

## 🌀 Music 🌀

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to schedule musicians and/or singers for your wedding. If you need recommendations, ask the Wedding Coordinator. A suitable remuneration should be given directly to the musicians and singers. We also have a variety of CDs that can be used, including instrumentals and vocals. Ask the Wedding Coordinator about our collection. Music used at a marriage should be Christian, and should be suited for Catholic liturgical use. The Wedding Coordinator can answer your questions when you meet. Be sure to ask if you're uncertain.

## 🌀 Flowers 🌀

The type and amount of flowers used for decoration are the couple's own choice, but we'd suggest medium-sized arrangements. **Flowers may not be placed in front of the altar, and must not block access to the sanctuary.** We also have a number of silk flower arrangements and adjustable flower stands in the sacristy that may be used

## 🌀 Decorations 🌀

NO tape is allowed on the wooden pews. We suggest using ribbon and looping it around the pew end or using a covered florist's wire formed to fit over the pew. For safety and insurance purposes, we do not allow any decorations in the aisle: no aisle carpets, no flower petals on the floor, nor anything else where people will be walking. The sloped marble floor does not allow it. Likewise, no unsafe decorations are allowed on the pews, such as candles or anything with glass or sharp edges.

## 🌀 Bird Seed, Rice, Etc. 🌀

As with virtually all parishes, we do not allow the throwing of bird seed, rice, or anything else following the ceremony.

## 🌀 Bridal Room and Men's Dressing Room 🌀

Be sure to have someone assigned to remove all personal items from the church pews, the bridal room, and the conference room. Your designated cleanup person should have these rooms cleared as soon as possible so we can lock the doors leading to the Church.

## 🌀 Damages 🌀

Fees will be charged for any damages to the church or church property. Please leave the church as you found it.

## 🌀 Rehearsal 🌀

The Bride and Groom set the time for the rehearsal. Typically, couples have set their wedding rehearsal time around 5 pm. Please tell participants to be at the Church at least 15 minutes ahead of time, in order to avoid delays.

## 🌀 Miniature Bride and Grooms Flower Girls and Ring Bearers 🌀

We encourage you to think twice before including any children younger than five in the ceremony. It can be more challenging than people realize. Also, there should be a designated adult who will be prepared to step out of the pew during the ceremony and assist any children who are participating. Please help the children prepare for this important day well ahead of time.

## 🌀 Bridal Party 🌀

Please take care not to overload the wedding with attendants. A large wedding party tends to detract from the bride and groom and poses logistical challenges for the procession and for the photographer.

## 🌀 Unity Candle 🌀

The Unity Candle is not part of the Catholic wedding ceremony. We encourage you to save your money and not have one. Or if this symbol is very important to you, we encourage you to consider making it part of your reception.

## 🌀 Further Questions 🌀

The Wedding Coordinator should be able to answer any further questions you have regarding decorations, music, photography, the procession, the wedding ceremony, and so forth. In all these matters, the final decision rests with the pastor.

**Please feel free to contact us the pastor with any questions you may have about the marriage preparation process and/or wedding plans.**



# Planning Your Wedding at St. Mary's or St. Raymond's

Congratulations on your engagement! We look forward to assisting you as you plan for this important celebration of your faith.

The Catholic Church puts a high value on marriage. We want couples to have successful marriages that bring them happiness and joy. As with all of the sacraments, adequate preparations are essential if the sacrament is to reach its full potential.

In an effort to help you prepare for the sacrament, the Catholic Church requires that you participate in a comprehensive marriage preparation process. The process will provide you with an opportunity to talk about your personal values, such as how you view money, work, sex, children, and extended family. The process will also help you deepen your understanding of what a Christian marriage ought to be.

Marriage preparation includes multiple steps: an online course in Natural Family Planning, discussions with a mentoring couple, participation in a marriage retreat, a compatibility inventory, and more. Because this process takes time, it is necessary that arrangements for marriage be made at least six months before the marriage date. An entire year is preferred. This six-month minimum is normal practice in all dioceses in the state, and in neighboring states.

**Your first step should always be an appointment with the pastor.** Call (715) 855-1294 to schedule one.





☞ No date can be set in the parish calendar until you've completed a meeting with the pastor or parochial vicar. During this meeting, he'll walk you through an overview of the process and answer your questions. He'll also ensure that there is nothing standing in the way of getting married in the Church (we don't want any last minute surprises!). At the end of your meeting, Father can put the date into the parish calendar.

\* During this initial interview, one of the questions is the place and date of your baptism. **If you have a copy of your baptismal certificate, please bring it to the meeting.** At the very least, determine the church and the year in which the baptism occurred. Eventually, we'll have to contact them and obtain an up-to-date baptismal certificate. (Please note that this requirement applies to non-Catholic Christians as well!).



☞ Father will give you the information you need to proceed with the subsequent steps of the preparation process: an online course in Natural Family Planning, two meetings with a mentoring couple, and a marriage retreat. Normally you'll want to complete those steps first before contacting the Wedding Coordinator. Once you've completed the various steps of the preparation program, set up a followup meeting with Father. He will want to talk to you about the various lessons you've learned along the way, and answer any last minute questions you have about your ceremony.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ☞ Cost ☞

We ask a donation from couples that are wed in our church. For registered and active parishioners, we ask \$200. For non-parishioners or inactive parishioners, we ask \$400. We use \$100 of that money to cover our administrative costs (paying the wedding coordinator and purchasing supplies). We deposit the remainder into our Works of Charity Fund. This fund is used to help the poor in our area. If you have financial

difficulties, feel free to talk with Father about them. Otherwise, **payment is due to the wedding coordinator no later than one month prior to the wedding.**

### ☞ Presider ☞

The Presider at the Wedding Mass or Ceremony is normally the pastor or parochial vicar. With the pastor's permission, any other priest or deacon in good standing could preside instead.

### ☞ Marriage License ☞

It is your responsibility to obtain your civil Marriage License. It will cost approximately \$80 and cannot be obtained until the final 30 days leading up to the wedding (with extra fees charged if you apply within the last week). For detailed information, call the County Clerk's Office at (715) 839-4801.

### ☞ Best Times for Weddings ☞

**St. Mary's:** On Saturdays, the earliest possible start time is 1 p.m., due to the weekly Confessions from 10-Noon. The latest start time is 2 p.m., due to the 4:00 Mass (although if you would like your wedding during the parish Mass you are most welcome). We encourage pre-wedding photos, and do not mind if they happen during the Confessions. However, the church needs to be cleared by 3 p.m., when the 4:00 Mass crowd begins arriving to pray.

**St. Raymond's:** On Saturdays, the church itself is generally free any time before 5 p.m. However, the pastor may not be free at any time, due to commitments at St. Mary's on the same day. A start time of 1:00, 1:30, or 2:00 is safest.

### ☞ Rooms for your Use ☞

On your wedding day, we make some rooms available for your use. Other rooms should not be used. Also, **we are not responsible for lost or stolen items.**

**St. Mary's:** The bridal room is available to the bride and bridesmaids and the conference room available to the groomsmen. Likewise the parish bathrooms are available to you and your guests. The church is available for prayer or for photographs, being careful to respect the sacred space. All other rooms are normally off limits, unless you have special permission.

**St. Raymond's:** The bride and bridesmaids normally use the "cry room" near the entrance to the church. Groomsmen normally use the parish library. The parish bathrooms are located near the end of the hall. The other rooms (**including the parish kitchen and parish hall**) are normally off limits, unless you have made arrangements to rent them for the day. Sometimes couples like to go to the fountain behind church for photos. This is fine, **but no one is allowed in the fountain or on the rocks.** As at St. Mary's, any use of the church space should be respectful.

### ☞ Alcohol Use ☞

There is a time and place for everything. The proper place for alcohol consumption is at your reception. **The consumption of alcohol on church grounds on your wedding day is absolutely forbidden.** If we find you or anyone in your wedding party drinking alcohol on church grounds, or if anyone appears drunk, we reserve the right to cancel the wedding on the spot.

### ☞ Photography ☞

Discretion should be used in taking pictures. Pictures may be taken at any time during the wedding parts of the ceremony (not during the sermon or during the Eucharistic prayers). The photographer should be discrete and should respect the sacredness of the worship space. If the photographer is new to the parish, he/she should touch base with the presider prior to the service.

### ☞ Outdoor marriages ☞

In the Diocese of La Crosse, outdoor marriages are not allowed. The sacrament of marriage is a sacred, religious ceremony in which solemn and religious acts should be made in a sacred and religious surrounding. Marriage promises are made not just to another human being, but to God as well and should be celebrated in a House of God.

### ☞ Servers ☞

Servers may be used, but they are not necessary. The couple may have relatives or friends as servers.