



# OUR LADY of MOUNT CARMEL CHURCH

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708 West Belmont Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60657-4513

## WEDDING GUIDELINES

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

You are about to enter into a relationship in marriage that will profoundly affect your whole future. It is a relationship so intimate and so important that God has created a special sacrament for it. Married life is to be a mirror of Jesus' love for us. Jesus gave his life for us—and, in a sense, a wife and husband give their life for and to each other. Married love is beautiful, but not without its difficulties. Individual personalities, cultures, and sometimes religion can complicate a sound marital adjustment and happy family life.

Preparation is essential. Attendance at the Archdiocesan Pre-Cana Conference is a splendid and necessary requirement before marriage. The experience of thousands of couples has been very positive and helpful—and even quite enjoyable.

The Archdiocese indicates that all marriage arrangements should begin one year in advance of the wedding date. Enough time (at least four months) then will be available to obtain Baptismal Certificates; Affidavits, when necessary; and the Marriage License as well as to schedule interviews with the priest, deacon, or pastoral associate who is arranging your marriage.

Please take a moment to read through the attached “Guidelines” to answer many of your questions regarding church regulations.

### **DESIGNATED BEST MAN & MAID OF HONOR**

You **MUST** choose one designated Maid of Honor and one Best Man as your primary witnesses for your wedding. These names are recorded for church records as your “witnesses”; they do not sign the Marriage License, which is completed by the priest.

### **WEDDING VOWS**

The Wedding Vows used during a Mass or Ceremony will be one of the two choices as found in the Roman Rite of Marriage. We **DO NOT** permit the writing of your own vows.

### **FLOWER GIRLS & RING BEARERS**

It is our recommendation that all children participating as Flower Girls or Ring Bearers be of school age (grades 1 and up). Through experience, very young children can be unpredictable in their moods and frightened by the crowd, music, and length of the aisle. To prevent episodes of fear and crying, we highly encourage you to consider the age of the children chosen. Also, the Wedding Mass / Ceremony is not the time to test children, but rather a sacred ceremonial act.

## **2. ETHNIC TRADITIONS (i.e., Mexican, Spanish, Filipino)**

Many cultures have various traditions that can be added to the wedding Mass / Ceremony. These traditions are added after the Exchange of Rings takes place.

These traditions include:

Wedding Pillows (brought up at the beginning of the procession for the Bride & Groom to kneel on)

The Unity Candle

Presentation of Bible, Statue, Crucifix, Rosary

Coins

Veil

Lazo or Cord

If you will be incorporating these traditions into your wedding Mass / Ceremony, please ensure that they are placed in your program after “the Blessing and Giving of Rings” in the above-mentioned order. You may select all the traditions or those which are most significant to you.

The wedding coordinator will go through the order at the rehearsal and the sponsor’s roles in the procession and the time that the items are to be brought forward.

### **3. PHOTO / VIDEO GUIDELINES:**

(This information should be shared with your Photographer / Videographer)

The photographer will meet with the Church Wedding Coordinator on the day of the wedding to review these regulations and what will be happening during the wedding ceremony.

Flash is permitted only for the Processional and Recessional of the Bridal Party. **ABSOLUTELY NO FLASH OR BRIGHT LIGHTS ARE TO BE USED DURING THE CEREMONY.**

The Sanctuary / Altar (marble floor) area is totally off limits.

During the Mass / Ceremony, the photographer is to take a stationary spot behind the guests and is not permitted to roam around the church. Photographers are asked to be as unobtrusive as possible during the ceremony.

No general picture taking of the bridal party is allowed in the church before the ceremony, except of the Ushers, Groomsmen, and Groom. This should all be completed 20 minutes prior to the start of the wedding so that the Ushers can begin seating guests and the Groom & Groomsmen can take their places.

Taking pictures of the guests / congregation during the wedding Mass / Ceremony is totally inappropriate and should be done after the wedding.

After the wedding Mass / Ceremony, sanctuary pictures can be taken **ONLY** in front of the altar. Absolutely no one is allowed around or behind the altar.

A maximum 30-minute time limit is set for pictures after the wedding, if time permits. A total of 1-1/2 hours is held for each wedding from the set start time. If a late start happens, it will take away from picture time.

When weather permits, photographs may be taken in the Rectory garden on the east side of the church or in front of the Parish Ministry Center on the west side of the church.

#### **VIDEO SET UP AREA:**

Stationary set up is normally in the front of the church on the east side in front of the first pew. Access to the choir loft is also provided.

No extra bright lights are permitted during the ceremony.

The same rules apply as to photography.



#### **4. BASIC RULES, REGULATIONS & ETIQUETTE OF THE CHURCH**

The Church is a sacred place and appropriate behavior and respect are to be maintained at all times by everyone.

The Blessed Sacrament remains reserved in the center Tabernacle of the church at all times.

Non-biblical readings are forbidden in all Catholic ceremonies.

Cell Phones & Pagers are to be shut off while in the church. Texting while in church is inappropriate.

Gum, water bottles, coffee cups, and food of any kind are to be deposited in the waste receptacles in the vestibule before entering the church.

Drinking alcohol in or outside of the church is not permitted.

A choice of having a receiving line or taking pictures after the ceremony is permitted and limited to a maximum of 30 minutes, if there is time. The church will be opened one hour prior to the service. We do not permit the throwing of rice, bird seed, rose petals and the like either inside or outside of the church as no maintenance staff is on duty.

No type of standing floral arrangements / pedestals may be placed in the center aisle.

No type of tulle netting / ribbon may be used to block off the pews in the center aisle.

Ring Bearers and Flower Girls should be at least in preschool to participate fully in the ceremony.

## **5. VISITING / GUEST PRIEST GUIDELINES**

(This information should be shared with your Visiting / Guest Priest)

- At Our Lady of Mount Carmel, we hold a rich tradition in the sacredness of our liturgical celebrations, especially Wedding Masses and Ceremonies.
- Weddings at Mount Carmel celebrated by Visiting / Guest Priests are to be conducted according to the Roman Missal, Third Edition, 2011 and as prescribed in the newly revised Rite of Matrimony according to the norms set forth.
- Recreating and rewording the Order of Mass are not the norm.
- The Wedding Coordinator of Our Lady of Mount Carmel will assist you in what is acceptable at Mount Carmel and in the manner in which we conduct our weddings. The coordinator can direct and assist you in what we expect as far as the Liturgical actions and the wording and order of the wedding rite.

If you have any questions, please feel welcome to contact the pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel prior to the wedding for specific questions that you may have.

## **6. ATTIRE & DRESS**

- Keeping in mind the sanctity of the sacrament of marriage and the sacred space that you will be married in, it is recommended that you put serious consideration into the type and style of dresses that are chosen to be worn by the female members of the Bridal Party and the Bride herself.
- There are **NO DESIGNATED DRESSING ROOMS** in the church. We ask all members of the Bridal Party to arrive at the church dressed and ready to start the wedding.
- The Bride and Bridal attendants who wait in the chapel or accessible washroom are asked to keep the area neat.

## **7. DECORATION / FLOWERS**

**(This information should be shared with your florist.)**

### **WHAT IS PERMITTED IN THE CHURCH:**

- **Altar Flowers:** It is recommended that two (2) Large Floral Arrangements be placed on the main altar on either side of the Tabernacle. We recommend that the floral arrangements be colorful and large enough to stand out against the white marble of the altar.
- We happily accept the donation of your floral arrangements, but do not require such.
- Other floral arrangements may be placed on the sides of the main altar or at the side altars.
- **PEW DECORATIONS** are the only type of aisle decoration permitted. The pew decoration may be a simple bow, bows with greenery, bows with flowers, etc., attached with pew clips, rubber bands or ribbon. **NO TAPE IS TO BE USED.**
- **PEWS:** There are 27 pews on either side of the main aisle.

### **WHAT IS NOT PERMITTED IN THE CHURCH:**

- Flowers / decorations are **NOT** to be placed on the Altar of Sacrifice (Table) or in front of the high altar Tabernacle.
- The church does **NOT** permit tossing rose petals, rice, or any other items down the center aisle of the church, nor outdoors on the steps.
- Arches / trellises may be placed at the rear and / or center of the main aisle, but not at the front first pew. They are not recommended.
- No aisle candles or standing / pedestal floral arrangements are permitted along the main aisle.
- The use of tulle netting along the main aisle is **NOT** permitted, as this blocks the flow of people going to and from their pews for Communion and causes seating confusion.
- **AISLE RUNNERS** are not permitted for safety reasons.

### **OTHER:**

- It is the Florist / Families' responsibility to remove, immediately following the ceremony all decorations (pew bows / arrangements, vases, stands, etc.).
- A designated florist / family member should be appointed to distribute and pin on all boutonnieres / corsages.
- **Delivery of flowers to the church:** If the church is not open, deliveries should be made to the Parish Ministry Center, 708 West Belmont Avenue.
- The church is not able to supply stands, pedestals, candelabra, extra candles, etc.
- Whatever seasonal décor is currently displayed in the church remains in place on your wedding day, primarily the seasons of Advent & Christmastime and Lent & Eastertime.

## **8. THE REHEARSAL**

We ask that all persons in the wedding party **BE ON TIME FOR THE REHEARSAL.**

- Neither the Priest nor Musicians are present at rehearsals.
- Rehearsals are scheduled for the night before the wedding.
- The rehearsal runs approximately 30 to 45 minutes.
- Rehearsal times can be set at 4:30 pm, 5:00 pm, 5:30 pm, and 6:00 pm, depending on the number of rehearsals scheduled and the availability of the church due to other weddings.
- The rehearsal is conducted by the designated church-appointed Wedding Coordinator of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The coordinator will also be at the wedding to direct, instruct, and start the wedding.
- Privately hired Wedding Consultants have no role in the liturgical celebration of the sacrament and as such will not be involved in the rehearsal.
- Only those persons directly involved in the wedding ceremony need attend (members of the bridal party, parents, ushers, readers, etc.).
- **PLAN AHEAD: Plan for Traffic Congestion Problems.** Plan your travel time so that the rehearsal and your wedding can begin on time.
- For the rehearsal, ample parking is provided in the west parking lot next to Casey Hall.

### **ITEMS TO BRING TO THE REHEARSAL:**

- Wedding License
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- All fees due to the coordinator Church and Musicians are payable in full. Please have checks made out ahead of time.
- The following items may be left at the church so that they will not be forgotten on the day of the wedding: Unity Candle, Taper Candles & Holder, Wedding Programs.



## 9. THE DAY OF THE WEDDING

- **PLAN AHEAD—PLAN YOUR TRAVEL TIME.**

In the Lakeview area, traffic back-ups are the norm. Allow sufficient time in your travel to get to the church at least ½ hour before the start of the wedding.

- The church is opened one hour prior to the wedding.
- Parking for the bridal party and guests is available in the EAST parking lot next to the Chicago Library and in the WEST lot next to Casey Hall. All cars must be removed from the lots following the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.
- Arrival Times:
  - Groom, Best Man, Groomsmen & Ushers are to arrive 1/2 hour prior to the start of the wedding and wait in the “sacristy hall area” in the front of church.
  - Bride, Maid of Honor & Bridesmaids are to arrive 15 minutes prior to the wedding and can wait in Eden Chapel, which is located behind the sanctuary. (This room is NOT a dressing room).
- Seating of guests begins 15-20 minutes prior to the start time.
- The Wedding Coordinator will address the start time of the wedding.

## 9. MUSIC

- Please contact the Music Office at 773-249-7080 to arrange music for your ceremony.
- Only designated musicians of Mount Carmel are to be used (organist, cantor, additional instrumentalists) and they are booked through the Music Office. We do not permit any outside vocalists / musicians.
- All weddings are required to engage a Cantor and an Organist.
- Please review the “Wedding Music Worksheets” in this packet and the Music policies of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

## 10. FEES

- All fees are given to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church
    - Church Fee: \$1,000.00
- If paying the church fee by check, please make it out to “Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church”
- A \$500.00 nonrefundable deposit is required upon the booking of a wedding date.
  - Musicians’ fees are separate; checks are made out to individuals per Director of Music

## **12. MARRIAGE LICENSE**

### **CHURCH MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE**

#### **Marriage License**

There is **NO** signing of the Registry or Marriage License required by you or your witnesses (Maid of Honor and Best Man). The priest who performs the marriage ceremony completes the Marriage License in its entirety. The completed license is then sent to the Office of the Cook County Clerk in Chicago.

To request a copy of your Marriage License please contact:

The Cook County Clerks Vital Records

118 North Clark Street

Chicago, Illinois 60664-2570

Toll Free: 866-252-8974 or visit [cookcountyil.gov/service/marriage-certificates](http://cookcountyil.gov/service/marriage-certificates)

#### **Marriage Certificate**

This is an official Church-issued certificate. If you should wish to obtain a Marriage Certificate from the church, please contact the Parish Office at 872-260-4100 to place your request during regular business hours.

**WEDDING PROGRAM FORMAT**

**\*\*\*SAMPLE\*\*\***

**The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony  
Uniting**

**Sarah Marie Jones**

**&**

**John Thomas Doe**

**Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church  
708 West Belmont Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois**

**Saturday, the Seventh day of August  
In the year Two Thousand and Twenty-one  
Two O'clock in the Afternoon**

**SAMPLE**

**The Wedding Mass**

<b>Preludes</b>	<b>Overture from Fireworks-Handel Air from Water Music-Handel</b>
<b>Processionals</b>	<b>Trumpet Voluntary - Purcell Bridal March from Lohengrin - Wagner</b>
<b>Greeting</b>	
<b>Gloria</b>	<b>(music found at the inside back cover of the hymnal)</b>
<b>Collect</b>	
<b>Liturgy of the Word</b>	
<b>Reading I:</b>	<b>Song of Songs 2:8-10, 14, 16a;8: 6-7 Reader: Thomas Jones</b>
<b>Responsorial Psalm</b>	<b>Psalm 34 "Taste and See the Goodness of the Lord"</b>
<b>Reading II:</b>	<b>Corinthians 6:12 Reader: Dawn Cling</b>
<b>Gospel Acclamation</b>	<b>Alleluia - Gregorian Chant</b>

Gospel Mark 12:18

Homily

Consent (Marriage Vows)

Reception of the Consent & Blessing & Giving of Rings

Lighting of the Unity Candle.(optional)

(Ethnic Traditions go here: coins, etc.)

Universal Prayer Reader: James Smith

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Presentation of the gifts of bread & wine...

Where Love is Found – Jones

Gifts Presented by Larry Kite & Susan Kite

Prayer over the Gifts, Preface, Holy Holy, Eucharistic Prayer, Mystery of Faith, Great Amen

Our Father

(Ethnic Traditions go here: lazo)

Nuptial Blessing

Sign of Peace

Lamb of God

Communion Procession No. 923 I Received the Living God

Prayer after Communion

Presentation of flowers to the Blessed Virgin Mary (optional)

Ave Maria - Schubert

Final Blessing & Dismissal

Recessional

Wedding March - Mendelssohn

### The Wedding Party

Celebrant Rev.

Parents of the Bride Mr. & Mrs.

Parents of the Groom Mr. & Mrs.

Maid of Honor

Best Man

Bridesmaids

Groomsmen

Flower Girl

Ring Bearer

Ushers

Musicians

, Organist

, Cantor