

Wedding Guidelines

Saint Alphonsus Parish

2030 Constance Street, New Orleans, LA 70130-5004

St. Mary's Assumption Church

923 Josephine Street
New Orleans, LA 70130

St. Mary's Chapel

1516 Jackson Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70130

Marriage Preparation

The policy of the Archdiocese of New Orleans regarding marriage preparation is that preparation should begin at least SIX (6) months prior to the date of the wedding. Ordinarily the parish priest or deacon from the parish of either the bride or the groom is the responsible party to oversee the wedding preparation. One of the priests from St. Alphonsus is also available to guide you through the process especially if he will be the officiant at your wedding.

Marriage preparation includes:

- Spiritual/Sacramental instruction.
- A recent (issued within six months) copy of each person's baptismal certificate.
- Pre-Marriage Questionnaire to be filled out with the priest.
- Pre-Marriage Inventory (FOCCUS) administered by the priest preparing the couple getting married and can provide some objective feedback about their relationship including strengths as well as areas for growth.
- Attendance at the Archdiocesan Days for the Engaged (2 Saturdays). At the conclusion of the second day a certificate will be issued which the couple is to give to the priest or deacon preparing them for the Sacrament.
- If you are not a registered parish member of St. Alphonsus Parish, you will need a letter of permission from either the bride or groom's pastor allowing the wedding to take place outside of their parish.
- Marriage Preparation Outside St. Alphonsus Parish
Please have the priest/deacon preparing you for your wedding send your completed marriage preparation file to our office at least one month in advance of the wedding date.

Officiant at the wedding

The officiant at your wedding can either be a priest from St. Alphonsus Parish or a priest or deacon in good standing from elsewhere. Priests and deacons from outside the New Orleans Archdiocese or the Baton Rouge Diocese will need a letter of suitability from their own diocese to officiate at a wedding in New Orleans. Any priest or deacon who is not on the staff of St. Alphonsus Parish will also need delegation from St. Alphonsus to witness your marriage. Finally, if the priest or deacon does not reside in Louisiana, he will need authorization from the State of Louisiana to perform a marriage in Louisiana.

Timeliness and Timing your Celebration

Wedding rehearsals and weddings are scheduled to begin on time. Immediately after your rehearsal is completed (this usually runs 30 to 40 minutes) you and your guests are asked to leave the church so the wedding coordinators can either prepare for the next wedding rehearsal or close the church for the day.

Weddings in church on Saturday are to be completed no later than 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon or can begin between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Friday weddings can begin anytime in the later afternoon up to 8:00 p.m.

Weddings in St. Mary's chapel (which seats about 60-65 people) allow more flexibility in time.

Our weekend Mass schedule is as follows:

Church: Saturday 4:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:30 a.m.

Chapel: Sunday 9:00 a.m.

We request that you make your florist, photographer, and anyone else associated with your wedding aware of this schedule as they prepare the details for your wedding. The church will be open one hour before the wedding time.

Fees

The wedding fee includes the use of the church or chapel and the service of the wedding coordinators.

The fee is \$2000.00 for the use of St. Mary's Assumption Church and \$2000.00 for the use of St. Mary's Chapel. The deposit should be made out to ST. ALPHONSUS PARISH and sent to the parish office at 2030 Constance Street, New Orleans, LA 70130.

A non-refundable deposit of one half the fee for the church is due within two weeks after the church is reserved. The remainder is due one month before the wedding is to take place.

The fee for music is a separate fee from the fee for the use of the church. The fee for the organist is \$350.00 and for the vocalist \$300.00.

Parking

A parking lot on St. Andrew Street is available for use during the wedding ceremony for a separate fee of \$350. Please contact the church office if you wish to reserve it.

Music

Couples are required to use the service of a member of St. Alphonsus Parish's ministerial staff for playing as well as for leading the congregational singing at the wedding liturgy, whether it includes Mass or not. The stipend for the services of the organist (\$350.00) and cantor (\$300.00) are due three months prior to the wedding. The checks for these services should be made out to the musicians themselves and can be sent c/o Mr. Robert Zanca.

Music and singing are essential elements of the wedding liturgy. All music selected for weddings is to be recognized as liturgical music. Couples must make arrangements with Mr. Robert Zanca, rgzuno@aol.com,

Director of Music for St. Alphonsus Parish, who will assist in all aspects of planning music for the wedding liturgy. All music must be approved by Mr. Zanca.

Other singers and musicians may be used for solo selections (fees paid by the couple) but must first be approved by Mr. Zanca at least three months prior to the wedding.

Decorations, Photography and Videography

Candles

Our church is a historical site, and everything is very old! Please refrain from putting candles in the aisles or next to pews. There are prominent candles at the altar that are provided by the church.

Attaching Items to Pews

Nothing may be taped or attached in any way that may cause damage to the wood or the finish.

Aisle Dimensions

The aisle in St. Mary's Assumption Church is 94 feet from the sanctuary steps to the back of the last pew. There are 32 pews from the front to the back. The aisle is 10 feet, 8 inches wide.

Photography and Videography

All photographers and videographers are asked to show respect by not becoming intrusive in the religious ceremony. They are to check with the priest or deacon for any specific guidelines. Photos following the ceremony may be taken for a maximum of thirty minutes.

To avoid any confusion (and upset!) on the day of the wedding, please ask your photographer and/or videographer to contact the wedding coordinator for details about wedding procedures. See below for overall guidelines:

- Please feel free to:
 - Stand in the aisles at the end of the bench only to video the parents, bridesmaids, and bride during processional. Once the processional is completed, please move from the space.
 - Place a stationary camera behind the presider's chair during the ceremony.
 - Go up into the choir loft to get pictures from above.
- Please do NOT:
 - Walk around during the Mass or ceremony.
 - Go up and down the side or center aisles during the ceremony.

Throwing Items during and/or after the Wedding Ceremony

The throwing of flowers, flower petals in the aisles, rice, seed, bubbles, open flame, wishing lanterns, etc., on church property is not allowed.

Church Decorations

Flowers or other decorations already present in the church are not to be removed or replaced.

The Next Step

Within two weeks after speaking with one of the priests on the staff of St. Alphonsus Parish regarding your wedding please return this form with your deposit for your wedding. Only then will the date and time be officially secured. If we do not hear back from you within two weeks, we will be unable to hold the date for you.