

*Guidelines
for
Planning a Wedding*



*Espiritu Santo Catholic Church
Safety Harbor, Florida*

The Wedding Planning Booklet

*This booklet provides you with
practical information regarding the
planning of your wedding and
clarifies the policies in place at
Espiritu Santo Catholic Church.*



Important Contacts
Espiritu Santo Catholic Church
(727)726-8477

Initial Contact	Receptionist
Wedding Date/Fees	Kathee Giuffré
Wedding Preparation	Tim Bergevin
Music	Jeff Fitzcharles
Rehearsal/Ceremony/Decorations	Marion Sudduth (727)726-3863

Wedding Prayer

It's Only the Beginning

The love of God has gathered us together and given us Angels to guide us on our journey through life. They were with us since before we were born and will remain with us throughout eternity. They inspire us to do good, to love, to laugh, to nurture, to grow and to share our lives with others. They teach us to serve the Lord with gladness.

May we pray often for the guidance and wisdom the Lord has to offer us. May the grace of Christ, our Savior, and the Father's boundless love, with the blessing of the Holy Spirit fill us with joy. May we live in union with each other and with the Lord.

PART I - WEDDING PREPARATION

Congratulations!

Becoming engaged is a big step! All of us who work with you during the marriage preparation process are eager to help you during the coming months. We know that planning a wedding can be a very hectic time for you. It is also a time that you will learn a great deal about one another. You may be wondering where to begin.

Call Us Six Months in Advance

Espiritu Santo Catholic Church (727)726-8477

Since you two are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Marriage, as well as readying yourselves to spend the rest of your lives together, you must contact the parish office at least six months in advance of your proposed wedding date to register for the next Marriage Information Gathering. This minimal period of time as set forth by the policy of the Diocese of St. Petersburg is simply stating that adequate preparation for the marriage is essential. Certain elements such as assessment, discernment, enrichment, liturgical planning, and attending the initial Marriage Information Gathering need time - at least 6 months.

1. Contact the office receptionist at (727) 726-8477 to
 - a. complete the Wedding Request form, and
 - b. register for the Marriage Information Gathering.
2. Attend a Marriage Information Gathering, usually held monthly. Check the bulletin or online calendar at www.espiritusanto.cc for date, time and location to

- a. learn more about the theology, spirituality and sacredness of the sacrament.
 - b. review the preparation process and timeline including required activities and documents.
 - c. ask any questions.
 - d. complete a Pre-Marital Inventory.
3. Review the results of your Pre Marital Inventory and prepare for enrichment weekend.
 4. Attend a marriage enrichment weekend retreat.
 5. Meet with musician and sacristan.
 6. Meet with wedding celebrant to finalize preparation.

When you look at what needs to be done, you will understand why the process will take at least 6 months.

Available Wedding Dates and Times

Call Kathee Giuffré at (727)726-8477 to see if your date is available.

Before you check out possible dates and times for reception facilities, it is important to see if the church is available. Weddings cannot be scheduled on Sundays, Holidays, Holy Days of Obligation, any days during Lent, including Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, or the Saturday following Easter Sunday.

Choose the Wedding and Rehearsal Times:

Wedding Times

Friday Evening 4, 5 or 6:00 p.m.

Saturday 11:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m.

Rehearsal Times

Thursday 5:30 or 6:30 p.m.

Friday 5:30 or 6:30 p.m.

Marriage Information Gathering

Marriage Information Gatherings are usually held once a month on Saturdays. Check out the dates in the church bulletin or go online to www.espiritusanto.cc and click on “bulletins and forms” on the homepage for the electronic version. You will receive all the information necessary at the Gathering to prepare you for the Sacrament of Marriage, including theological and spiritual discussion, an explanation of the process, and a checklist and folder with the required forms.

At the gathering you will complete the *Wedding Date Request* form and submit your deposit of \$50 to secure your wedding date.

Diocesan Requirements

Tim Bergevin, Director of Life Ministries (727)726-8477

Before the date for the ceremony can be confirmed on the parish calendar, diocesan policy requires that the couple be administered the Pre-Marital Inventory, a marital attitude survey which indicates the readiness for marriage. The PMI will be administered at the Marriage Information Gathering.

The Diocese of St. Petersburg requires that the bride and groom attend the Engaged Encounter weekend, Pre Cana day, Evenings for the Engaged, or some similar preparatory instruction depending upon the specific program for the local parish. The preparing facilitator will advise the bride and groom as to which of these options is available. Registration forms with the dates of the Engaged Encounter weekend and Pre Cana are available at the Marriage Information Gathering.

Documents Required by Church Law

Tim Bergevin, Director of Life Ministries (727) 726-8477

- A new copy of your Baptismal Certificate, with notations of your First Holy Communion and Confirmation on the back, dated within six months prior to your wedding.
- A pre-nuptial investigation form (Form A) is to be filled out with the preparing facilitator at the Marriage Information Gathering.
- The testimony of two witnesses for each party, usually the parents or other relatives, certifying your freedom to marry (Form B). If applicable, dispensations are obtained by the parish priest from the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal. If one of you has been married before, you may be required to obtain an annulment.
- A civil marriage license must be obtained from any County Court House in the State of Florida. In order to alleviate a longer waiting period and additional costs, a Certificate of Completion stating that you have attended a premarital preparation course may be presented when applying for a license.
- If a priest from outside Espiritu Santo Parish is to witness for the marriage, he must request by written letter and obtain written permission from the Pastor of Espiritu Santo before the ceremony.
- If you are registered parishioners at a church other than Espiritu Santo Parish, you must obtain written permission from the Pastor of your church before marriage at Espiritu Santo Church.

For questions about your wedding preparation and requirements, call Tim Bergevin, Director of Life Ministries.

PART II - THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Liturgy Preparation

- Study the booklet *Together for Life*.
- Choose the readings.
- Complete the *selection form* for readings, prayers, and blessing to be used in the ceremony (found in the back of the booklet *Together for Life*).
- Call the Director of Liturgy and Music as soon as possible after the wedding date is established and readings have been chosen, to make an appointment to select appropriate music for your wedding Mass or Ceremony. Bring your choice of readings to the meeting.
- Meet with the priest or deacon who is performing the ceremony 2-4 weeks prior to your wedding date.

Music

Jeff Fitzcharles, Director of Liturgy and Music
(727)726-8477

Contact the Director of Liturgy and Music to schedule an appointment for planning your music as soon as the wedding date is finalized and your readings are selected. Music for weddings at Espiritu Santo Church is an integral part of the ceremony. All music chosen must be in keeping with the sacramental nature of the Rite. *Secular music is not appropriate for a Mass or Ceremony.* It can be used at the rehearsal dinner or at the wedding reception. An organist/vocalist is provided from the parish music department staff. Guest organists, vocalists, or other instrumentalists must be approved by the Director of Liturgy and Music. For an outside organist, a *bench fee* applies.

Musical Selections

Prelude

The organist, pianist, or other musicians will begin playing prelude music approximately 15 minutes before your wedding. A vocal selection, "Ave Maria" (Franz Schubert) for example, may be sung just prior to the beginning of the Entrance Procession.

Entrance of Bridesmaids, Groomsmen and Attendants

Some popular suggestions for music are "Canon in D" (Johann Pachelbel), "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" (J.S. Bach), "Prince of Denmark's March" (Jeremiah Clarke), "Bridal Chorus" from *Lohengrin* (Richard Wagner).

Responsorial Psalm

The cantor or organist will lead the singing of the Psalm after the First Reading from the Old Testament.

Gospel Acclamation

The cantor or organist will lead the singing of the acclamation before the Gospel Reading.

Unity Candle

If a "unity candle" is lit by the bride and groom (usually after the exchange of vows), the organist will play a brief interlude.

Preparation of the Gifts

If a nuptial Mass is celebrated, a hymn or vocal solo will be sung or the organist will play a brief interlude.

Ordinaries of the Mass

If a nuptial Mass is celebrated, the cantor will lead the singing of the "Holy, Holy, Holy," "Memorial Acclamation," "Amen" and "Lamb of God."

Communion

if a nuptial Mass is celebrated, the cantor will lead the singing of a hymn or an appropriate communion song.

Recessional

A few popular suggestions include "Wedding March" (Felix Mendelssohn), "Allegro Maestoso" from *Water Music Suite* (George Frideric Handel) and "Trumpet Tune" (Henry Purcell). The musician will play samples of appropriate recessional pieces.

Wedding Coordinator

Marion Sudduth, Wedding Coordinator
(727)726-3863

Espiritu Santo's Wedding Coordinator must be contacted at least one month in advance regarding the wedding rehearsal and all details of the ceremony, including flowers and delivery arrangements, facilities where the wedding party can dress, etc. The parish wedding coordinator's responsibilities include all events taking place inside the church - both on the day of the rehearsal and the day of the wedding. Professional wedding consultants or coordinators may assist the wedding party in the church narthex prior to the wedding.

The Wedding Rehearsal

A wedding that has been rehearsed well goes well. Wedding rehearsals must begin on time! Please instruct your wedding party, family, and friends to allow for ample traveling time.

Remember that you are rehearsing in a church, which is a sacred space, the house of God. You are preparing for a sacred event. A reverent and respectful attitude is of the utmost importance. No food or drinks are permitted anywhere in the church building.

The following steps will ensure a good rehearsal:

- Be on time: All members of the wedding party need to be present for the rehearsal.
- Gather quietly in the main church.
- Participate reverently in the Opening Prayer.
- Listen carefully, the rehearsal coordinator will address you.

Note: All decisions related to processions and rituals for the wedding must be finalized with the Wedding Coordinator prior to the rehearsal date.

The Wedding Coordinator will explain the procedures chosen by the bride and groom and will conduct the rehearsal in the following order:

- Procession and seating arrangements
- Readings: *Readers should not be in the wedding party, must be at least 16 years old, must rehearse in the sanctuary using the microphone, ambo, and Lectionary, and must be dressed appropriately for proclaiming God's Word in the sanctuary. Short skirts and bare shoulders are not appropriate dress.*
- Vows and unity candle
- Gift bearers
- Completion of vows
- Communion: *If anyone in the wedding party is not Catholic or not prepared to receive Communion, we invite you to come forward with your arms crossed on your chest to receive the blessing of the church.*
- Presentation of flowers to Blessed Mother (optional)
- Final blessing
- Recessional: Wedding party goes to the chapel

Note: There is no receiving line at the church. Return to the main altar for pictures. Time allotted is 20 minutes.

There are slight variations if you have a ceremony rather than a Mass.

Decorations

Flowers

The sanctuary in the church is always decorated appropriately for the liturgical season: Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time, Lent, Easter. You may choose to simply allow the decor in the sanctuary to remain as is, and thereby save expenses, or you may add your own arrangements. Floral arrangements should complement the seasonal decor of the Church and not replace any decorations which are already in place. The wedding coordinator will assist you regarding the traditional colors of the liturgical season.

Flower arrangements for your wedding may be attached to the pews or to the candelabra, placed on stands in the sanctuary or on the steps, or placed in front of the altar. **Arrangements in the sanctuary must not be taller than the ambo or altar and should not interfere with the priest's movements around the altar.** Existing altar decorations and furnishings may not be moved. After the ceremony, your arrangements should be taken to your reception. It is a good idea to assign one of your attendants or groomsmen to do this for you.

Candles

There are four single candlesticks on each side of the sanctuary steps. Two additional candelabra are available if you wish to use them.

Unity Candle

If used, the Unity Candle is provided by the church and consists of a tall three-branched candelabra. The two side candles are lit before the service by the two mothers, symbolizing the two individual lives. During the service (after the vows) the couple approaches the candelabra and together light the center candle from the two side candles symbolizing that the two lives have become one in Christ.

Pews

When decorating the pews, use clamps, ties, or rubber bands only. No tape is permitted on the pews. *We supply pew bows with the proper clamps to be used.*

Aisles

No runners of any kind are permitted.

Note: Pew bows, candelabra, and unity candle are available for use through the church at no extra cost.

Photography and Videography

Your photographer is welcome during the service, but should not move around unnecessarily since it is distracting. The photographer must remain on the carpeted areas in the back of the church. Because of the sacred nature of the occasion, flash photography is not allowed during the ceremony. The sanctuary itself is off limits to the photographer and all members of the wedding party. Children should be supervised so that they do not wander into this area as well.

Video cameras are permitted only on the carpeted area near the choir or on the opposite side near the American flag. After the ceremony, the wedding party will return immediately to the altar for final group photographs. ***The time allotted for pictures is 20 minutes.***

The wedding party may also have photographs taken in Church before the guests arrive.

Dressing Room

If the bridal party uses the minister's room in the church to dress, provisions must be made to straighten it up and put all of your personal belongings and purses in your cars before the

wedding begins. Nothing should be left in the room during the wedding! The church cannot be held responsible for items left in the church before, during, or after the wedding.

Before the Wedding

Because of the very busy schedule of Espiritu Santo Church, the wedding must begin on time. If the parents of the bride and groom will not be in the entrance procession, they should be seated five minutes before the scheduled wedding time.

After the Wedding

Immediately after the ceremony, the two official witnesses (usually the Best Man and Maid of Honor) should come into the sacristy of the church to sign the marriage license with the priest who has witnessed the marriage. After recording the marriage, the parish will forward the license to the county Court House.

The Best Man or the Ushers should be responsible for checking the entrance area of the church to see that all boxes from the florist and any other materials have been cleaned up. It is also advised that the pews in the church are checked to see if anything has been left after the wedding such as handbags, keys, cameras, etc.

Other Important Details

When to Arrive

Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the wedding.

Where to Meet

The Bride and her attendants meet in the Minister's room, which is off the vestibule of the church. The Groom and his attendants meet in the chapel.

Rice/ Birdseed

Because of safety hazards and cleaning problems, we ask that neither rice nor birdseed be thrown at the door of the church or anywhere on church grounds.

Food and Drink

There is no smoking, eating, or drinking permitted anywhere in the church building before, during, or after the rehearsal or ceremony.

Personal Belongings

Appoint a family member to be responsible for all personal belongings not taken into the church during the wedding, such as cameras, cell phones, purses, clothing, and other valuables. It is recommended that these items be placed in your cars.

Cell Phones

Please ensure all cell phones are turned off or placed in the silent mode.

Leave Rooms in Order

Please appoint a family member to straighten the rooms used and dispose of flower boxes etc. in the trash cans provided.

Fees

Call Kathee Giuffré at (727)726-8477 for questions about your wedding fees.

Wedding Fee

The offering for the use of the church is \$450. The \$50.00 deposit, submitted to confirm your wedding date, is included in the total offering. ***The wedding fee should be made payable to Espiritu Santo Catholic Church and is to be paid in full one month prior to the wedding.***

Musician Fee

The fee for the musician is \$150.00 and ***is paid directly to your musician***. Additional expenses are incurred for rehearsals with vocalists and instrumentalists. The bench fee (if you are using your own musician) is \$75.00 and is paid directly to the Director of Liturgy and Music.


Altar Server Fee

If there is an altar server, a stipend of \$10.00 is customary. The Altar Server fee is to be paid to the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal. The fee will be given to the server after the wedding ceremony. *The decision to have an altar server is made when the wedding is planned, not at the rehearsal.*

All fees, except for the altar server stipend, are to be paid in full 30 days before the Wedding.

ORDER OF THE MASS

1. The mother of the groom is escorted to the unity candle, takes a taper and lights the candle on the left.
2. The mother of the bride is escorted to the unity candle, takes a taper and lights the candle on the right.
3. Both mothers are seated.
4. Procession begins in one of two ways:
 - a. Groomsmen can go to the back hall with the priest, come out with him, and stand by the first pew as the bridesmaids process down the aisle; or
 - b. Groomsmen can process in with the bridesmaids.
5. Either way, each couple bows when they reach the altar, steps up and goes to the chairs on the altar steps, turns, and faces center.
6. The music changes; the bride is escorted down the aisle; the groom meets her; they step up onto the bottom step; all turn and face the altar.
7. The Liturgy begins with the greeting, opening prayer, and readings (all are seated for the readings).
8. Homily: Priest or Deacon will address the assembly.
9. Wedding Vows: The wedding party is invited to stand for the vows and blessing of the rings followed by the lighting of the unity candle.
10. Prayers of the Faithful (all stand).
11. Preparation of the Gifts (Nuptial Mass only). Those bringing up the gifts go to back of the church.
12. "Our Father" (all stand). The priest comes from the altar to do the Nuptial Blessing.
13. Communion (Nuptial Mass only). Bride and groom choose the form for Communion well in advance: either bread only, or bread and wine. If you are not Catholic, or not spiritually prepared to receive, you are invited to come forward in the communion procession with your arms crossed over your chest to receive a blessing.
14. After Communion, the bride and groom have the option of placing a bouquet of flowers before The Blessed Mother in the Holy Family Alcove.
15. The bride and groom return to their place for the Final Blessing.
16. The priest presents the new couple to the community.
17. Recessional.
18. Go directly to the chapel to regroup for pictures.
19. Return to the sanctuary for pictures.



*Love is patient,
Love is kind,
Love is not jealous,
Love is not rude,
Love does not seek its own interests,
Love is not quick-tempered,
Love does not brood over injury,
Love does not rejoice over wrongdoing,
but rejoices in the truth.
Love bears all things,
Love believes all things,
Love endures all things,
Love never fails.*

(1 Corinthians: 13)

