

PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE

Handbook for Engaged Couples



Saint Paul

the Apostle

6401 Gages Lake Rd.

Gurnee, Illinois 60031

847-918-0600

www.saintpaultheapostle.church

info@saintpaultheapostle.church

Rev. Chris D. Ciastoń, Pastor

Rev. Joe Curtis, Associate Pastor

Mr. Mike Penich, Deacon,

Mr. Ivan Siap, Deacon

Mr. Bob Birck, Deacon,

Mr. Rod Reyes, Deacon,

Mr. Andy Baker, Deacon,

Mr. Brent Bertke, Deacon

Mrs. Ruth Peck, Director of Music

Mrs. Arleen Siap, Wedding Coordinator

*MAY CHRIST DWELL IN YOUR HEARTS THROUGH FAITH,
AS YOU ARE BEING ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE. (EPHESIANS 3:17)*

Congratulations on the wonderful news of your engagement! We at St. Paul the Apostle share your joy and happiness as you begin the preparation for your wedding and for your married life together. It is an honor for us to be part of this sacred event in your life. We are hopeful that your marriage will truly become a blessing for the Church and the world.

Marriage is a sacred covenant of love that not only unites bride and groom with each other, but places them in a special way in the hands of God and in a new relationship to the community. The Church encourages the engaged to celebrate their wedding in the context of ritual prayer. When you marry in the Church, you will not only be asking God to bless your union, but you will also be asking God to be an integral part of your family life.

While marriage is a personal and intimate experience for the couple, it is also a public acceptance of a married couple's new vocation in the world and in the Church. When you celebrate your marriage in the Church, you receive the support of a community that affirms your commitment and surrounds you with the prayers and love of the Church to help you live out your vocation as a married couple.

The contents of this wedding packet will hopefully answer many of the questions you might have about weddings at St. Paul the Apostle. Besides following the marriage guidelines of the Church, the wedding policies at our parish have evolved over time in order to ensure an orderly and dignified celebration within the Catholic Tradition and to avoid any problems or misunderstandings that can arise in planning a church celebration. Please take time to read through these materials carefully. There are pages that you give directly to your florist, photographer and/or videographer.

We are committed to assisting you in planning a wedding liturgy that is both sacred and full of joy. This is a wonderful time for you to revisit your relationship to the Church and strengthen your faith. We hope that through this process you will come to know the Lord's love all the more deeply. We feel blessed to have the opportunity to share this journey with you.

Your Pastor & Your Parish Staff of Saint Paul the Apostle Parish

Preparing for Marriage
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In addition to this Handbook, you have received an entire packet of related materials from us in order to prepare for the wedding and the marriage that follows. Please bring all these materials with you to every meeting or consultation that you have at St. Paul.

*Thank you for the witness of committed love you provide to the world as an engaged couple.
May God bless you as you prepare for married life!*



Primary Stages

Perhaps you have lived all your life in this parish and have always been coming to Mass at St. Paul. Perhaps you moved away for awhile to attend college because of a job. Or perhaps you are new to the area and are still familiarizing yourself with St. Paul parish.

Whether you are a life-long parishioner or you are new to the parish, these wonderful and exciting months of your engagement present an opportunity for you and your fiancé to celebrate each Sunday within the household of the faithful at Mass. The weeks and months leading up to the wedding and for us as we pray together are a unique time for you and for us as we pray together.

The Larger Perspective

Married Christians share in the mystery of unity and fruitful love that exists between Christ and his Church. They help each other to attain holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children. They have their own special gift among the people of God.

Your life together arises from the irrevocable consent which each partner freely bestows on and accepts from the other. Christ raises this marital union between Christian spouses to the dignity of a sacrament so that it might more clearly recall and more easily reflect his own unbreakable union with his Church.

Christian couples, therefore, nourish and develop their marriage by undivided affection, which wells up from the fountain of divine love. They remain faithful to each other in body and mind all the days of their lives.

Did You know?

Pope Francis spoke to engaged couples at a Valentine's Day event at the Vatican in 2014. Answering a question submitted to him, he said:

But if, instead, love is a relationship, then it is a reality that grows, and we can also say by way of example that it is built up like a home. And a home is built together, not alone! To build something here means to foster and aid growth.

Dear engaged couples, you are preparing to grow together, to build this home, to live together forever.

You do not want to found it on the sand of sentiments, which come and go, but on the rock of true love the love that comes from God

Implications

Some important implications flow from what we believe marriage is. Those implications are:

- **Christian marriage is an ecclesial reality.** It's not something two people invent or live on their own. Marriage is situated within the Church. It is nurtured, supported and enriched by the whole People of God. As you attend Sunday Mass together, praying with other committed Catholics, your marital relationship will grow, deepen and be wonderfully expressive of the relationship Christ has with his spouse, the Church.
- **You have a special calling to build each other up in holiness.** In the joys and challenges of daily life, God will send you the graces necessary to offer your lives as a spiritual sacrifice, witnessing to the love of God for his people in the Paschal Mystery.
- **Your marriage is a covenant relationship.** Just as God enters a covenant with his people, so do a husband and wife enter a covenant with each other. This means that your marital relationship cannot be reduced to that of a contract. Contracts are narrowly defined, based on a specific *quid pro quo*: if I give you this, you in turn, will provide me with that.
- **Your relationship as husband and wife is expansive rather than narrow.** In other words, marriage impacts all aspects and areas of life for a husband and wife. No part of your lives is segmented away from the marriage relationship. Every part of the day is jointly claimed in the covenant of marriage for you both. By marriage you will each live through, with and in each other, every day, all your days.
- **Your covenant union as husband and wife is unbreakable.** It endures all the days of your life. There is no "shelf life" of Christian marriage. You always owe each other fidelity because a marriage that is entered freely and validly continues until one of the partners dies.
- **Your marriage takes work.** Each day has its own demands, many of them competing. But no matter what pulls and pushes there are on your marital relationship, the bedrock that grounds the two of you as husband and wife consists of the undivided affection you show to each other.

Did You know?



Because they are circular (without end), the exchange of rings in the Catholic wedding rite symbolizes the fidelity and permanence of marriage.

➤ **When children enter the picture, they bring their own special joy and happiness to your relationship.** Children also bring a unique push and pull on your marital union. But when mothers and fathers recognize in their children the heart of who they couple, the marital covenant takes on a whole new character, one that is life- giving, affirming and participating in the creative possibilities of God for this are as a world.

Fidelity

Condition of being faithful, fulfilling one's duties and obligations.

The term derives from the same Latin root word fides for "faith." With regard to marriage, fidelity implies the faithfulness of spouses to each other so that they live up to the vision of the Church for this sacrament.

Booking a Date

A date and time for the wedding liturgy should be scheduled as early as possible. Weddings are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis, and no more than two weddings are scheduled on any Saturday (1pm and 3pm).

Marriage on days other than Saturday can be arranged as parish calendar permits and priest or deacon is available and willing.

When you call the parish office to book a date, a receptionist will fill out the *Marriage Intake Form* and it'll be forward to one of the priests or deacons.

At this point the date for the wedding is *tentative*.

The priest or deacon must review the form and meet with you within a week or two after receiving your request. If everything is in order and the priest or deacon is available to preside at the wedding, then the wedding date will be set into the parish schedule.

By Archdiocesan policy, we are not permitted to schedule a wedding if there is a previous marriage that requires an annulment or a declaration of nullity pending. We would be happy to assist you with these special circumstances for an eventual marriage within the Catholic Church, but no wedding date may be set until both parties are free to be married.

Please do not print invitations or make a final reservation for the reception hall until your application form has been reviewed, you have met with a priest or deacon, and your date has been confirmed and set into our parish schedule. If circumstances change and you subsequently decide not to be married at St. Paul the Apostle, please notify the office so that the date and time can be made available to others

Location

Weddings are celebrated in our Church. The Church is completely handicapped accessible, an especially welcoming feature for those who find steps challenging. There are adequate restroom facilities, and a large gathering area, which is a welcome feature in inclement

weather. A separate bride's room with access to the women's restroom is available. The Church is air-conditioned.

Church Requirements

Christian marriage is an ecclesial reality, a Church reality. It is not something any one of us invents. It is a gift, a sacrament given by God to God's people. As such, the Church has developed a rich tradition that surrounds and supports marriage.

For this reason certain requirements have evolved, such as:

Officiant

You will be talking with the priest or deacon who will officiate at the wedding. Please schedule an appointment with him as soon as possible after filling out the *Marriage Intake Form* with our parish office. He needs to meet with you within a week or two after receiving your call to get to know you, to explain the parish's marriage guidelines, and to find out if you are free to receive the Sacrament of Marriage. If you are, the date of your wedding will be written with a black font into the calendar (it's secured/set date now).

You must notify us in advance if you wish to have a priest or deacon from outside the Archdiocese of Chicago preside at the wedding, in order for us to secure a letter of good standing from his superior. In situations of mixed religious, the non-Catholic clergy are welcomed to attend the liturgy in a place of honor.

Baptismal Certificate

Both of you will need to secure baptismal documents.

- a) *For a couple where both are baptized Roman Catholic.* You must each produce current (issued within the last six months) baptismal certificates from the parish where you were baptized. When asking for this document to be sent to you or to the priest/deacon arranging your wedding, please tell the parish that you "need a baptismal certificate for an upcoming wedding with all notations on it." Old originals or photocopies are not acceptable.

Covenant

Solemn agreement between human beings or between God and a human being.

This type of agreement involves mutual commitments or guarantees. The Bible refers to our relationship with God as a covenant, first mediated between God and Noah, then Abraham, and later, Moses.

Through the covenant with Moses, God revealed his Law to the people and prepared them for the fullness of salvation by the prophets. The Mosaic covenant is fulfilled in Christ, who establishes a new and final covenant with God's people through his own sacrificial death and resurrection.

- b) *For a couple where one is a baptized Roman Catholic and one is baptized in a Christian ecclesial community.* The Catholic must produce a current baptismal certificate from the parish where you were baptized. The baptized non-Catholic party must provide document from their place of Baptism, either a letter or certificate.
- c) *For a couple where one is a baptized Roman Catholic and one is not baptized.* The Catholic must produce a current baptismal certificate from the parish where you were baptized as well as two affidavits. The one who is not baptized must have older family members complete two affidavits attesting to your non-Baptism.
- d) *Interfaith marriages* and special situations will require additional paperwork. The priest or deacon who meets with you will advise you if this is necessary.

Affidavits

Two affidavits/witnesses are required for each party to the marriage. These are filled out by parents, siblings, or friends who know you for a long time. Affidavits can be filled out, by appointment, with any priest, deacon or our wedding coordinator (reviewed and signed by a priest or deacon) at our parish or in any other Catholic parish and forwarded here.

Affidavit

Formal written declaration made under oath by a witness before priest or a deacon attesting to another person's freedom to be married.

Pre-Cana Program

It's required of you to attend the Archdiocesan Marriage Preparation program, Pre-Cana. Please register at <https://pvm.archchicago.org/lifelong-formation/marriage/marriage-preparation-courses> for a class at one of archdiocesan location (Lake and Cook counties). If you wish you can also participate in this program online at www.catholicmarriageprep.com. Upon completion of the program, you will be given a card certificate which is to be returned to the priest/deacon or the wedding coordinator helping you in your marriage preparations.

State Requirements

A marriage cannot be performed at Saint Paul without a license from Lake County. When you visit the county offices, you will need your driver's license or some other valid proof of your age. You must pay in cash for the marriage license. It is good for 60 days, so please schedule your visit at the Lake County Court no earlier than 60 days before your wedding day.

Preparing for the Wedding Liturgy

A wedding is one of many different liturgies of the Church. Liturgy is made up of song, Sacred Scripture, prayer and ritual-all of which have developed over centuries within the rich tradition of the Catholic Church. The specific components that go into the wedding liturgy are determined by this rich tradition.

You will be given a folder and a *Together for Life* booklet which contains readings and prayers which can be used in your wedding or ceremony by the deacon or to record your reading and music selections. The completed form must be given to the music director and wedding coordinator.

The wedding coordinator will set up meetings with you to plan your wedding ceremony at least six months before your wedding date.

You will be asked to decide whether your wedding will be celebrated within the context of a full Mass (both Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist with communion) or whether your wedding celebration will simply include the Liturgy of the Word (Scripture readings) and the exchange of vows and rings, without communion.

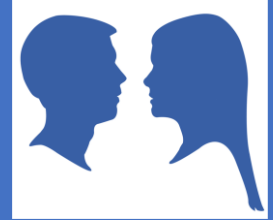
You should give this decision careful consideration and the priest or deacon will give you guidance. If a number of the guests are non-Catholics who are unfamiliar with the Mass and who will not be able to receive communion, a simple Liturgy of the Word with Wedding ceremony is usually more appropriate.

Liturgy and Music

Marriage is a sacrament. Great care is taken to see that the prayer for this special moment is reverent, graceful, beautiful, and open to the movement of God's Spirit among us. Sacraments are always celebrated as a community. We gather our brothers and sisters in faith and ask for their prayerful support.

These celebrations are incomplete unless they are filled with Scripture and song, with prayerful gestures, and with the silence in which we hear the voice of God speaking to us. The priest/deacon, wedding coordinator and the music director will assist you in the liturgical preparations.

Did you know?



Saint Paul's advice to Christian spouses at **Ephesians 5:25-32** must be interpreted in light of his own day. It was a male-dominated society. Everyone took for granted that wives would be "subordinate" to their husbands. What is unusually radical and counter-cultural in Paul's advice is for husbands to "love their wives as their own bodies."

Music

Couples getting married at St. Paul the Apostle must contact the Music Director, Ruth Peck (847) 738-0809 or call the parish office (847) 918-0600. All music should be appropriate for use in the Church. In some situations, the presence of the church Sound Engineer might be required.

The first thing to consider when selecting music for the wedding ceremony is that the liturgy is an act of worship, part of the public prayer of the Roman Catholic Church. The primary purpose of music in any liturgy is to enable and enhance the prayer of the assembly, for it is that assembly, gathered together in faith, which worships at the liturgy.

The music chosen should facilitate the active participation of the assembly. The music chosen should express not only the faith of the couple but also the common faith of the universal Church. Pieces of music which speak of love in purely secular terms are not appropriate for use at the wedding liturgy and would perhaps be better used at the reception.

Music Consultation

If other musicians besides our own SPA musicians are used, you will need to discuss this with our parish music director. Arrangements need to be made in advance so that visiting musicians will have what they need to provide music within our music area in church.

Wedding Coordinator

Please contact Arleen Siap (asiap@saintpaultheapostle.church) who will provide direction, support, and hospitality to the bride and groom, wedding party, and their families. She accomplishes that through the three primary aspects of the role: assisting with advance planning, conducting the wedding rehearsal, and coordinating/overseeing the activities during the wedding ceremony.

*Did you
know?*



Benedict XVI addressed families who were meeting in Valencia, Spain in 2006, saying:

Human beings were created in the image and likeness of God for love, and that complete human fulfillment only comes about when we make a sincere gift of ourselves to others. The family is the privileged setting where every person learns to give and receive love.

THE ORDER OF CELEBRATING MATRIMONY WITHIN MASS

Order of Service

Introductory Rites

Procession of Liturgical Minister and Attendants Opening Hymn
Sign of the Cross/Greeting
Invitation
Gloria
Collect (Opening Prayer)

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading
Responsorial Psalm
Second Reading
Gospel Acclamation & Gospel Reading
Homily

The Celebration of Matrimony

Address by Presider
Questions before the Consent
Consent (Vows)
Reception of the Consent
Acclamation
Blessing and Giving of Rings
[Optional: Blessing and Giving of the Arras]
Universal Prayer (Prayers of the Faithful)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Presentation of the Gifts & Preparation of the Gifts
Eucharistic Prayer:
Preface
Holy, Holy
Memorial Acclamation & Great Amen
[Optional: Blessing and Placing of the Lazo or the Veil]
Lord's Prayer and Nuptial Blessing
Sign of Peace
Holy Communion
Prayer After Communion

Concluding Rites

Final Blessing
Dismissal
Recessional

RITE OF MARRIAGE TAKES PLACE WITHOUT MASS (*Non-Eucharistic Liturgy, a "Ceremony"*)

Order of Service

Introductory Rites

Procession of Liturgical Minister and Attendants

Opening Hymn

Sign of the Cross/Greeting

Invitation

Collect (Opening Prayer)

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel Reading

Homily

The Celebration of Matrimony

Address by Presider

Questions before the Consent

Consent (Vows)

Reception of the Consent

Acclamation

Blessing and Giving of Rings

[Optional: Blessing and Giving of The Arras]

Universal Prayer (Prayers of the Faithful)

[Optional: Blessing and Placing of the Lazo or the Veil]

Lord's Prayer and Nuptial Blessing

Concluding Rites

Final Blessing

Dismissal

Recessional

Non-Eucharistic Liturgy

Ritual celebration that does not | include the Liturgy of the Eucharist | and therefore no Holy Communion. In making a distinction between marriages celebrated at a non- Eucharistic liturgy and Mass, some people call the non- Eucharistic form a "ceremony" as opposed to a Mass.

When marriage is celebrated according to a non-Eucharistic format, a Liturgy of the Word is | followed by the Rite of Marriage, concluding with the Lord's Prayer | and a solemn blessing of the couple.

Nuptial Blessing

Special prayer for the blessing of a couple being married.

Parish Offerings

It is a long-standing custom in the Catholic community to make a special offering to the Church which has assisted you over the months of marriage preparation helping you to make your wedding ceremony special and beautiful.

The offering for weddings at St. Paul's is \$1000 regardless of the parishioner status. This amount includes the fees for parish, presider-officiant, wedding coordinator, and parish musician. This fee doesn't include additional cantor(s) and/or instrumentalist(s).

You are always welcome to give more as the spirit moves you, perhaps proportionate to the other expenditures for your wedding, but that is up to you. If financial constraints prevent you from sharing such an amount, just let the priest or deacon you are working with know.

Although offerings may be given at any time during the preparation process, all offerings must be given no later than six months before the wedding date. Checks for the church are made out to St. Paul the Apostle Church.

Photography

The use of photography and videography are permitted during the wedding liturgy. The dignity and solemnity of the occasion, however, require the utmost care on the part of these persons so that they do not become a distraction during the liturgy. A professional photographer and/or videographer will be familiar with lighting needs and with appropriate protocol in a sacred space and will ultimately provide superior results. We ask that you please read and then pass along to your photographer and/or videographer the page in this folder titled "For Your Photographer". Have them see the priest or deacon before the ceremony begins.

Rehearsal

Most couples schedule a wedding rehearsal to be held shortly before the wedding. Rehearsals are usually held the evening before the wedding, but when is not convenient, another time can easily be arranged. It is recommended that you reserve the church as soon as possible. Call the

*Did you
know?*



In the wedding homily a priest or deacon is expected by the Church to speak about:

the mystery of Christian marriage

the dignity of wedded love

the grace of the sacrament

the responsibilities of married people

Parish House to schedule the rehearsal. A wedding coordinator will guide the wedding party through the rehearsal. Make sure that all members of the wedding party arrive early for the rehearsal.

Flowers

You are welcome to provide flowers for the church. The parish priest or deacon, as well as liturgy coordinators can offer suggestions and advice. (If not a penitential season and depending upon our liturgical environment for our weekend liturgies, we ordinarily are happy to have couples leave the floral arrangements at the church for our weekend liturgies. If this is your intent, please let us know of your plans.)

Because your wedding liturgy takes place in the larger context of the liturgical life of the parish, any liturgical setting and environment that has already been set up (e.g. Fall, Christmas, Easter, etc.) **CANNOT BE REMOVED OR REARRANGED** for your wedding liturgy or for any photo sessions taken after the wedding liturgy. We ask that you please read and then pass along to your florist the page in this folder titled, “For Your Florist”.

No Rice/Bird Seed/Confetti

Because of the hazard it presents and the untidiness it creates on parish aisles and walkways, as well as environmental concerns, the throwing of rice, bird seed or confetti is not permitted. Balloons are not allowed anywhere inside the buildings. Other choices that have been used well are bubbles and bells – both of which should only be handed out when people are exiting the outside doors.

Flower Petals Strewing of real flower petals inside is not allowed. However, a few silk flower petals (no more than a handful) will be permitted for a flower girl to drop in front of the bride. Please arrange for someone to pick up the petals as soon as possible after the ceremony to avoid slips, falls or damage when walked upon. No real flower petals are allowed anywhere inside or outside.

Wedding Runner

Runner- If you wish to use a runner, please make sure that the florist understands that it is not to be taped to the hardwood floor. If you inform us that you are using a runner, we will provide a special board so the runner can be held in place without damaging the floor. The length of the center aisle is 56 feet.

Unity Candle

In the new ritual of marriage, having a unity candle ceremony is not encouraged because such “unity” is expressed in the exchange of vows. However, if couples feel this is significant for them, this can be discussed with the priest/deacon or wedding coordinator you are working with for your wedding. The couple supplies the candles and the candle holders. No other symbols of unity such as plants, sand, etc... are allowed at St. Paul the Apostle.

Clean-Up

Dispensation

Formal permission granted by the Catholic Church so that an individual or group would be exempted from Church law.

For example, Church law requires all Catholics to be married in the Catholic Church only. A dispensation can be granted, however, so that a Catholic marrying a Protestant could be validly married in a Protestant ceremony or so that a Catholic marrying a Jewish person could be validly married with a rabbi officiating. To obtain a dispensation you would need to first speak with a priest or a deacon about it.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the church building is left in the condition you found it. Since the time immediately following the wedding liturgy can be extremely busy for the bride and groom, we ask that you arrange with your ushers or specific family members to take responsibility for tidying the church and checking the bride’s room and washrooms. This includes picking up of boxes, programs in pews, and the straightening of pew racks. A solution that has proved very successful is to assign this “project” to a family person and

suggest that family children assist while supervised by an adult. Children may need something to occupy their time while photographs are being taken.

Did you know?



The essential form of marriage (that is, the part of the wedding ritual that must be done for it to be considered a Sacrament) is the groom's and bride's consent and exchange of vows before a priest or deacon in the presence of two witnesses.

Everything else in the wedding rite leads up to that moment or amplifies it.

Other Policies

Because of the sacredness of church space and the event we are celebrating, we kindly request that everyone, especially members of the wedding party, refrain from smoking, consuming alcohol, or chewing gum in the church building or on the grounds. Only registered service dogs are permitted in the church. All emotional support animals and other pets should remain at home.

Getting Settled

Once you set up your new home together, be sure to register in the parish where you reside. If you will be staying in the area, we will welcome your continued membership at St. Paul's. Be sure to let our secretaries know your new address and telephone number.

Programs/Worship Folders

You may wish to have printed programs which enable the assembly to participate more fully. These usually include the outline of the liturgy, Scripture citations (the texts are usually not printed), titles of musical selections, and names of participants. You may also wish to include words and/or music of songs, refrains, and acclamations that the congregation will be singing. Reprinting music usually requires a reprint permission license. The parish music personnel can help you with these permissions and instructions as to how they ought to appear in your worship aid.

Sacraments

Effective signs of
God's grace,
perceptible to the
senses, instituted by
Christ and entrusted
to the Church.

There are seven:

Baptism

Confirmation

Eucharist

Penance

Anointing of the Sick

Holy Orders

Matrimony

For Your Photographer/Videographer

For the wedding of: _____

on: _____

date

time

at: St. Paul the Apostle – Gurnee, IL

To Photographers/Videographers:

We believe in the Church's teaching that marriage is a Sacrament; a sacred event, a holy covenant. As such, it should be planned with dignity, grace, and respect. We offer these guidelines to assist you in your planning. These guidelines will prevent confusion and frustration on the wedding day both for you and for the presiding priest or deacon. Please familiarize yourself with them before you make suggestions to the couple and prepare for the wedding liturgy.

- Weddings are celebrated in our church. A visit to the building ahead of time can be good because of abundant lighting from our church windows and to provide an opportunity to approach wedding photography in a purposeful yet respectful way.
- It is essential protocol for the photographer/videographer to check in directly with the priest/deacon and/or wedding coordinator before the wedding to clarify where you are or are not permitted to go and advice as to where you might obtain some of your best photos without disrupting the ceremony. Please have your business card available.
- Because the Church is a sacred place for prayer – even at times when it is not being used for the liturgy – it should not be regarded as a studio. At all times, photographers are asked to respect the dignity and decorum of the church.
- Photographers/videographers may only take pictures at the front of the center aisle during the processional (but not interrupting the flow of the procession or recession), once the wedding party has arrived in their places up front, the photographer and videographer must NOT go past the front pews anywhere in church. You may take pictures from the side aisles during the remainder of the liturgy (but no further than the front pew). Please remain on the main floor (within the section of pews/chairs called the nave) and do not step into the floor area in front of the sanctuary or up any stairs or onto the raised platform area of the sanctuary.
- Only “available light” photography is permitted once the members of the bridal party have arrived in their positions up front. Supplemental lighting and flashes are not to be used during the liturgy – with the limited exception of one or two flashes during the actual exchange of vows and rings. You will find that better photos can be taken from the side because there will be less glare.
- If you choose to take pictures afterwards in the front of or on the sanctuary steps, please remember that no altar furniture, altar decorations, flowers, or environment arrangements may be moved or altered in any way. Respect the sacred altar and do not place any items or equipment on the altar. This is our home and our sacred space; we know you will want to respect both us and our home.
- Because of other events that may be scheduled in the church prior to the wedding liturgy, photographers and videographers are asked to arrive no sooner than one hour prior to the wedding.
- All post-wedding photography must be completed within roughly thirty minutes after the conclusion of the liturgy. On Saturdays, everyone – wedding party and photographers - must be totally out of church by 4:30 PM so that church is available for the evening Mass. Because of the many events and services that take place in the church, this time period is non-negotiable.

Please contact the parish priest or deacon conducting the wedding concerning any questions you may have regarding these guidelines. Thank you for your cooperation.

Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Church • 6401 Gages Lake, IL 60031 • (847) 819-0600

For Your Florist

For the wedding of: _____
on: _____
date _____ time _____
at: St. Paul the Apostle – Gurnee, IL

At St. Paul the Apostle, we believe the Church's teaching that marriage is a Sacrament; a sacred event, a holy covenant. As such, it should be planned with dignity, grace, and respect. We offer these guidelines to assist florists with their preparation and to avoid confusion and frustration on the wedding day. Please familiarize yourself with these guidelines before you make suggestions to the couple and prepare for the wedding liturgy.

- Weddings are celebrated in our church. A visit to the church may provide you with an opportunity to approach wedding flowers in a new and simple way.
- Because of events that may be scheduled in the church prior to the wedding liturgy, florists are asked to set up no sooner than ninety minutes before the wedding. [If there is a wedding before this wedding, the couple will let you know and the time frame might be an hour or less.] Also, if you need to pick up materials or flowers after the wedding, we ask that you please do so no later than ninety minutes following the start of the wedding liturgy (i.e. by 2:30 for a 1pm wedding and 4:30 for a 3pm wedding).
- Because the wedding liturgy takes place within the larger context of the liturgical life of the parish, liturgical decorations such as floral arrangements, plants, banners, and altar cloths already in place **MAY NOT BE MOVED OR CHANGED** for any reason.
- Additional floral arrangements (besides the regular liturgical environment already in place by St. Paul's Liturgy personnel) should not restrict movement in the sanctuary or obstruct the view of the assembly. Floral arrangements may never be placed on the altar table.
- Ordinarily it is recommended that one flower arrangement or plant be placed on the floor in front of the altar and one flower arrangement or plant in front of the ambo (pulpit) - since these are the focal points of our liturgical prayer. If the optional ceremony of lighting a Unity Candle is chosen, then one simple floral arrangement or plant can be placed at the base of our special Unity Candle Stand. Towards the back of the sanctuary where no one will be walking ordinarily might be another option if more flowers are desired. When in doubt, please ask the priest, deacon or wedding coordinator.
- The unity candle ceremony is entirely optional. The arrangement is never placed on the altar table. St. Paul's provides a small table but the couple supplies the candles and the candle holders. Please consult with the priest/deacons or wedding coordinator as to whether any flowers may be appropriate for attaching to this stand and how this will be done.
- Given space limitations and fire safety ordinances, additional candelabra or candles or candle stands are not permitted. Nothing should be placed in the aisles at any time.
- Runner cannot be taped to the hardwood floor. We will provide a special board so the runner can be held in place without damaging the floor. The length of the center aisle is 56 feet.
- We discourage any flower petals. However, a few (not more than a handful) silk flower petals will be permitted to be dropped in front of the bride. Please arrange for someone to pick up the petals as soon as possible to avoid slips, falls or damage when walked upon. No real flower petals are allowed.
- Pew bows, ribbons, and flowers may only be attached to the pew ends using padded clips designed for this purpose, or by ribbon, string, or rubber bands that are not fastened to the pews or chairs. Please do not use any tape, putty, or glue or any metal or plastic clips that will damage our pews or chairs. Do not rope off the center aisle or the pews along the center aisle.

Please contact the pastor concerning any questions you may have regarding these guidelines. Thank you for your cooperation.

Saint Paul the Apostle Catholic Church • 6401 Gages Lake, IL 60031 • (847) 819-0600

For Your Lector

You have been asked by the bride and groom to serve as a lector for their wedding. Yours is an honored duty, for you are to proclaim to all assembled the inspired Word of God. So that you may feel most comfortable with this ministry we present these guidelines.

- You will be given a copy of your reading. Please take the time to practice your reading(s), becoming very familiar with the passage and its meaning (even to the point of memorization).
- Have a backup copy of your reading(s), just in case one is not set out on the ambo (pulpit). (see below)
- Practice your reading aloud to yourself before a mirror, and then to another person.
- Do not hesitate to find out the correct pronunciation of names and places. The Scriptures are full of tongue twisters!
- You can be at the rehearsal to be familiar as to the cue for your reading. At the conclusion of the general practice, if you wish, let the priest or deacon know if you want the opportunity to practice your reading while standing at the ambo and using the microphone.
- Because you are acting as a vessel of the Word, please dress appropriately for church. Ladies: very high heels sometimes catch on sanctuary steps; gentlemen: wear a suit and make sure the neck of your dress shirt is loose enough for easy breathing.
- Take your time; walk and speak slowly and deliberately. There's no rush. And because you may be a little nervous, speak even more slowly than in normal conversation. You're thinking much faster than the congregation is listening!
- Every reading has beginning and ending sentences. First, the lector names the book from which the Scripture passage is taken: for example, "*A reading from the book of Genesis*". After that the lector proclaims the Scripture reading. At the conclusion of the reading, the lector pauses for at least five full seconds (count it out; that's a long pause when you're nervous) and then states, "*The Word of the Lord*". These beginning and ending phrases ritually frame the reading.
- If you will be reading both the Old Testament and New Testament readings, please temporarily take a seat on the bench at the bottom of the sanctuary ramp after the first reading. The cantor needs to lead the singing of the psalm. After the psalm is sung and the music stops, take a couple of deep relaxing breaths and return to the ambo to proclaim the second reading.
- St. Paul Parish will have your assigned Scripture passages in place on the ambo (pulpit). Come early before the wedding has begun to make sure your reading or readings are appropriately placed on the ambo (pulpit). If not, please check with the presiding priest/deacon or wedding coordinator.

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Checklist

- ✓ Secure date/time for wedding liturgy with St. Paul the Apostle Parish.
- ✓ Complete pre-nuptial questionnaire with the priest/deacon who will officiate.
- ✓ Provide parish with baptismal certificates issued within the last six months.
- ✓ Attend Pre-Cana session
- ✓ Consult with parish music director
- ✓ Communicate parish policies to photographer/videographer and florist
- ✓ Choose Scripture texts and other liturgical options
- ✓ Choose readers: 1st Reading 2nd Reading Prayers of the Faithful
- ✓ Give readers copies of their readings or petitions, and the “For Your Lector” sheet.
- ✓ Choose 2 gift-bearers to bring up the bread and wine (if wedding takes place during Mass).
- ✓ If needed, choose Eucharistic ministers. Consult with the priest or deacon as to who qualifies for this role.
- ✓ Secure a marriage license through the Lake County Clerk (no earlier than 60 days before your wedding day). Remember it must be in the priest or deacon’s hands no later than the evening of the rehearsal. No ceremony may be performed without this license.
- ✓ Discuss order of entrance procession and come with outline for the rehearsal.
- ✓ Make arrangements with one of your ushers or family members to ensure that the church is left in good order after the liturgy.
- ✓ Inform priest/deacon of any special needs or family circumstances that could have a bearing on the homily or other preparations.
- ✓ If preparing a participation booklet, review with parish music person and priest or deacon.
- ✓ No later than at the rehearsal: give parish offering and all musician fees to the priest/deacon or wedding coordinator working with you.
- ✓ If you change your telephone number or address any time after you begin your preparation, notify the parish office with the updated information.
- ✓ If you move out of the parish after the wedding, remember to register in your new parish. The Church wants to welcome you as you begin your married life together.
- ✓ Keep a sense of humor throughout this process.

In the wedding rite, a couple gives their consent to three essential aspects of marriage: their unity in an exclusive love, their intention to enter into a permanent or indissoluble bond, and their openness to having and raising children.