

Your Wedding Considerations and Guidelines



***Mother Seton Parish
19951 Father Hurley Blvd.
Germantown, MD 20874
301-924-3838***

www.mothersetonparish.org

Congratulations on your decision to commit yourselves to one another in the Sacrament of marriage! May our loving God richly bless and sustain your love with the Church, with your family, and with your friends. We welcome you warmly as you call upon the Church to witness your wedding and we hope to help you in every way possible as you prepare to celebrate one of the most important decisions in your lives.

You may not be aware that when you come to a parish to prepare for your wedding, you are asking the entire parish community to bear witness to the reality of your Christian love. Everyone in the parish community shares the responsibility of proclaiming and celebrating your marriage in the Lord. In a sense then, you are surrounded by love as you begin your married life together, the love not just of family and friends, but also of the Church.

We will make every effort to consider and accommodate your personal wishes, but we also ask that your plan begin with a deep and abiding love for the Lord, a personal and profound commitment to His Church, and an enduring respect and devotion to the rites and ceremonies of our parish family.

Thank you for asking us to share this important milestone in your lives. We hope you'll continue to share your lives with us as a member of our family of faith, that together we might serve the Lord.

God bless you now and always!

GETTING STARTED IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

Who may marry at Mother Seton Parish?

- Mother Seton Parish is a Roman Catholic Church and as such only marriages joining at least one practicing Catholic are allowed. If either party has a prior marriage, regardless of where that marriage took place, it will need to be resolved in accordance with the teachings of the church. Let the pastor, priest or permanent deacon know at your first meeting if you have any prior marriages or are currently civilly married.
- To celebrate a marriage at Mother Seton Parish, it is recommended the bride and groom be:
 - registered and participating members of the community, *or*
 - relative of a registered parishioner, *or*
 - suitably prepared in another Catholic parish to receive the sacrament of marriage
- If the marriage is taking place between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, the preference for the wedding is a ceremony outside of Mass.
- Ultimately, the decision to celebrate a marriage at Mother Seton Parish lies within the discretion of the priest or permanent deacon of Mother Seton Parish.

Scheduling your Wedding

- Contact the parish at least six (6) months in advance of the date and time you are considering for your wedding celebration
- Confirm that the pastor, priest, or permanent deacon is available to celebrate your wedding with you.
- Confirm that the church may be reserved after you have met with the pastor, priest, or permanent deacon.
- Once the date and time for your wedding and rehearsal are confirmed and finalized, you may proceed to make your

other wedding arrangements (rehearsal dinner, reception, etc.)

- A priest who is not assigned to Mother Seton Parish may preside at your wedding if he has the written delegation (permission) of the Pastor, Fr. Lee Fangmeyer.
- The priest or deacon who officiates your wedding is responsible for completing all necessary documentation and instruction, unless other arrangements are made.

PREPARATION PROCESS

Sessions with the Priest or Deacon

- A series of appointments are required to help a couple explore the interpersonal issues influencing their readiness to enter into the Sacrament of Christian marriage.

Archdiocesan Marriage Preparation Program

All couples are required to participate in a pre-marriage preparation program sponsored by the Archdiocese. Visit: <http://adw.org> and in the search field enter "marriage prep schedule"

- Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center also offers marriage preparation courses. <http://www.ourladyofbethesda.org>
- The Archdiocese of Washington sponsors conferences that give detailed information on the Natural Family Planning method. For information, call (301) 897-9323, or visit: adw.org/nfp

Meet with Music Director

- If you would like music at your wedding, please contact Amy Massey at least six months prior to your wedding, Music@MotherSetonParish.org. ***Under no circumstances should the couple make arrangements for instrumentalists or singers before consulting with the Director of Music.***

MOTHER SETON WEDDING GUIDELINES

Wedding Coordinators – Our Parish Office does not have a wedding coordinator; however our office staff will assist you to answer questions about the church, facilities, etc. You are welcome to have a professional wedding coordinator, but they must adhere to all guidelines outlined in this booklet. The celebrant makes all final decisions regarding how a wedding is celebrated and professional coordinators must follow his guidance.

Photography and Videotaping – Flash photography is not permitted during the mass. Digital cameras must be set to museum mode to prevent the audible sound of the camera during the ceremony. No cameras are allowed in the sanctuary area during the ceremony, but the photographer and wedding party may return after the service to take pictures.

Bridal Gown and Dresses of Bridal Party – Your wedding is a sacred and public act of worship taking place in a consecrated place of divine worship. Bearing in mind the reverence and decorum required by the sacred liturgy, modesty in dress should be observed.

Flowers – If flowers for the sanctuary are desired, two bouquets of reasonable size are considered sufficient and appropriate. It is customary to leave the flowers in the church after the wedding as a gift for the parish. Flower petals may not be thrown during the bridal procession or at any time during the ceremony.

Runner – Runners are not permitted during the ceremony.

Rice, Confetti, Birdseed, Etc. – Not permitted at any time, either inside or outside of the church.

Church Cleanup – You are responsible for all clean up at the conclusion of your wedding. Parish staff is not available to clean up after weddings, therefore it is expected that you remove all decorations from the Church allowing ample time to prepare for the next liturgy.

Unity Candle – You must obtain permission from the celebrant to include a Unity Candle during your wedding. If permitted, the church will not supply the Unity Candle.

TIME OF WEDDINGS

Weddings will be scheduled on Saturdays, between 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Weddings are booked so as not to conflict with Saturday afternoon confessions and Mass. No Saturday evening weddings are available. These norms apply even if a guest clergyman officiates.

Weddings may not be scheduled on Sundays, nor on or near major holidays.

Weddings are not generally scheduled on Friday evenings except by special arrangement.

The Wedding Mass does not fulfill your Sunday obligation to attend Mass.

Weddings must begin on time. The Church is used for other activities and the wedding may be cut short if it is going to run into the next scheduled event.

PLANNING THE WEDDING LITURGY

Scripture Reading and Prayers – You will be provided materials from which you may select the readings, prayers and other elements in designing the ceremony.

Music - Our parish's Director of Music, will assist you in planning your wedding liturgy, including selecting music.

Lectors - We invite you to ask some of your family members or acquaintances to proclaim God's Word during your wedding ceremony. Those chosen should plan to attend the wedding rehearsal and have practiced their reading prior to the wedding ceremony.

Gift Bearers (when the Eucharist is celebrated) - We invite you to ask some of your family members or acquaintances to present the gifts of bread and wine as the altar is prepared for the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Rehearsal - The priest or deacon who presides at your wedding will conduct the wedding rehearsal, even if a wedding coordinator is present. Musicians will not attend the rehearsal.

Wedding Program - Please consult the Director of Music. If you would like to have a printed program for your wedding, the Director of Music will provide a template with music selections and all pertinent liturgical information. **It is the couple's sole responsibility to have programs printed for use during the wedding.**

WEDDING MUSIC

A wedding is a worship service. As in any Christian ritual, the music should be chosen with great care. Music for worship is prayer for, and of, the gathered community. The Church provides a series of guidelines that determine the suitability of music for worship. These guidelines will give you the information you need about music for your ceremony and assist you in planning a liturgy that is both beautiful and liturgically appropriate. There are many opportunities within this outline to personalize the worship service and to allow for certain options you may choose.

- Our Director of Music, Amy Massey, will assist the couple in planning the wedding liturgy including music selections and will play organ/piano for the wedding. The fee for the Director of Music's services is \$250 which is payable **two weeks prior** to the wedding.
- The Director of Music will hire a cantor who will lead the sung parts of the ceremony or Mass. Wedding music is not performance music and therefore an active, trained cantor in the musical liturgical norms of the Catholic church is required. The fee for the cantor is \$150 which is payable **two weeks prior** to the wedding.
- The music you choose must always be suitable for a worship service. Secular songs, while they may have meaning for

the couple, are not liturgically appropriate and are therefore not allowed.

- The music for the wedding will be provided by **Mother Seton Parish musicians**. A cantor from outside the parish may be permitted, but must be approved by the music director. Additional instruments such as trumpets, strings, flutes, guitars, etc. may be used to enhance your wedding music. The music director requires a rehearsal with cantors or vocal soloists from outside the parish and for any additional instrumentalists. An additional \$50 fee applies which is payable **two weeks prior** to the wedding.

OFFERINGS AND FEES

The couple is requested to contribute \$700 toward the operation of the church and the services associated with their wedding according to the following norms:

- Church Offering: \$150
- Wedding celebrant: \$150
- Clergyman who prepares you for marriage (if different from above): Donation directly to the clergy which is not included in the above total amount.
- Musician fees: \$250 for the organist/pianist and \$150 for the cantor (or a \$50 rehearsal fee for cantors outside of the parish).
- An additional \$50 will be added to coordinate and rehearse with outside instrumentalists or vocal soloists – the contribution total to the church will be \$750 to include this rehearsal fee.

Please make the requested contribution payable to Mother Seton Parish.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact the individuals below at (301) 924-3838 for assistance with your marriage preparation and wedding ceremony.

Fr. Kevin Regan, Pastor	ext. 208	pastor@mothersetonparish.org
Fr. Jorge Ubau	ext. 203	biondia@adw.org
Amy Massey, Director of Music	ext. 215	music@mothersetonparish.org
Ruth Chávez, Parish Secretary	ext. 211	mspps@mothersetonparish.org