

## **Your wedding at Sacred Heart Parish, Seattle, Washington**

Thank you for inquiring about the possibility of being married at Sacred Heart Church. We want to support and assist you in the best way possible as you plan your wedding and, more importantly, your life-long commitment in marriage.

These pages are intended to answer a few of the questions which are most likely on your mind at this time.

### **Who can be married at Sacred Heart Church?**

Normally, those who are registered parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish. The Catholic Church has a long tradition of celebrating the sacraments within one's community of faith. There are some exceptions to this. For example, couples whose parents or grandparents were married at Sacred Heart or couples who once belonged to the parish.

### **Who officiates at weddings?**

Normally one of the priests assigned to Sacred Heart Parish. Permission can be given for a priest or deacon friend to officiate. If you belong to another parish in the Archdiocese, your pastor may be the appropriate person to officiate at your wedding.

### **Are people who are not of the Catholic faith able to be married at Sacred Heart?**

Yes, if they are marrying a Catholic. We do not rent the church out for "other" weddings.

### **What preparation is needed for couples wishing to be married?**

The Catholic Church sees marriage as a sacrament and life-long commitment. One of the ways we value and honor this sacrament is by taking time to help couples prepare. We ask couples to participate in a marriage preparation program and you will be given information about the options for these programs when you make your initial interview with the priest of the parish. You may also be asked to complete a comprehensive Pre-Marriage Inventory or questionnaire, followed by an interview with the priest who is working with you.

### **What are the times for weddings at Sacred Heart?**

Saturday is the usual day for weddings at Sacred Heart. The suggested times are: 10am, 12noon, 2:00pm. We do not schedule weddings later than 3:00pm on Saturday. Weddings may also be scheduled on Friday evenings. The Church discourages the celebration of weddings during the season of Lent.

### **Do Catholic weddings always take place during Mass?**

No. A wedding may be celebrated either during the celebration of Mass or during a Liturgy of the Word. Normally, weddings are celebrated during Mass only when both parties are of the Catholic faith.

### **Does Sacred Heart have policies regarding the content of the wedding service, the music to be used, etc.?**

Yes. The content of the service is given in the Church's official ritual book for weddings. We do have a booklet that contains the official prayers and readings with various options. This booklet is given to the couple to plan their wedding ceremony. We also have guidelines about music at weddings and these will be given to the couple for help in planning the music for their wedding.

### **What about photographs before, during, and after the service?**

Sacred Heart has guidelines about photographs at weddings. The wedding party may use the church for photos an hour and half before the wedding and for a half hour after the wedding. During the service one official photographer may take pictures from the body of the church. The photographer may not enter the sanctuary (be near or behind the altar) to take pictures during the ceremony. We ask that the couple, the wedding party, the family, and the photographers be respectful of the sacred space.

### **May we have bows on the pews and flowers on the altar?**

You may have bows on the pews (but no candles) if they are attached by string or ribbon (no wire, fasteners, tape, or pins that could damage the pews). You may have flowers in the sanctuary, near the altar but not on the altar. The flowers do not have to be left at the church.

### **How does one arrange a wedding at Sacred Heart?**

If you are a registered parishioner of Sacred Heart Parish, you may begin scheduling a wedding by calling one of the priests and arranging for an interview to begin the process of setting a date and time as well as beginning the preparation process. If you are not a parishioner, you may begin the process by calling one of the priests and arranging an interview. Your date will remain tentative until after the initial interview with the priest. It is best to begin this process at least six months before your intended wedding. Parishioners of Sacred Heart Parish have first claim to a date and the use of the church for their wedding.

**Are there documents that we will need for our marriage?**

Yes. You will need the following documents:

1. A recent copy of each Catholic's baptismal certificate issued within the last six months. This can usually be obtained by contacting the church where you were baptized. For those baptized in a Christian church, we need proof of their baptism.
2. The sworn testimony of two competent witnesses that can vouch for the freedom of each party to marry. The parish supplies these forms.
3. A civil license to marry. This is usually obtained from King County. This document is given to the priest no later than the day of the rehearsal.
4. Your wedding planning sheet that you bring to the priest when you are making your final plans for the wedding ceremony. Certainly no later than the time of the rehearsal.

**Is there a fee for a wedding at Sacred Heart?**

The fee assigned to your wedding helps defray the costs of the pre-marriage inventory (if used), the secretarial support, the other costs associated with a wedding in church.

Fee for parishioners: \$400.00 (Parishioners are those who have registered at Sacred Heart for at least the last six months and have been contributing members during that time.)

Fee for non-parishioners: \$800.00

These fees are payable by the time of the rehearsal.

No one will be denied a wedding at Sacred Heart due to an inability to pay.

We pray that your wedding will be the memorable day you want it to be and we pray your marriage will be truly blessed.

The priests and staff of Sacred Heart Parish  
Seattle, Washington

Please visit <http://catholicweddinghelp.com> for more information