

# St. James the Apostle

## Sacrament of Marriage Policy

*August 11, 2023 (last rev 8.16.23)*

### Requirements for Celebrating at St. James

- ❖ Either the bride or groom **must be a registered & practicing member** of St. James the Apostle.
  - Non-registered couples, desiring to be married at St. James the Apostle, **must obtain a letter of permission from their own parish & complete all required marriage preparation paperwork at their own parish.** St. James the Apostle will provide all liturgical aspects of a wedding - OR - **couples may register at St. James the Apostle.**
  - Newly registered members of St. James the Apostle Parish **must wait at least 6 months** before scheduling a wedding liturgy.
  
- ❖ Engaged couples must arrange a meeting with the priest or deacon at St. James the Apostle **at least 6 months prior to the date of the wedding.**
  - A wedding date cannot be scheduled until it has been documented that **both parties are free to marry** in the Catholic Church.
  - **If either party was previously married,** you must show proof of your freedom to be married in the Church. The priest or deacon can assist you with this process.
  
- ❖ **If a Catholic is marrying a non-Catholic,** before the Sacrament of Marriage can be celebrated, the Catholic party will be asked to promise to have any children both to their union baptized and brought up in the Catholic faith. Please see below for more information.
  
- ❖ **If the bride or groom is under 19 years of age at the time of the wedding,** both must be interviewed by a counselor from Catholic Charities. If the recommendation by the counselor is positive, the preparations will proceed.
  
- ❖ We do not have permission from the Diocese of Joliet to celebrate weddings outside the church building.
  
- ❖ The priest, deacon or wedding staff can **only make arrangements with the engaged couple,** rather than with another well-meaning family member.

## **Requirements for the Wedding Liturgy**

### ❖ **Nuptial Mass or a Scripture Service?**

- It is presumed that a marriage between two Catholics, who are in a position to celebrate and receive the Eucharist, will take place with the context of a Nuptial Mass.
- Ordinarily, except by exception, the Sacrament of Matrimony between a Catholic and a non-Catholic is celebrated outside the context of a Nuptial Mass. Simply, these weddings are celebrated within the context of a Liturgy of the Word without the Eucharist.
- When one person is non-baptized, the marriage is celebrated with a Scripture Service.

### ❖ Weddings are scheduled on **Saturdays at 1:00 PM** with the rehearsal scheduled the evening before the wedding at 5:30 PM.

- Friday weddings maybe scheduled by special arrangement.
- Typically weddings are not celebrated during Lent (unless by exception), on civic holidays or Holy Days of Obligation.

### ❖ Readings, prayers and blessings that may be used in your celebration will be chosen from information provided at your initial meeting.

- We do not have permission from the Diocese of Joliet to use non-scriptural readings, internet downloads, or vows composed by the couple themselves. Additionally, all scripture must be from the New American Bible Revised Edition, as found in the Lectionary for Mass.
- Musical selections must conform to the Church's standards for sacred music.
  - No pre-recorded music is permitted.

### ❖ Family members and friends may participate in the celebration after consulting the celebrant. The reader must be a Catholic in good standing.. Please discuss your choices with the priest/deacon at your initial meeting.

- Illinois dictates that the **official witnesses** (Best Man & Maid/Matron of Honor) **must be at least 18 years of age.**
- **Children in the wedding party must be at least 4 years old.**

### ❖ Required documentation and offerings should be provided **at least 4-6 weeks before your wedding.**

- It is requested that a \$500 donation be made for the usage of our facility and a fee of \$250 for musical accompaniment.
- It is suggested that the couple provide free-will offering of \$150 to the celebrant.

❖ Church Restrictions due to Insurance Liabilities:

- No unity candles, extra candles, hurricane lamps, trellises, canopies, arches, candelabras or topiaries may be used in the church.
- Aisle runners are not permitted.
- Flowers and other decorations may not be placed on, behind or beside the altar. Furniture and existing floral arrangements in place in the current church environment may not be altered, moved or removed.
- The throwing of petals (real or artificial), birdseed or rice, the launching of balloons, butterflies, birds or other items/materials are not permitted inside or outside the church.
- Strollers, wagons, carriages and animals (unless it is a service animal as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act) are not permitted in the wedding procession.
- The Ring Bearer should carry only imitation rings. The Best Man or Maid/Matron of Honor should be made responsible for the rings.
- Photographers/Videographers are not allowed in the sanctuary, in front of the pews or in the center aisle. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS!** Drones or other extraordinary photo devices are not permitted.
- The use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco products or any weapons are not allowed inside or on the grounds of the church campus. No food or beverages are permitted in the church.

## **Required Documentation**

- ❖ After your wedding date has been confirmed, all marriage preparation should be completed and documentation provided at least 4-6 weeks before your wedding.
  - Completion of the Prenuptial Questionnaire under the guidance of a priest or deacon.
  - Attendance and completion of an Engaged Encounter Program
  - Attendance and completion of a Natural Family Planning Class
  - Completion and review of you Prepare and Enrich Inventory.
  - A new copy of your baptismal certificate, dated no sooner than 6 months before your wedding date.
  - A new copy of your confirmation certificate, dated no sooner than 6 months before your wedding date.
  - Marriage Affidavit forms completed by 2 witnesses for each the bride and groom in the presence of a priest or deacon.
  - A DuPage County Marriage License. Please note that the license is valid for 60 days prior to your wedding date.
  - Attendance at a meeting with the celebrant to discuss your liturgy.