



Weddings at St. Pius X Church

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Pastor: Fr. Silvano Vargas

We hope that your celebration of marriage at St. Pius X is a happy and memorable event for you and your families. The Sacrament of Marriage is an important event for the Catholic Church as well. Married couples who are committed to a generous, faithful and life-giving love are one of the clearest and best signs of the love of God in the world.

This pamphlet will help you to prepare for this important celebration of your love and faith.

Revised May 2006

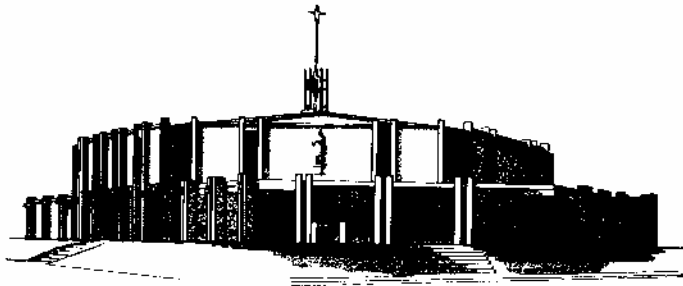
CHURCH BOOKING

We will book a date and time for your wedding providing there are no impediments to your marriage. The initial booking just reserves the time in the Church itself. ***This booking is conditional upon the couple ensuring that all required paperwork is prepared, along with all other necessary preparations.***

- Often bookings for the Church are made a year or more in advance because of the difficulties involved in coordinating receptions and other arrangements.
- Your wedding will take 50 - 60 minutes
- On Saturdays there may be three weddings booked. At 5:00 PM we have Mass (Sunday Liturgy). As you can appreciate, in order to facilitate all the activities in the church **it is imperative that your Wedding starts promptly.**

Normal Wedding times at St. Pius X are as follows:

Saturdays	11:00 AM
	1:00 PM
	3:00 PM



MARRIAGE PREPARATION

The usual program for marriage preparation at St. Pius X is the Sponsor Program. This is a program well received and highly recommended by our engaged couples in the past. A trained married couple from our parish, called the Sponsor Couple, is assigned to assist an engaged couple (or couples) to prepare for marriage by working through a preparation program. Meetings are held at the home of the Sponsoring Couple at times convenient to both couples. The program usually requires 9-12 hours of meeting time in 5 or 6 sessions with the Sponsor Couple, in addition to the engaged couple's preparation prior to the meetings.

To register for the Sponsor Program, please call the Parish Office. Once you have registered, you are asked to come to the Office to pick up two copies, one for each of you, of the program book, entitled *For Better and For Ever*. Following your registration, in due time, you will be contacted by telephone by your Sponsor Couple, who will arrange for your first meeting.

It is also possible to register for the Sponsor Program and to receive your books from the priest at your first meeting with him. Engaged couples are advised to complete their preparation program as early as possible, as a lot of other work still needs to be done!

The **cost of the Sponsor Program**, including the preparation books, **is \$100.00 payable to St. Pius X Church.** You are asked to pay the full amount when you pick up your books. If the cost of the program is a difficulty for you, please speak to the priest about it.

If the Sponsor Program is not possible for you, for example, if one of you lives out of town, two other preparation programs are also possible. One is offered through Catholic Family Services (233-2360). The other is called Catholic Engaged Encounter (24-0-0103) and Life & Family Resource Centre (218-5504). Both of these are weekend programs. Information flyers for all these are available from the priest with whom you will be working or the parish office.

There is also a program for people who have been previously married, mature couples or who have cohabited for an extended time. Please inquire at the parish office.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR MARRIAGE

1. CERTIFICATE OF BAPTISM: (a new, up-dated copy, issued within six months of marriage). Please contact your church of baptism with this request. This is a common request and you should not encounter any difficulty.

- We have reference books in the parish office and can help you with addresses and phone numbers of parishes within Canada. The internet is also a terrific asset.
- There is not usually a fee for this, but there are always exceptions. (i.e. Quebec)
- If you are not Catholic, a copy of your original Baptismal certificate will suffice. If that is not available, or if you have not been baptized, an affidavit will be needed and this form is available from the parish office or the website (Sacraments/Marriage).

2. LETTER OF FREEDOM is required for both bride and groom. A Letter of Freedom is completed by a parent (1st choice) or sibling, someone who has know you personally for most of your life. They testify that you are able to take on the responsibilities of marriage and have never been married before, either in a Church or in a Civil Ceremony. Forms available from the parish office or the website (Sacraments/Marriage)

3. MARRIAGE LICENSE: This may be obtained from the Vital Statistics Office in the McDougall Building (455-6 Street SW), from any AMA Branch Office, or from any other private License & Registry Office.

- You both need to be present, with at least one piece of ID showing your full legal names such as Birth Certificate or Passport, to obtain a Marriage License.
- There may be other requirements depending on any previous marriages, your age, and other circumstances.
- This will take you a minimum of 1 hour and many registry offices will no do this if you come in near closing.
- The current fee for a Marriage License can be anywhere from \$72.00 and up, but these may vary between registry offices. Please consider this a guideline only.
- A Marriage License can be obtained any time from 3 months prior to the wedding.
- Bring the license to one of the preparation meetings with the priest. **The wedding cannot take place without the license in the hands of the priest.**

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

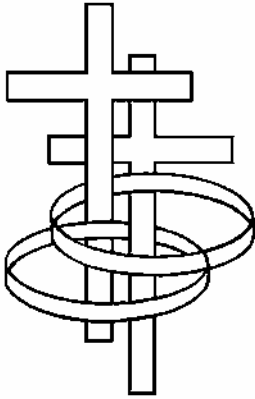
A PREVIOUS MARRIAGE: If either the bride or groom has been married before (in a civil or religious ceremony), a declaration of nullity is needed before a marriage can occur in any Catholic Church. This requires some additional consultation and couples in this circumstance should contact the Church as soon as possible in advance of any proposed wedding date.

- ***We cannot book a wedding date at St. Pius until you are both free to marry in the Catholic Church.***

MEMBERS OF ANOTHER PARISH Since a wedding is a celebration of the Church, normally it takes place in the parish of the bride. If the bride is not Catholic, it takes place in the parish of the groom. If neither bride nor groom is from St. Pius X Parish, please contact the priest.

A VISITING PRIEST If you would like a priest who is not on staff at St. Pius X to officiate at your wedding, he would be warmly welcomed. Since permission from the Bishop, and in some cases from the province is required, please inform the parish well in advance so these permissions may be obtained.





APPOINTMENTS

Please take steps to get the above paperwork started early. Make an appointment to meet with the priest a minimum of 4-6 months, before your wedding, and immediately if there are any special circumstances such as a previous marriage.

You will need to meet with the priest several times before your wedding, in addition to the rehearsal.

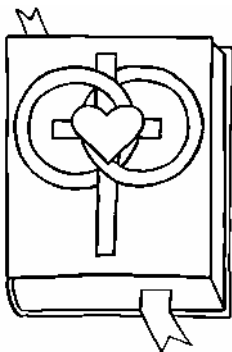
REHEARSAL

A rehearsal can be arranged with the priest who will officiate at your wedding, or through the parish office (in consultation with the priest).

- Rehearsals are usually scheduled for Friday evenings at 6:00, 7:00 and 8:00 PM. The rehearsal requires 30 - 45 minutes.
- Music is not practiced at the time of the wedding rehearsal. The musician(s) may attend to receive timing cues from the priest. If the musician(s) wishes to reserve a practice time at a time other than the rehearsal, arrangements may be made with the secretary in the parish office.
- Please remind all those involved in your rehearsal to arrive at the Church about fifteen minutes early so that you are ready to begin on time. There are often three weddings on the same day each requiring rehearsals. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



Liturgical Celebration



The goal of any liturgical celebration is “full, conscious and active participation by all worshippers.” The following notes will help you to achieve that goal. The priest will work closely with you to help you prepare your celebration. You will be offered a planning booklet that will provide you with a wide range of possible prayers and Scripture readings for your wedding.

Mass - A wedding ceremony may or may not include the celebration of the Mass. The reason is outlined in the articulation of the goal of liturgy stated in the paragraph above. If a Mass is celebrated, please encourage your wedding guests to participate as fully as possible. A Wedding without much, if any, participation from the worshippers, is a joyless event. A wedding with mass lasts about one hour.

Entrance Procession - The procession gathers all those who will participate in your celebration of marriage. All the participants enter the Church accompanied by the same processional music. You are asked to choose one of the following as the basic framework for your procession from which additions or deletions may be made. Note that in each of the options below, the priest enters first, followed by the others.

Plan A

Bride and Groom
Parents of the Bride
Parents of the Groom
Groom's Witness - Bride's Witness
Groomsman - Bridesmaid
Groomsman - Bridesmaid
Book Bearer (Lector)
Priest

Plan B

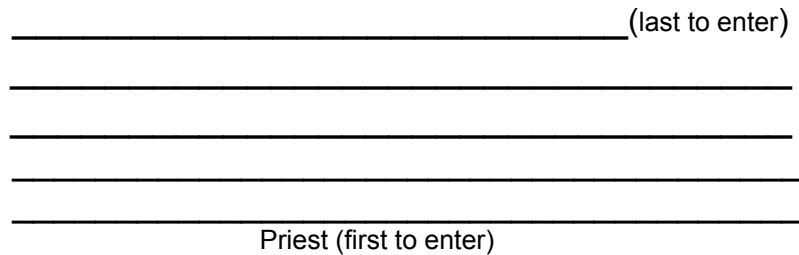
Bride and Groom
Groom's Witness-Bride's Witness
Groomsman-Bridesmaid
Groomsman-Bridesmaid
Book Bearer (Lector)
Priest

Plan C

Mother-Bride-Father
Mother-Groom-Father
Groom's Witness-Bride's Witness
Groomsman-Bridesmaid
Groomsman-Bridesmaid
Book Bearer (Lector)
Priest

Plan D

You may wish to re-arrange one of the above processions to suit your wedding party. Please use the space below to diagram your wedding procession. Please keep in mind that only one procession is permitted with one processional hymn.



Notes:

1. The number of groomsmen and bridesmaids is up to you.
2. If you wish to involve children in the liturgy, altar servers are possible if they have had previous training and experience. If you wish to include a flower girl and ring bearer, we recommend that they be 6 years of age or older.
3. Remember that the goal of liturgy is "full, conscious and active participation of all the worshippers." That includes the bride and groom. Above all, the Church wishes them to be active participants in their own wedding.

4. Some wedding elements that are popularly considered traditional, often seen in films or on television, may be theatrical, but they do not necessarily constitute good liturgy. Some customs originate in another era and no longer correspond to the church's (or even modern man's or woman's) understanding of marriage. For example, at one time people believed it was bad luck for the groom to see the bride before the ceremony began. This is an ancient superstition and does not belong in Christian liturgy since it is not rooted in anything Christian.
5. The custom whereby the bride's father "gives the bride away" may also be difficult to reconcile with good Christian liturgy. This tradition reflects a time when marriages were pre-arranged, and from a time when brides were seen as "property" to be handed from one person to another. Today, both the church and society understand marriage as totally different -- as a mutual decision by equal and free partners. It is more proper to think of the parents of the bride and groom accompanying their daughter and son to the altar and to Christian marriage. (*Liturgy 90*, Volume 30, Number 4, 1999)
6. Finally, liturgical guidelines recommend that the groom and his attendants should not enter by the side door prior to the celebration. There should be one procession, in which the full wedding party participates "fully, consciously and actively." Please discuss these details with the priest.

Unity Candle - If you wish to use a unity candle set, you are welcome to do so. The Unity Candle ritual is optional. This ritual recalls your Baptismal inheritance. If you have your Baptismal candles, you are welcome to use them. If you do not, other candles will suffice. It is the responsibility of the couple to provide their own candles; the parish does not provide candles or candleholders.

Signing the Register - At the conclusion of the celebration the signing of the register takes place at the altar. The Unity Candles also go on the Altar, if you are using them.

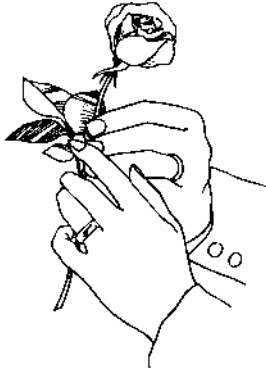


Music - A wedding is a sacred service that reflects a view of love and marriage as it is presented in Scripture. This concept should be the primary consideration when choosing music suitable for a wedding. Music with a readily apparent secular connotation is not appropriate for a church celebration of marriage.

- Make your booking with your musician(s) and leaders of song (if you are having singing) at least 4 - 6 months in advance of your wedding.
- Meet with your musician(s) and leaders of song (if you are having singing) 6 - 10 weeks prior to the wedding to choose appropriate music. Generally, the organist or pianist is responsible for rehearsing with and accompanying the vocal / instrumental musicians, not for teaching the music. It is not necessary for the organist or other musicians to be present at the rehearsal. If it is helpful, they may attend to receive the timing cues from the priest, but music is not played during the rehearsal.
- Arrangements for rehearsal of music in the church may be made through the parish office.
- Fees for musicians and singers vary. Financial arrangements are made directly with the musician. Please enquire as to their fee during your first telephone conversation.
- Our resident organist and pianist is **Leona Baldwin (283-4624)**. Our resident pianist keyboard player is **Gavin Caldwell (244-1496, cell 815-9203)**. If you wish to acquire their services, please call them. We have more names less known to us. Please call the parish office.
- If you are in need of help in acquiring musicians and leaders of song, please speak to the priest. We have on hand a roster of people you can ask, including, harpists, violinists and bagpipers.
- If you are having singing, it is recommended that you ask someone who can lead the congregation in singing. This contributes to the fuller, active involvement of the worshippers. in the ceremony. Remember that singing at a worship service is primarily for involvement of the people, not primarily for performance or entertainment.



OTHER INFORMATION



Flowers - Care should be taken with regard to the liturgical environment of the Church. This is particularly true during the major seasons such as Advent, Lent and Easter. There are many other liturgical celebrations that impact the Church environment, such as Thanksgiving, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, 1st Eucharist, etc.

The existing Church decor during these celebrations must remain in place. You may enhance the Church environment but your decorations must be removed from the by 4:30 PM in time for the 5:00 PM Saturday Mass.

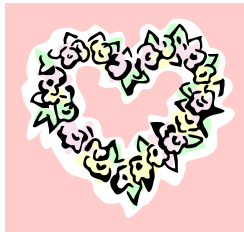
- **Please contact Anne Lipoth (282-3653) regarding Church décor.**

- You are welcome to leave some of your flowers in the Church for Sunday services if you wish.
- Since the summer is a busy time for weddings, please be mindful that there may be (most likely will be) other weddings before and after yours. Accordingly, flowers should be delivered to the church approximately one hour prior to your wedding.
- They should be delivered to the Church and not to the rectory or hall.

Pew Bows - Please attach with masking tape, sticky putty or hooks available from florists and stores specifically for this purpose. Do not use thumbtacks or scotch tape.

Confetti - (or ALL related stuff, including flower petals, rice, bird seed, etc.) is not to be used either in the Church or on Church property.

- Bubbles are also not appropriate and are not to be used in the Church.

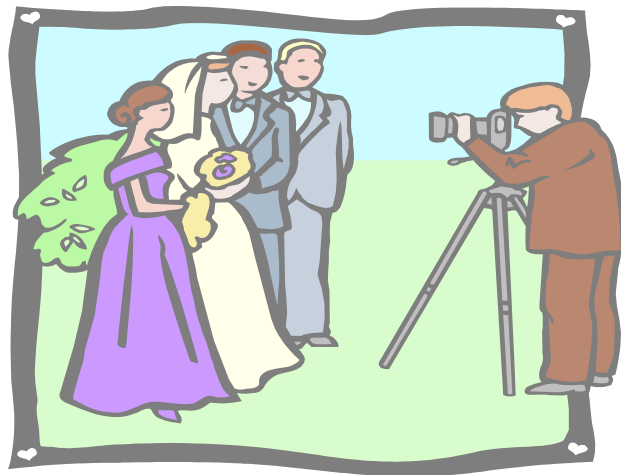


Photographs - Photographs may only be taken at the discretion of the priest.

- Wedding guests should be asked to put their cameras away after the entrance procession.
- The official wedding photographer is always expected to use discretion. They do not impede or obstruct the liturgy in any way. They do not stop the procession, nor communicate with the bridal party during the wedding service. They do not have any additional lights, other than on-camera flash devices, nor any wires running through the church.

Parking - Parking at St. Pius X is limited.

- It would be useful to find out if there are other activities at the Church that day. If there are, you may wish to advise your guests. There may not be much that can be done but sometimes forewarned is less stressful.
- Decorated wedding cars are generally parked on 23rd Street in front of the Church. Usually, no reserved signs are needed.
- If there is a football game at McMahon Stadium the afternoon of your wedding, there will be heavy traffic congestion. We will block off the parking lot for your guests; however, the parking lot capacity is 28 cars. The Stampeder's Schedule is published annually in late spring.



Clean-Up - **Please arrange** for your ushers (or someone else) to tidy up the church, after your wedding, in preparation for the next wedding or for Sunday Mass.

- This includes removal of any flowers not donated to the church, pew bows, unity candles, other decorations, flower boxes, and flower wrappings.
- Please also ask them to check the pews and remove any leftover programs (if you have them), tissues (from those who cry at your wedding!) and any other refuse that may have accumulated during your wedding.
- There are waste paper baskets in the vestibule of the church and a large garbage receptacle behind the parish hall.

Guest Book: Please Note: St. Pius X has its own *GUEST BOOK*, located in the vestibule. Wedding parties often remove it thinking that it is theirs. Sometimes Wedding guests sign it instead and although this is not a problem, (in fact it is welcomed by the parish) you will prefer to have your guests sign your book.

Fees - **There are no fees for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage**; however, the Diocese of Calgary recommends that the suggested minimum offering is \$200.00 payable to St. Pius X Church, for marriage pastoral services. Couples are encouraged to remember the work of the Church as they express their thanksgiving to God. Your donation to St. Pius X on the occasion of your wedding should be based on the cost of your wedding (flowers, photographs, gowns and reception).

- The cost of the Sponsor Program is \$100.00 additional.
- If these amounts are a difficulty for you, please speak with the priest about it.

