plan your wedding liturgy. We feel this is the most important part of your wedding day, and we want to help you make it the most blessed and joyous ceremony it can be. St. Peter's parish has compiled the following wedding policies to be used as a guide for the planning of your wedding liturgy.

God Bless You!

Wedding Policies of St. Peter's Parish

Who can be Married at St. Peter's? Anyone who is a registered and active member of St. Peter's Parish can be married in the parish church. If the bride or the groom is not an active member, but a parent of the bride or groom is a registered and active member of the parish, then the couple may be married in the church. By "active member", it is meant that the person is regularly attending weekly Mass. For those parishioners who have only recently moved into the parish, St. Peter's highly encourages and recommends that they return to their home parish for the celebration of their wedding. Canon Law makes no distinction between being married in the bride's home parish or the groom's home parish. St. Peter's can do the marriage preparation for those couples temporarily living here who will be returning to their home parish for their wedding liturgy. The Christian moral code clearly prohibits cohabitation by the prospective bride and groom. Though cohabitation is not grounds for refusing a church marriage, it is a cause of scandal.

The Diocesan Marriage Policy shall be adhered to for all weddings. This includes the procedures and time tables involved in the assessment and marriage preparation processes. A copy of the policy is available from the parish priest.

Documents: During the marriage preparation, Catholics must furnish a recent copy of their baptismal certificate (no older than six months). This can be obtained from the church where the baptism occurred. In the case of an interfaith marriage, the non-catholic person should also provide documentation of his/her baptism. If an annulment of a previous marriage has been obtained by the bride or groom, a copy of the Declaration of Freedom to Marry must be given to the priest at the first preparation meeting. Pre-nuptial forms and dispensation forms (if any) must be completed by the priest during this time also. The marriage license must be presented to the priest during or before the rehearsal.

Celebrant: The St. Peter's priest who assists the couple in their preparation will be the celebrant at their wedding. Concelebrants are welcome. If either the bride or groom has a brother, uncle, or nephew who is a priest, he will be granted permission to celebrate the Mass or ceremony. He need not necessarily have been involved in the marriage preparation process. Couples planning a wedding in St. Peter's Church, but who are receiving their marriage preparation outside St. Peter's Parish or the Lincoln Diocese, are to inform the priest who is supervising their preparation that he is to provide the pastor of St. Peter's with the completed pre-nuptial file with written verification that the marriage preparation process has been successfully completed in accordance with his diocese's requirements, at least one month before the wedding date.

Wedding Coordinator: The primary role of the wedding coordinator is to be your contact person for all wedding questions concerning the ceremony and to assist you with following the Wedding Policies. (Wedding Music questions are handled by the Saint

Peter's Director of Music Ministry (**Mary Zimmer Odgaard: 402-483-4945**) cf., wedding music guidelines) The wedding coordinator will help answer questions regarding the many wedding day choices and will be in attendance at the rehearsal and the wedding to help make sure your special day runs smoothly. Please contact the wedding coordinator by phone or email to set up an initial meeting once your date is set with the church secretary and you have received your wedding information from St Peter's. A brief initial meeting is required early in the planning process and all other information or details can be finalized through email or online correspondence.

Wedding coordinator Michelle Kreifels Home (402)423-7044 Cell (402)202-6838

Email: djkmjk90@hotmail.com

Time of Ceremony: There are certain time periods during the weekend for weddings. Each time period includes three to four hours giving the wedding party enough time to dress, take pictures, have the ceremony, and clean up the church. The times are: Friday at 4:00pm (summers only), Friday at 7:00pm, Saturday at 2:00pm. Weddings at 2:00pm on Saturday must be cleaned up and completely finished by 4:00pm for confessions and evening Mass.

Unity Candle/Flowers to Mary's Altar: Since these customs are not a part of the official rite of marriage, if they are desired, they can take place after the wedding vows or before the introduction of the couple and exit from the sanctuary. **Please use dripless candles in the lighting of the Unity Candle.**

Lector/Reader: The lector/reader for your wedding Mass must be a Catholic familiar with the appropriate protocol for reading the Scriptures at Mass. It is suggested that the lector/reader familiarize himself/herself with the parish sound system.

Stipend: The fee to reserve the church is \$300.00. The suggested minimum stipend to the officiating priest is \$200.00. The recommended stipend for the altar boys is \$10.00 each.

Music and Musicians: Music in Catholic weddings is sacred and Christ centered. It directly reflects the holiness of the marriage sacrament. All wedding music must be approved by the St. Peter's Director of Music Ministry and is ultimately approved by the officiating priest. Secular or recorded music is not allowed. The St. Peter's organist/pianist provides all music at all weddings requiring an organ or piano. If additional outside musicians are approved, the St. Peter's Director of Music Ministry ensures the overall coordination of wedding music during the ceremony. All music information is provided in a separate "Wedding Music Guidelines" in your wedding information packet.

Decorations, Flowers, Candelabra, Aisle Runner: To keep the church looking beautiful for all occasions, nothing is to be taped, tacked, or attached to the pews. When choosing floral arrangements keep in mind the simple elegance of the church. Flowers may be placed on either side of the altar. Plant stands or podiums are available. It is recommended that arrangements should be kept to a maximum of 36" high. Flowers may also be placed in front of the lectern, not to exceed 48" high. Flowers can be placed on either side of the tabernacle and in front of the statues of Mary and Joseph. **No flowers may be placed on the altar.** St. Peter's will accept donations of wedding flower arrangements to be used for decoration for the upcoming Masses. Due to the threat of fire and dripping wax, no candelabra may be used. Since the main aisle of the church is carpeted, aisle runners are not necessary.

Photography: Non-flash photography may be taken during the wedding provided they are not disruptive and cause no delays in the ceremony. Posed pictures may be taken before or after the ceremony. If pictures are taken before the ceremony, they should be completed at least 30 minutes before the ceremony begins to allow for the seating of guests. If pictures are taken after the ceremony, they must be completed before Confessions and evening Mass. During the taking of the posed pictures, it must be remembered that the church is a sacred place and a reverent quiet is to be maintained. If it becomes excessively loud or disruptive, pictures will be moved to another location.

Videotaping: Videotaping may be done with a stationary camera located in the choir area of the sanctuary.

Attendants: To maintain proper focus during the wedding, no more than five attendants are permitted for each wedding. These five attendants include the maid/matron of honor and best man.

Flower Girls and Ring Bearers: Please consider the maturity and disposition of the child when choosing flower girls and ring bearers. We discourage using any child that is too young to participate in the Mass or ceremony.

Altar Servers: Altar servers must be boys who are trained in the church as altar servers. You may ask family members or friends to be altar servers at your wedding Mass or you can contact the wedding coordinator to line up altar servers for you. You need only two servers for the wedding Mass. A wedding ceremony without a Mass does not require altar servers.

Candle Lighters: Candle lighters are not allowed for weddings at St. Peter's. All candles are lit by the altar servers or acolytes before the wedding ceremony begins.

Dressing Room: A bride's room is available for the bride and her attendants. The groom and his attendants should dress before coming to the church. Please leave the dressing room clean and orderly after the wedding.

Attire: The bride, groom and all attendants must be properly and modestly attired. The bride and her attendants should not wear anything that is very low cut in the front or in the back or is immodestly short. The groom and his attendants should be properly attired in dress clothes. No jeans are allowed. These rules are not intended to limit your personal expression, but are necessary to maintain proper decorum in the House of the Lord and respect the dignity of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Rehearsal: Rehearsal will take place the evening before the wedding. The time needs to be arranged with the wedding coordinator and authorized by the priest so it can be placed on the parish calendar. The wedding party should meet the priest and/or wedding coordinator in the vestibule of the church. **Please remember to bring the marriage license to the rehearsal.** Rehearsal should begin on time and dress and behavior should be suited to the House of the Lord.

Food and Beverages: Out of respect for God, no food, drink, gum, or smoking is allowed in the church proper. **Alcohol is not to be consumed anywhere on the church grounds.** Likewise, no members of the wedding party should be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs during the rehearsal or wedding ceremony.

Renting the Hall: If you would like to rent the hall or meeting room for one or two hours before the wedding, you may do so by contacting Facility Scheduling at 421-9352. You may pick up a scheduling guidelines form in the vestibule of church for more information.

Dismissal of the Congregation: Dismissal of the congregation will be done by the ushers, row by row, after they have ushered out the parents and grandparents. The bride and groom **may not** usher out their guests. A receiving line may be formed in the courtyard (weather permitting) or to the far side of the vestibule.

Rice, Confetti, Etc.: The throwing of rice, confetti, bird seed, flower petals, or any other materials is **not** allowed in the church or on church grounds due to safety and custodial problems.

General Information:

Sanctuary: Seats 850

Pews: 20 rows of pews on either side of the center aisle. 18 rows of pews on the far right side and 18 rows of pews on the far left side of the church.

Saints Mary and Joseph Side Shrines: Available for smaller groups and has 18 rows of pews each seating 9 people. There is no center aisle in the side areas.

Lower level of the church is handicap accessible by an elevator located in the northwest corner of the main floor of the school.

Church Office: 4500 Duxhall Drive, Lincoln NE, 68516 (402) 423-1239

Office Hours: 8:00am to 4:00pm Monday through Friday

Closed on Holy Days

Wedding Coordinator: Michelle Kreifels (402) 423-7044

Djkmjk90@hotmail.com

Checklist

Provided to the priest or church:

_____ Updated Catholic baptismal certificate(s) or copy of non-catholic baptismal certificate.

_____ Engaged Encounter certificate.

_____ Natural Family Planning certificate.

_____ FOCCUS inventory Couple Meetings Signature sheet

_____ Affidavits of Freedom to Marry.

Brought to rehearsal

_____ Civil marriage license.

_____ All fees, stipends and offerings.

Extras

_____ Organize clean up crew for: Bride's room, bathrooms, pews and aisles, all programs collected and kneelers raised.

_____ Write down questions to ask the priest during pre-marriage instruction, or meet with or call the wedding coordinator.