

Congratulations on your engagement!

On behalf of the parish community of the Cathedral of Saint Andrew, I am delighted that you have chosen the Cathedral for your wedding. The community will be united with you in prayer as you prepare to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony. Welcome!

Because so many couples seek out the Cathedral of Saint Andrew as the site of their wedding, I have enclosed the policies that experience has taught our staff are necessary for creating a liturgy that you and your guests will never forget. You will spend time with members of our Cathedral staff as you prepare for your wedding. I have watched and participated in preparing many couples for Matrimony. I hope your experience with the Cathedral will be as rich as couples frequently tell us has been their experience.

The centerpiece of your wedding is the willful consent that you will give to one another. Any wedding ceremony in the Catholic Church presumes that each partner is equally responsible to the other. It also assumes faithfulness to each other until death. The covenant of marriage requires that people recognize that faithful love does not just happen. It is a gift to us from God who first established such a covenant between the people of the promise and the God whose name is written in our hearts.

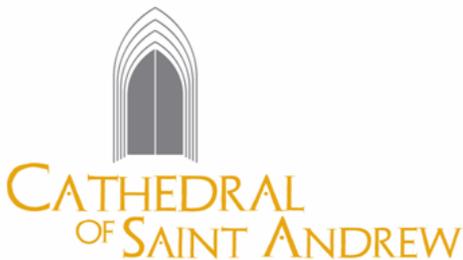
So that couples will recognize the solemnity of the wedding and its importance in their lives, I have established policies to assist every couple who receive the Sacrament of Matrimony at the Cathedral to enjoy their wedding and appreciate its significance in their lives.

God willing, your wedding will go well, be as fulfilling as your fondest dream and help each of you individually and as a couple to realize that the Sacrament of Matrimony is an important step in expressing the love that has grown between you over the last months and years.

With prayerful best wishes, I remain:

In Christ's love,

(Very Rev.) René Constanza, CSP
Rector



a ministry of the Paulist Fathers

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cathedralofsaintandrew.org

WELCOME TO THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT ANDREW!

... as you begin

Please phone or email Lynnae Jarrell, Cathedral Wedding Coordinator. Lynnae is responsible for scheduling all weddings. She will guide you through the initial stages of scheduling and provide you with information about Cathedral policies. (616) 456-1454 ext. 1901. weddings@cathedralofsaintandrew.org

QUESTIONS:

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- 13. What kinds of decorations may I use at the Cathedral for a wedding?**
- 14. What are the guidelines for photography and videography?**
- 15. What if I am a parishioner at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew, but I am getting married at another Catholic Church?**
- 16. What if I also want to ask the Cathedral of Saint Andrew's parish Priest to preside at my wedding at another church?**

Miscellanea

QUESTIONS & RESPONSES:

1. Who can be married at the Cathedral?

The Catholic Church has a long tradition of celebrating the sacraments within one's own community of faith; registered parishioners of the Cathedral Parish and, as the mother church of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, we also welcome weddings of Roman Catholics from other parishes who might wish to celebrate their wedding in the Cathedral with the preparation and also officiated by a priest or deacon from the home parish of the couple. If the home parish priest cannot preside, a Cathedral of Saint Andrew priest may be requested.

2. Who can officiate or preside at Cathedral of Saint Andrew weddings?

The [Paulist priests](#) officiate at Cathedral weddings for parishioners. But permission can be given for a visiting priest or deacon to officiate. If you belong to another parish, your home parish priest is the appropriate person to ask to help you complete your wedding file and preside at your wedding. If the home parish priest cannot preside, a Cathedral of Saint Andrew priest may be requested through the Wedding Coordinator. Also see # 15

3. When do weddings take place at the Cathedral?

- Traditionally, the day and time for a wedding at the Cathedral is Saturday @ 1:30pm.
- Alternate times on Saturday are 10:00am or 6:30pm.
- On a Friday, or any other day of the week, the time for a wedding is 2:30 pm.
- Weddings are **not** permitted on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, during the Catholic Church's Easter Holy Week, or on Sundays.

4. Is the Cathedral Chapel available for weddings and/or convalidations?

Yes, they may also take place in the St. Ambrose Chapel when the guests will not exceed 60 persons. Please call the parish office at (616) 456-1454 ext. 1901 to schedule a date and time.

***Covid 19 guidelines are in place. They are updated regularly as changes occur. Please see the guidelines on the Cathedral's website. Thank you for your understanding.**

Preparation

5. What is the time period for preparation to celebrate a Catholic wedding?

The Catholic Bishops of the Province of Michigan, which includes the Diocese of Grand Rapids, requires a **minimum immediate preparation period of six months prior to the celebration of a couple's wedding**. The covenant of love that a couple hopes to enter with the Sacrament of Matrimony requires time, so the couple is ready for the commitment they are about to make. Six months is necessary to insure time for proper preparation.

6. What preparation is required for a couple before the wedding?

Since marriage in the Catholic Church is a sacrament and a lifetime commitment, one of the ways the church values and honors it is by taking time to help couples prepare. After a date has been confirmed with the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator, all couples may begin their preparation.

All couples:

- schedule a time to meet initially with the priest that will assist in filling out what is known as the **A Form** or **Wedding File**.
- complete a comprehensive Pre-Marriage Inventory or questionnaire given to the couple by their priest/deacon. It is a premarital assessment and evaluation of the couple's readiness to marry. The assessment is usually done on line. When the assessment is complete the couple will meet with the priest or deacon witness to their wedding several times for discussions and conversations.
- are required to participate in a [marriage preparation program](#), Pre-Cana, either in the Diocese of Grand Rapids or a class near their home parish. A Pre-Cana Conference which is usually a day long time together to meet with other couples who are soon to be married and three couples who have been married for some time as well as a priest. The Cana Conference explores finances, day to day living as a married couple, sexuality and how Christ animates a marriage. A certificate will be presented to the couple to give to the priest who is helping to complete the wedding file. Be sure to schedule a class at least six months before your wedding.
For more information on the Cana Conferences, their times and costs, please visit the Diocesan of Grand Rapids website: www.dioceseofgrandrapids.org
- request an official Baptismal Record **from the church** in which each person was baptized. The record of Baptism is to be obtained **within six months of the wedding** from the Church. The Baptism Certificate is sent to the priest helping the couple to complete the wedding file.
- secure a license to be married is required. A license for marriage is issued to be used within 33 days of issuance. Arrangements to secure the license are made by the couple and instructions on how to get a license are found online.
https://www.accesskent.com/Departments/CountyClerk/marriage_app.htm The marriage license to perform the wedding ceremony is presented to the wedding coordinator or priest at the rehearsal. If a legal license is not presented to the marriage coordinator or the priest prior to the ceremony, **a wedding may not proceed**.

Policies for Liturgy and Music

7. Are there policies regarding the liturgy of the wedding, the music used, personal coordinators, etc.?

Yes. The content of the service is set forth in the Church's official Ritual Book for weddings. The couple being married is encouraged to engage in helping to plan the wedding service. The Cathedral also has standards and policies regarding the music to be used at a wedding. They are set forth in some detail in the [Wedding Policies](#) for the Cathedral of Saint Andrew which is given to all couples who are going to be married in the Cathedral.

The couple will plan the liturgy with the Cathedral's Wedding Coordinator and discuss the choices with the priest who is presiding at the wedding. A welcome letter will be sent after the date of your wedding has been confirmed that will invite you to meet with the Cathedral's Wedding Coordinator to begin the process of completing the Wedding Ceremony & Liturgy Planning Guide and answer specific questions regarding the service.

**Please note that if you have a personal wedding coordinator for your wedding day, s/he does not plan the time once the bride and groom enter the Cathedral until the time the bride and groom leave the Cathedral. Please make sure you share the policy with your personal coordinators.*

8. What Kind of Music is Allowed at the Cathedral During a Wedding?

- All music that is part of Cathedral wedding liturgies must be liturgical music.
- The Cathedral organist and a Cantor are required for the music at Cathedral wedding liturgies.
- All music accompanying weddings is to be approved by the Cathedral Director of Music. The music selections for weddings can be found on the Cathedral's website at <http://cathedralmusic.weebly.com/wedding-music-form.html>.
- Secular music is not allowed during Cathedral wedding liturgies.
- Additional musicians, particularly those with no Cathedral affiliation, must be approved by the Cathedral's Director of Music.
- The Cathedral's Director of Music will review the choices submitted by the engaged couple from the Cathedral's website. Choices for music should be submitted by the couple at least 4 months before the wedding.
- The Cathedral Cantor is required to rehearse with the Cathedral Director of Music. The Cantor will perform all liturgical music during the wedding liturgy.
- Soloists hired by the couple outside the Cathedral musicians must first be approved by the Cathedral Director of Music and be paid according to the soloists' fees. Soloists are required to rehearse with the Cathedral Director of Music.
- Musicians, other than the Cantor and Cathedral Director of Music, or an organist he appoints, must be approved by the Cathedral Director of Music, and paid according to the musicians' fees. Musicians are required to rehearse with the Cathedral Director of Music.

Scheduling a Wedding at the Cathedral

9. If one person of the couple is not Catholic, is s/he able to be married at the Cathedral?

Yes, s/he is free to marry a Catholic in a Catholic ceremony. At least one person must be Catholic.

10. How does a Cathedral parishioner* schedule a wedding?

***Parishioner:** Is anyone who has been registered **AND** has been actively, regularly giving and participating at the Cathedral for **at least 6 months before scheduling at wedding date.**

1. Contact the Wedding Coordinator at the Parish Office who will verify that you are a parishioner and then give you available dates/times. Weddings at the Cathedral are usually scheduled **more than a year in advance** because of the demand.
2. Request a date and time for a wedding to be put on hold for no more than one week.
3. Send a **\$200.00 non-refundable deposit** made out to the Cathedral of Saint Andrew. Please place the date for your wedding on the memo line.
4. **A Cathedral** priest or deacon will be assigned to the couple based on the availability of their schedules. Or a **parishioner** may **request a specific Cathedral priest or deacon by asking him** to help **complete the wedding file and** confirm with the Wedding Coordinator that he will also **preside at the wedding.**
5. When the deposit **and** the confirmation from your priest to complete your wedding file and preside at your wedding are received, your date will officially be placed on the Cathedral's calendar.

11. How does someone who is NOT a Cathedral parishioner schedule a wedding?

1. Contact the Wedding Coordinator at the Parish Office who will give you available dates/times. Weddings at the Cathedral are usually scheduled **more than a year in advance** because of the demand.
2. Ask a priest or deacon from his/her home parish to **confirm** with the Cathedral **through email or phone** that **he will be preparing your marriage file** and be **present to preside at your wedding.**
*If the priest agrees to complete the wedding file, but cannot preside, he still needs to contact the parish office and talk to the Wedding Coordinator. A Saint Andrew parish priest can be asked to preside at your wedding.
3. Call the Wedding Coordinator at the Cathedral, and she will place your date on hold for no more than one week.
4. Send a **\$500.00 non-refundable deposit** made out to the Cathedral of Saint Andrew. Please place the date for your wedding on the memo line.
5. When the deposit and the confirmation from the priest to complete your wedding file and preside are received, your date will officially be placed on the calendar.

Fees: Parishioners and Non-parishioners

12. What is the cost of either a Marriage or a Convalidation at the Cathedral?

The following fees have been established for a wedding at the Cathedral of St. Andrew and the balance (less the deposit) must be paid in full two months prior to the wedding.

Parishioners: \$1000.00 for the main sanctuary (Seating is limited to 120)*

\$800.00 for the Chapel (Seating is limited to 20)*

Non-parishioners: \$2,250.00 for the main sanctuary (Seating is limited to 120)*

\$1,200.00 for the Chapel (Seating is limited to 20)*

What does the cost include?

The cost includes:

- the use of the Cathedral and facilities
- the preparation and recording of church records
- the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator and Liturgy planning
- the Cathedral Music Director, organist and planning
- the printing of the Worship Aid for each guest
- the Cathedral Cantor
- the use of the Bride's Room
- the Diocese of Grand Rapids security

***Covid 19 guidelines are in place. They are updated regularly as changes occur. Please see the guidelines on the Cathedral's website. Thank you for your understanding.**

Decorations

13. What kinds of decorations may I use at the Cathedral for a wedding?

“Simple is best” is an excellent principal to practice when decorating a Church. The objective of decorating any worship space is always to improve the quality of the liturgical celebration. Because it is a beautiful liturgical space in and of itself, it is recommended that little decoration is necessary at the Cathedral. Decorations should not be overbearing to the senses or overwhelming to the space they occupy, nor should they interfere with the actions of the celebration.

To insure the Sacrament of Matrimony is not compromised (*i.e.* Liturgy of the Word, Eucharist, the couple, and the Church gathered,) the following guidelines should be used when preparing decorations for the church space:

- A maximum of two potted floral arrangements are permitted in the sanctuary, one in front of the altar and/or one in front of the ambo or on the top step of the front corners of the sanctuary.
- Flowers may be placed in front of the Marian image (Our Lady of Guadalupe) during the Adoration of Mary. Please advise florists not to scratch the slate floor or any wood when moving flower arrangements.

Maximum Dimensions for Arrangements:

The front of the Altar: 30” high x 30” wide x 26” depth

The front of the Ambo: 35” high x 18” wide x 18” depth

Front corners of Sanctuary: 35” high x 35” wide x 18” depth

- There are 20 pews on the left and right of the center aisle. Cathedral pews may be decorated with unobtrusive bows or ribbon with simple flower arrangements. Only non-abrasive elastic attachments may be used. Permanent or semi-permanent attachments such as adhesive, wire, etc. are **not** permitted. Whatever decorations are used on the pews, they must not interfere with people being able to enter and exit the pews.
- Additional floral arrangements may be used outside the church. Hooks are positioned as part of the church’s exterior wall near the main door entrance for the hanging of wreaths, for example. Other hangers, nails, screws, or hanging devices are not permitted.
- The unity candle is not a liturgical part of the Catholic wedding. If you should choose to light a unity candle, it takes place prior to your ceremony. The couple must provide their own candles and candle holders. Only dripless candles may be used and floor protection below the candles is required.
- Additional candles may not be added to the decor of the church. During the Easter Season, the Church’s Paschal or Easter candle will be at the ambo. Its light is a symbol of the risen Christ and may not be moved.
- All processions must include a processional cross.
- Dropping flower petals, whether real, silk or paper in the aisles is not permitted at any time. Nothing may be thrown on the floor inside or ground outside.
- Decorations for the Sacrament of Marriage are best when they reflect the liturgical time of the year. Removing or adjusting the parish’s seasonal décor to accommodate a wedding is not allowed.
- Flowers and other decorations should be compatible with the colors of the liturgical season in which they are used. Should a wedding take place during Lent, please note that the Church forbids the altar area to be decorated with flowers during the Lenten season. A variety of colors and styles may be utilized in designing floral arrangements at other times. It is best to use the liturgical color scheme already established for the season.

- Because of safety concerns, aisle runners are not permitted in the Cathedral.
- Archways and candelabras are not permitted in the Cathedral during a wedding.
- The Cathedral is a living historical record for the past, present and future. The utmost care must be given to preserving the quality of our building and grounds when decorating for an event.
- When considering a decoration plan, keep in mind that setup and cleanup is the user's responsibility. The church is available for setup 1 hour prior to the scheduled ceremony time (including florists and photographers.)
- **Cleanup should be completed no more than one hour after the wedding ceremony ends.** We recommend that couples designate a clean-up coordinator. To see that all decorations (except for any floral arrangements you may wish to leave for the Cathedral's use), the Bride's Room, florist boxes, pew arrangements, worship aids and other papers are to be removed from the church.

If the couple chooses, the Cathedral staff will clean up for an additional fee of \$100 paid with the final balance.

- Occasionally couples have requests about decorations that are not specifically addressed here, you may contact the Cathedral Wedding Coordinator to discuss any additional ideas. To preserve the integrity of our sacred space any proposals must be pre-approved by the Cathedral rector.

Photography

14. What are the guidelines for photography and videography?

Photographers and Videographers are welcome at your wedding. They are expected to adhere to the high standards of their profession and do their work as seamlessly as possible to give you a visual memory of the celebration of your wedding. Most professional photographers and/or videographers are aware of their role and place at a wedding—to provide a valuable service without obstructing or hindering the quality of the liturgy or distracting from the prayer.

Notes for photographers and videographers:

- Flash or light enhancements of any kind are **not** allowed during the ceremony.
- Additional pictures or videotaping may take place before and/or after the ceremony, both inside and outside of the Cathedral for no more than one hour.
- Please remember that pews in the Cathedral are not work benches for cases, spare equipment, plugs etc. Blankets used by movers are necessary to protect pews.
- Visits to the Cathedral for prior orientation to the space and filming conditions is encouraged during normal weekday hours. Please avoid weekly Mass times.
- When a wedding rehearsal is scheduled, it is advisable to have photography and/or videography representatives present.
- During the ceremony, photographers and/or videographers are to maintain stationary positions in the north or south transept. They may also position themselves in the center aisle but only behind the assembled congregation.
- Photographers and /or videographers are encouraged to come no less than one hour before the scheduled ceremony to set up their equipment.
- No photographer or videographer is allowed behind the altar steps.
- The choir loft is **not** accessible to photographers, videographers, or the public due to Fire Marshal codes and safety concerns.
- Couples should please advise friends, family and guests of the policies for photography. Weddings in the Cathedral are “unplugged.” Phone cameras should not be used during the ceremony. All cell phones are to be silenced.
- Robotic cameras/drones are not allowed in the Cathedral.
- For an additional fee, the Cathedral of Saint Andrew is wired for recording ceremonies using five separate cameras stationed throughout the Cathedral. Please consult Lynnae Jarrell, Wedding Coordinator, about utilizing the Diocese of Grand Rapids and Cathedral videotaping of your wedding. She can provide you with the fees and contract. The contract can also be found on the Cathedral’s website under Sacramental Life/Marriage within the *Download Wedding Policy* link/**Video Contract download**.

Weddings at another Catholic Church

15. What if I am a parishioner at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew, but I am getting married at another Catholic Church?

Any one of your Cathedral priests is more than happy and willing to accompany you and your fiancé in the wedding preparation of the wedding file even if you are not getting married at the Cathedral.

<http://www.cathedralofsaintandrew.org/contact-us>

Pastor/Rector: Very Rev. René Constanza, CSP

(616) 456-1454 x1905

fatherrene@cathedralofsaintandrew.org

Parochial Vicars: Rev. William Edens, CSP

(616) 456-1454 x1906

fatherbill@cathedralofsaintandrew.org

Rev. Michael Hennessy, CSP

(616) 456-1454 x1916

fathermichael@cathedralofsaintandrew.org

Deacon Dennis Rybicki

(616) 456-1454 x1903

deacondennis@cathedralofsaintandrew.org

Please contact the priest in which you wish to request to begin your preparation. If he is available, please call the Wedding Coordinator to schedule a meeting.

There is a **\$100.00 processing** fee for this service. A check written out to the Cathedral of Saint Andrew and delivered to the Cathedral office when you schedule your meeting with the wedding coordinator. This must be scheduled before you begin your preparation with your priest.

The fee covers the wedding file preparation, Prepare & Enrich Reports, completing the file, and sending it to the Chancery at the Diocese of Grand Rapids.

16. What if I want to ask a Cathedral of Saint Andrew parish priest to preside at my wedding at another church?

Please contact the priest in which you wish to request to preside. You may ask him to check his calendar to see if he is available to be **present at your rehearsal and on your wedding day**. If he is available, you must call the Wedding Coordinator to schedule the date of your wedding. You should plan for additional mileage and lodging cost for his travels. Please note, it is also customary to present a gift to your priest.

Miscellanea:

- **Vehicles, horse drawn buggies, or the like are NEVER allowed on the Piazza!**
- **Are people who have been married before able to marry at the Cathedral?**

Unless there has been an annulment, usually, the answer to this question is no. That is because the Catholic Church regards marriage as a permanent commitment. However, because there are exceptions and extenuating circumstances, you would be well advised to discuss it as soon as possible with the priest or deacon whom you approach about officiating at your wedding before a commitment for preparations have been made.

Thank you for inquiring about celebrating your wedding at the Cathedral. Contact us as soon as you have the information needed and we will add your special date to our calendar.

Blessings!

Lynnae L. Jarrell

Wedding Coordinator

Cathedral of Saint Andrew

215 Sheldon SE, Grand Rapids, Mi 49503

(w) 616 456 1454 ext. 1901

weddings@cathedralofsaintandrew.org