

# **WEDDING POLICIES**

## **for**

### **New Kensington Catholic Community Parishes**

The canonical requirements of the Church governing the Sacrament of Marriage are the same in all parishes of the Diocese of Greensburg. The way parishes approach the celebration may differ from parish to parish. We have established these policies to ensure a reverent and memorable day for you and your guests. These policies have been designed to help you have a beautiful and prayerful celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. Please know that the clergy and staff of the parish are here to help you with any concerns or questions that you may have.

#### **1. WHERE SHOULD THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE BE CELEBRATED?**

The proper place for celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage is the parish church. In the Roman Catholic Church, the wedding liturgy is usually celebrated in the parish of the bride. The wedding liturgy may also take place in the parish of the groom.

When one of the parties is not Catholic, the Catholic partner may be granted permission for the wedding to take place in the non-Catholic's church if desired. This permission is granted by the diocesan bishop on an individual basis via the parish priest.

To marry without proper dispensation or permission makes the marriage invalid. When a Catholic, with proper dispensation, is married in a non-Catholic church, it is not necessary for the priest to be present. The priest may be invited to participate in the ceremony, and may do so on a limited basis.

In the Diocese of Greensburg, the wedding is not permitted in secular places such as gardens or hotel settings.

#### **2. HOW OLD MUST A PERSON BE FOR MARRIAGE?**

Both parties must be at least 18 years old.

#### **3. HOW MANY TIMES DOES THE COUPLE HAVE TO MEET WITH THE PRIEST?**

A minimum of two personal visits is required to complete the required paperwork and to review the details of the liturgy. The priest may want to spend more time with the couple in preparation if he feels that there is a need.

#### **4. WHAT TIME OF THE DAY MAY THE WEDDING LITURGY BE CELEBRATED?**

- A wedding liturgy may be celebrated on Saturdays at St. Joseph and St. Mary Parishes at 1:30 PM and Mount Saint Peter Parish at 2:00 PM.
- Friday weddings may be scheduled between 4:30 PM and 6:00 PM.
- When planning a winter wedding, check with the Pastor for adjusted time availability.
- Rehearsals are usually scheduled at 6:00 PM and last for one hour. They are usually held the evening before the wedding unless there is a Friday wedding scheduled. In that event, the rehearsal will be scheduled according to the parish availability.

## **5. WHAT ABOUT THE MUSIC FOR OUR WEDDING?**

The Directors of Music Ministry, Mr. David Leo at Mount Saint Peter Parish, Mrs. Diane Painter at St. Joseph Parish or Mr. George Pecoraro at St. Mary Parish, will preview musical options. You will have an opportunity to meet with the Music Director who will help you to choose music that will enhance your wedding liturgy.

## **6. WHAT ABOUT ALTAR DECORATIONS?**

Fresh flowers are always appropriate; however, they are not required. Artificial flowers are not permitted. There are certain times of the year when the church is decorated for the liturgical season. These decorations may not be removed for a wedding.

## **7. CAN THE BRIDE PRESENT FLOWERS TO THE BLESSED MOTHER?**

**Yes.** If the couple has a strong devotion to the Blessed Mother, live flowers may be presented after communion.

## **8. CAN WE HAVE THE WEDDING / UNITY CANDLE?**

**No.** The liturgy of the Church makes no mention of the unity candle. If this ceremony is important to the couple, we recommend using it as part of the prayer of blessing at the wedding reception.

## **9. MAY WE DECORATE THE AISLE OR PEWS WITH CANDLES OR ROPE OFF THE CENTER AISLE WITH ROPE OR RIBBON?**

**No.** Candle aisle markers are not permitted. Fabric and ribbon may not be used to “rope off” the center aisle. Individual aisle markers may be used. Flowers, ribbons, or bows may be used to decorate individual pews. They cannot however be taped, stapled or tacked, and must be removed immediately following your ceremony. A florist can assist you by adding rubber bands to your decoration that will slip over the end of the pew for easy application and removal. It is the responsibility of your florist or some other designated person to place and remove aisle markers. The wedding coordinator is unable to assist with this process.

## **10. MAY WE THROW RICE, BLOW BUBBLES OR HAVE A BALLOON OR DOVE RELEASE?**

**No.** Flower petals, rice, confetti, birdseed, balloons, bubbles, and similar items may not be used in the church or on the premises. Living creatures, including birds or butterflies, may not be released on the premises, nor may pets and/or other animals serve any role in the wedding.

## **11. MAY THE BRIDE’S FATHER ESCORT HER DOWN THE AISLE?**

**Yes.** However, this is not the Church’s intention, with the focus only on the bride. The Church teaches that the bride and groom should process down the aisle together, since they have already been walking together on life’s journey. You have the ability to choose one of the three procession options that fits your family’s needs. These are outlined later in these guidelines. We know that you will find an option which allows you to reflect your family’s needs while at the same time remaining faithful to the precepts of the Sacrament of Marriage.

## **PARISH STIPENDS**

Effective January 1, 2024, the stipend for marriages is as follows:

- **For parishioners who are registered, the stipend is: \$1,000**
- **For weddings of non - members, and parishioners who are not active, or who have only registered within twelve months of scheduling the wedding, the fee is: \$2,000**

**\*The additional amount is assigned for the use of the church building, maintenance, heat or air conditioning, lights, etc.**

**Non-members are required to pay a non-refundable \$250 deposit at the time of booking their wedding.** No dates will be considered confirmed until this deposit is received in the Parish Office. Therefore dates being considered for wedding ceremonies will be removed from the schedule if the deposit is not received within two weeks from the booking date.

Fees may be subject to change based on diocesan/parish stipulation.

- **All stipends must be submitted in cash no later than two weeks prior to your scheduled wedding date.** We know how busy those few weeks before a wedding can be. Therefore, as a courtesy, if your fees are not paid in full at least two weeks prior to your wedding date, you will receive a call from the parish office as a reminder.
- If you are requesting a priest or deacon from outside the parish to preside, an additional stipend should be offered to him for his service.
- All concerns about wedding fees should be directed to the Pastor, Rev. Kenneth G. Zaccagnini. He and the entire staff want you to feel comfortable with your decision to marry here. Father Zaccagnini would be happy to address any concerns that you might have about our fee structure or any of our policies discussed here. Please call the parish office for an appointment.

# PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER

## NEW KENSINGTON CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS

In order to maintain a spirit of prayer and reverence during the wedding liturgy and to allow the couple to capture special moments of their wedding day in photographs, the following guidelines must be observed:

- Only the official photographer is permitted to move about the church to take photographs.
- Flash photography is not permitted during the liturgy.
- The photographer is not permitted to rearrange altar appointments or sanctuary furniture for these photos.
- No one is permitted to take photographs from the upper pulpit, upper altar, or from any position inside the sanctuary of the church (inside the communion rail).
- The use of stationary tripods to set up camera/video equipment is recommended for the liturgy. However, the setup must not impede the movement of the liturgy nor block the entrance to the Chapel.
- Photographers/Videographers are not permitted to interfere with the wedding procession or recession by stopping subjects as they walk down the aisle.
- Following the ceremony, 30 minutes are allowed for picture taking at the church (inside or outside). It is essential that the above time schedule be adhered to so that we can continue to offer this privilege. Please remember that the church building is sacred space and that an atmosphere of reverence must be maintained at all times.
- Pictures may not be taken at the outside grotto; masonry and steps are unsafe.
- Photographers must follow any additional directions given by the Priest or the Parish Wedding Coordinator.
- The wedding coordinator is to be afforded the utmost respect. Disrespect to any member of the staff will not be tolerated.

We continue to offer these privileges with your professional assurance that you will adhere to the . We know that your wish for the wedding couple echoes ours: that all will uphold the dignity of the sacrament that they celebrate on their wedding day. Following these simple guidelines will help to ensure just that.

# WEDDING PROCESSION OPTIONS:

## Wedding Procession Option 1



Children of the Wedding Party  
(Ring Bearer, Flower Girl, etc.)

Best Man and Maid/Matron  
of Honor

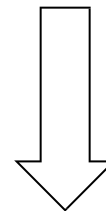
Attendants in Couples

Parents of the Bride

Parents of the Groom

Priest

Servers



Seats/Best Man/Maid of Honor

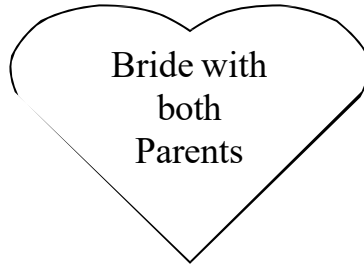
Seats for Attendants

Kneeler

Seats for Bride & Groom

ALTAR

## Wedding Procession Option 2



Children of Bridal Party  
(Ring Bearer, Flower Girl, etc.)

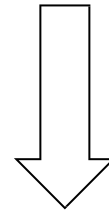
Best man and Maid of Honor

Attendants as Couples

Groom with Parents

Priest

Servers



Seats for Best Man/Maid of Honor

Seats for Attendants

Seats for Bride and Groom

Kneeler

ALTAR

## Wedding Procession Option 3

This option is used when Bride is being accompanied by ONE Person.

Bride with Family Escort

Children of the Bridal Party  
(Ring Bearer, Flower Girl, etc.)

Best Man and Maid of Honor

Attendants in Couple

Mother of the Bride w/ escort

Groom with his parents

Priest

Servers

Seats for Best Man  
Maid of Honor

Seats for Attendants

Kneeler

Seats for Bride and Groom

ALTAR



## **12. WHAT ABOUT THE MARRIAGE LICENSE?**

A Pennsylvania marriage license is required by state law and must be secured before the wedding date and **presented to the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal**. You may apply for a marriage license at any county courthouse in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is valid for 60 days. **No wedding will be celebrated if a valid license is not presented.**

## **13. WHICH PRIEST WILL PERFORM OUR WEDDING?**

Either the pastor or one of the parochial vicars will preside at the wedding liturgy. If the bride or groom has a relative or personal friend who is a priest, he is welcome to celebrate the wedding according to parish policy and guidelines. The visiting priest is responsible for all paper work associated with your wedding. He must also complete a *Visiting Clergy Form* that will be given to you if you desire this option.

## **14. MY FIANCE IS NOT CATHOLIC. MUST I HAVE A MASS?**

**No.** The Church offers two options for the wedding celebration. One takes place within Mass, the other takes place within the Liturgy of the Word. The second option does not include Holy Communion. This option is recommended when your fiancé is not Catholic, since he/she would not be able to receive Holy Communion if Mass is celebrated.

If your fiancé is not baptized, the Church does not allow the wedding to take place within Mass. This is the universal law of the Catholic Church.

## **15. MY FIANCE IS NOT CATHOLIC. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR HIS/HER MINISTER TO TAKE PART IN THE CEREMONY?**

**Yes.** In the case of a marriage between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, we heartily welcome the minister of the non-Catholic party to come and share in the ceremony according to our diocesan regulations. The minister must make a courtesy call to the presiding priest as soon as the wedding date is set.

## **16. MAY WE HAVE A RECEIVING LINE AFTER THE WEDDING?**

**No.** Because of the Parish Mass schedule a receiving line is not possible. Since most of your wedding guests coming to the church will be attending your reception, please greet your guests there.

## **17. WHO PROVIDES THE WEDDING WORSHIP AIDS (PROGRAMS)?**

The couple, in conjunction with the Music Director, provides any desired worship aids for the congregation's use during the ceremony. The Music Director will send you a draft of your worship aid with all the finalized music selections and an order of the ceremony. Please do not change any of the information that will be listed. It is also your responsibility to have your ushers remove all programs from the pews after the ceremony.



**18. WILL THERE BE SOMEONE AT THE CHURCH TO GUIDE US ON OUR WEDDING DAY?**

**Yes.** Mrs. Susanne Graham, the New Kensington Catholic Community Wedding Coordinator, will lead the wedding rehearsal and be present to assist you on your wedding day.

**19. IS A WEDDING CRASH ALLOWED? (The white runner that covers the center aisle)**

**No.** Crashes are not permitted.

**20. ARE THERE OTHER THINGS TO BE MINDFUL OF?**

**Yes.** Weddings are a time of great celebration. However, the use of alcoholic beverages, while appropriate at the reception, is strictly forbidden prior to arriving at the church or anywhere on church property.

The couple needs to be aware that the use of alcoholic beverages prior to the ceremony could prevent the couple from being married since drinking alcohol could compromise their free and full consent at the time of the exchange of the wedding vows. Additionally, no member of the wedding party is permitted to use alcohol prior to the wedding.

There is no smoking in the church or anywhere on church grounds.

God's choicest blessings are extended to both of you as you embark on this very special time in your lives,

**The Reverend Kenneth G. Zaccagnini, V.F.**