

St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church

Requirements for Marriage:

- The Bride and Groom must arrange a meeting with the pastor or associate pastor at least 6 months before the proposed date of the wedding.
- Both the Bride and the Groom must be at least 16 years of age.
- Only the Bride and/or the Groom will arrange the meetings with the pastor or associate pastor (not mothers or grandmothers or other members of the family).
- Both the Bride and the Groom will complete the FOCUS test prior to marriage with the pastor or associate pastor.

On the Day of the Wedding:

- **Arrive Sober:** Absolutely all men and women involved in the wedding (i.e. groomsmen, bridesmaids, etc.) will refrain from any alcohol consumption prior to the wedding and wedding rehearsal. Please note that as the ministers witnessing the marriage before God we retain the right to call off the wedding if anyone is intoxicated, especially those involved in the mass itself.
- **Decorations:** Absolutely no tape is to be used on the pews in hanging flowers. Tape peels away the finish on the pews and the floor.
- **No Rice, etc.** Absolutely no rice or other items are to be thrown inside the church itself. In the past people have slipped and fallen and we wish to avoid this in the future.
- **The Church Hall:** is *not* available for a wedding reception.
- **No Substitutions:** Only the Bride and Groom that have gone through the marriage prep with the pastor or the associate pastor can be married at the mass. If, at the last minute, another bride or groom is added or changed the wedding will be definitively canceled.
- **Promptness:** Please note that as priests of the Catholic Church our schedules are quite busy. We are very happy and honored to witness your marriage before God in the Church, but we must begin the mass on time. **If both families are not ready to begin the mass at the scheduled time the priest will leave. This means, in short, that the mass will begin with or without the parents of the Bride and Groom. We repeat, if the family is not ready to begin the mass at the appointed time the priest will leave.** Please understand that it is not our intention to be rude, but as ministers of the Church our time is valuable as well. **Once we leave we will not be coming back.** We can imagine how embarrassing it would be for any couple to have to explain to those present on their wedding day why they cannot be married. We humbly ask you please not to test us on this issue.
- **Modesty:** PLEASE advise all bridesmaids that they are expected to dress appropriately if they are standing in front of the Church and before God. **More specifically, this means that they, in addition to the bride, are to avoid wearing any revealing clothing and should realize that they are in the House of God.** Out of respect for Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, please dress appropriately and please pass the word that the Church expects them to do so.
- **Talking during Mass:** Please note that if families congregate in the back of the Church and are talking loudly during mass or after communion they will be confronted and they risk being publicly embarrassed.

- **Delegation:** Under no circumstance can a visiting priest, former pastor, or any other minister come to St. Paul's to preside at a wedding mass without:
 - a. Written permission/delegation from St. Paul's pastor (only the pastor).
 - b. The couple having completed 6 months of marriage preparation with the visiting priest. We must receive documentation from the priest that he is meeting with you and your fiancée prior to your wedding.

Please Note: According to Canon Law any visiting priest absolutely must receive permission from the pastor prior to performing any mass, liturgy, and ceremony within the pastor's parish. For this reason if you wish to have a wedding here at St. Paul and you wish to have another priest witness the wedding, this priest must confirm this only with St. Paul's pastor beforehand (confirming this with an associate pastor is not sufficient). No exceptions.