

St. John Neumann Catholic Church

Wedding Policies



635 St. John Court
Knoxville, TN 37934
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865.675.6815 Fax

“The love of a man and a woman is made holy in the sacrament of marriage and becomes the mirror of God’s everlasting love.”

-Rite of Marriage

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My dear friends in Christ,

In this booklet you will find the guidelines for celebrating the sacrament of Marriage at St. John Neumann Catholic Church.

These guidelines will assist you in preparing for your life together and in planning a marriage celebration which will be beautiful, noble, and in accordance with Church regulations.

Know of our prayers for you as you continue this journey on which the Lord has guided you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Very Rev. Monsignor Patrick Garrity

Rev. Michael Maples

Rev. Christopher Manning

General Requirements

Congratulations on your engagement! May this be a season of grace and heavenly blessing! You are coming to the Catholic Church to be married. A Catholic wedding is so much more than a social event. It is a sacrament in which a man and woman become husband and wife in the presence of God, the wedding officiant, and your family and friends. From the Rite of Marriage: “*Dear friends, you have come together in this church so that the Lord may seal and strengthen your love in the presence of the Church’s minister and this community.*”

The staff at St. John Neumann will assist you as you plan for this momentous and sacred day. Your preparation will reflect the principals that govern Catholic liturgical celebrations.

ELIGIBLE WEDDING COUPLES:

Either the bride or groom must be a practicing Catholic and registered at a parish. Both parties must be free to marry in the Catholic Church.

To be married at St. John Neumann, the bride, groom or their family must be an active (time/talent/treasure) registered parishioner.

Second Marriages: If either person has been married before, a death certificate or a declaration of nullity must be presented before setting the date of the wedding.

The Place of the Wedding: The wedding of a couple should take place in the parish church where one of the persons getting married is actively involved and registered. Permission to be married in a non-Catholic church must be obtained from the Bishop’s office. Non-Catholic Clergy will be welcome to assist at an ecumenical or interfaith wedding.

SCHEDULING A WEDDING:

Prior to setting the date for your wedding, it is required that you plan an initial meeting with a parish priest. It is recommended that this meeting take place as soon as possible and at least four months prior to your wedding. This will be one of a series of meetings that will allow both you and the priest to get to know each other as well as to discuss the vocation of Marriage. The gathering of documentation, as well as planning the wedding celebration will occur at these meetings. Even if you are inviting visiting clergy to officiate at your wedding, a meeting with the parish priest is required.

WEDDING TIMES:

Wedding celebrations are scheduled as follows:

Saturday afternoon, no later than 1:30 pm

Saturday evening, 6:30 or 7:00 pm

Weddings are not celebrated during the season of Lent, Sundays, Holy days of Obligation, or any national holidays.

WEDDING FEES:

Presiding ministers do not charge for weddings. An honorarium is customary, but not required.

Use of church:

Damage deposit is due upon booking. Remaining church fees are due 30 days prior to wedding or the date may be removed from the church calendar. Financial limitations will not preclude a wedding at St. John Neumann.

Parishioner (contributing) for over one year:

\$250 damage deposit (refunded if no damage found and all policies followed)

\$500 (non-refundable, includes clean-up/staff fee)

Non-contributing or registered less than one year:

\$250 damage deposit (refunded if no damage found and all policies followed)

\$1000 (non-refundable, includes clean-up/staff fee)

Non-parishioner (with Pastor's permission)

\$250 damage deposit (refunded if no damage found and all policies followed)

\$1500 (nonrefundable, includes clean-up/staff fee)

Organist Fee:

\$300 (includes consultation, rehearsal, and wedding celebration)

Cantor Fee:

\$100 (includes rehearsal and wedding celebration)

Vocal Soloist/Instrumental Soloist Fee:

TBD

GUEST PRESIDERS:

If a couple would like a priest from another parish to preside at the wedding, the couple must have this priest submit a request to the Pastor of St. John Neumann. To preside at a wedding at SJN, a priest or deacon must be in good standing with his parish and provide proper documentation to the Pastor.

CANCELLATION:

In the event that the wedding is cancelled within three (3) months of the scheduled date, St. John Neumann will retain the \$250 Damage Deposit, and will not ask for the remaining wedding fees. If any of the remaining fees have already been paid, they will be refunded by St. John Neumann.

Marriage Preparation

Diocesan policy requires a four month preparation period before the wedding can take place. During the four month preparation period you will:

- Discuss any dispensations or permissions necessary.
- Obtain a newly issued copy of your sacramental records from your Church of Baptism dated within the last six months.
- Complete freedom to marry forms.
- Attend an Engaged Encounter weekend.
- Meet with the priest for preparation sessions.
- Meet with the Pastoral Associate to complete the FOCCUS program
- Meet with the Wedding Coordinator to plan your ceremony.
- Obtain Marriage License.

More information can be found on the Diocese of Knoxville website:
<http://dioknox.org/marriage-preparation-and-enrichment/>

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION:

Your devotion to God and involvement in a church community will add to the strength of your relationship. If you live in the area we hope you will worship with us often here at St. John Neumann before and after your wedding day. Please contact the parish office for registration.

DOCUMENT CHECKLIST:

- Certificate of completion from Engaged Encounter
- Baptismal Certificate
 - o Catholics: You must contact your parish of baptism to obtain a recent copy of your baptismal certificate. The copy must be no more than six months old.
 - o Non-Catholics: Must present proof of baptism.
- Have the certificate sent to the priest or deacon performing your ceremony.
- Together For Life Selection Form
- Wedding Celebration Planning Sheet (page 15)
- Signed Wedding Policy Agreement Form (page 16)
- Document Checklist (page 17)
- SJN Wedding Detail Information Sheet (page 18)

Planning Your Wedding Celebration

The staff of St. John Neumann will work with the couple to plan a wedding celebration that is meaningful, beautiful and in keeping with the best of Catholic liturgy, theology, and spirituality. A couple's wedding service celebrates the love they have for one another. The service also celebrates the love they have for God, for their families, and for the community. A Catholic worship service is communal; a couple's choices must invite and make it possible for their families and friends to fully enter the celebration. Above all else, a Catholic wedding Mass or ceremony gives glory to God.

WEDDING MASS OR WEDDING CEREMONY:

When two practicing Catholics marry, they may celebrate the Rite of Marriage within a Mass. When a Catholic and a person of another faith marry, they generally celebrate the Rite of Marriage within a Liturgy of the Word, ensuring that their family and friends can comfortably participate. A discussion will be held with the priest/deacon to determine the most appropriate and comfortable Rite.

FAMILIES OF ENGAGED COUPLES:

Families of engaged couples often enjoy participating in the planning process. Please note that Church staff cannot make arrangements with the families of the engaged couple, but only with the couple in concert with the priest.

Liturgical Planning

CHOOSING READINGS

You will receive the book *Together for Life* by Joseph M. Champlain, which gives you a complete outline of the ceremony and which contains all the readings and prayers from which you may choose.

There is a helpful selection form in the back of the book which you should fill out and return to either the priest you are working with or the Wedding Coordinator at least one month prior to your wedding date; this form is used to prepare the readings and prayers for your wedding liturgy. Copies of the readings and the General Intercessions will be available at the rehearsal for the readers.

The use of readings which are not taken from Scripture or the use of so-called "original vows" composed by the couple is not permitted by Church law. Downloading Scripture from the internet is not recommended, since often it brings up translations that are not officially approved for liturgical use.

CHOOSING PRAYERS:

With the selection of readings entered on the *Together for Life* Selection Form the couple then selects prayers that complement their readings. The TFL booklet presents several opportunities for couples to choose prayers.

ADAPTIONS TO WEDDING CEREMONY

A Catholic wedding Mass or ceremony must comply with the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. Requests for ceremony adaptions, however minor, must be made in writing to the Wedding Coordinator no less than one month prior to the wedding date. All final decisions regarding weddings at SJN are the responsibility of the Pastor.

Unity candle and other symbols

Within Catholic liturgies, candles primarily refer to the light of Christ and baptism; the Easter candle, lit at the Easter vigil, is the central candle in the sanctuary. The lighting of the Unity Candle may be observed at the wedding reception; its lighting can be incorporated into the blessing before the meal. As for other symbolic gestures refer to Adaptions to Wedding Ceremony above.

Choosing Music

As Marriage is a sacramental occasion, all music for your wedding must be sacred and appropriate for a worship service. PLEASE NOTE: Pre-recorded music (from iPods, phones, CD's, tapes, etc.) is not used at SJN.

Organist

Nancy Wells: (865) 898-3459, nwellso7@att.net

It will be your responsibility to contact Nancy for a consultation regarding the music selections for your special day. This initial contact should be made as soon as possible after confirming your wedding date with our parish office. For fee structure, please refer to page 5. If you should desire to have an additional vocal or instrumental soloist, please communicate this in your consultation meeting. If a cantor is needed for a sung Mass or wedding service, Nancy will assist you in making arrangements.

Wedding Party and Ceremony Participants

WEDDING ATTIRE:

When choosing wedding attire, your choice must reflect the dignity of Christian marriage. Some styles are more appropriate for evening wear than they are for a sacred event held in a holy place. All wedding attire should be modest. Low necklines and high slits are not in keeping with appropriate guidelines for a religious service.

Suits or tuxedos worn by groomsmen must be appropriate for a religious service as well, and not detract from it. “Costume” style tuxedos or accessories (i.e. tennis shoes) are not appropriate for a sacred event held in a holy place.

BEST MAN AND MAID OF HONOR [WITNESSES]:

State law dictates that official witnesses, the Best Man and Maid of Honor must be at least 16 years of age.

BRIDESMAIDS AND GROOMSMEN:

The bridal party ought to comprise family and friends who love the couple and will support them as husband and wife.

USHERS:

It is recommended to have ushers in addition to groomsmen. Groomsmen are often busy with photographs as the guests are arriving and therefore are unable to seat them. Ushers are also able to assist guests at the beginning and end of the ceremony. Our recommendation is to have one usher for every fifty guests.

CHILDREN IN THE WEDDING PARTY, RING BEARER, FLOWER GIRL

We recommend that children in the wedding be at least six years of age. If children are included in the wedding party, please be mindful of their unique needs and plan accordingly.

Flower Girl – (one only please): Please note that only silk flower petals may be strewn on the floor.

Ring Bearer – (one only please): Please do not put the wedding rings on the pillow carried by the ring bearer. The best man and/or maid of honor should be responsible for the rings.

READERS:

If you choose to have your Marriage celebrated within the Mass a Catholic should proclaim the readings. If you choose to use the Rite for Celebrating Marriage outside of the Mass, other non-Catholics may proclaim the readings. The reader for the Prayers of the Faithful may be Catholic or of another Christian faith.

When choosing readers please choose people who have had experience with reading in their own parishes. Select someone with a strong clear voice with good enunciation. They should be coached ahead of time and will be allowed time to practice with SJN’s microphone during rehearsal.

OTHER CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS:

If a couple is celebrating with a wedding Mass, there is opportunity to include two people to bring up the gifts [bread and wine] at the Preparation of the Altar, and one or two people to assist with distributing Holy Communion. People who distribute Communion must be Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in their own parish.

ADDITIONAL CATHOLIC CLERGY:

Should the engaged couple have Catholic priests or deacons among their family or friends, the couple is most welcome to invite the clergyman to participate in the ceremony. The priest or deacon can contact the Wedding Coordinator to make arrangements.

MINISTERS OF OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS:

We welcome ordained women and men of faith to the wedding celebration. A wonderful opportunity to include an ordained friend or family member is at the “Prayers of the Faithful,” which leads the community in prayers for the couple.

WEDDING CONSULTANT

If you are utilizing the services of a wedding consultant, please advise him or her that the wedding rehearsal and wedding ceremony are the responsibility of SJN staff.

Recommended Vendors

While not required, St. John Neumann Church highly recommends these vendors because of their professional disposition and familiarity with our church.

Photographer

Daniel Cooper: (865) 386-7648
dcphoto@comcast.net

Florist

Myra Fancher, Bowden's Flowers: 910 East Broadway
Lenoir City, TN 37771
(865) 988-9886
myrafancher@aol.com
www.bowdensflowerslenoircity.com

Wedding Rehearsal

Your Presider will schedule your rehearsal. Rehearsals are generally scheduled the evening before the wedding, and should take no longer than one hour. It will start and end on time, so please plan accordingly.

The wedding rehearsal is not the rehearsal for musicians. Any necessary rehearsals should take place at another time arranged through the Wedding Coordinator.

Please ask all who have a specific role in the wedding to arrive thirty minutes before the rehearsal is to begin.

The rehearsal is not a social event, but its purpose is to assist the wedding party with understanding their role at the ceremony, so that on the wedding day, all can fully participate.

Those who attend the rehearsal are those who have a role in the wedding celebration. They are:

- Bride and Groom
- Maid of Honor and Best Man
- Bridesmaids
- Groomsmen
- Ring Bearer and Flower Girl
- Parents [those who will be in the procession or the wedding ceremony)
- Ushers
- Readers
- Gift Bearers
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

All others [spouses, significant others, family members who do not have a role in the ceremony, out of town guests, etc.] should meet the couple at the rehearsal dinner rather than attend the rehearsal.

Please help us maintain the reverence and dignity of the Lord's house by informing members of the wedding party to refrain from chewing gum and imbibing in alcoholic beverages prior to the rehearsal and wedding ceremony. Anyone coming to the church intoxicated will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony, including the bride and/or groom.

Please bring the Marriage license to the rehearsal. In the event the license is forgotten the couple must designate a volunteer to retrieve it during the rehearsal, and it must be delivered before the end of the rehearsal hour.

WEDDING COORDINATOR:

The SJN Wedding Coordinator will be present at the rehearsal as well as on the day of the ceremony. They will conduct the wedding rehearsal, set up for your wedding, will keep the celebration running smoothly, and serve as a liaison between the church and your wedding party. Contact information: tvarga@sjnknnox.org

On Your Wedding Day

When you arrive on your wedding day, you are entering holy ground; SJN requests that the activity before, during, and after your wedding maintain a peaceful and prayerful environment. Jesus Christ dwells here. May His presence fill you with peace and joy on your wedding day.

BRIDE'S ROOM:

A Bride's room is available. Please make arrangements with the priest or Wedding Coordinator to ensure sufficient set up time.

All personal belongings and trash must be removed from the Bride's room prior to the ceremony. Please assign someone to ensure that this room is clean and clear.

SJN Parish cannot assume responsibility for items left unattended.

GROOM:

SJN is unable to provide a room for the groomsmen to dress.

Important Items of Concern

Working closely with your Wedding Coordinator will ensure that your wedding liturgy and the activities which surround it comply with the guidelines of St. John Neumann. Additions to the liturgy, such as the "unity candle" are not permitted. Please refer any questions from your florist, photographer, and videographer to the Wedding Coordinator.

Some of your guests may not be familiar with our Catholic tradition of gathering in silence upon entering the church. All your guests, including the wedding party, even at rehearsal, should be instructed that the church is a sacred place and that conversations should be kept to a minimum.

Altar Server:

Should you desire an altar server, this can be arranged. It is customary to provide a stipend for each altar server.

PROPER DISPOSITION

It is a matter of church law that exchange of marriage vows requires full consent of one's will. To this end, we wish to be clear that the use of alcohol (or other chemical mind-altering substances) is regarded as impairing the full and freely given consent required for a valid sacrament. Consequently, we will not permit alcoholic beverages in or on church grounds. A bride or groom who has consumed alcohol and/or other substances prior to his/her arrival and appears impaired will necessitate the delay of the sacrament until an appropriate time. Limo drinks must be refrained until after leaving the premises.

Flowers and Decorations Policy

We welcome your efforts to beautify the worship space for your wedding. Please share these guidelines with those assisting with flowers and decorations.

It is a long-standing tradition that the flowers placed in the church for your wedding are an offering of thanksgiving to God. For that reason your flowers should remain in the church after the wedding. In order to help you keep your expenses down, we encourage couples with weddings on the same day to coordinate their flowers and share the cost. The wedding coordinator will be happy to assist you with these arrangements. If for some reason you are not planning to use arrangements of fresh flowers for your wedding, please inform the wedding coordinator two weeks prior to the wedding.

- Please note that if you do plan your wedding during a special liturgical season, the church sanctuary may be enhanced with seasonal arrangements which cannot be altered or removed.
- Pew decorations are permitted but nothing may be taped or pinned to the pews. Your florist will be able to suggest an alternate method.
- It is our experience that aisle runners can cause several problems at the wedding ceremony, one of which is falls. Therefore, ***aisle runners are not permitted.***
- Due to the risk of fall or injury and the need for cleanup, we do not permit bubbles or the throwing of confetti, birdseed, rice inside or outside of the church. Flower girls may drop flower petals (***artificial only***) inside the church.
- **All decorations must be removed from the church immediately following the ceremony. This is the responsibility of the wedding party, unless arrangements are made with the florist.**

Photography Policy

Below are some special instructions for your photographer and videographer. They are printed on separate pages so that you may distribute them to your providers of service.

To provide a meaningful remembrance of the liturgy and sacred vows, we do allow photographs to be taken in the church. To make sure your marriage liturgy will be a prayerful experience for you and your guests, we ask the following in regard to taking photographs and videography:

Photographers are not allowed within the sanctuary. There are no exceptions.

Flash photography is only allowed during the processional and recessional. All other videos and photos will be with existing/natural light only.

When the sacrament of matrimony is celebrated within the holy sacrifice of the Mass, no pictures are permitted during the Liturgy.

We ask that all movement be discreet so as not to intrude on or draw attention away from the experience or mood of the ceremony.

All photography and videography during the ceremony must be done from a stationary position in the rear of the church. The photographer should not be moving around during the ceremony.

It is the responsibility of the photographer to help the wedding party keep a sense of reverence during picture taking.

In order to facilitate the flow of picture taking after the ceremony, once the newly married couple arrives at the rear of the church in the recessional, the Wedding Coordinator will direct the bride and groom and the bridal party back to the sanctuary to immediately begin taking pictures.

Because of the time sensitive nature of weekend schedule in the church, we ask that you wait to greet your guests until after the pictures are taken.

Wedding Celebration Planning Sheet

As a supplement to the Selection Form you complete in the back of the Together for Life booklet the information on this page will allow us to better prepare for your ceremony. Please return the completed form to the **wedding coordinator**.

Wedding Party

(Please list in order as they will process down the aisle.)

Maid/Matron of Honor:

Best Man:

Flower Girl (optional):

Ring Bearer (optional):

Bridesmaids:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Groomsmen:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Rite of Holy Communion

Distributing Holy Communion – Communion will be offered under both forms for the wedding party seated in the sanctuary. If you wish to have communion under both forms for the entire congregation, you will need to provide two Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. The ministers you choose must be Extraordinary Ministers in their own parish (documented).

1. _____

2. _____

Concluding Rite

Announcements – Would you like your Presider to make any announcements prior to the Blessing and Dismissal?

Blessing and Dismissal – at the conclusion of the Blessing, the Presider will introduce the newly married couple to the assembly. How would you like to be introduced? A few suggestions:

Bob & Alice Smith | Alice & Bob Smith | Mr. & Mrs. Bob & Alice Smith | Mr. & Mrs. Bob Smith

Please write your preference here _____

Wedding Policy Agreement Form

After having read the SJNCC Wedding Policies Guide I understand the policies regarding weddings performed at St. John Neumann Catholic Church. I agree to follow these policies as stated and will see that members of the wedding party understand and follow the policies as well.

I am enclosing with the return of this application to the **Parish Office** the amount of \$250.00 as my Security/Damage Deposit and I do understand that nothing is officially on the Master Church Calendar until:

- a. preliminary meeting with the SJNCC Celebrant,
- b. approval of wedding date by SJNCC
- c. providing the Security/Damage Deposit

I understand that I am responsible for the following:

- **To schedule a meeting with the SJN Wedding Coordinator** to further discuss guidelines, fees, and other plans for the wedding
- **To complete premarital counseling sessions** with the officiating minister, or someone he has approved
- **Keep scheduled appointments** with wedding personnel and SJNCC Celebrant
- **Provide DAMAGE DEPOSIT** immediately upon booking the church
- **Provide all remaining FACILITY FEES** to either the Wedding Coordinator, Celebrant, or Parish Office no later than **THIRTY (30) DAYS** prior to the wedding date
- **Provide the MARRIAGE LICENSE** to the officiating minister at the **BEGINNING** of the wedding rehearsal

I understand that it is my responsibility to see that the church facilities and properties are left in the same condition in which they were found.

I understand that in the event of a **cancellation** less than three (3) months prior to our scheduled ceremony date, SJNCC will **retain the \$250.00 Damage Deposit** and will refund any additional payments that may have been made.

I understand that **all alcoholic beverages and illegal or controlled substances are strictly prohibited** on all SJNCC property. I also understand that all buildings are **"Smoke-free"**.

I understand that I must notify the Wedding Coordinator or Celebrant of any cancellation of wedding plans as soon as possible so that the Security/Damage Deposit may be refunded.

I also understand that the Wedding Policies are subject to change at the discretion of SJNCC.

By my signature, I agree that failure to comply with the stated policies could be considered "disregard of policy" and could mean forfeiture of the Security/Damage Deposit.

Bride

Groom

BRIDE	Certificate Checklist	GROOM
<input type="checkbox"/>	BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	FIRST COMMUNION CERTIFICATE	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	FREEDOM TO MARRY TESTIMONY	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	DISPENSATION	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	COPY OF ANNULMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER	<input type="checkbox"/>

WEDDING DETAIL INFORMATION FOR ST. JOHN NEUMANN CHURCH

Celebrant		Date/Time of Wedding	
Bride's Name		Groom's Name	
Home Phone	Cell Phone	Home Phone	Cell Phone
Bride's Email		Groom's Email	
Address		Address	
City, ST ZIP Code		City, ST ZIP Code	

REHEARSAL INFORMATION

CEREMONY INFORMATION

Rehearsal Date	Rehearsal Time	Wedding Date	Wedding Time
		Mass: Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
		Approximate number of guests: _____	
Rehearsal Arrival Time: _____		Wedding Arrival Time: _____	

FACILITY INFORMATION

Bride dressing at church:	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>	Cry Room	Community Room
Florist Name	Phone	Florist arrival time		
Flower arrangement type	Flowers for the Altar remain in the church: Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>			

Flowers for the Altar area can only be placed on either side on the Tabernacle

Note: *Whether or not the Altar flowers remain or are removed all other floral arrangements and containers will need to be removed from the church (inside/outside) prior to departure.*

Music Performed

Strings: <input type="checkbox"/>	Piano: <input type="checkbox"/>	Organ: <input type="checkbox"/>
Vocalist <input type="checkbox"/>	Other: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Musician Name	Phone	
Professional Photographer	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Director/Planner	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
		Guestbook stand Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/> Name/Phone: _____

***No food or drink is allowed in St. John Neumann Church except for bottled water.
No bubbles, sparklers or tossing of any object is allowed inside or outside of the church***