

Important information regarding weddings at St. Raphael

Flowers

If you wish to have any special flower arrangements in church for your wedding, you will have to contact a florist of your choice and work out the details. Below are guidelines to follow.

- 1- One floral arrangement is permitted on each side of the altar where Mass is offered. If you wish, additional floral arrangements may be placed on pedestals at either side of the high altar. If any stands or pedestals are to be used, these should be set up by the florist.
- 2- Pew bows are permitted, but they must be secured in place with ribbon or rubber bands only. NO thumb tacks, tape or clip-on holders are permitted. It is the florist's responsibility to set up such decorations. Candles or torches of any kind are NOT permitted in the aisles or attached to the pews.
- 3- You may wish to use a crash (or aisle runner). For planning purposes, the aisle of our parish church is 100 ft. long. It is the florist's responsibility to set up the crash for the center aisle.
- 4- The church will often be available for florist preparations after 11 a.m. on the day of your wedding. Because other services may be scheduled on that day, please make sure to have your florist confirm the availability of the church at a given hour by calling our parish center at 412-661-3100.
- 5- While a unity candle is permitted for a wedding ceremony, please note that the use of any other candles as part of your decoration plan must be *specifically approved* before their use in the church. Additional standing or branched candelabra are not in church.
- 6- The florist or one of your family or friends should distribute the corsages and boutonnieres. Choose someone who will know the other members of your family so that they can make all of your invited guests feel welcome and comfortable.

Please remember that seasonal decorations in the church (such as those used on Easter, Christmas, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, etc.) require many hours of planning and set-up. All such decorations are to remain undisturbed in the sanctuary. Please be aware of this as you plan for your wedding. Any additional flowers you may use should complement the seasonal decorations already in place.

Wedding Coordinators

Our wedding coordinators will assist you during your wedding rehearsal and on your wedding day (beginning 30 minutes before the wedding Liturgy). You will be contacted at least one month prior to your wedding date by one of our wedding coordinators -- Nan Pischke (412-661-2692 - home or 412-638-0963 - cell) or Pam Matia (412-661-4912 - home). The fee for the wedding coordinator (payable at the rehearsal) is \$75.

Marriage License

By PA state law, no wedding may be conducted without a valid marriage license. Therefore, if you have not already given your marriage license to the priest or deacon officiating at your wedding prior to the rehearsal, you must give it to the wedding coordinator at your rehearsal.

Neither the wedding rehearsal nor the wedding ceremony will begin until you have provided a valid marriage license.

Visiting Priest

You may wish to invite a priest or deacon who is not from St. Raphael Parish to officiate at your wedding. Visiting Catholic clergy in good standing with the Catholic Church are welcome at St. Raphael Parish with the express permission of the pastor. They will be expected to act in accordance with our parish guidelines and according to Church law. Make sure to tell the parish priest about any visiting clergy in advance so that everything can be arranged.

The priest or deacon who will officiate at your wedding will complete all paperwork that is necessary for the church's records. You will be asked to provide a recently issued Baptismal certificate (no more than 6 months old) and any other documentation that details the Sacraments you have received.

Before and After the Ceremony

At the wedding rehearsal, please remind your bridal party and friends and family to be mindful of the sacredness of the church and the upcoming wedding. Before and after the ceremony, it is expected that all will act respectfully and dress accordingly.

Absolutely **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** are permitted in the church or on church grounds - before or after the wedding.

Please remember that you are responsible for making sure that the church and all the pews are clear of facial tissues, water bottles, etc. both after the rehearsal and after the wedding liturgy. You may wish to ask the ushers or other members of your family to ensure this task is completed.

Please remind all of your guests that no rice, birdseed, confetti, or rose petals may be thrown either in front of or in the parish church. All such items create a safety hazard and require great care to clean up or remove.

If there are any plans to use festive or helium-filled balloons, these must absolutely remain **OUTSIDE** the church building at all times.

We want you to enjoy your wedding day, but remember that other parishioners will be using the church after your wedding party has departed.

Photography and Videography

Photo and video memories can be a precious legacy of your wedding day. We hope that you can capture the spirit and the events that will make this day so special for you and that you may have the opportunity to enjoy these memories in years to come with your family and friends.

Here you will find guidelines for photographers taking pictures or videos in St. Raphael Church.

A - Photographers should be as inconspicuous as possible throughout the ceremony. The church is not a public building, and the wedding is not a public event, but a sacred action. The clergy and staff of the parish respect the professionalism of the photographers and expect that they in turn will respect the sanctity of the occasion.

B - Photographers must be out of the church 1 hour and 15 minutes after the wedding begins. Other church services are scheduled on Saturdays immediately following this time.

C - Upon arriving at the church, please have all photographers or videographers speak with the priest, deacon, or parish wedding coordinator.

D - St. Raphael Parish will not provide photographers with extension cords, ladders, or other items and / or props.

E - Photographers and videographers are **NOT** permitted beyond the altar rail.

F - Videographers, please note, generally the clergy will not wear a wireless lavalier microphone.

Dressing Areas

A small, but private dressing area is available for the bride in the church vestibule (the main entrance to the church). The groom may make use of the rest room in the church sacristy (the room near the front of the church where the priest prepares for Mass).