

Wedding Requirements

Visitation of Our Lady Church

3500 Ames Blvd.

Marrero, LA 70072



There are in the end
three things that last:
faith, hope, and love,
and the greatest of these
is love. —1 Corinthians 13:13

Pastoral Center

Office: (504) 347-2203

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Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday - Friday

Q. How far in advance do we need to contact a priest about our wedding?

*A. Archdiocesan policy requires that the bride and groom contact a priest or deacon from the parish **NO FEWER** than **SIX (6)** months before the proposed wedding date. It is highly recommended that couples contact one of the parish clergy as soon as they are engaged to be married. You must confirm your wedding date with a priest or deacon before booking the church. After confirming the wedding date with the priest or deacon, you are still required to contact the church office to reserve the church.*

Q. What are the church fees?

*A. The fee to hold a wedding date is based upon parishioner status. For non-parishioners, the fee is \$400. For parishioners, the fee is \$100. To be considered a parishioner, the bride, groom, or either of their parents must have been a practicing, registered, supporting parishioner for 6 months or more **prior** to booking the wedding date. **Payment in full is due when the wedding date is booked.** Weddings will not be scheduled on the parish calendar until payment is received in the parish office. Checks may be made payable to Visitation of Our Lady Church.*

No fee is required for the celebrant; however, you may offer a gift to him on the day of your wedding.

Q. What wedding times are available at Visitation?

A. Weddings may be scheduled on Fridays at 7:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 10:00 a.m., 12:00 noon, 2:00 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. Please be cautioned that Visitation celebrates a 5:00 p.m. Mass on Saturdays, so wedding vendors will not have access to the church until the completion of the Mass and after the church has cleared, usually around 6:15 p.m.

Q. Does Visitation have an organist?

A. Yes! Our parish organist and music director, Mrs. Cecilia Miller, is available for weddings at Visitation. Unless other arrangements have been made with her and with approval of the pastor, Mrs. Miller should coordinate your music. She may be contacted at (985)863-2280. Fees should be discussed with Mrs. Miller personally.

Q. What are the policies on flowers, aisle runners, and unity candles?

A. Florists should be informed that flowers should not obstruct the Mass. Pew bows must be attached by string or rubber band to prevent scratching of the pews. All candelabra must be shielded by glass. Aisle runners must not be taped to the carpet. Unity candles are allowed, but it is the responsibility of the bride and groom to provide the candles and have them removed after the wedding. Donations of altar flowers are appreciated.

*All decorations must be removed **IMMEDIATELY** following the wedding. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COUPLE TO INFORM THE FLORIST OF THIS POLICY.***

Q. What are the restrictions on photography?

A. The photographer is not allowed between the celebrant and the bride and groom, and the photographer may not detract from the celebration of the Mass. Further, as a matter of courtesy, the photographer should check with the celebrant of the ceremony before the liturgy begins.

Q. What is involved in our wedding preparation?

A. Couples should expect to meet with the priest or deacon at least four times before the wedding to discuss various issues. Couples may also be asked to participate in a Day for the Engaged, an Engaged Encounter Weekend, or an In-Home Marriage Preparation Program. Couples preparing for marriage in the Catholic Church are expected to fulfill the precept of the Church and attend Mass weekly. Non-Catholics, likewise, are invited to Mass or should attend the church of their choice.

Q. Will someone from the church be at church before the wedding?

*A. Visitation has a wedding coordinating couple that volunteers their assistance. The husband and wife team make every attempt to attend rehearsals and weddings and to handle the details of your special day, but are sometimes not available. This couple assists the celebrant during the rehearsal and helps organize the wedding party for the procession. Please inform your wedding party and wedding vendors (such as photographers, videographers, and florists) that our wedding coordinators direct the set up of the church and the procession. **Wedding vendors do not have this authority.***

Q. Other than the bridesmaids and groomsmen, are there any other people we need to select to participate in the Mass?

A. You should select 2 people to do your readings - one for the first reading and one for the second reading and the Prayers of the Faithful and Responsorial Psalm, if read. You should also select 2 people, preferably practicing Catholics, to bring up the offertory gifts of water, wine, and bread. Readers and gift bearers should be present for the rehearsal.

If a friend or family member is an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist or altar server, you may want to ask her or him to participate in the Mass. Speak to the priest or deacon during the wedding planning process before inviting someone to participate.

Q. What should we know about the wedding rehearsal?

*A. The date and time for your wedding rehearsal should be set with the celebrant of your wedding when your wedding date is established. Wedding rehearsals are allotted 45 minutes in the parish appointment book. Please be advised that the church may have other scheduled activities or rehearsals, so the punctuality of the bridal party is important. **Rehearsals begin promptly at their scheduled time.***

It is important for everyone participating in the rehearsal to arrive on time. Participants may include: bridesmaids, groomsmen, flower girls, ring bearers, ushers, readers, gift bearers for the offertory, altar servers, parents of the bride and groom, and, of course, the bride and groom.

Although Mass will not be celebrated during the wedding rehearsal, respect and reverence should still be expressed in church. Inform your bridal party that attire for rehearsals is “dressy” - the same attire one would wear to a Sunday Mass. There is no eating, drinking, chewing gum, or smoking in the church at any time. Please inform them also of the importance of punctuality.

Q. Are there any dress restrictions for the wedding attendants?

A. Modesty of dress is required of all Christians. The bride and groom are responsible for choosing appropriate wedding attire for the attendants. If there is doubt as to the modesty of dress, talk with the celebrant.

Q. What time should we arrive at the church the day of the wedding?

A. Groomsmen should arrive 45 minutes prior to the wedding time. They must go directly to the day chapel (cry room) upon arrival. Bathroom facilities are available in the day chapel. Bridesmaids should arrive 30 minutes prior to wedding time. They must go directly to the meeting room upon arrival. Bathroom facilities are available in the hall leading to the meeting room. Please note there are no “dressing” rooms available, so all attendants must arrive fully dressed. Our wedding coordinators carry an “emergency” bag for last minute emergencies on the day of the wedding.

Q. Can we use rose petals, birdseed, or rice?

*A. Silk Rose petals are permitted but only if the bride and groom take responsibility to remove them **immediately** after the wedding. Birdseed, rice, and other such throws pose a serious threat of slipping and falling to both you and your guests. Our insurance forbids the throwing of such substances.*

Q. Can I get into the church during the day to help with my wedding planning?

A. Certainly! The church is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Feel free to invite your florist or photographer to come and view the church at his or her convenience during these hours. Make arrangements with the pastor if you’d like to get into the church on Saturday between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. You may want to check with the Pastoral Center before your visit to be sure there are no other events in the church at the time of your visit.

Q. Is there anything else we need to know?

A. YES! Just a few more important items to know:

- *The bride and groom must be able to give totally free consent to their vows. The use of alcohol or drugs diminishes that ability. Therefore, if the bride or groom is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, **THE WEDDING MAY NOT PROCEED.***
- *Please inform your bridal party that the church will be cleaned after your wedding, so any boxes, bags, items of clothing, shoes, makeup, etc. left in the meeting room or cry room should be removed immediately after the wedding.*
- *Please emphasize to your wedding party and immediate family members the importance of arriving on time for the wedding. When weddings begin late, they end late, which may cause problems for you, the couple, with your florists, limousine service, and reception halls.*