



Saint John the Baptist

Roman Catholic Church

Wedding Policies & Information

Dress Code Policies

It is customary for the bride to wear white as a sign of purity. The white garment worn at baptism symbolized holiness in just the same way that Sacred Scripture describes the angels and saints robed in white; the white dress worn at First Holy Communion also can serve as a model for the wedding dress, both in symbolism and style. Similarly, altar boys, deacons and priests wear the surplice and the alb which specifically refer to having been washed clean in the Blood of the Lamb.

Wedding guests would do well to recall the parable told by Our Lord about their counterparts who were unceremoniously ushered out because of their inappropriate attire. Their apparel also should fit not only the solemnity of the day but also the sacredness of the Church. Church attire, while being appropriately fashionable, must always be modest and chaste. We should want neither to attract attention to ourselves nor distract others in prayer. Basically, try to go out of your way to help people worship God and not covet or envy your body. Unfortunately many of today's fashions attempt to do just the opposite. Here are some specific guidelines:

- A wedding dress with sleeves is both elegant and unusual. In lieu of one, brides and their attendants should cover their shoulders with a jacket or shawl.
- Low necklines designed to show cleavage are inappropriate for Church;
- Hemlines above the knees and slits which rise above the knees must be avoided;
- Dresses that expose the back or waist would embarrass a Christian bride.

These rules must also be observed by all those who serve in liturgical functions (i.e., readers, gift-bearers, etc...).

Appropriately modest dress should also be observed at the rehearsal. Please tell your guests that the air conditioning is very cold and they might need sweaters.

Dressing Rooms on the Day of the Wedding:

The bride and her attendants may dress in Father Ruehl Hall.

The groom and his groomsmen are asked to wait in the "main sacristy" located to the right of the sanctuary, where there is also a small mirror and a restroom, but, they may not get dressed here.

PLEASE NOTE: ST. JOHN'S CHURCH IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY PERSONAL ITEMS LEFT IN THESE TWO SACRISTIES (OR ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE CHURCH) BY THE WEDDING PARTY WHICH MIGHT BE LOST, STOLEN, OR MISPLACED. WE RECOMMEND YOU HAVE SOMEONE COLLECT ALL YOUR BELONGINGS BEFORE THE WEDDING BEGINS SINCE IT IS LIKELY THAT NO ONE WILL WANT TO DO THAT AFTERWARDS.

Flowers & Decorations

In planning all your Wedding flowers and decorations, please consult with our Wedding Coordinator who can answer any specific questions. This consultation should take place BEFORE any final arrangements are made regarding flowers or decorations.

Generally, flowers may be of any style or color you wish, as long as they are consistent with the solemn and religious nature of the celebration and the season. Flowers in the sanctuary should be arranged so as not to restrict the movement or visibility of the priest, ministers, or the Wedding party, or to disrupt the lines for Holy Communion. No flowers are to be placed on or in front of the altar, and no arrangements may be higher than the top of the altar. Considering these limitations, flowers would normally be placed on the floor and on pedestals or stands.

- Any flowers placed at or near the altar are considered your gifts to Our Lord and are not to be removed after the Wedding. Please take this into account when making floral arrangements.
- Ribbons and flowers may be attached to pews using special varnish-friendly adhesive or plastic slips. A white cloth covering may be placed over the priedieu of the bride and groom.
- For the safety of all involved, aisle runners are not permitted.
- Because of the decorations and candles already in place in the church, additional candelabra may not be used.
- If there is more than one Wedding on the same day, couples may wish to coordinate their decorations and flowers. You may contact the Wedding Coordinator to help you in this regard.
- Any other special decorations not mentioned here must be specifically approved by the Wedding Coordinator.
- Flowers may be delivered to the church one-hour before the Wedding. Any boxes with flowers should be properly marked (e.g., “bride”, “bridesmaid”, etc.). Decorations and flowers may also be set up in the church one-hour before the Wedding.

May we use rice, birdseed, flower petals, etc.?

As St. John's does not have a full time maintenance person on staff to clean up immediately, throwing rice or any other substance which may be customary is strictly prohibited since ALL of these present some degree of hazard on the walkway outside of church. We certainly don't want your celebration marred by anyone accidentally slipping and injuring himself or herself, so please inform your family and friends to refrain from such practices.

For this same reason no flower petals, etc., may be dropped in the aisle in front of the bride by flower girls in the entrance procession.

Photography

We do allow photographs during the Wedding Mass or ceremony. It is also permitted to have your Wedding videotaped. We urge photographers to exercise good judgment and common sense, in accord with the solemnity of the occasion, and at all times accept direction from the Wedding Coordinator, priest, and music staff.

Once the Wedding has begun the following rules must be followed:

- No flash photography (or strobe/movie lighting) is allowed;
- The photographer/videographer is asked to keep his/her visible movement to a minimum;
- They may never walk in the area in front of the sanctuary or enter into the sanctuary;
- They may never take a position during the Wedding which would distract the assembly or obstruct anyone's view of the couple, the readers, or the priest; and
- They may take candid shots from upstairs, from the back of the church or from either side of the sanctuary.
- *All photographers/videographers must read this policy and sign the statement included at the end of this booklet.*

Photographs after the Wedding:

Out of respect for the Blessed Sacrament, posing for pictures at the altar after the Wedding is discouraged. Where a couple finds it necessary to pose at the altar, we remind them that they are still in the presence of Our Lord, truly present in the Tabernacle. During picture-taking be sure to remind your photographer to maintain an atmosphere of reverence so that other people could be praying in the church without any distraction.

Guest Photography:

Guests are usually much less likely than professional photographers to be bold in their picture taking etiquette. Nevertheless, they are also asked to observe the above rules for photography. In particular, before the Wedding the groomsmen/ushers should try to discretely discourage guests with cameras from taking flash photography during the Wedding.

Music

A Wedding (whether within the context of Holy Mass or not) is a sacred service; therefore, only sacred music — that is, music composed for the specific purpose of the worship of God – may be played or sung during the Mass or ceremony. Please do not request an exception to this law of the Church. Familiar pieces like the “Bridal Chorus” (Here Comes the Bride) from Wagner’s *Lohengrin*, the “Wedding March” from Mendelssohn’s *A Midsummer’s Night Dream* are not only secular but actually were written to mock the sanctity of Marriage.

All arrangements relating to music and musicians (organists, singers, other instrumentalists, etc.) must be made with the parish director of music, Dr. Jeffrey Alban. Be sure to contact the Dr. Alban immediately after reserving your date with the parish office. Please call (540) 635-3780.

During the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent, the music is to be compatible with the solemn penitential spirit of these days. Dr. Alban will advise you on what is appropriate.

Who may serve as musicians?

Dr. Alban is the primary musician for all weddings at St. John’s. Outside classical musicians are permitted, pending the approval by Dr. Alban. You may invite an outside organist to play for your wedding. In this case, the base fee is dropped and you are required to pay a Music Coordination Fee. The organist, cantor, and any other musicians’ fees are separate from any offering made to the priest or church.

RECORDED MUSIC OF ANY KIND IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED!

Organist – Base Fee*	\$300.00
Music Coordination Fee	\$150.00 (<i>this fee applies only if you bring an outside organist</i>)
Cantor	\$150.00
Outside musicians	determined independently apart from the parish
Rehearsal Time*	\$100.00/hr.

EFFECTIVE FOR ALL WEDDINGS BEGINNING ON DECEMBER 1, 2023:

Couples are required to bring a \$150 non-refundable deposit to their initial music consultation with Dr. Alban.

Cash payments are preferred. This deposit will be credited toward the final fee for your wedding.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this policy.

The \$300.00 fee covers the initial consultation with the couple for selecting music and playing the organ for your wedding. Additional music/rehearsals with choirs, soloists, or instrumentalists will incur the additional rehearsal fee.

Couples may request a mixed choir or chant schola for their Nuptial Mass (both ordinary and extraordinary forms); these can be provided through the parish. A minimum honorarium of \$100.00/singer is required (and can increase depending on the amount of music requested). A mixed choir requires eight singers (2/ part) for a total cost of \$800.00. A chant schola requires four chanters for a total cost of \$400.00. The director of music will determine the necessary amount of rehearsal time to prepare the singers for the music you have requested subject to the rehearsal rate of \$100.00/hour.

FINAL FEES MUST BE PAID IN FULL NO LATER THAN ONE WEEK PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING.

You may drop payments off at the church office or mail payments to:

St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church
Attn: Dr. Jeffrey M. Alban, Director of Music
120 W. Main St., Front Royal, VA 22630

Fee Schedule

As of December 1, 2023 this fee schedule is in effect:

Customary Offerings

Priest/Church Altar Servers

You may provide a donation to the priest/church

*Please designate whether you wish the offering to go to the priest-celebrant, the parish, or both.

Altar Servers (there will be at least two servers; it is customary to tip each altar server) \$10.00/each

Staff Fees

Wedding Coordinator \$150.00

Music

Organist – Base Fee* \$300.00

Music Coordination Fee (this fee applies only if you bring an outside organist) \$150.00

Cantor \$150.00

Outside musicians' fees are determined independently apart from the parish

Rehearsal Time* \$100.00/hr.

Chant Schola \$100.00/singer

Polyphonic Choir ~\$100.00/singer

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Cash payments are preferred. This deposit will be credited toward the final music fee for your wedding.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation with this policy.

Wedding Music Planner - Novus Ordo Nuptial Mass

Name: _____

Date: _____

Phone: _____

Time: _____

Email: _____

Priest: _____

Prelude _____

Bridesmaid Procession _____

Bridal Procession _____

Gloria _____

Psalm _____

Gospel Acclamation _____

Offertory Hymn _____

Sanctus _____

Memorial Acc. _____

Agnus Dei _____

Communion Hymn(s) _____

Marian Devotion _____

Recessional _____

**Chanted Propers? ___ yes ___ no

While not mandatory, adding the chanting of the Latin propers of the Nuptial Mass adds a beautiful dimension of solemnity to your wedding celebration. The texts and translations of the chants can be found on the next page.

Chanted Latin Propers for the Nuptial Mass

(Graduale Romanum 1974)

Introit: Psalm 67: 6, 7; 36, 2

Deus in loco sancto suo: Deus qui inhabitare facit unánimes in domo: ipse dabit virtútem et fortitúdinem plebi suæ. Ps. Exsúrgat Deus, et dissipéntur inimíci ejus: et fúgiant, qui odérunt eum, a fácie ejus. Gloria Patri...

God is in his holy dwelling place; the God who causes us to dwell together, one at heart, in his house; he himself will give power and strength to his people. *Ps.* Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered; and let those who hate him flee before his face.

Gradual: Psalm 127: 3

Uxor tua sicut vitis abundans in latéribus domus tuæ. V. Filii tui sicut novellæ olivarum in circúitu mensæ tuæ.

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your home, Your children like young olive plants around your table.

Alleluia: Psalm 119: 3

Alleluia. Mittat vobis Dóminus auxiliúum de sancto et de Sion tueátur vos. Alleluia.

Alleluia. May the Lord send you help from the sanctuary, from Zion be your support. Alleluia.

Offertory: Psalm 30: 15, 16

In te sperávi, Dómine; dixi: Tu es Deus meus, in mánibus tuis témpora mea.

In you have I put my trust, O Lord; I said: "You are my God, my destiny is in your hands."

Communion: Matthew 5: 8-10

Beáti mundo corde, quóniam ipsi Deum vidébunt; beáti pacífici, quóniam filii Dei vocabúntur: beáti, qui persecutiónem patiúntur propter justítiam, quóniam ipsórum est regnum cælórum.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God; blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God; blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

Policies for Photographers & Videographers

We urge photographers to exercise good judgment and common sense, in accord with the solemnity of the occasion, and at all times accept direction from the Wedding Coordinator and the priest.

Once the Wedding has begun the following rules must be followed:

- No flash photography (or strobe/movie lighting) is allowed;
- Photographers are asked to keep their visible movement to a minimum;
- They may never walk in the area in front of the sanctuary or enter into the sanctuary;
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- They may take candid shots from upstairs, from the back of the church or from either side of the sanctuary.

Please keep the top portion of this form for your records and sign and submit this bottom portion.

PHOTOGRAPHER/VIDEOGRAPHER STATEMENT

I have read the guidelines for photography and video equipment as stated at questions Q 54, Q 55, and Q 57 of the Wedding guidelines and I will comply with the policies listed.

Lead Photographer/Videographer

Date

Business Address

Business Telephone

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church Acknowledgment Of Receipt And Adherence To Wedding Guidelines

Please bring this signed form with you to your first meeting with the priest.

We have read the Wedding guidelines for St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and will honor them. In particular, we understand:

- the commitment we will make to all phases of Marriage preparation;
- the importance of honesty and candor;
- that the Wedding date can't be set immediately but only after it is established that we are free to marry, understand the Wedding vows and are ready to make them;
- the necessity of providing new Baptismal Certificates, Affidavits of Freedom and other documentation for the Wedding file;
- that a visiting priest needs the permission of the pastor of St. John and authorization from the Commonwealth of Virginia in order to officiate at a valid and legal Wedding;
- the spirit of cooperation that is entailed in preparing a sacred ritual of the Church;
- that modesty in dress will be a first sign of reverence in the House of the Lord;
- the policy on the donation of flowers and not being able to remove the Altar flowers after our Wedding;
- the reverent atmosphere that we need to maintain in the Church during the rehearsal and before and after the Wedding.

Bride _____

Date _____

Groom _____

Date _____