

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING



Corpus Christi Catholic Church

The clergy, staff, and parishioners of Corpus Christi Catholic Church rejoice with you in your engagement to one another, and we will walk with you as you approach one of the most important days in your life, the beginning of the sacred covenant of Christian marriage!

In asking to be married in the Catholic Church, you are publicly proclaiming your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and asking to live as disciples of Christ in the Sacrament of Marriage. The sacred liturgy of your wedding, which begins your married life by the solemn exchange of marital consent, is above all else an act of worship, and we will help you prepare both for that happy day and for the lifetime of marriage that follows your nuptial liturgy.

We understand that you are concerned to have every detail of your wedding carefully planned and well executed, and we will work with you to ensure that the sacred liturgy is a beautiful and memorable event for you and your families and friends.

We ask you to remember that your wedding, although an intensely personal moment for you, is not a *private* event; rather, it is a public celebration of one of the seven Sacraments given to the Church by the Lord Jesus. For this reason, we must take care to ensure that the sacred liturgy is celebrated according to the mind of the Church and in conformity with liturgical law and local custom.



Where Do We Begin?

We at Corpus Christi know what an exciting and special time this is for every couple, and though many of us will dream about the day that we get to finally start planning our wedding, we know that it can also be a bit overwhelming at times too. The goal of this manual is to help make the process of planning your wedding a smooth and enjoyable one. We hope that you find this guide both informative and helpful.

Please note that this is not a complete list of every detail that you'll need to discuss prior to your wedding, but rather a guide for assuring that all of the most crucial steps are completed in the proper order. Your Wedding Coordinator (provided by us) will go over any remaining details pertaining to your wedding.

Your First Step: Meet with Father Joseph

The first thing any couple should do if interested in having their wedding at Corpus Christi Catholic Church is to call our office secretary, Maria Coller, and explain to her that you are interested in getting married at the church and that you would like to schedule a meeting with Fr. Joseph.

Meeting with Father is always step one of the process towards having a marriage in our Parish, as it allows him a chance to meet and get to know the couple and make sure that they are ready to join in a marriage together. It also allows you to get to know Father better, and bring up any religious questions or concerns you have regarding marriage within the Catholic Church. This first meeting will be one of several that you'll have with him before your wedding.

Please plan to meet with Father at least six months prior to when you'd like to have your wedding. To schedule an appointment with Father Joseph, please contact Maria Coller at (803) 359-4391 Ext. 122

Please do not complete any further steps towards your marriage prep before this meeting.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR MARRIAGE

1. **LETTER OF ACTIVE PARISHIONER STATUS & PERMISSION TO MARRY AT CORPUS CHRISTI CATHOLIC CHURCH:** A non-parishioner of the Church must obtain a letter from his/her pastor stating that they are active, registered parishioners of their local parish, there are no impediments to the marriage, that the pastor gives permission for the wedding to occur in this church and that the pastor of their local parish or his delegate will complete all pre-nuptial paperwork and marriage preparation.
2. **CERTIFICATE OF BAPTISM:** Catholics must contact the church of their Baptism and request a **current, newly issued**, Certificate of Baptism, **dated within six (6) months of the wedding date**. Neither a photocopy nor the original certificate will be acceptable. A non-Catholic should request a letter on official letterhead stationery from his/her church indicating the date and place of Baptism.
3. **CERTIFICATE OF CONFIRMATION:** If the record of Confirmation is not recorded on the front or back of the Catholic's newly issued baptism certificate, the Catholic must request an original certificate from the church where the Confirmation was celebrated.
4. **PRE-NUPTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE:** It requests certain biographical and attitudinal information necessary for the valid reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony. After your wedding, this information remains in the permanent files at the church. If you are a non-parishioner, this will be completed by your pastor or his delegate at your local parish. All pre-nuptial paperwork must be received no later than three months prior to the wedding date.
5. **CERTIFICATE OR PROOF OF COMPLETION OF PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING** is due three months prior to wedding date.
6. **CIVIL LICENSE:** A civil license for a marriage in South Carolina can be obtained from the marriage license bureau in any county courthouse in the state. The couple must apply for the license in person; you will receive the license the next day. You will be given three (3) licenses plus a self-addressed envelope. Please bring these to the church office. Please do not sign any of them. You should apply for the license a month before your wedding date. If possible, please do not wait until the week of the wedding. The rehearsal for the wedding will not be done without this license, nor will the wedding be celebrated without this license. License is due one month prior to wedding date.

**Please note that #1 is for non-parishioners only
Documents 2-6 can be brought to the office and given to Maria**

What Happens Next?

Your Second Step: Meet with our Wedding Coordinator

After you both meet with Father, Maria will put you in touch with our wedding coordinator here at the church.

The Wedding Coordinator of the Church provides many important, vital functions before, during, and after the wedding. She serves to help the bride and groom and is totally responsible for implementing the policies and customs of the Parish. She will consult with the priest, conduct the rehearsal, give directions for the procession and placement of the wedding party, and ensure that the altar furnishings, candles, and lights are properly set.

Due to the unique nature of Catholic liturgy, a professional wedding director or wedding planner will not function in the role of Wedding Coordinator at either the rehearsal or the wedding ceremony.

You will meet with the Wedding Coordinator two times; both meetings will be scheduled for a date and time that works best for the both of you. You will schedule these meetings directly with the coordinator herself. During your meetings, you will discuss the following:

- Scheduling the date of your wedding
- Starting your marriage prep paperwork given to you by the coordinator.
- Introduction to any reading material to help you plan the wedding
- Discussion about details of wedding
- Discussion on who will be in your wedding
- Helping you in formatting your worship aid
- Discussion about the rehearsal

Commonly Asked Questions ***Before Your Wedding***

WHO PLANS THE WEDDING LITURGY?

By asking to have your wedding in this Parish, you are choosing a Catholic wedding. This is not merely a civil ceremony or a social event in an auditorium. Weddings, like all liturgies, are public, liturgical actions of the Church and the celebration of weddings is governed by liturgical law. Love for the Church and for her sacred liturgy is the chief reason Catholics desire a Catholic wedding.

The basic form of the wedding liturgy, then, is given by the Church and no variation from that form is possible.

Within that basic form, the bride and groom may select the first and second readings and the Gospel from the set of readings given by the Church, readings which come from Sacred Scripture. No other readings are permitted. These reading options will be given to you by the wedding coordinator.

WHAT IS PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELING?

A wedding is a simple ceremony lasting only a few minutes; a marriage is a lifetime commitment of sacrificial love in a solemn and sacramental covenant. Wedding preparation and marriage preparation are two different things, and preparing for the marriage is by far the more important.

The Church requires all engaged couples to attend an approved pre-marriage counseling program (Pre-Cana.) We expect couples to participate in marriage preparation not simply because it is a “requirement” or a “hoop” to jump through, but because it is important for their life together. Our sole desire is that couples become married in Christ and stay married until they die. Everything the Church does and asks is towards this end.

For parishioners of Corpus Christi, the office staff will contact you about the Catholic Engaged Encounter sessions in the area. Couples who live out of town/non-parishioners must consult their pastor to make arrangements for approved pre-marriage counseling in their local parish. **A certificate of completion is required before the wedding.**

FOR COUPLES ALREADY LIVING TOGETHER (COHABITATION)

Although many couples in our current society live together before marriage, it remains an unacceptable practice for a Christian. In addition, studies have shown that couples who live together before marriage have much higher rates of divorce and a poorer quality of marital relationship than those who do not.

As a recent pastoral letter explains, the Church’s teaching on cohabitation is not an “arbitrary” rule. Living together before marriage is a sin because it violates God’s commandments. Saint Paul lists this sin – technically called “fornication”

– Among the sins that can keep a person from reaching heaven (see 1 Corinthians 6:9). Since you are freely choosing to be married in Christ, it is important to actually live the commandments He gives us. The Church does

not exist merely to provide beautiful ceremonies, but to proclaim through her members the full, life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Your engagement is meant to be a time of grace and growth in preparing for your marriage. Couples living together are to separate and remain chaste before contacting the office to request a wedding.

Living chastely during your remaining months of engagement will produce bountiful spiritual fruits, helping both of you to grow in the virtues of generous love, sacrificial giving, self-restraint, and good communication. These virtues are essential for a good, lasting marriage.

The Church is here to help encourage you to correct your living situation. If a cohabitating couple chooses not to separate, at the Pastor's discretion, a wedding may be scheduled, but it will be a private ceremony of the couple, two witnesses, and immediate family only. To do otherwise suggests to the world that the Catholic Church condones cohabitation.

Many points taken from Living Together, by the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, 1999.

Commonly Asked Questions

Scheduling the Big Day

WHEN CAN WEDDINGS TAKE PLACE AT THE CHURCH?

Weddings at the Church may be scheduled for most days provided the Pastor's schedule allows for it. The time of the wedding is also flexible, with options for morning, afternoon, and evening ceremonies (for Saturday weddings, we require them to be before 2:00 p.m.)

Those days closed to weddings are: Holy Days of Obligation, Easter Weekend, the weekend after Easter, All Souls Day (November 2), Thanksgiving Weekend, the season of Advent and the weekend after Christmas. We will not schedule weddings on these days. Other dates may be unavailable due to parish events.

HOW DO WE RESERVE THE CHURCH?

For Parishioners: Either the bride or the groom must be a practicing Catholic and registered at the Parish for at least twelve months before scheduling a wedding date and beginning the six months marriage preparation. The bride/groom must be an active parishioner, regularly attending Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation and using the envelope system in regular support of the parish.

For Non-Parishioner Weddings: Either the bride or groom must be a registered, practicing Catholic in their local parish.

The staff and clergy will not deal with any third party in making reservations or in planning a wedding in order to avoid and confusion or miscommunication.

Please note: At least either the bride or groom must be a Catholic in good standing, and only Roman Catholic ceremonies celebrated according to the norms of the Catholic Church's sacred liturgy are permitted at Church. There are no exceptions possible.

To aid your planning: the Church seats approximately 650 people.

Commonly Asked Questions

After Reserving the Date and Time

Please note also that tentative reservations are not accepted (i.e., we cannot "pencil you in"). We are able to reserve a date and time for your wedding and rehearsal only when the following three requirements are fulfilled:

For Parishioners

1. When parishioner status has been verified, the Pastor meets with all engaged couples of the parish and they have completed the necessary steps with the wedding coordinator.
2. When all pre-nuptial paperwork and notification of completion of marriage preparation must be received no later than three months prior to the wedding date. Once this documentation is supplied, a reservation contract will be filled out.
3. When we have a completed the reservation contract, along with the required deposit.

For Non- Parishioners

1. When we have received a signed and sealed letter from the Pastor of your local parish that you are active and registered. The letter must also grant permission for the wedding to take place at Corpus Christi Catholic Church, that there are no known impediments to the marriage and that the Pastor or his delegate will prepare all pre-nuptial paperwork and marriage preparation at the local parish. All pre-nuptial paperwork and notification of completion of marriage preparation must be received no later than three months prior to the wedding date. Once this

documentation is supplied, a reservation contract will be mailed or filled out.

2. When we have a completed reservation contract, along with the required deposit.
3. When we have received written notification from the Catholic priest or deacon who will preside at your wedding stating that there are no impediments to his witnessing your marriage (i.e., he is in good standing with the Catholic Church). Also, he must agree to perform the wedding according to the Catholic Church's sacred liturgy and norms as well as Church policies as put forth by the Pastor.

COST OF THE WEDDING

Active, Registered Parishioner

There is a \$500 fee for the use of Corpus Christi for an active, registered parishioner who wishes to use the Church for his/her wedding. This fee covers the wedding coordinator and stipend for the priest.

Some members of the Parish staff will be involved in celebrating your wedding liturgy: our wedding coordinator, organist, cantor/vocalist and priest. The Wedding Coordinator will also format the interior of your wedding program. You should take the format to a printer of your choice.

A deposit of \$250 is required when the contract is signed and the wedding date is reserved on the calendar. The remaining \$250 is due one month before the wedding date.

If the wedding is cancelled, a refund will be made less a \$150 office fee.

COST OF THE WEDDING

Non-Parishioner

A non-parishioner is welcome to use the Church for his/her wedding. Some members of the Parish staff will be involved in celebrating your wedding liturgy: our wedding coordinator and your priest. The Wedding Coordinator will also format your worship program. You should take the format to a printer of your choice. The fee for the use of the Church for a non-parishioner is \$1,000.

A deposit of \$500 is required when the contract is signed and the wedding date is reserved on the calendar. The remaining \$500 is due one month before the wedding date.

If the wedding is cancelled, a refund will be made less a \$150 office fee.

****If the bride or groom are currently a registered, active parishioner in a Catholic parish in the Diocese of Charleston (the state of South Carolina) please contact the office regarding the church usage fee for a wedding ceremony.**

Commonly Asked Questions

Who Will Officiate Our Wedding?

The Pastor, Fr. Joseph Romanoski, is responsible for every sacramental celebration that takes place in this Parish. He and he alone may delegate this to other Catholic priests or deacons who hold the necessary faculties.

If you are a member of another parish and are using the Parish's facilities, your own priest or deacon should be invited to officiate at your wedding. The clergy of the Parish are not available to officiate at weddings of non-parishioners. Visiting clergy must obtain the required delegation from the Church's Pastor, providing proof from his diocesan chancery that he is a priest or deacon in good standing. Delegation will only be granted when all of the required paperwork, permissions, and dispensations have been completed and sent to the Parish's office. This delegation cannot be sub-delegated. Also, the visiting clergy must abide by the Church's wedding policies and only celebrate the liturgy according to the approved, Catholic form.

If you desire to invite a non-Catholic clergyman to participate in the wedding liturgy, you must submit a written request to Father Joseph, giving the name, title, and address of the clergyman you want to invite. Non-Catholic clergy are permitted to participate in a Catholic wedding by their presence, but they cannot preside at the liturgy. They may read one of the Scripture readings (other than the Gospel), offer a short reflection (at an appropriate time other than after the Gospel), and perhaps offer a prayer. The Catholic priest or deacon must read the Gospel, preach the homily, receive the wedding vows, and impart the Nuptial Blessing. The ritual of the Roman Catholic Church is always used, and the form of the celebration will always be the wedding outside of Mass when non-Catholic clergy are present.



Rev. Joseph V. Romanoski

Commonly Asked Questions

Who Plans the Music?

Dr. Charles Renick, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

All music at the Church is planned and coordinated through our Music Office in consultation with the bride and groom only. (Parents and friends do not accompany the couple.) The Parish's Director of Music can serve as the organist for the wedding only sacred, approved music is permitted. Your musical options will be given to you by the wedding coordinator.

If you have a special request for a certain musician, please discuss this with the wedding coordinator.

All musicians hired within the church have their own set fee, which the couple should discuss with them personally.



Dr. Charles Renick

Commonly Asked Questions

What about the Rehearsal?

The Rehearsal is scheduled by you and the wedding coordinator. Please be on time so that the actual rehearsal can begin promptly. The rehearsal is limited to one hour. The Wedding Coordinator will lead you through the ceremony during the rehearsal. The bride and groom must both be present, as well as those participating in the wedding (the wedding party.)

Because of the nature of the sound system and acoustics of the Church, please have your lectors present so that they may practice their readings at the rehearsal.

Please remember to bring your wedding programs to the rehearsal.

Parking

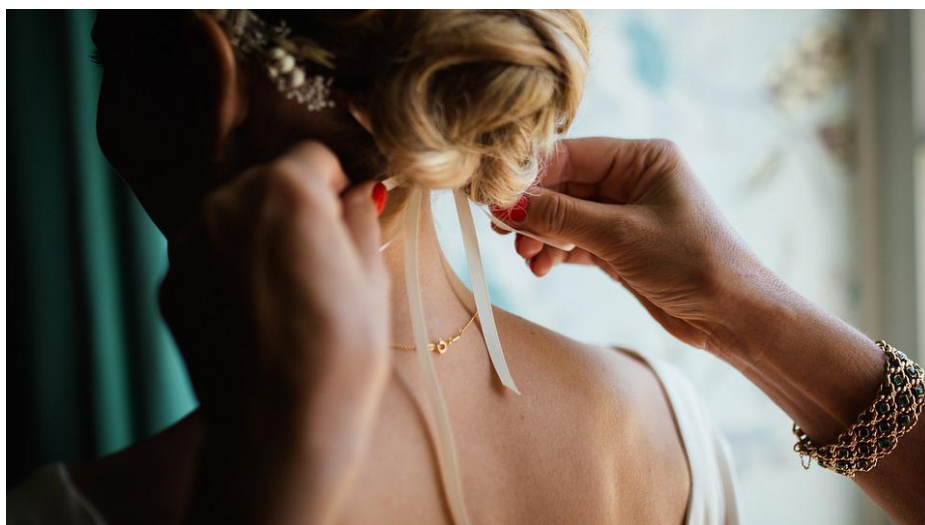
Those attending the rehearsal may park in the Church's front parking lot. Additional parking behind the Church is also available should the need arise. We cannot guarantee overnight security and so cars may not be left in the lot overnight.



Commonly Asked Questions

Can We Get Ready at the Church?

Due to limited facilities, we prefer that everyone arrive dressed. If changing rooms are required, the cry room may be used by the bride to ensure complete privacy. The groom and his party may use the room across from there.



The groom, groomsmen, ushers, and greeters should arrive at the church at least one hour prior to the ceremony. The parents, greeters, ushers, readers, groom, and groomsmen report directly to the church. The bride and her attendants should arrive at least one hour before the wedding, or earlier if needed for photographs or other preparations. She and her party will go to the cry room.

What about Parking?

You and your family and guests are welcome to use the Church's parking lot for the duration of your wedding. Please inform your family and guests that vehicles must be removed from the lot after the wedding in order to free up parking for vehicles who need to park for the next wedding or the next Mass being held at the Church. Do not leave behind vehicles in the lot and carpool with others.

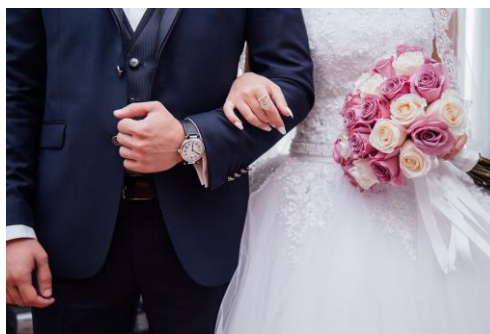
Commonly Asked Questions

What about Photography?

To protect the sacred character of your wedding liturgy, the requirements for photography at the Parish may be different from your experience of other weddings. It is essential that the policies given to your photographer by the Pastor be followed without exception, and your careful attention to these requirements during the planning session with your photographer may save a great deal of grief on the wedding day. Your photographer must speak with Father Joseph to review these policies prior to the wedding. Also, we ask that you communicate with them that all photographers are to arrive formally dressed.

Corpus Christi reserves the right to exclude from working at our church any photographer who has not abided by these policies in the past.

Absolutely no flash photography or external lighting is permitted during the wedding liturgy, as this detracts from the sacred action. If a video is to be made, all of the above restrictions also apply. The videographer should consult Father Joseph prior to setting up cameras.



All wedding photographs used here are free to use and have been sourced by Pexels and Pixabay. Wedding photos do not represent weddings here at Corpus Christi.