

WEDDINGS AT ST. PATRICK CHURCH, ERIE

This booklet outlines St. Patrick Parish Wedding Policy as of January 1, 2020. Please direct any questions to the Wedding Coordinator.

CONGRATULATIONS on your intention to become husband and wife. The celebrant you choose to witness your wedding will help you to prepare for your new life together.

If you choose a priest or deacon from outside St. Patrick Parish to be the celebrant of your wedding, he will be the person who prepares you for marriage. Any priest or deacon from the Diocese of Erie is more than welcome here. If the priest or deacon you choose is from outside the Diocese of Erie, he must present a "Celebrit" or letter of good standing from his bishop or superior in order to celebrate a sacrament in the Diocese of Erie.

RESERVATION FOR A WEDDING AT ST. PATRICK

Your wedding reservation is official only after you have spoken with the Pastor at St. Patrick Church and then completed and returned the reservation form found on the church website. Reservations for the current year should be requested at least six months prior to your wedding. Reservations will be accepted for the next year after January 1 of the year prior to your request. Priority will be given from January through March to registered active parishioners of one year, ie., members who regularly attend Mass. After March 30th, if there are dates remaining, reservations will be accepted from non-parishioners.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION PROGRAM

In the Diocese of Erie, the ordinary program for marriage preparation takes place over a period of four to six months. This includes an initial meeting with the celebrant. St. Patrick Church is very popular for weddings and we are usually booked a year in advance. All couples being married are required by the diocese to participate in a marriage preparation program: Pre-Cana, Engagement Encounter or NOVA. A schedule, which also includes information about each program, is available on the Erie Catholic Diocese website: www.eriecd.org/familylifeoffice.

INTERFAITH MARRIAGE

When the parties are of different faith backgrounds, the *Wedding Service Outside of Mass* may be celebrated by a Catholic priest or both the priest and a minister. A dispensation is granted by the diocesan bishop for an interfaith marriage to take place in the Catholic Church. Your celebrant can discuss this with you.

APPLYING FOR A MARRIAGE LICENSE

Both applicants must appear in person with the following:

- **Driver's license or photo ID**
- **Social Security Number (card preferred)**
- **Mothers' maiden names, parents' current addresses, state where parents were born, parents' occupations**
- **\$60.00 filing fee – Cash Only**

If either applicant is divorced, bring latest divorce decree. If female has resumed her maiden name after the divorce, submit proof of such.

If prior marriage terminated by death, provide death certificate or a copy as to your former spouse.

Three-day waiting period between application and issuance of license. Either applicant may pick up the license after the waiting period. **(NOTE: YOUR MARRIAGE LICENSE MUST BE AT ST. PATRICK PARISH OFFICE NO LATER THAN 72 HOURS (3 DAYS) BEFORE THE WEDDING)!**

License is valid for 60 days from date of issuance and can only be used in PA.

Non-PA residents may also secure a license at PA Marriage License Bureau, to be used in PA only!

Change of bride's name after wedding: Form is available at the Marriage Bureau.

Contact Information:

Erie County Courthouse, Room 123

140 W 6th Street

Erie, PA 16501

Phone: 814-451-6264

Office Hours: 8AM-4PM, Mon-Fri

REQUIRED CHURCH PAPERS

The following documents are required for each party. These must be in the parish file no later than **three months prior to your wedding**.

1. Catholics must bring a **CURRENT Baptismal certificate issued within 6 months**.

2. Non-Catholics will need a baptismal certificate if they were baptized. If they are not baptized, at least one parent must sign a form attesting to this.
3. Catholics will also need a copy of their First Communion and Confirmation certificates if they were received at a church other than the church of baptism.
4. If either party was married before, documentation of a church annulment or a death certificate must be provided.
5. Once the Engagement Encounter, Pre-Cana or NOVA is completed, the certificate must be provided for the file.
6. Additional items may be required.

THE WEDDING CEREMONY

The Parish Wedding Coordinator and the Parish Music Director will meet with each couple to work out all the details of your ceremony at a pre-scheduled music planning session.

Weddings at St. Patrick Church generally use the form *Weddings Without Mass* due to the large number of weddings performed here. Funeral Masses are often scheduled on Saturday mornings due to family needs, and the general Parish Mass is at 5:00 pm on Saturday evening. Since a priest is not permitted to celebrate more than two Masses per day, we generally limit weddings to the *Wedding Service*.

The *Wedding Service* consists of: Prelude, Entrance Rite, Liturgy of the Word, Rite of Marriage, Prayers and Blessings and Concluding Rite.

The ceremony begins with the procession of the bridal party and the bride, who may be accompanied by her father/mother or both parents. Bridesmaids may process singly and meet groomsmen at the front of the church or be escorted by groomsmen from the back of church. After the Final Blessing, the newly married couple is introduced to their guests and they will recess along with the entire wedding party.

Because of time and spatial constraints, it is strongly recommended that you do not have a receiving line as guests leave the church.

If wedding participants include flower girl(s) and/or ring bearer(s) under the age of five years, AN ADULT, NOT IN THE WEDDING PARTY must be present in the vestibule to direct the child/children. Flower girls are NOT permitted to scatter flower petals in the aisle and ring bearers may NOT carry the actual rings. The best man should have both rings in his possession.

Several months before your wedding you should select appropriate readings and readers for your ceremony. The revised booklet, **"Together for Life" Sixth Edition**,

by Joseph M. Champlin will be included in your materials for Pre-Cana, Engagement Encounter and NOVA, and the readings should be selected from this booklet. If you are not required to attend any of these sessions, you may purchase the booklet (approximately \$5.00) at Hofmann's Church & Religious Goods, 420 East 26th St., Erie or online.

FLOWERS TO THE SHRINE OF MARY AND LIGHTING OF A UNITY CANDLE

These practices are not part of the Rite of Marriage in the Catholic Church and do not take place in the context of a wedding Mass. If a couple wishes to bring flowers to the Shrine of Mary, you should do so at the end of your rehearsal. If you desire a Unity Candle, that should be done at the wedding reception. (See Wedding Coordinator for a special "table grace" which incorporates a ceremony of lighting the unity candle).

SPECIAL REQUESTS

If you have a special request that is not covered in this booklet, please contact the parish Wedding Coordinator. Every effort will be made to accommodate your request if possible.

TIME OF WEDDINGS

Weddings may be celebrated on any day of the week except from the time when the Saturday evening Vigil Mass begins until sunset on Sunday.

The normal time for weddings at St. Patrick is on Friday evening at 5 pm or 6 pm and on Saturday at 12 pm or 2 pm. We cannot schedule weddings later than 2 pm because of confessions and the Mass schedule. If you desire a different time it must be approved by Msgr. Kriegel, Pastor.

Because of the large number of weddings and Masses at St. Patrick Church each couple is allotted **90 minutes** from the time their ceremony begins until they are finished with pictures and leave the church. While every effort is made to limit the number of weddings to one per day, on occasion there may be two back to back. The wedding coordinator will work to ensure that adequate time is allotted to each party for preparations before and pictures after.

The wedding party may access the Bride's Dressing Room (southwest tower room) two hours prior to the ceremony. Food, drink (except for water) and particularly alcohol is NOT permitted in the dressing room or church. This room is 'somewhat' airconditioned; brides with summer weddings may want to arrive close to the time of the ceremony, but at least **15 minutes** before. We do not recommend dressing at the church, but instead at another cooler and roomier location.

Following the ceremony and upon exiting the church the use of rice, birdseed, butterflies, confetti, balloons, bubbles, etc. IS NOT PERMITTED! There is no religious significance to any of these practices, and therefore they are not permitted on church grounds.

MUSIC AT YOUR WEDDING

Before making any wedding music plans please consult the Parish Wedding Coordinator, Jan Gervasi, to schedule a music planning session.

The Wedding Coordinator and the parish Music Director will meet with each couple to plan their music. A parish wedding cantor will be selected to sing for your wedding; if you have a particular cantor in mind, please mention this to the Wedding Coordinator when you schedule your meeting. Please be advised that diocesan regulations limit music selections to sacred music only.

GUEST VOCALIST AND INSTRUMENTALIST

You may have a guest or family member play music or sing at your wedding. This normally occurs during the prelude, before the wedding begins. Please note that all music, vocal or instrumental, must be liturgical and meet the approval of the Parish Music Director. Rehearsal for a guest musician is usually held earlier on the day of the wedding. There is no charge for this rehearsal, but if an additional rehearsal is requested prior to the wedding, there is a charge of \$30 per hour. Please take this into consideration when asking a friend or relative to sing or play.

If you wish to have a guest musician replace the parish Music Director/Organist, please be advised that the stipend to him must still be paid as that is part of his contract with the parish.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

This rehearsal is for you and your wedding party and will also be attended by the celebrant, sacristan and wedding coordinator. The parish organist and cantor do not attend. All rehearsals are held at **5:30 PM** the evening prior to your wedding. The rehearsal must begin at the appointed time and will take approximately 45 minutes to one hour. The bride, groom, parents, readers, gift bearers and all who have a part in the ceremony should attend. It is recommended that you schedule your rehearsal at least one hour or more before your rehearsal dinner. Any changes must be approved by the celebrant and wedding coordinator.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

Decorations in the sanctuary should be simple and in good taste. The parish has back altar floral arrangements which are available for your use at no charge. No arrangements may be placed directly on the main altar. Decorations are limited to the sanctuary only. Aisle candles, trellises or arches, etc. are not permitted.

All decorations brought in by you or your florist must be removed immediately after the wedding.

Pew bows are also available for your use at no charge as well as large decorative candle sticks. All of these decorations may be viewed at your music planning session.

Aisle runners are not permitted due to insurance restrictions.

Please notify your florist that the church will be open for two full hours prior to your ceremony for any decorating. If another wedding is preceding yours by two hours, you may have only 30 minutes to decorate.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Your professional photographer and videographer may take pictures during the ceremony. Please ask them to check with the wedding coordinator and/or sacristan, Tom Golab prior to the ceremony, particularly if using wireless microphones which may interfere with the church sound system. Photographers/videographers are not permitted in the sanctuary.

Photographers/videographers are permitted to set up equipment in the choir loft, but must leave at least a **six foot clearance** around the organ.

Formal poses may be taken before the ceremony if no other wedding precedes yours. Photos may be taken after the wedding, but please remember that all photos, etc. must be completed within 90 minutes after the scheduled start of your ceremony.

CONDUCT

No one is permitted in the choir loft except the photographer or videographer. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the church or on the grounds. No food or beverages should be brought into the church. It is suggested that bottled water be brought in for the wedding party for the rehearsal and wedding as there are no water fountains in the church.

THERE ARE NO FEES FOR THE USE OF THE CHURCH

PARISH MUSIC FEES

\$200 for Music Director/Organist

\$150 for Parish Cantor

Music fees must be paid at the time of your meeting with the Wedding Coordinator and Music Director. If you choose to use other or additional musicians or vocalists, please remember that the Parish Music Director/Organist fee must be paid regardless of your decision. If a parish cantor is not used, you do not pay that fee. You are responsible for making payment to any additional musicians or vocalists according to your agreement with them.

SACRISTAN, SERVER AND CELEBRANT FEES

The sacristan receives \$75 payable at the time of your meeting with the Wedding Coordinator. If you opt to use an altar server (not recommended) you should pay him or her \$25. There is no set fee for the celebrant, but please take into consideration the amount of time and work he has invested in your wedding. It is customary in our diocese to offer \$150. Please bring your celebrant’s honorarium to the rehearsal and give to him there.

CONTACT INFORMATION

RECTORY OFFICE.....814-454-8085
FAX.....814-459-8685
E-MAIL.....stpats@neo.rr.com or hak7043@aol.com
MUSIC DIRECTOR – Mark Alloway814-323-2196
WEDDING COORDINATOR – Jan Gervasi814-453-6824
SACRISTAN – Tom Golab814-454-0748

*St. Patrick Church
130 East 4th St.
Erie, PA 16507*