

Policies and Guidelines
for the

Sacrament of Matrimony

at St. *Robert* of Newminster Parish

St. *Robert* of Newminster Parish

6477 Ada Dr SE

Ada, MI 49301

Parish Contact Information

Mailing Address:

St. Robert of Newminster Parish
6477 Ada Dr SE
Ada, MI 49301

Parish Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday 8:00am – 4:00pm
Friday 8:00am – 3:00pm

Telephone: 616-676-9111

Email: parishmail@strobertchurch.org

Fax: 616-676-0950

Parish Website:

Strobertchurch.org

Facebook Page:

St. Robert of Newminster Catholic Church

Priests:

Fr. Tony Russo, Pastor
Fr. Logan Weber, Parochial Vicar

Director of Music Ministry:

Jane VanHouten

General Information

Congratulations on your wedding engagement! Be assured of the prayerful support of our parish family and of the universal Church as you prepare to exchange wedding vows and live as husband and wife in your commitment to the beautiful and sacred Sacrament of Matrimony!

Please understand that arrangements for celebrating your wedding here at St. Robert of Newminster Catholic Parish differs from venues and services such as reception halls, florists, photographers, etc., as engaged couples do not “rent” the Church or services of parish ministers: The Sacrament of Matrimony is a sacred ritual, celebrated in a sacred space before God and a community of faith witnesses who represent the Universal Church. As such, all aspects of planning for and celebrating your wedding at St. Robert of Newminster must reflect respect and reverence for the Sacrament, the liturgy and our worship space.

The following pages help answer questions you may have, and provide information for planning your wedding at St. Robert of Newminster Catholic Parish. Please contact us if we can be of further assistance.

May this time of preparation be blessed with a sense of peace amid the busy-ness of preparing for your wedding day, and with a depth of love as the two of you grow together in Christ toward your vocation of married life together!

Preparation Checklist

Arranging Marriage Preparation

- ☐ Consult with Priest and Music Minister
- ☐ Deposit to reserve wedding date (See “Fees & Stipends Checklist”.)

PLEASE WAIT UNTIL AFTER THE PARISH OFFICE CONFIRMS YOUR WEDDING DATE

BEFORE CONTRACTING WITH RECEPTION HALLS, FLORISTS, OR OTHER WEDDING FACILITIES AND SERVICES.

Required Documentation

(Submit to Parish Secretary or Priest)

- ☐ Baptism certificates from Church of baptism dated current year
- ☐ Pre-Cana completion/Certificate
- ☐ FOCCUS completion
- ☐ Dispensations (if applicable)
- ☐ Proof of annulment (if applicable)
- ☐ Submit Marriage License to parish office three (3) days in advance of wedding day.
- ☐ Natural Family planning (NFP)

Wedding Liturgy

- ☐ Consult with Priest (at least 1 year prior to wedding)
 - ☐ Forward contact information for visiting priest or deacon
- ☐ Consult with Parish Music Director (at least 8 weeks prior to wedding)
 - ☐ Forward contact information for visiting musicians.

Fees and Stipends Checklist

☐ **Church**

Amount: registered parishioner (registered at least one year prior to planning)

\$300.00

Non-parishioner: \$500.00

Payment method: check payable to St. Robert of Newminster Parish

Submit to: Parish secretary

Due: before wedding day arrives or occurs

- ☐ **Clergy:** Generally, there are no fees for the priest. However, a gift or stipend is welcome and helps express appreciation for his role in the wedding preparation and celebration. Generally, the couple encloses a stipend gift in a thank you note that is given directly to the priest.

- ☐ **Wedding Coordinator:** \$75.00. Will be on site during rehearsal and wedding day.

☐ **Accompanist**

Amount: TBD with Music Director

Payment method: check made out to Music Minister

Submit to: Music Minister

Due: Two (2) weeks prior to wedding

☐ **Cantor**

Amount: TBD with Music Director

Payment method: check made out to Music Minister

Submit to: Music Minister

Due: by day of wedding

☐ **Instrumentalists (if applicable)**

If you plan to use musicians other than St. Robert Music Ministers, please:

1. Be sure the Parish Music Minister is aware of this, and has the contact information for your musicians.
2. Arrange fee payment directly with your guest musicians

Church and Diocesan Requirements

1. Pray and worship together: Make a commitment to attend Mass together:
Allow God's Word and Sacrament to strengthen you. Pray with and for each other.
2. Confirmation of being free to marry
3. Pre Cana workshop
4. FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding and Study)
5. Natural Family Planning (NFP)

Parish Requirements

1. Either the bride or groom must be Roman Catholic AND a registered, participating member* of St. Robert of Newminster Parish for at least six (6) months prior to the wedding.

*"Participating member" means attending Mass faithfully on weekends, and being involved in parish life and service.

2. Meet with the Priest
3. Confirm the date with the parish office/Secretary
4. Consult with the Parish Music Director

WHAT IF WE ARE NEWLY REGISTERED IN ST ROBERT OF NEWMINSTER PARISH?

Newly registered engaged couples must be members of the parish for at least six (6) months before they may reserve a date for their wedding or begin the marriage preparation process.

WHAT IF I AM NOT A REGISTERED PARISHIONER?

1. The pastor of the parish where the bride and/or groom are registered must give written permission for the engaged couple to be married at St. Robert of Newminster Parish,
AND EITHER
2. The parents of the bride or groom are registered, active, contributing members of St. Robert of Newminster Parish;
- OR**
3. The pastor where you are registered testifies in writing that you are active, contributing member(s) of that parish.

WHAT IF I AM NOT CURRENTLY REGISTERED IN ANY CATHOLIC PARISH?

There is an additional six (6) months of preparation necessary before a couple may reserve a date for their wedding.

Reserving a date

To reserve a date for your wedding:

Contact Priest

We advise couples to contact the parish at least one (1) year in advance of the desired wedding date. Depending on circumstances, special processes or documentation may be necessary before the wedding date can be confirmed. Our priest will let you know specific documentation you may need.

Marriage License

The engaged couple is responsible for obtaining the marriage license from the County Clerk in the county where they plan to reside. Both witnesses who sign the license must be at least 18 years of age at the time of signing. To ensure proper preparation of the license, BOTH COPIES OF THE MARRIAGE LICENSE MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE PARISH OFFICE NO LATER THAN NOON ON THE THURSDAY BEFORE THE WEDDING DAY.

The license will be signed immediately following the wedding. The newly married couple's official copy will be given to the person previously designated by the couple. St. Robert of Newminster will mail the second official copy to the County Clerk.

Wedding Liturgy

Catholic weddings take place in the context of a Wedding Mass or a Wedding Ceremony. What is the difference, and how does a couple decide which is best for their wedding? A Wedding Mass includes both the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

A Wedding Ceremony is the Liturgy of the Word only (readings, homily, exchange of vows and rings, prayers of intercession).

Two Catholics traditionally exchange wedding vows in the celebration of a Catholic Mass, joining in their vows to each other and in the reception of the Holy Eucharist. When either the bride or the groom is not Catholic, the Church recommends a Wedding Ceremony outside of Mass, since the reception of Holy Communion could not be shared by the newly married couple. In circumstances where the bride and groom are both Catholic, but most of their guests are non-Catholic, a Wedding Ceremony may be preferred to a full Mass, in consideration of good hospitality.

Our Priest and our Music Minister will assist couple in planning details for the wedding liturgy.

Wedding Music

Please contact our parish Music Minister at least eight (8) weeks prior to your wedding date. The Music Minister will assist in the selection of music for your wedding liturgy, and will help you find and hire experienced musicians and cantors. All arrangements for wedding music and musicians need be completed and approved four (4) weeks before your wedding date. You can contact our Music Minister by email: janev@strobertchurch.org

Guest Ministers

Guest priests, deacons, or other liturgical ministers are welcome to serve during your wedding Celebration. Permission and arrangements should be made through the parish office.

Decoration of the Liturgical Environment

- ☐ As with all aspects of our liturgy, decorations should help direct our minds and hearts toward God.
- ☐ All arrangements will need to be taken off after the Wedding Ceremony and pictures are complete, as we have a Mass on Saturday afternoons.
- ☐ Aisle runners are not used at St. Robert since they can be a safety hazard.
- ☐ Unity Candles or Sand Vases are not allowed.
- ☐ Some liturgical décor may be present in the Church environment, depending on the liturgical season in which your wedding takes place.
- ☐ All flowers and decorations must be respectful of the Church and it's liturgical environment.
- ☐ Flowers in front of the Altar may not extend higher than the top of the Altar itself
- ☐ If flower girls will be throwing petals before the bride, please make sure they are silk, as real flowers will stain our floor and are harder to clean up.
- ☐ Due to concerns of safety or cleanliness of Church grounds, the following may not be used during the "send-off" of the bride and groom:

rice	birdseed	confetti
balloons	sparklers	similar items
- ☐ We respectfully ask that all decorations be cleaned up after final pictures due to the fact that we have Mass on Saturday afternoons. This will apply to the bride and groom rooms that are used before the wedding to get dressed, etc. Please also make sure you turn out any lights and DO NOT turn on any air or heat. They are set to a certain temperature throughout the building.

Photography

You will want to discuss with the priest in which area the photographers are not allowed in.

Rehearsal

Wedding rehearsals take place between 5:00 – 6:00pm on the day before the wedding day. The priest will walk the bridal party through the logistics of the wedding liturgy so they will feel more comfortable with what to do on the wedding day. It is helpful, when possible, for family members and friends who have a role in your wedding liturgy to attend the rehearsal: Bridesmaids, Groomsmen, Parents, Grandparents, Ushers, Readers, Cross Bearer, Master/Mistress of Ceremonies, etc. The musicians generally do not attend the rehearsal, though friends and family who will be playing or singing are most welcome!

Use of the Church

In reverence for Jesus present in the tabernacle, and respect for our sacred worship space:

Food, drink and chewing gum are not allowed inside the Church
Please try to maintain the quiet integrity of the worship space by socializing
in our Gathering area.

Space is available for the bridal party to prepare at the Church on the day of the wedding. We ask that you respect the space and clean up after yourselves, turn off any appliance you may have turned on. It might be a good idea for your bridal party members to bring along a duffel bag to put their street clothes and other items in so they are packed before the actual wedding. This way, the rooms are cleaned up before the wedding and you will not have to worry about coming back to clean up before the room is used again.

Use of Alcohol

Possession or use of alcohol or drugs on St. Robert of Newminster Catholic Parish property, indoors or outdoors is strictly forbidden. Please be sure that your wedding party and guests are aware that anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked to leave the premises. **St. Robert of Newminster Parish reserves the right to cancel a wedding**, especially if the bride, groom or either of their witnesses are *under the influence of drugs or alcohol* before or during the liturgy. In accordance with Canon Law, if it becomes known at a later date that the bride and groom were under the influence at the time of their vows, the marriage will be declared invalid.

Use of Tobacco

Smoking is not permitted inside the building, but is permitted in the area outside the North Entrance (Door D).

Wedding Programs

Worship aids can help non-Catholic guests follow the wedding liturgy, and can serve as a memento of the day. If you plan to use a worship aid, please make sure you designate someone to pick the programs up after the wedding. We need to have the pews clear for the upcoming Mass.

Helpful Things to Know

Church

Air conditioned

Seats 1200 comfortably

Handicapped accessible

Has LOOP – (wireless hearing aid for people without T-coil hearing aids)

Wheelchair and walker available for use (door D)

Signature Page

By signing below, I certify that I have read, agree to, and will abide with all the policies and Responsibilities contained within the “Policies and Guidelines for the Sacrament of Matrimony At St. Robert of Newminster Parish” handbook.

Bride’s signature _____ Date _____

Groom’s signature _____ Date _____

Deposit: _____

Received by: _____

Date: _____