



## WEDDING GUIDELINES

123 E. 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
(513) 721-2988

Congratulations on your engagement! We are honored that you are considering celebrating the sacrament of marriage at historic Old St. Mary's Church. We are a popular choice for weddings because of our beautiful church, rich history, convenient downtown location, and the service we provide.

These guidelines are meant to assist you in the planning of your wedding. If you have questions at any point leading up to your wedding day, please contact our wedding administrator. In the meantime, enjoy your marriage preparation process, as the two of you grow closer to each other and in your faith! It is our hope that your experience at our parish will prepare you for a life-long covenant, made in the presence of God and the Church. Please know that we will be praying for you during your marriage preparation!

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Jon-Paul Bevak

### ***Who can get married at Old St. Mary's?***

We welcome both parishioners and non-parishioners, as long as at least one of you is Catholic and both are free to marry in the Church and have the permission of your pastor.

### ***When are Weddings Scheduled at Old St. Mary's?***

Weddings are scheduled on Saturdays to begin between 2:30pm-5:00pm (3hr reservation). Weddings are not scheduled on Fridays or Sundays. They are also not scheduled during Advent, during Lent, or special Feast Days based on the parish calendar.

Rehearsals are scheduled for the Friday evening on the day before your wedding. The rehearsal begins at 5:00pm, or before, and can last up to one hour. Please have everyone arrive early so the rehearsal can start on time and ensure that you have use of the full hour.

### ***How much does it cost to reserve the church, and what does that include?***

The fee for celebrating a wedding at Old St. Mary's Church is \$1500. A \$400 non-refundable deposit is required to reserve the wedding date. The balance must be paid two months before the wedding. The deposit and balance checks should be made payable to Old St. Mary's Church; be sure to include the bride's name and the wedding date on the check. Non-payment will result in cancelation. Active parishioners of Old St. Mary's for at least one full year prior to their wedding should schedule a meeting with the pastor for their fee structure.

#### **This reservation fee includes**

- use of the church for three hours, which will include all vendor/guest/party access, set up, the ceremony, photos, and clean up
- a one-hour rehearsal on the Friday preceding the wedding may be scheduled to begin at or before 5:00 pm
- use of the parish hall by the wedding party before the ceremony (within reserved time)
- the assistance of a parish wedding coordinator at the rehearsal & wedding
- a security guard to assist with parking direction for the limited onsite and pay lot parking

If you wish to have ALL your photos taken in the church BEFORE the ceremony (an option only for weddings 3:00 pm and later), the 3hr reservation will begin 1.5hrs before the scheduled start of the ceremony. If you will have ALL your photos in the church taken AFTER the ceremony, your 3hr reservation will begin 1hr before the ceremony.

### ***What do I need to do to get married at Old St. Mary's Church?***

**To reserve your date, you need to send the following to our office:**

- \$400 non-refundable deposit
- completed & signed agreement (found at the end of these guidelines)
- non-parishioners will need a letter from their pastor granting permission to marry at Old St. Mary's (this is requested by you and sent to Old St. Mary's office)
- a Catholic priest or deacon to prepare you for marriage and to officiate your ceremony along with his written confirmation

We will hold your date after receiving your deposit and agreement, while a letter from Old St. Mary's will be sent to your officiant asking for confirmation that he is a cleric in good standing with the

Catholic Church, licensed to perform weddings in Ohio, will be responsible for your marriage preparation as required by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, and will provide the necessary paperwork to Old St. Mary's parish at the rehearsal and conduct the rehearsal and perform your ceremony at the contracted time. We will contact you if we have not received a response from him within 30 days of mailing the letter. If we do not receive confirmation, your reservation will be canceled. If the marriage preparation is not completed, or the assisting cleric (priest or deacon) does not feel you will be adequately prepared for a lifetime of marriage by the time of the ceremony, your date will be canceled.

Your reservation will be made official when the above items have been received and this agreement has been signed by all parties, including an Old St. Mary's representative. Requests for changes in contracted dates or times need to be submitted to the parish wedding administrator in writing. If the request is accepted, any changes will be reflected on the agreement and a new copy will be emailed to you.

### **Other documents needed for your marriage file by your wedding day (collected by the wedding officiant)**

- Pre-Cana certificate or equivalent.
- The forms required by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati filled out by the priest conducting your preparation.
- Baptismal Certificates for both parties. A baptismal certificate of the Catholic Party must be a recently issued one, not more than (6) months old. If one party is not baptized, the proper dispensation is to be obtained from your bishop.
- If either party was previously married, documents must be submitted which prove the person is free to marry in the Catholic Church. No wedding can be scheduled until the annulment process is completed.
- **The wedding cannot take place without a marriage license!** All couples will need to bring a valid marriage license to the rehearsal. If you live in Ohio, you will apply for the license from the county in which you reside. If you live outside of Ohio, you will apply for a license from the county in which you are getting married. Old St. Mary's is in Hamilton County. Visit the Hamilton County website for more information and to pre-register: [www.probatect.org/marriagelicenses/index.htm](http://www.probatect.org/marriagelicenses/index.htm).

### ***Assisting Clergy***

The proper clergy for officiating your wedding is your pastor (of either the Bride or the Groom). You are also free to invite any other priest or deacon who is in good standing with his Bishop to officiate, provided permission of your pastor has been obtained. We cannot confirm a wedding date unless we have a written commitment from a priest who agreed to accept the responsibility for the wedding (please see "what do I need to do to" section for details). That priest is responsible for all pre-nuptial preparations, the rehearsal and the wedding itself. He is responsible, of course, for seeing that all Archdiocesan Norms, Liturgical Norms and Old St. Mary's Policies are followed.

### ***Planning the Liturgy***

Your priest or deacon will be sent information regarding liturgical policies of Old St. Mary's Church. **One of the most frequently asked questions is concerning the unity candle, which may not be used at Old St. Mary's Church.** However, we do welcome the addition of a Marian Devotion if you choose.

If your officiant requests a server, the Old St. Mary's Sacristan will serve the wedding. If additional servers are needed, please contact the parish wedding administrator for arrangements for parish servers. There will be a \$25 per server fee for any additional servers. Outside servers are not permitted. A list of the approved readings will be provided to you.

A parish wedding coordinator will attend the rehearsal & wedding. They will prepare the church, assist the officiant and family, and ensure that all policies are observed, and that respectful decorum is maintained. The parish wedding coordinator will oversee arranging the order of the procession in and out of the church. This will be based on the number of attendants and in keeping with the church teachings.

### ***Attire***

Attire for the bride and groom, wedding party and guests should reflect the sacredness of the occasion and the church. All in attendance should keep in mind respect, honor and reverence for the Real Presence of Our Lord. The bride must have her shoulders, upper arms, back and knees covered. The veil does not count as covering and any bolero or shawl that does cover cannot be too sheer. It is required that, men and women, shoulders to knees be covered, no low-cut tops or bare midriff, and no above the knee shorts, workout clothes or beachwear. In the event the parish wedding coordinator deems attire not appropriate, a coverup/wrap around will be provided.

### ***Music***

Music is an important part of all weddings celebrated at Old St. Mary's. At Old St. Mary's, we have the highest of standards. To assist you in choosing musicians and choosing your music, you are to contact the parish's Director of Sacred Music as soon as possible (Br. Brent Stull, [bstull@oldstmarys.org](mailto:bstull@oldstmarys.org)). He must approve anything related to music.

Our Church is a very traditional looking church building dating back to 1842; all music should fit the space to give you the wedding of your dreams. As such, we do not allow contemporary music, the guitar, keyboard, drums, and recorded music. All music and song must also be performed from the choir loft. No music practice is allowed at the rehearsal.

Musicians will have access to Old St. Mary's one hour prior to the ceremony. Old St. Mary's Church requires that all song selections be liturgical and in accord with the policies of our parish, which may not match the practice of other parishes. **All music choices will need to be approved by the Director of Sacred Music before the programs are printed.**

### ***Flowers and Decorations***

**All decorations must be approved one month before the ceremony by the wedding coordinator.** Flowers/decor are not permitted on any of our altars or the Communion rail. All décor must be attached without the use of tape, nails, etc. Items or seasonal decorations in the sanctuary, around the statues, and liturgical furniture may not be moved, covered, or decorated. Access for deliveries and set up is for during the reservation time (no earlier). Clean-up must be completed within the reservation timeframe. Old St. Mary's Church is not able to store items before or after the wedding (any décor will be disposed of if left in the church). No additional candles are permitted, and the parish sacristan regulates use of the church's candles. For safety reasons, aisle runners, flower petals, bubbles, rice, confetti, etc., may NOT be used inside or outside the church.

## ***Photography***

It is important to remember everything the photographer does should reflect reverence for our church and the liturgy. Please tell your photographer to introduce him or herself to the coordinator, at which time they will go over parish policies. Violation of church policies is grounds for the removal of the photographer/videographer from the premises. Old St. Mary's is not responsible for loss of services following removal of vendors from the premises.

The photography policies include (but may not be limited to):

- All photography in the Church should be dignified and reverent. There should be no jumping, shouting, lying down, etc.
- Photograph/video may be taken from the side aisles, rear of the church, or in the choir loft at the discretion of the musicians. Photographers are not allowed to enter the Sanctuary or come between guests and the liturgy. The center aisle is only allowed to be used during the processional/recessional.
- Flash photography will only be allowed during the processional and recessional. During the ceremony, all extra lighting is prohibited.
- No equipment may be left in the aisles and may not be placed between guests and the Sanctuary, or in the Sanctuary. No cables of any type may be used. No equipment can be attached to any church surface with adhesives or tacks/nails/screws/etc. Microphones may NOT be plugged into our sound system and may only be placed in the Sanctuary with the permission and assistance of the Sacristan.
- Photographs may be taken in the sanctuary after the ceremony, provided you are finished within time designated by the church agreement. The high pulpit and the area between the altar and tabernacle may not be used.
- No equipment is to be stored at the church before or after the ceremony. Old St. Mary's Church is not responsible for any equipment.
- The photographers are asked to introduce themselves to the assisting cleric to see if they have additional restrictions (our rules are not negotiable, but a priest may add restrictions).

## ***Please Note***

- Old St. Mary's does not have air conditioning, an important point to consider from June through September. The places for preparation for the bride and the priest are air conditioned.
- The consumption of alcohol or any illegal substance on parish property prior to or after the wedding by any member of the wedding party is strictly forbidden. Any member of the wedding party that shows signs of having been drinking will not be permitted to participate in the wedding ceremony.
- If either the bride or the groom, or both, show signs of intoxication, this will lead to the cancelation of your wedding. Old St. Mary's is not responsible for any loss or expense following such a cancelation.
- Old St. Mary's is the oldest standing continuously used Church in the City of Cincinnati. With the age and beauty of the Church, at times work and repairs are required for the building that are outside of our control. While this does not happen often and we do everything we can to carry out any repairs and work as efficiently as possible, there is always the possibility of the building needing repairs during the time period of your wedding. The wedding itself will never be impeded, but there is no absolute guarantee for that the church will be 'construction free' for your wedding.
- This is your wedding, sacrament of matrimony and as such the bride and groom are the responsible parties to manage the details. Communication from Old St. Mary's Church will be between the bride and groom only; we do not communicate with wedding planners, parents, etc.
- To maintain proper liturgical standards, the Old St. Mary's parish wedding sacristan & coordinator will be responsible for direction and guidance inside the Church, this includes the rehearsal and wedding day. If you have hired a wedding planner you should communicate this with them.

## Agreement

By signing below, the Bride and Groom respectively agree:

- ❖ We have received and thoroughly read the Old St. Mary's Church "Wedding Guidelines" and appendices (updated January 2020) and agree to abide by all rules and regulations set forth therein. We certify that all information we have provided to Old St. Mary's Church is accurate.
- ❖ We are aware of all-time considerations involved for the use of the Church. All rehearsal, wedding, and delivery times must be scheduled in advance, approved, and in writing.
- ❖ The liturgical traditions of the Catholic Church will be honored, particularly in reception of Holy Communion, the observance of feasts and seasons, and the use of appropriate music. We have read and agree to uphold Old St. Mary's policies on flowers, photography, decoration, and music set forth in the Wedding Guidelines.
- ❖ We will provide the deposit (\$400) and agreement to reserve our wedding date and promise the remainder will be paid **two months** before our wedding date. Cancellations will be in writing. We understand this fee is non-refundable and does not include the priest stipend or musicians' fees.
- ❖ Violation of the Wedding Guidelines or other policies established by Old St. Mary's Church by any vendors is grounds for their removal from the premises. Old St. Mary's Church is not liable for any loss of services related to the removal of such vendors.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to ensure their attendants and ceremony participants conduct themselves with dignity and decorum while in and around the church. **Alcoholic beverages and illegal substances are not permitted on church property or in the parking lots. Violations will result in immediate cancellation of the wedding.** Old St. Mary's Church is not responsible for any financial or other losses incurred by the renters as a result of such cancellation. Anyone in the wedding who appears under the influence or is acting disrespectful will not be permitted to participate. No food or beverage is permitted in the church.
- ❖ Anything not covered in this agreement is left to the judgement of the Pastor of Old St. Mary's Church. We reserve the right to change, add or remove provision of this Agreement and/or Guidelines at any time.

Groom's name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

----- Below to be filled out by OSM representative, contract not valid without OSM representative signature -----

Letter from officiant received. Yes or No (circle one)

Old St. Mary's and premises are available on \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ pm until \_\_\_\_\_ pm.

OSM representative name \_\_\_\_\_

OSM representative signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Due to the high number of weddings occurring at Old St. Mary's, there can be no exceptions to this agreement.

*Contact and Wedding Information*

**DATE OF WEDDING** \_\_\_\_\_

**TIME OF CEREMONY** \_\_\_\_\_

**Photos BEFORE or AFTER the wedding? (circle one)**

**DATE OF REHEARSAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**TIME OF REHEARSAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIDE:** Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Parish \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Parish of Baptism \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

**GROOM:** Full Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Parish \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Parish of Baptism \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

**PRIEST/DEACON PRESIDING:**  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Parish \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Updated 01/2020