



**Holy Family Catholic Church**  
474 N Jefferson Avenue  
Port Allen, LA 70767

Phone: 225.383.1838

Fax: 225.383.1839

E-mail: [holyfamilycathol@bellsouth.net](mailto:holyfamilycathol@bellsouth.net)

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## WEDDING GUIDELINES & POLICIES

The following policies are intended to help the wedding ceremony go smoothly, so that it will be a joyful and prayerful day for the couple.

### Diocesan Policies:

- A wedding must be scheduled at least six(6) months in advance to permit enough time to fulfill the requirements set forth by the Diocese of Baton Rouge.
- The couple begins the preparation process by meeting with the priest or deacon who will review the wedding guidelines with the couple.
- A recently-issued certified copy (that is, with the Parish's seal affixed) of baptismal certificate will be required of each Catholic individual as soon as meetings begin.
- A photocopy of any prior civil or church wedding certificate(s), divorce decree(s), or annulment(s) for any prior marriage, and death certificate(s) of any previous spouse will be needed if applicable.

### Important Holy Family Church Policies:

- Couples may not be married any sooner than 6 months prior to the requested wedding date.
  - The date and time of any wedding is tentative until the couple has completed their first session with the priest, deacon or wedding coordinator.
  - No children below the age of 6 years old, unless accompanied by an adult, are allowed to stand or walk in the wedding.
  - The maximum number of attendants allowed to stand in the wedding is 14 total. (This includes adults and children.)
  - Unity candles and aisle runners are not allowed.
  - All couples must use the church Wedding Coordinator for wedding planning.
  - Couples are asked to read and sign this agreement and pay a non-refundable deposit prior to their first meeting with the priest.
- \*\* All fees for the wedding must be received thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled wedding date. Music fees are subject to musicians hired.**

***All couples are asked to review this agreement, sign it, and turn it in prior to your first session with the priest.***

We have read the **Wedding Guidelines and Policies** and will make the commitment to the required process of preparation and wedding planning according to these policies.

BRIDE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

GROOM: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Communication with the Parish Office:**

To ensure the most accurate communication regarding a wedding in Holy Family Parish, we ask the following procedures be followed:

- Please make all initial contact by way of a phone call.
- The bride or groom must make all inquiries regarding a wedding. No conversation will be had with anyone other than the bride or groom.

### **Wedding Times:**

Weddings are scheduled only at the following times:

- Fridays at 6:00 pm, 6:30 pm, 7:00 pm
- Saturdays at 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 12:00 pm (noon)
- \*\* Weddings are not held at Holy Family during the season of Lent or Advent

### **Reservation of the Church:**

Wedding and rehearsal dates will be reserved when the Pastor of Holy Family has approved the date. A non-refundable \$50 deposit fee is required. This fee is applied to the total wedding fees.

### **Wedding Fees:**

Use of Church:

- If at least one of the couple is a parishioner, the wedding fee is \$250.
- For those couples who are not Holy Family parishioners, the wedding fee is \$500

Wedding Coordinator:

- If at least one of the couple is a parishioner, the coordinator fee is \$120.  
\$60 for the rehearsal and \$60 for the ceremony
- For those couples who are not Holy Family parishioners, the wedding fee is \$180  
\$90 for the rehearsal and \$90 for the ceremony

**\*\* All fees for the wedding must be received thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled wedding date. Music fees are subject to musicians hired.**

### **Wedding Coordinator:**

Holy Family has one (1) wedding coordinator. Our coordinator is the only coordinator allowed to assist with the preparation of the wedding ceremony, to conduct the rehearsal and assist with the ceremony itself.

Regarding the planning of your wedding ceremony, our coordinator will assist you and contact you initially after you have completed the necessary pre-scheduling paperwork, paid a deposit, and finalized your date with the church.

The following is a brief outline of the wedding coordinator's job description:

- Explain to the couple the prescribed outline of the wedding ceremony itself, whether wedding takes place within or outside of Mass.
- Assist the couple in the selection of the scripture readings for their wedding.
- Conduct the wedding rehearsal.
- Be present to assist with the start of the wedding ceremony.

### **Time Frame for Use of the Church:**

- The Church is available for 1 hour to conduct the wedding rehearsal.
- The daily chapel is available to the bride for one hour before the scheduled time of the wedding.
- The wedding party should arrive no earlier than 30 minutes before the scheduled time unless they are taking pictures.
- Wedding parties may remain in the Church for 20 minutes after the wedding ceremony to take pictures.

### **Music Guidelines:**

- Holy Family Church has a Music Coordinator that **must** be contacted for all weddings
  - The Music Coordinator must approve all wedding music and musicians.
  - All musicians performing at Holy Family Church must be familiar with the Catholic Rite for Marriage.
  - No outside speakers or amps can be brought into Holy Family Church
- \*\* All fees for the wedding must be received thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled wedding date. Music fees are subject to musicians hired.**

### **Decorations:**

**No part of the Church décor (banners, plants, etc.) may be changed or removed, especially during the Christmas and Easter seasons.**

### **The following ARE NOT permitted at the wedding ceremony:**

- Unity candles
- Runners for the main aisle
- Stroller, wagons, pets, etc. during the procession
- Archways
- Tape and tacks, especially on the pews. Only clip-on hooks or ribbon ties are permitted.
- Candles attached to the pews
- Flowers on the altar table
- Floral arrangements that obstruct the view of the altar, the pulpit (ambo) or the readers or interfere with the ceremony
- Throwing of rice, birdseed, flowers, or any other item either inside or outside the Church.
- Food and drink inside the Church

If a florist is contracted, the florist should check with the Church's Wedding Coordinator **before** any final decisions are made regarding flower arrangement. If there is any question about placement of flowers, please consult the wedding coordinator no later than 2 weeks prior to the wedding.

### **Photography:**

The following guidelines must be observed:

- Wedding photographers or videographers are not allowed to assist with the coordination of the wedding itself. They should remain within their role of photographer.
- Spotlights are not permitted during the ceremony
- Photographers and videographers are not permitted in front of the tabernacle of the church
- The use of drones is not permitted
- The wedding party may engage the services of 1 - 2 still photographers and/or 1 videographer
- The wedding party may remain after the wedding for group pictures for a maximum of 20 minutes

### **Accountability:**

The bride and groom will be held responsible for the action and behavior of all the guests, florists, musicians, and photographers.

### **Marriage License:**

The civil marriage license (obtained from the Clerk of Court Office) must be brought to the parish office at least 5 days prior to the wedding.

### **Marriage Preparation:**

There are four elements involved in marriage preparation.

The completing of a "prenuptial instrument," the Prepare/Enrich (P/E).

2. Meet with a Holy Family Church wedding preparation couple who will share the findings of the P/E.
3. The couple is also asked the schedule and attend a pre-marriage weekend available in the Diocese of Baton Rouge, or another Catholic diocese.
4. After the review of the P/E results and the pre-marriage weekend are complete, the priest and couple will meet to finalize the plans for the wedding ceremony itself.

All contact with the priest regarding marriage preparation and the wedding ceremony itself must be made by either the bride or groom.

### **Weddings in the Diocese of Baton Rouge: Time, Day, and Place:**

- In the Diocese of Baton Rouge, weddings may not be celebrated on Sundays or holy days of obligation.
- In Holy Family Parish, the latest that a wedding can start on Friday evening is 7:00 p.m. On Saturday, the latest is 12:00 p.m.
- In Holy Family Parish, weddings may not be celebrated during the Seasons of Lent or Advent.
- No wedding date and time is final until the wedding coordinator has confirmed with the couple.
- In the Diocese of Baton Rouge, no wedding ceremony may take place outside of a church building.

**Regarding Inter-Faith Marriages: *Also known as “Mixed” Marriages:***

In the Diocese of Baton Rouge, “the celebration of a mixed marriage takes place at a non-Eucharistic ceremony,” also known as “The Rite of Marriage Outside of Mass.”

**Priests or Deacons Not from Holy Family Parish:**

A priest or deacon not currently assigned to Holy Family Parish may preside at your wedding. In order to do so, the following are required:

- If from within the Diocese of Baton Rouge, he must request (in writing) delegation (permission) from the current pastor of Holy Family.
- If from outside of the Diocese of Baton Rouge, a priest or deacon must contact the Bishop of that diocese and follow the normal process regarding “testimonial of suitability for ministry.”

**The Wedding Ceremony Itself: *Planning, Music, Decorations, and Wedding Party:***

- All questions regarding the wedding ceremony itself should be directed to our wedding coordinator, Mrs. Karen Ardoin
- All couples are required to contact Mr. Glen Daigle, music coordinator for weddings, 892-4844, regarding music, musicians, and vocalists for any wedding.
- The planning and the conducting of the wedding rehearsal will be done by the coordinator assigned to your wedding.
- Children standing in the wedding must be at least 6 years of age and are to be seated with an adult other than those adults standing in the wedding party.
- Readers and gift-bearers at a Wedding Mass must be practicing Catholics.