

Policies and Guidelines for the **Sacrament of Matrimony**

at St. Robert of Newminster Parish

6477 Ada Dr SE Ada, MI 49301

Parish Office Hrs.: Mon. – Thurs. 8:00am – 4:00pm Fri. 8:00am – 12:00pm

Parish Information: 616-676-9111

strobertchurch.org

Priest: Fr. Anthony Russo

Music Director: 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. Friday weddings or ceremonies are at 4:00 pm. Rehearsals for a Friday wedding are held on Thursday at 4:30 pm.

Saturday weddings or ceremonies are held at 1:00 pm. Rehearsals for a Saturday ceremony or wedding are held on Friday at 4:30pm.

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!

Wedding Preparation Checklist & Required Documentation

- Consult w/ Priest for wedding date
- & pre-cana.
- Mass or Ceremony?
- Pre-cana & certificate to office
- FOCCUS completion & certif. to office
- Dispensations (if applicable)
- Proof of annulment (if applicable)
- Baptism certificates to office
- Liturgy planner to office
- Natural Family Planning
- Contact music director 8 wks. prior to wedding date

2 wks. prior to Wedding Date:

- Submit 2 marriage licences to office
- Submit all fees to office:
 - Church = \$300 parishioner OR
 - \$500 non - parishioner
 - Priest = \$300 check
 - Music = \$275 check
 - Cantor - TBD check
 - Instrumentalists - TBD check
 - Wedding Coordinator = \$160 cash
 - Sacristan = \$50 cash
- If scrolling photos on TVs, submit with wedding colors to joannf@strobertchurch.org

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

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?

A. 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

B. The parents of the bride or groom are registered, active, contributing members of St. Robert of Newminster Parish;

OR

C. 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?

REGISTER! Either register at St. Robert's because you plan on attending here, or register where you are attending mass with the church you live close to.

Reserving a date

To reserve a date for your wedding: Contact the Parish Office for availability on the St. Robert's calendar.

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 SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE PARISH OFFICE NO LATER THAN TWO (2) WEEKS PRIOR TO 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). There will be no communion Rite.

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 Director will assist couple in planning details for the wedding liturgy.

Wedding Music

Please contact our parish Music Director at least eight (8) weeks prior to your wedding date. The Music Director 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 Director 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 wedding 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. November weddings will have candles in front of the Altar for the month of Holy Souls. Weddings taking place during the Christmas season will have poinsettias around the Altar.

*Flowers aren't allowed in front of the altar or ambo. Place flowers on bottom steps.

*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. 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.

Rehearsal

Wedding rehearsals take place @ 4:30pm on the day before the wedding day.

The priest and St. Robert wedding coordinator 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 for family members and friends who have a role in your wedding liturgy to attend the rehearsal: Bridesmaids, Groomsman, Parents, Grandparents, Ushers, Readers, 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, adults and children are expected to behave in a respectful manner while inside the Church which include no running or yelling, socializing may take place 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.

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 at any time on the church campus.

Wedding Programs

Worship aids can help non-Catholic guests follow the wedding liturgy, and can serve as a momento 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 is air conditioned & seats 1200 comfortably

Handicapped accessible; wheelchair and walker available for use (door D)

Has LOOP – wireless hearing aid for people with T-coil hearing aids