

Parish Policies

Photography & Videography is welcome in our church during the ceremony. Picture taking without a flash or video without lights is permitted during the ceremony. Naturally, photographers are not permitted to enter the sanctuary space, or disrupt the ceremony. Please advise them of these policies. We recognize that photos are important, but should not distract from the ceremony.

Decorating: Flowers are more than welcome in the church. Flowers are not to be placed on any wood top or the altar. Flowers for the Blessed Mother will be placed in front of the statue of Mary.

General policies:

- * Aisle runners are not permitted due to safety concerns.
- * Flower girls are permitted to drop flower petals when they are walking down the aisle. Although, they **must** be cleaned up after the wedding.
- * We do not permit the throwing of any substances (rice, bird seed, rose petals, confetti, etc.) at the church due to safety reasons. Bubbles and hand bells are allowed outside the church.
- * Clean-Up: Please leave the parish facilities as you found them. This is the responsibility of the wedding party.
- * Alcohol and tobacco are strictly forbidden at the church (interior and exterior). Violation of this policy will result in the forfeiture of your deposit. Please make sure your wedding party is aware of this policy.
- * Dressing area: If needed, we have two rooms at the Parish Activities Center which rent out at \$100 per room. Reservations are required. Contact Dave Torson at 630-853-5040 or events@stmarysycamore.com

- **What are the offerings for the church?**

Church facility (*nonrefundable payment due when the church is reserved*):

Parishioners	\$250.00
Non-parishioners	\$450.00

We kindly ask all couples to be responsible for ensuring that the church facilities are left in the same condition as they were found. Please consider designating a family member or someone in the wedding party to walk through the facility to assure proper maintenance and that no items are left behind. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

The priest performing the ceremony generally receives a donation.

Altar Servers: The parish may obtain servers upon request. Stipends for servers are typically \$20 per server.

Music:

Music and preparation includes conference with couple and the wedding coordinator to obtain approval from the music director. It is important to reserve your musicians as soon as possible.

If you use an outside musician there will be an additional \$125 fee, otherwise music fees will be determined by our Music Director.

We request that all the remaining fees (music, altar servers), and the marriage license be delivered to the parish office one week prior to your wedding date.



UPDATED 6-29-2026

St. Mary Catholic Church Guide for Your Wedding Preparation



*Photo provided by:
Chrissy Deming Photography*

St. Mary Catholic Church
322 Waterman Street
Sycamore IL 60178
815-895-3275

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Congratulations! You are engaged and getting ready for your marriage in the Catholic Church. The months preceding your wedding may be filled with extensive planning, financial concerns, and endless decision-making. We will help assist you in preparation for your holy ceremony and sacramental commitment.

By choosing a church wedding you are expressing your Catholic faith. God's love for all people is faithful and everlasting. The sacrament of Christian Marriage reflects this love. Together, you will serve as reminders to the world of God's concern for and attention to humanity.

Commonly Asked Questions

What are our first steps?

You should answer these important questions:

- * Am I a Parishioner? A parishioner is a registered member of our parish.
- * Am I a practicing Catholic? A practicing Catholic joins his or her fellow parishioners for Sunday Eucharist on a weekly basis, has a mature understanding of the Catholic faith and participates in the life of the community.
- * Am I free to enter the Sacrament of Marriage? In order to be married in the Catholic Church, each party, whether Catholic or not, must be free to marry. If you have been married previously, whether civilly or in a church ceremony, you will need to have your marriage annulled by the Catholic Church. This needs to be discussed with the priest who is preparing you for marriage BEFORE any dates can be reserved.

What initiates the marriage preparation process?

You will need to call the parish office and schedule an appointment to meet with the Pastor at least six months prior to your desired date. Nothing can be confirmed until this meeting has occurred.

How do we establish a time for our wedding?

Generally, weddings are held on Saturday afternoons (1:00 p.m. or 1:30 p.m.). All Saturday weddings and photographs must be completed prior to 3:15 p.m. Friday evening weddings are also an option after 3:00 p.m. Weddings are not celebrated on Sundays or during the season of Lent. Exceptions to these general policies can only be made by the Pastor.

What happens at the initial interview with the Pastor?

The interview provides the priest and the couple an opportunity to get to know one another and to discuss any questions regarding the marriage preparation program. You will also be given information about the parish pre-marriage program. You will also be required, by the Diocese of Rockford, to attend the Gift of Self program. Dates and times, as well as online registration for this hybrid program can be found on the diocesan website: <https://life.rockforddiocese.org/marriage-prep/>

Visiting Clergy

When arranging a wedding, the names, addresses and phone numbers of any clergy who will assist with the wedding must be provided to the parish. All clergy must be approved by the diocese, as well as submit a letter of good standing from his own diocese, and be given specific permission/delegation by the pastor in order to witness the wedding.

Planning the Ceremony

You will plan the ceremony, together with the priest who will witness your marriage. We recommend a Nuptial Mass for couples who have been practicing their faith regularly. We suggest a simple wedding ceremony for interfaith marriages. Our wedding coordinator, Kathy Cebulski (815-895-4552), will assist you with all the liturgical details of your wedding. The Church encourages all couples to take their wedding planning seriously. The active involvement of the couple in the planning as well as the celebration of the wedding itself is important. Please schedule an appointment to finalize your ceremony with the priest and wedding coordinator.

What documents do we need?

1. A newly issued baptismal certificate from the parish of baptism issued no earlier than six months prior to the wedding. All other sacramental information should be notated on the certificate. If the parish of baptism does not have record of confirmation, please contact the parish of confirmation for a current certificate.
2. If one party is non-Catholic, they will be required to sign a document promising that the children will be raised Catholic as prescribed by the Code of Canon Law 1136.
3. Witness affidavits will be required as requested by the Pastor.
4. A civil marriage license must be obtained from the county where the church is located. *St. Mary Church is located in DeKalb County - <https://dekalbcountyclerk.il.gov/>* Please provide this document one week before your wedding date.
5. Other documents may be needed.

How do we select music for our ceremony?

Arrangements for the selections of music are to be made with the wedding coordinator and music director. No secular or pre-recorded music is permitted. The right to play the music at weddings belongs to accredited parish musicians. Any arrangements for outside musicians (family members or friends) must be approved by the pastor and music director. Extra musicians are available upon request for an additional fee and will be arranged for by the music director.

The Wedding Rehearsal

Rehearsals are generally held the evening before the wedding, unless it is a Friday wedding (rehearsals will be Wednesday night). Punctuality is very important; please arrive 15 minutes early. The rehearsal will begin promptly at the agreed time with members of the wedding party that are present and dressed in appropriate attire. Conduct during rehearsal should be reverent with a respectful attitude by all. Please designate someone to attend to children.