

**INFORMATION FOR THOSE
CONTEMPLATING MARRIAGE
AT
ST. AUSTIN CATHOLIC CHURCH**



St. Austin Catholic Parish offers our congratulations on your engagement, and we pray that God will bless and guide you in your preparation for marriage! Your wedding day will be a very special and we want to help insure that it will be filled with joy; that it will be a blessed, holy and prayerful celebration.

Preparation for your marriage should begin **no later than six months in advance of your desired wedding date**, and preferably nine months in advance. The first step is to obtain a *Wedding Request Form* from the receptionist at the Parish Office. Fill out the form **completely** and return it to the receptionist. Within a week or so, after the availability of dates and times has been determined, you will be contacted by one of St. Austin's clergy or his delegate who will guide you through the marriage preparation process.

PAPER WORK REQUIREMENTS

As your preparation proceeds, the clergy you are working with will ask the Catholic party or parties to provide an updated copy of their baptismal certificate with notations. This must be a recently issued copy, not the “family heirloom” copy. This certificate may be obtained by contacting the church in which you were baptized and requesting that one be sent to you. If your confirmation is not noted on your baptismal certificate, please bring the assisting priest a copy of your confirmation certificate. While confirmation is not required in order to be married, it is strongly recommended that you celebrate that sacrament prior to the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Christians baptized in other Christian churches must also provide a copy of a baptismal certificate or other proof of baptism.

If either of you, whether Catholic or not, has ever been previously married, in either a civil or a religious ceremony, you need to immediately inform the priest of this. These previous marriages are recognized by the Catholic Church so you must speak with the clergy about any previous marriage and its implications on your freedom to marry in a Catholic ceremony.

A check list of necessary steps and documentation required as you move through the wedding planning process is located in Appendix 3 of this packet.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

The celebration of a sacrament, including the Sacrament of Matrimony, is a vital and important part of the life of the Roman Catholic Church. Your love for each other is an example, a sign, of how God loves his people, and how the Church needs and is nourished by the witness of your love and fidelity to each other and to your family.

Because the Church considers marriage a sacrament, that is, a sign of the presence of God among us, and takes the marriage commitment very seriously, certain preparation is necessary and expected. This includes, but is not limited to:

- ongoing conversation with the clergy preparing you for marriage.
- attendance at an Engaged Encounter Weekend, Diocesan Marriage Formation Program or St. Austin Sponsor Couple Program.
- attendance at weekly Sunday mass and participation in the parish ministries

WEDDING COORDINATOR

After your wedding date has been placed on the parish calendar, please contact the Parish Wedding Coordinator, to discuss your wedding, the use of the church, and to arrange a tour the church and bride’s dressing room. The Wedding Coordinator will attend your rehearsal and be present to assist you the day of your wedding. During your tour, you will be given a Wedding Set-Up Form that

should be filled out and returned to the Wedding Coordinator no later than two weeks prior to your wedding. The parish wedding coordinator is the sole wedding coordinator who works with the clergy/presiders.

Although some couples employ a wedding coordinator to help with the wedding day details, s/he is not permitted to assist with the wedding rites or elements associated with the actual wedding ceremony. This is the sole responsibility of the parish wedding coordinator.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

The marriage license must be in the hands of the parish wedding coordinator **no later than the time of the wedding rehearsal**. For information about obtaining the required civil marriage license, contact the county clerk's office. A marriage license issued in one county of Texas is valid in any county of Texas.

WEDDING TIMES

St. Austin Catholic Church is a very busy place on Saturdays; for that reason marriages are scheduled **only at 11 a.m., 2 p.m. or 7 p.m.**, and each wedding is allowed a three-hour block of time. More about this later in this brochure.

No weddings are scheduled during:

- Holy Week (from the Saturday before Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday)
- All Souls Day (November 2)
- Christmas Eve or Day (December 24 and 25)
- New Year's Eve or Day (December 31 and January 1)
- Any Sunday

Weddings may also be scheduled for a weekday if the parish calendar permits.

REHEARSAL TIMES

Wedding rehearsals, no longer than one hour in length, are usually conducted on Friday at between the hours of 4 and 7 p.m. Holidays on Friday may necessitate a rehearsal time other than a Friday.

FEES

At St. Austin we strive to celebrate all the sacraments with liturgical dignity, beauty, prayerfulness, and in the manner intended by the Roman Catholic Church. Please keep in mind that the model for the celebration of a marriage is the Sunday Eucharist. The parish provides the services of several members of the staff, formation for the couple and a dignified environment to help facilitate the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage.

The fee for the use of the church, the bride's dressing room and the parish parking garage for your guests, and for the services of the clergy, organist, cantor and wedding coordinator is \$1,625 for those who, at the time the wedding request is made, are registered, active and contributing parishioners of St. Austin Catholic Parish. If you do not choose to use the parking garage, the cost of the wedding is \$1,325.

The fee for the use of the church, the bride's dressing room and the parish parking garage for your guests, and for the services of the clergy, organist, cantor and wedding coordinator is \$2,125 for non-parishioners who request the celebration of their marriage at St. Austin. If you do not choose to use the parking garage, the cost of the wedding is \$1,825. For the purposes of requesting marriages at St. Austin, a parishioner is defined as a registered member of the parish at the time the wedding request is made and who has made traceable financial contributions to the parish; or whose parents are currently registered and contributing members of the parish. Parishioner status is determined at the discretion of the pastor.

A non-refundable deposit of \$250 is payable when your wedding date has been confirmed and is required to reserve the date and time of your wedding. The remainder of the cost is due in full no later than two weeks prior to the wedding. A personal gift to the clergy is certainly appropriate and is solely at your discretion.

The services of any additional musicians are the financial responsibility of the couple and will be paid by you directly to the individuals providing the service.

THE BRIDE'S ROOM

Paulist Hall is available for the bride and her attendants 1-1/2 hours before the scheduled time of the wedding through 1/2 hour after the wedding. Please do not expect the use of this room any earlier or any later. St. Austin's wedding coordinator will unlock Paulist Hall at the following times: 9:30 a.m. for a 11 a.m. wedding, 12:30 p.m. for a 2 p.m. wedding, 6 p.m. for a 7:00 p.m. wedding.

We recommend that you don't leave valuables in Paulist Hall during the ceremony. The wedding coordinator will lock the room during your wedding, but St. Austin Catholic Parish cannot be responsible for items left unattended.

Paulist Hall should be left clean and orderly. **Please note that SMOKING, the consumption of any form of TOBACCO, ILLEGAL DRUG use or ALCOHOL, including champagne, wine, or beer and FIREARMS or WEAPONS of any type (including swords) are not permitted anywhere on St. Austin property including the parking lots.**

No dressing room is provided for the groom and groomsmen. At the discretion of the priest presiding at the wedding, the groom and his attendants may assemble in the sacristy* of the church prior to the ceremony.

No food, drink (other than water), tobacco products of any sort, or alcohol are permitted anywhere in the church building, including the sacristy. All Catholic who will receive Holy Communion should refrain from drink and food (according to the Church's fasting guidelines) prior to the celebration of a Mass.

The Church's requirements for fasting before Mass should be observed by anyone 12-59 years of age and whose health permits them to participate in the fast.

**The sacristy is a designated room for the clergy to prepare for the Liturgy. Conversations and other activities MUST be reverential in nature.*

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO TAPING

In order to preserve the solemnity and prayerfulness of your wedding, photographers and videographers may not enter the sanctuary (the altar area) or the "old" choir room adjacent to the sanctuary during the ceremony. They may photograph the wedding from a designated location in the balcony or from the center aisle behind the last seated guest. (The videographer is permitted to set up a stationary, "unmanned" video camera in the old choir room adjacent to the sanctuary, however he or she must start the camera before the ceremony begins and may not enter that room during the ceremony.) They may not move about the church during the ceremony with the exception of the recessional. In order not to detract from the religious nature of the ceremony, flash photography (professional or amateur) is not allowed during the ceremony with the exception of the procession and recession. Videographers may not use any additional light source and must film from a stationary location.

The parish will not approve the use of drones inside the church or on or near the parish property for the purpose of a wedding or for wedding photography or videography. If a drone is found operating on the parish property, St. Austin Catholic Parish may report it to the civil, state and federal authorities.

Please see Appendix 2: "Policy for Photographers and Videographers at St. Austin Catholic Church" for additional guidelines concerning your wedding photography. We request that you give a copy of these guidelines to your photographer (and videographer) and discuss the details with them at the time you contract for their services, but certainly no later than one month prior to your

wedding. If your photographer/videographer has any questions, he or she may discuss them with the wedding coordinator before the wedding.

FLOWERS AND CANDLES

It is a long-standing tradition that the flowers placed in the church for your wedding are an offering of thanksgiving to God. For that reason your flowers should remain in the church after the wedding. In order to help you keep your expenses down, we encourage couples with weddings on the same day to coordinate their flowers and share the cost. The wedding coordinator will be happy to assist you with these arrangements. If for some reason you are not planning to use arrangements of fresh flowers for your wedding, please inform the wedding coordinator two weeks prior to the wedding.

Floral arrangements for 7:00 p.m. weddings must be in place no later than 4:00 p.m. Your florist may not deliver flowers or other decorations between 4:30 and 6:15 p.m because a Mass is celebrated at 5 p.m. Any candelabra or aisle decorations may not be put in place until after the Saturday evening Mass, which means at about 6:30 p.m.

Because of the serious and dangerous problems caused by wax dripping on the terrazzo floor and pews, only dripless candles in metal casings approved by the parish wedding coordinator may be used.

Only church candles may be placed on the “high” altar. The church lighting will not be dimmed due to its age and all lights must be “on” prior to, during and after the wedding for safety concerns. No additional lighting (i.e. spots) may be used during the Liturgy.

Any free-standing flowers and/or candles may not be placed in such a way as to inhibit the movement of the ministers during the marriage rite. No garland of any kind may be used inside or outside the church. Ribbons, bows, or candles must not obstruct entrance into the pews from either the side or center aisles.

Please see Appendix 1: “Policy for Florists” for additional guidelines concerning decorations for your wedding. Please give a copy to your florist when you order your flowers and other decorations, but certainly no later than one month prior to your wedding. If they have any questions, they should immediately call the wedding coordinator.

MUSIC

St. Austin Catholic Parish arranges the services of an organist and cantor for all weddings at St. Austin. Please contact the Wedding Coordinator for more information.

Music for your wedding may be selected from many different styles, however, it must express the religious and liturgical nature of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

LITURGICAL APPROPRIATENESS

At St. Austin we believe that our church has a simple and noble beauty. We take care to add only those things which are necessary for the liturgical rites celebrated here. On occasion, banners and other hangings are hung along the walls of the church in the color of the liturgical season. The fabric hangings, seasonal flower arrangements, plants and other decor are not to be moved or altered.

The furniture in the sanctuary or chancel, that area that includes the altar and ambo (pulpit), and any seasonal decorations are placed there for specific purpose, meaning and symbol. They are not to be moved.

The Catholic Church encourages those contemplating marriage during the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent to take into consideration the special preparatory or penitential nature of these seasons. These seasons are more somber in character and the Marriage Rites should respect this tradition. Simple flower arrangements are permitted for weddings during lent. They can only be placed in the church for the wedding directly before the liturgy and must be removed follow the ceremony.

During the seasons of Lent, Easter, Advent, Christmas, and for specific solemnities throughout the year, the readings for a Mass must include at least the Gospel of the day for any Masses celebrated after 4 PM.

OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS OF CONCERN

For the safety of those attending your wedding:

- The use of an aisle runner in the church is not permitted.
- Flower petals, rice, birdseed, confetti, bubbles, etc. may not be thrown anywhere on parish property. Releasing of butterflies, doves, etc. is not permitted.
- The assembly is not permitted to hold lighted candles, bells, flower petals, butterflies, etc.
- Reception-receiving lines are not permitted at the church because of time constraints.
- For security and safety reasons, please do not leave purses, cameras, valuable property unattended at any time. Do not allow children to wander around the church property unaccompanied by an adult.
- Food and drink are not permitted in the church or its ancillary rooms (i.e. sacristy.) This includes non-alcoholic drinks.
- The ability to dim lights is not available. All lights will remain on prior to, during and after the ceremony for safety concerns. No additional lighting is permitted in the church (i.e., spot lights).

Some of your guests may not be familiar with our Catholic tradition of gathering in silence upon entering the church. All your guests, including the wedding party even at the rehearsal, should be instructed that the church is a sacred place and conversations should be kept to a minimum.

The attire (wedding gowns, attendant dresses and guest attire) should be modest in nature befitting the sacred character of the celebration in the church. Gowns and dresses with bare midriffs, short dresses/skirts, high slits, skin-tight outfits, plunging necklines or backless gowns are not dignified or appropriate for the wedding rehearsal, marriage Rites and/or Mass. Please inform your wedding party and guests.

You may wish to include the following in your wedding invitations:

For those who will be attending the wedding rites at the Church, please note the following:

- Parking is available at the parish parking garage located at the corner of MLK and San Antonio Streets, directly on the streets around the church, behind the church and around the fence that encloses the school playground and under the north portions of the parish center/gym. Please do not park wherever signage say parking is prohibited. Towing is enforced. For more information about parking see www.staustin/parking
- The church is a dedicated sacred space for worship and contemplation. As Catholics we believe Christ, is fully present in the form of bread, which has been consecrated at Mass and is kept in the Tabernacle (located on the high altar). This is reserved in the Tabernacle for distribution to the sick and homebound. Please respect our tradition and join us in silent prayer as you enter the church.
- Come dressed for a sacred celebration. Attire should be modest and respectful for a traditional church setting. You may consider wearing a shawl or wrap over the shoulders while in the church.
- Photos with or without flash and video cameras are not to be operated by wedding guests during the wedding. Professionals have been hired to perform these tasks and follow specific directions out of respect for the sacred worship.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

CONCLUSION

Many people comment about the reverence, prayerfulness, beauty and peace they experience during worship at St. Austin. These comments affirm our belief that we should always remain true to our identity as Catholics and celebrate the Rites in the best manner possible. Our highly talented and experienced staff offers quality service in a prayerful manner. Please be assured that you, your family and friends will experience the Church at its best.

Sometimes the couple may be concerned about the guests who will not be familiar with the Catholic wedding Rites. Please be assured that in most cases your guests expect you to honor our Catholic heritage and want to witness your marriage in our faith tradition. There is no need to worry about inhospitality. Our staff will always strive to make everyone feel welcomed and comfortable.

Please be assured of the prayers of the parish staff and the entire St. Austin's community as you prepare, not only for your wedding day, but for your life together as husband and wife. God bless you and your families and friends.

A SPECIAL NOTE TO THE COUPLE AND THEIR PARENTS:

Parents often express a desire to assist with the planning and execution of the wedding. However well-intentioned this may be, only the couple alone with the presider (priest or deacon), the music director and the parish wedding coordinator will plan the Rites, the environment and music for the wedding. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

The parish is well aware that weddings in our culture seem to demand a lot of couples and families. Photographs, flowers, gowns, rings, receptions, dinners, invitations and many other details require a great deal of time from the couple. However, we invite the couple to find time to pray. We encourage all couples to attend Mass frequently, fully engage in your wedding formation process, and become active in one of the many parish ministries. We look forward to celebrating with you and hope you will join us in our prayer and ministries.

God's blessings to you,
Clergy, Musicians and Wedding Coordinator

May 2018



ST. AUSTIN
CATHOLIC
PARISH

Served by the Paulist Fathers

2026 Guadalupe St.
Austin, TX 78705
(512) 477-9471
www.staustin.org

APPENDIX 1 – POLICY FOR FLORISTS

IMPORTANT: Please give this to your florist.

Any questions concerning these guidelines should be directed to the St. Austin Catholic Parish Wedding Coordinator at 512-477-9471.

DELIVERY AND SET-UP TIMES FOR CHURCH FLOWERS

Weddings are scheduled on Saturday at **11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.** The **scheduled Mass time** on Saturday is **5 p.m. Because of confession and the 5 PM Mass deliveries can not be made between 4:30 & 6:15 p.m.**

- **For a 11 a.m. wedding:** flowers, pew decorations or candelabra may be put in place after 8:45 a.m.
- **For a 2 p.m. wedding:** flowers, pew decorations or candelabra may be put in place following the 11 a.m. wedding (after 12:30 p.m.) or any time after 8:45 a.m. if there is no 11 a.m. wedding scheduled.
- **For a 7:00 p.m. wedding:** flowers must be placed on the rear altar **before 4:30 p.m.** Any additional floral arrangements, pew decorations or candelabra must be put in place after 6:30 pm.

DELIVERY OF BOUQUETS

- **For a 11 a.m. wedding:** flowers may be delivered to Paulist Hall (bride's dressing room) at **9:30 a.m.**
- **For a 2 p.m. wedding:** flowers may be delivered to Paulist Hall at **12:30 p.m.**
- **For a 7:00 p.m. wedding:** flowers may be delivered to Paulist Hall at **6:15 p.m.**

FLOWER PLACEMENT

Two floral arrangements may be placed on the back altar on either side of the Tabernacle. Flowers (and other decorations) may not be placed in front of the Tabernacle. No flowers, candles or decorations of any sort may be placed on top of the front Altar table. Flowers may also be placed on stands in front of the Ambo (pulpit) or in other locations in the sanctuary.

Within the sanctuary, ferns, greenery, topiary and candelabra may be used in moderation and in good taste but may not be placed where they will obstruct the movement of the ministers. Any unusual or very elaborate floral pieces must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator well in advance of the wedding. The wedding flowers on the back altar are to be left in place in the church after the wedding. Flowers placed in front of the ambo may also be left. Please add water to the plants once they are in place.

CANDLES AND CANDELABRA

What is commonly referred to as a unity candle is not part of the Roman Catholic marriage ritual and St. Austin's does not have a unity candle stand.

All candles provided by the couple or the florist, including free-standing candelabra, must be dripleless candles in spring-loaded metal casings, and clear plastic sheeting (Saran Wrap) must be placed under the candles to protect the floor and other surfaces from dripping wax. No candles, except the parish candles, may be placed on any altar.

REMOVAL OF CANDELABRA AND PEW DECORATIONS

Because the church has no place to store these items, candelabra, pew decorations and extra floral decorations must be removed immediately following the wedding.

Please Note: All flowers must be removed during after the wedding during the seasons of Advent and Lent. During the Christmas and Easter seasons the church is "fully" decorated.

APPENDIX 2 – POLICY FOR PHOTO/VIDEOGRAPHERS

IMPORTANT: Please give this to your photographer.

Any questions concerning these guidelines should be directed to the St. Austin Catholic Parish Wedding Coordinator at 512-477-9471.

BEFORE AND AFTER THE CEREMONY

Photographs may be taken in the church before the ceremony and **MUST BE finish at least 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the ceremony**. Photographs may be taken in the Church after the end of the ceremony, however because there may be additional weddings and other services scheduled in the church, **the church must be cleared no later than 90 minutes after the wedding “start” time**. Please feel free to take photographs in the courtyard, also, but within these same time limitations. The wedding party, guests and photographer must be out of the church by 3:25 PM.

DURING THE CEREMONY

In order to preserve the solemnity and prayerfulness of the marriage ceremony, **photographers and videographers may not enter the sanctuary (the altar area) or the “old” choir room adjacent to the sanctuary at any time during the ceremony**. They may photograph the wedding from a designated location in from the **center aisle, behind the last seated guest**. Positions for photography or videography in the balcony is limited to specific locations. The organist can provide you with this information prior to the wedding. **No flash photography is permitted during the wedding. Shutter noise should also be inaudible. At no time are the aisles to be blocked by camera equipment nor are any wires permitted in the aisles even if they are taped to the floor.**

The videographer is permitted to set up a stationary, “unmanned” video camera in the choir room adjacent to the sanctuary, however you must start the camera before the ceremony begins and may not enter that room during the ceremony. Videographers may not use any additional light source and must film from a stationary location. With the exception of the recessional, you may not move about the church during the ceremony.

Please consult the wedding coordinator to the format and order of the ceremony, and where the wedding party will be sitting/standing/kneeling so you may plan appropriate photos during the ceremony. Do not block aisles while taking photographs or leave equipment or wires in the aisles. No flash photography during the wedding rites.

LIGHTING FOR PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

In order not to detract from the religious nature of the ceremony, photos and videos taken during the wedding ceremony **must be taken with available light only, without the use of flash, spotlights or floodlights**. Flash photography is permissible during the procession and recession only.

APPENDIX 3 – CHECK LIST

As soon as your wedding date and time have been confirmed by the Parish Wedding Coordinator:

- Submit **deposit required** to hold your date and time.
Wedding Date: _____
Wedding Time: _____
- Submit the **remaining amount of wedding fees** 30 days prior to the wedding.
Due Date: _____
Amount: _____
- Contact the Parish Wedding Coordinator at 512-477-9471 to arrange a **tour of the church** and other facilities.
- Request a recently dated copy of your **baptismal certificate** from your church of baptism and turn this in to the Parish Wedding Coordinator.
- Schedule a date to participate in an Engaged Encounter Weekend, Couple Sponsors Program or other formation program. The Parish Wedding Coordinator can provide information and resources.
- Contact the county clerk’s office to obtain a **marriage license**. In Travis County a marriage license must be obtained between 3 and 89 days prior to the wedding date to be valid on the wedding date. Visit traviscountyclerk.org for more information.
- Give a copy of the **Policy for Florists** to your florist.
- Give a copy of the **Policy for Photographers & Videographers** to your photographer and/or videographer.
- Submit the **Wedding Preparation Form** to the Wedding Coordinator no less than two weeks prior to your wedding date.