

## **WEDDING GUIDELINES**

These guidelines help couples understand what to expect when making a decision about celebrating the sacrament of marriage in our parish church. We ask that couples carefully read and consider all of the requirements for a wedding at St. Peter the Apostle Church. **There is a minimum of 6 months advanced planning and preparation prior to the wedding. A \$200.00 non-refundable deposit is to be given at the time of the initial pre-marital interview in order to hold the intended wedding date.**

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

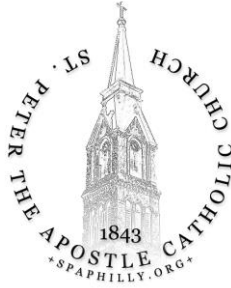
1. If a couple is not a member of the parish, they should request a Letter of Permission from their home parish (with parish seal) to be married at St. Peter's. If you send any correspondence to the Rectory Office, be sure it is sent to the attention of the Pastor. Bring it with you when you have your first meeting with our pastor. Once the letter has been obtained, please contact the Parish at (215) 627.2386 to schedule an appointment with the Pastor.
2. All Catholic and Christian parties must supply a signed copy with raised sealed of their Baptism Certificate that has been dated within the last 3 months. A wedding between a Catholic and a Non-Catholic, or between a Catholic and a Non-Christian are possible. However, it will require a dispensation from the Archbishop and will typically be celebrated without the Eucharist (Mass), unless there are a substantial number of practicing Catholics expected to attend the Sacrament of Marriage on the wedding day.
3. Couples must [register on-line](#) for the required marriage preparation classes (Pre-Cana) for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Registration information will be supplied at the time of the first appointment. A certificate of completion will be given to the couple that, in turn, must be given to the priest for your file at the church. There are a variety of dates, times & places to choose from.
4. If either party has been married before, an annulment from the Metropolitan Tribunal must be granted prior to ANY wedding date being reserved in the church calendar. Ask the Pastor for details and further information as to what type of annulment may be required.
5. The wedding ceremony itself, will be planned with the priest and the couple at least 30 days prior to the wedding date. The remaining balance is due 30-days prior to the wedding date and to be accompanied by the Marriage License from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

At St. Peter's, weddings are normally celebrated on Fridays at 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm, and Saturdays at 1:00 pm and 3:30 pm. The wedding must start on-time, as the church has a very full liturgical schedule. Due to certain religious liturgies throughout the year that take place in the Church, particular days may not be available for weddings. Weddings are not celebrated during the liturgical season of Lent (Ash Wednesday until Easter).

### **THE CHURCH OFFERING:**

\$700.00 for active, contributing parishioners

\$1,200.00 for non-parishioners



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Note: Active, contributing parishioners who are registered members of St. Peter the Apostle Parish whose attendance at Mass for the past 12 months are trackable through their use of parish offertory envelopes. The non-refundable \$200 deposit to lock-in the intended wedding date will be applied to the church offering total(s) above.

### **MUSIC FOR YOUR WEDDING:**

Music for your wedding is coordinated with the Office for Liturgy and Music. The music fees are *not* included in the church offering, and should be paid in advance, directly to the church.

Organist: \$275

Soloist: \$200

It is the policy of St. Peter the Apostle Church that the parish musicians are utilized at all parish liturgies. Occasionally, outside musicians are permitted to participate at church weddings, however, this should be discussed in advance with the Director of Liturgy. All music and outside musicians must be approved prior to contracting with them. The sound system of the upper church is limited in capabilities - recordings of any kind are not permitted during wedding ceremonies.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY:**

The bride and groom are responsible for choosing a photographer and informing him/her of the church's guidelines about wedding liturgies. The photographer is not to stop the procession to take individual shots of each person in the bridal party; no additional lights are to be used for photographic purposes; photographers may not enter into the sanctuary area (inside the altar rail) during Mass or during the ceremony. There is ample time for photos once the Mass / ceremony has ended.

### **VIDEOGRAPHY:**

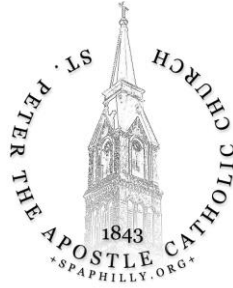
The same rules apply to videographers as photographers. Any stationary video must be set up in the main or side aisles of the church and be unobtrusive at all times. No equipment may be set up in the sanctuary (behind the altar rail) nor the presence of any video personnel.

### **LIMOUSINES:**

In order for the wedding to start on time, the limousine with the bride should be instructed to arrive at the church at least 15 minutes before the scheduled start of the wedding.

The couple should inform the limousine driver and the photographer that the wedding procession is to begin at the set time. Any pre-ceremony photographs must be finished well-before the time for the wedding procession. No alcohol should be served to any member of the wedding party prior to the Sacrament of Marriage. If any member of the wedding party is determined to be under the influence of alcohol, the wedding may be cancelled.

### **USHERS:**



## **WEDDING GUIDELINES**

Ushers should be at the church 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the wedding. It is important that ushers seat guests as they arrive so that the wedding may begin on time.

### **USE of RICE, BIRD SEED, CONFETTI, FLOWER PETALS, ETC.:**

Please inform family and friends that the throwing of anything – rice, bird seed, confetti, flower petals, etc., is forbidden either outside or inside of the church. No balloons are allowed inside the church.

### **FLOWERS:**

Flowers for the sanctuary are optional and are the responsibility of the wedding party. Please note that ribbons may never be attached to the pews using tape, thumb tacks or wire.

### **UNITY CANDLE:**

The Unity Candle MAY NOT be used in the wedding ceremony within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia as it is not an official part of the Rite of Marriage. It is a secular symbol, and a “creative addition,” that diminishes the proper understanding that the couple themselves (by their exchange of vows) are the primary symbol of marital unity.

### **BUS / TROLLEY and PARKING:**

There is a Philadelphia Traffic Department “Bus Parking Only” sign directly in front of the church steps. There are four primary parking lots available for guests. Two accessible from 5th street (right side and left side), one directly behind the church approaching from Lawrence Street, and one across from the church on the North side of Girard Avenue. All lots have yellow parking signs for the St. John Neumann Shrine.

### **RESTROOMS:**

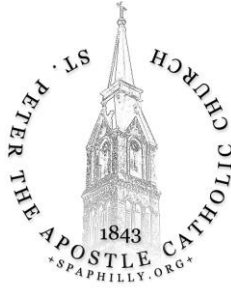
Restrooms are readily available at the far end of the Atrium toward the offices and across from the elevator by the new gift shop.

### **BRIDE’S WAITING ROOM:**

Since the church architecture dates back to 1842, we have no such room available. As a result, the bridesmaids typically wait behind the vestibule doors 10-15 minutes before the ceremony. The groom and best man wait in the Sacristy to the right of the main altar with the Priest before the ceremony begins.

### **BEST MAN & MAID OF HONOR:**

These two will serve as the official witnesses to the Sacrament of Marriage. During the ceremony both will be seated in the main Sanctuary with the couple. The Maid of Honor may attend to the Bride’s flowers while the Best Man will hold and produce the two rings within the marriage ceremony.



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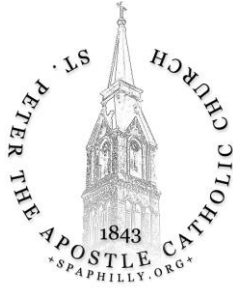
### **WEDDING CHECKLIST:**

*(Needed well in advance of the wedding ceremony)*

- Groom's baptism certificate
- Groom's first communion certificate
- Groom's confirmation certificate
- Groom's Letter of Permission from Pastor (if outside of St. Peter the Apostle Parish)
- Bride's baptism certificate
- Bride's first communion certificate
- Bride's confirmation certificate
- Bride's Letter of Permission from Pastor (if outside of St. Peter the Apostle Parish)
- Pre-Cana Certificate (register online with the Diocese)
- Ceremony planning sheet (tear-out in the back of "Together for Life" book and can also be found online at <https://togetherforlifeonline.com/selectionform/sixthedition/>). St. Peter the Apostle church recommends Form 1 (with mass) or Form 2 (without mass).
- Deposit of \$200 to secure the wedding date
- Remaining balance/church offering paid
- Organist check of \$275 given to the church
- Soloist check of \$200 given to the church
- PA marriage license from City Hall or Town Hall (needed 60 days prior)
- Annulment paperwork and decree of divorce certificate (if applicable)

### **DAY of CEREMONY CHECKLIST and IMPORTANT THINGS to NOTE:**

- Photographer and videographer informed of church guidelines:
  - Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony
  - No stopping the procession for individual shots of wedding party
  - No additional lights
  - No entering the church sanctuary during the mass or ceremony (inside the alter rail)
  - Videography equipment can be set-up in the main or side aisles but unobtrusive



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- Inform ushers to arrive at the church 30 minutes prior to scheduled start time and seat guests as they arrive so ceremony starts on time
- Inform guests no throwing of rice, bird seed, confetti, flower petals in or outside of the church.  
No balloons
- Bride and limo should arrive at the church at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony
- No thumb tacks, wire, tape, or ribbons on pews
- No unity candles during ceremony
- Inform limo, bus, and trolley vendors they are able to park directly in front of the church steps. Guest parking available in four primary parking lots (request campus map from Rectory Office if necessary)