

WEDDINGS GUIDELINES

MOTHER OF GOD CHURCH

119 West 6th St.
Covington, KY. 41011

859-291-2288

Fax: 859-291-2065

Web site: www.mother-of-god.org

Mother of God Parish welcomes your interest in the celebration of your marriage in our church. As a Catholic Parish, Mother of God follows the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Diocese of Covington, KY concerning the Sacrament of Matrimony. The parish is bound by the laws of marriage established by the Catholic Church for the whole world and by laws and guidelines established by the Bishop of Covington.

We are blessed that you are thinking of beginning your journey of married love in our beautiful and historic Church. You will find these wedding guidelines helpful in preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage in Mother of God Church. Since many weddings take place here, these wedding guidelines apply to all wedding ceremonies in our beloved church. Be assured that we will do whatever we can to assist you in the celebration of your wedding joyfully with the dignity accorded to the sacred sacramental rites and to this holy place in which they are performed. May your wedding day be one in which you, your families and guests, will cherish lasting memories of God's love and blessing in your filial commitment to one another.

WHO MAY BE MARRIED AT MOTHER OF GOD

Weddings may be celebrated in Mother of God Church if:

1. **Either the bride or the groom fulfills the requirements of our Active Parishioner Policy.** An active parishioner is one who is registered and has been contributing to the support of the parish through weekly Mass attendance and offertory contributions (weekly offertory envelopes usage). Registered active parishioners are asked for an offering of \$700 to cover the cost of the church utilities. A non-refundable deposit of \$200 is required before a date is reserved for your wedding and included with your wedding application form. The remaining balance is due in our parish office 60 days before the wedding date. All checks should be made payable to Mother of God Church.
2. **Neither the bride nor groom is a registered parishioner of the parish.** In this case, the couple may have their wedding at Mother of God Church provided their respective pastors provide permission for his parishioner(s) to exchange their marriage vows in our church. We consider persons non-parishioners if you are not registered members of Mother of God Church. Each couple is responsible for making arrangements with a priest or deacon to provide the necessary instructions and preparation for the marriage. All requirements of the Diocese of Covington must be met before your wedding can be performed at Mother of God. As non-parishioners, the contribution for the wedding is \$2,000. A non-refundable deposit of \$500 is required before a date and time is reserved for the wedding which must be included with the wedding application form (attached). The remaining balance is due in our parish office sixty days before the wedding. All checks should be made payable to Mother of God Church.

NOTE: These fees do not include costs for the musician, florist, or photographer. Additional costs, other than those mentioned, are stipends of a minimum of \$100 for the presider (priest or deacon), \$50 for an assisting deacon and \$25 for each altar server if you chose to have them.

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

Since many people will assist in your wedding celebration, all wedding rehearsals and celebrations must be scheduled and coordinated through our parish secretary, Ellen Habermehl. She can be reached at 859-291-2288. For preplanning purposes, please keep in mind that no wedding celebrations will be performed on Sundays, during Holy Week, Christmas day, or Easter.

HOW TO GET STARTED

At least 9-12 months before your anticipated wedding date, contact our parish secretary, Ellen Habermehl, at 859-291-2288 to check on the availability of the church and to make arrangements to speak to our pastor, Fr. Comer (859-816-3198) to receive his permission for your marriage at Mother of God Church.

Until we have the following, we cannot confirm a date for your wedding:

1. Permission from Fr. Comer, pastor of Mother of God, to celebrate your marriage in our church.
2. The Mother of God "Wedding Application" form received.
3. The non-refundable deposit submitted with the wedding application form. The deposit amount is determined by your status as an active parishioner or non-parishioner.
4. Permission granted by Fr. Comer when clergy outside our diocese are chosen to witness your vows.

When we have received your non-refundable deposit, the wedding application form indicating that our pastor has approved your wedding to take place at Mother of God Church, we will confirm and reserve your wedding celebration date. At this time, we will contact the clergy who has accepted your invitation to witness your marriage and offer our assistance in the preparation of your wedding.

The Diocese of Covington requires that each couple preparing for marriage complete a Natural Family Planning Program and a Pre-Cana (diocesan wedding preparation) program either in our diocese or in the diocese in which you reside and are registered. These programs are required and must be completed, and a certificate of completion received before a couple is allowed to celebrate marriage in the Diocese of Covington. The person preparing you for marriage will give you information about these programs, or you can visit our diocesan web site at www.covdio.org. We have also included information about these programs. Please review carefully and apply as soon as your wedding date has been confirmed as these programs fill up quickly.

During the course of your preparations, the clergy or designated person preparing you for marriage will assist you in planning the Marriage Liturgy and complete a Pre-Nuptial Investigation.

DOCUMENTS NEEDED

1. A current annotated baptismal certificate is required for each Catholic party. The Catholic baptismal certificate must be obtained from the parish where you were baptized. **The Baptism certificate must be dated no more than six months prior to the wedding date and the parish seal affixed.** When requesting a current certificate from your church of baptism, the Confirmation date and any other sacramental recorded dates are required and need to be notated on the certificate. If one party is not catholic, your cleric preparing you for your marriage is required to apply for a dispensation for your marriage to take place. In the case where a Catholic is marrying a non-baptized person, the wedding ceremony cannot take place within Mass.

2. Certificates of attendance and completion at both an approved diocesan marriage preparation program (Pre-Cana) and a Natural Family Planning (NFP) program are required. It is your responsibility, and the person preparing you for marriage, to include these certificates of completion in your marriage file.
2. A civil marriage license must be obtained from a Kentucky county court house, no more than **thirty days** before the wedding date. The license must be brought to the rehearsal, signed by the clergy witnessing your marriage, and be added to the Prenuptial Investigation package.

MUSIC GUIDELINES

All music to be performed at your wedding ceremony before, during, and after must be approved and coordinated by Cindy Duesing, our music director. You are responsible to contact Cindy at 859-512-1063 (c) or email her at cduesing@twc.com as soon as your approved application is received and date of wedding confirmed by our office.

All music, musicians and/or vocalists must be approved by Cindy. Please do not make prior commitments regarding musicians, vocalists, or choice of music.

In keeping with the liturgical norms of the Diocese of Covington, Mother of God requires that all music selections be chosen from the repertoire of sacred or liturgical music. They must be religious in their text, clearly referring to God by name in a significant way. Popular songs that happen to mention God in an incidental manner do not thereby qualify as sacred music. **Secular or popular songs, therefore, are not allowed during the liturgical celebration.** Any questions regarding music should be directed to Cindy.

The music program approved by Cindy is considered to be the final draft. If special circumstances warrant later changes of music or performers, these changes must be approved by Cindy.

DECORATIONS:

Decorations, such as flowers, pew displays, rehearsal and other requirements must be discussed with our wedding coordinator, Lisa Wetterich. You are responsible to contact Lisa at 513-484-5334 or e-mail her at lisawetterich@gmail.com as soon as your approved application is received and date of wedding confirmed by our office. She will assist in answering any questions you may have outside of what has been discussed thus far and alert you to our church's limited availability of rehearsal times and on the wedding day. If you decide to have a Wedding Planner, they will need to coordinate all liturgical planning through Lisa.

Elaborate floral displays are really not necessary at Mother of God Church. We are grateful if you leave your flowers to enhance our Sunday liturgy. All decorations, other than flower arrangements, must be removed immediately after the ceremony. Please make sure that your florist and/or the ushers are alerted to take care of this requirement. Throwing rice, confetti, flower petals, birdseed, etc., is not permitted. Likewise, blowing bubbles and/or releasing balloons is prohibited. No flowers, flower petals, etc. may be tossed in the center aisle or on the church property at any time. Due to insurance concerns aisle runners and/or candelabras are not allowed.

UNITY CANDLE(s) AND OTHER SYMBOLS OF UNITY:

Neither the unity candle nor other symbols of unity are a part of the Catholic wedding liturgy. The exchange of marital consent between the bride and the groom brings marriage into being. Other symbols, like the unity candle, distract from the importance of the exchange of vows which unite a man and woman in holy matrimony. Therefore, no marriage celebration will be permitted to take place at Mother of God utilizing these symbols.

PHOTOGRAPHERS:

Mother of God Church has historical value, and the use of photographers' equipment may cause damage to our sacred art. Lisa Wetterich will discuss and monitor all photography with you and the photographer. Lisa will also provide times when pictures of the wedding party may be taken; keeping in mind that access to the church before and after is limited.

REHEARSAL AND LITURGICAL MINISTERS:

Lisa Wetterich will be on hand for the rehearsal and the wedding to ensure that all the details are taken care of.

Mother of God will provide lectors for your wedding upon request. If you choose a family member(s) or a friend(s) to lector then they should be trained to proclaim the Word of God in a reverent manner. If they have not been formally trained, Lisa will provide training at the rehearsal.

After discussion with the presider (clergy), you may choose to distribute both species of Holy Communion (host and cup) if your wedding takes place within Mass. In doing so, depending on the number of people who will be in attendance, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may be required. Lisa will assist in determining the number of ministers which are needed. If neither the bride nor groom knows of anyone specifically commissioned by their diocese as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Lisa will assist in selecting those properly trained and commissioned from our parish community.

NOTE:

Alcoholic beverages of any type are **not permitted** on the church property or in the parking lot. No food or drink is permitted in the church. Alcoholic beverages are **not to be consumed** before the rehearsal or before the wedding ceremony. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make their wedding party and guests aware of this restriction.

CONCLUSION

The official record of your marriage will be kept here at Mother of God Church. The church in which you were baptized will also receive notification of your wedding and become a permanent record of your sacramental history.

If you have any questions, please call the parish office at 859-291-2288. We wish to do all we can to make your great day a memorably beautiful experience, counting always on your good cooperation.

In Christ Jesus,

Michael Comer

Rev. Michael Comer, Pastor