

Wedding Guidelines

Our Lady of Wisdom Church and Catholic Student Center
501 E. St. Mary Blvd. Lafayette, LA 70503
PO Box 43599 Lafayette, LA 70504

Marriage Preparation

1. The couple desiring to get married must contact Mrs. Robin Hebert, Marriage Ministry Coordinator, **at least nine months before the desired date of the wedding**. She can be contacted at: or at the Wisdom office: 337-232-8742.

2. *Engagement is a time of discernment.* We at Our Lady of Wisdom will do everything we can to assist your discernment as well as your preparation for the sacrament.

Generally, the time of **marriage preparation** will primarily consist of:

- At least one meeting with Father Sibley (or your chosen celebrant). *This meeting must be scheduled before your date is confirmed on Our Lady of Wisdom's calendar.*
- **PREPARE/ENRICH**, a customized couple assessment which is completed online and identifies a couple's strength and growth areas. The cost is \$35, payable by credit card at the time you log-in to begin the assessment.
- At least one meeting with Robin and Easton Hebert to review the assessment.
- **Six meetings with an assigned "mentor" couple.**
- Other meetings per suggestion by the marriage ministry team.
- **The full course of NFP** (Natural Family Planning). To register, go to the diocesan web-site: The fee is payable at the time of registration.

3. **Recent copies of baptismal certificates** are needed, dated within nine months of the anticipated date of the wedding. *To obtain a recent copy, contact the church in which you were baptized.*

Note: Non-Roman Catholics will need a certificate stating when and where they were baptized.

4. Other documents will be needed if this is a **con-validation** or if one or both of the individuals has or needs an **annulment**.

Note: If either of the parties wanting to be married is seeking an annulment, Diocesan policy states that the wedding date cannot be set until the annulment is granted.

Wedding Liturgy Preparation

Setting of Date and Time

1. Weddings are normally scheduled on Friday evenings, late Saturday mornings or early Saturday afternoons, no later than 1:30 p.m. **There are no Saturday evening weddings.**
2. No wedding will be scheduled during Lent, on Holy Days of Obligation, or on All Souls Day.

Conduct and Dress

1. The Church is a sacred place and not a meeting hall; and marriage is a sacrament and not a social event. The conduct and attire of the wedding party at the rehearsal and at the wedding should reflect this sense of sacredness.
2. All females in the wedding party, including the bride, must dress modestly. No cleavage, no exposed backs, no exposed shoulders. If in doubt, consult the wedding coordinator.
3. Dresses must be approved. Send a photo of the bridal and bridesmaid's gowns, front and back, to veronica@ourladyofwisdom.org or 337-354-7830.
4. **Any dress violations will require the use of a shawl or bolero or the attendant will not be allowed to participate in the wedding.**
5. **Absolutely no drinking of alcohol whatsoever will be tolerated nor smoking/vaping on the premises.** If the priest smells alcohol on the breath of anyone in the wedding party, or if there are any signs of drunkenness either at the rehearsal or during the wedding itself, they will not be allowed to participate in the liturgy, and the ceremony itself runs the risk of being postponed or cancelled.
6. The bride and groom are the ones who will be held responsible for the conduct and behavior of the wedding party.

Music/Liturgy

1. The Director of Liturgical Music, **Duston Stout**, will guide you in choosing wedding music and preparing for the Liturgy. Contact Duston at music@ourladyofwisdom.org to set up the meeting, a minimum of six months prior to the wedding date. He will approve all musical selections.
2. To enhance the sacredness of the liturgy, no secular music will be permitted during the wedding ceremony. Classical music or organ music is required.
3. There can be no prerecorded music. All music must be live.
4. All instrumentalists must be approved by our Director of Liturgical Music.
5. If the rite of marriage takes place within the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, a **cantor** is required in order to sing the Mass parts, the psalm response, and other pieces as necessary. However, if the rite of marriage takes place without a Mass, there is no requirement to use a cantor.
6. Google "Catholic wedding readings" to choose your scripture readings. These need to be turned in to your celebrant and Veronica at least two weeks before the wedding.

Lectors and Altar Servers

1. The lector(s) should be Catholic and in good standing with the Church and need to be appropriately and modestly dressed for the sacredness of the liturgy (See "Conduct and Dress" #2 for female lectors).
2. In addition, **lectors must be experienced**. They should be given copies of the readings before the rehearsal for practice.
3. If the couple chooses to have altar servers, they must be experienced servers in a Roman Catholic Church.

Decorations

1. The florist and decorators are allowed to come the day of the wedding to decorate the church. *Call the office at least one week before your wedding to arrange a time. The decorations must be removed immediately after the ceremony. This is not the responsibility of the church staff.*
2. Decorations during the **Advent season** should be minimal.
3. During **Christmas season** (Christmas Day through Epiphany), priority will be given to the decorations already in the church. There will be NO removal of church flowers; and decorations CANNOT be rearranged.
4. During **Easter season** (50 days following Easter Sunday), church flowers CANNOT be rearranged. Wedding flowers can be added to existing arrangements.
5. General: There is to be no aisle runner or candles in the aisle.
6. Decorations inside or outside of the church must not damage any property.

Wedding Rehearsal

1. Wedding rehearsals are normally held 1-2 days before the wedding. Thursday rehearsals are held at 6:00 p.m. following 5:30 Mass. Friday rehearsals are normally held at 5:30 p.m.
2. **Veronica Pagan**, Parish Wedding Coordinator, will direct and guide the rehearsal and the procession at the wedding. You can contact her at veronica@ourladyofwisdom.org if you need to adjust the rehearsal time.
3. The rehearsal will begin promptly and will normally last forty-five minutes.
4. Attendants must arrive fifteen minutes early.
5. ***The marriage certificate must be brought to the rehearsal***, unless otherwise arranged by the priest.
6. If the priest is available, you can request that he hear confessions at the end of the rehearsal. *It is a good idea to participate in the wedding ceremony while in a state of grace.*
7. **PARKING:** Regarding Thursday or Friday rehearsals, contact the UL Office of Transportation Services at (337)482-6858 or <https://park.louisiana.edu/parking-and-permits-0> for important information on campus parking.

The Wedding Ceremony

1. The wedding party must arrive at church at least one hour early to prepare and make sure everything is in order. (There is no bridal room, so everyone must come dressed.)
2. The parents' procession will begin five minutes before the time of the wedding.
3. The bride and bridesmaids are to wait in the student center until the time of the wedding. The groomsmen are to meet in the music room adjacent to the sacristy.
4. The groom is to meet with Father fifteen minutes before the ceremony begins. He will process out with Father.
5. Lectors are to sit on the end of the pew immediately behind the parents of the couple. A copy of the readings will be in a white binder on the ambo.
6. **Please watch and maintain control over all children, especially those involved in the wedding.** Do not let them roam or approach the sanctuary.

7. Those who are not Catholic, or those who are Catholic and are not disposed to receive communion, may come up to the priest during communion time to receive a blessing or remain in the pew and make a spiritual communion.
8. Roses for the mothers and the Blessed Virgin are to be given after the closing prayer.
9. **Please make sure there is someone to remove decorations and clean up *immediately after the ceremony*.**
10. **We are not liable for lost or stolen items left in the church or student center.**

Photos and Video

1. Both photography and video taping of the ceremony are permitted. It is preferred that professionals photograph and video tape the ceremony.
2. Please have the photographer and videographer speak to the wedding coordinator, Veronica Pagan, before the wedding in order that she might instruct them as to the rules and regulations.
3. Most of the pictures should be taken before the wedding ceremony begins. The wedding party is allowed twenty minutes after the ceremony to take pictures in the church.

Varia

1. Throwing of rose petals, rice, birdseed, etc. is not allowed.
2. No Unity Candle will be permitted in the wedding ceremony because it is not part of the Catholic wedding liturgy.
3. *For weddings between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic or a non-baptized person*, it is normative that there be no Mass, only the wedding ceremony.
4. **PARKING:** Regarding Friday evening weddings, contact the UL Office of Transportation Services at (337)482-6858 or <https://park.louisiana.edu/parking-and-permits-0> for important information on campus parking.

Fees

The fee includes the marriage assessment review, marriage preparation, music consultation, rehearsal and wedding coordination, and church rental. *The fee does not include the marriage assessment or NFP classes.*

Parishioners

Parishioner fees for use of Our Lady of Wisdom Church are as follows:

- Wedding fees for registered, tithing parishioners who are faithfully involved in the life of the parish will be \$425.
- Fees for parishioners who have been registered for less than one year and/or have no record of tithing or faithful service will be \$650.

Non-parishioners

Fee for non-parishioners will be \$800.

A deposit of \$200, deducted from the marriage fee, is required at the time the wedding is scheduled.

Marriage Preparation only: \$200

Note: For information on the rental of **Jeanmard Hall** for Wedding Receptions, contact Jeane Moya, Pastoral Assistant, at jeane@ourladyofwisdom.org.

Helpful Contact Information

Robin Hebert, Marriage Ministry Coordinator: robin@ourladyofwisdom.org / 337-232-8742

Jeane Moya, OLOW Business Office: jeane@ourladyofwisdom.org / 337-232-8742

Veronica Pagan, Wedding Coordinator: veronica@ourladyofwisdom.org

Duston Stout, Director of Liturgical Music: music@ourladyofwisdom.org