



# *Sts. Anne & Joachim*



## *Wedding Guidelines*

Sts. Anne & Joachim  
5202 25<sup>th</sup> St. S.  
Fargo, ND 58104  
Parish Office: 701-235-5757

Director of Sacramental Preparation  
Sue Ripplinger: [sripplinger@stsaaj.org](mailto:sripplinger@stsaaj.org)  
701-612-2478



# Table of Content

Wedding Preparation Checklist.....	Page 1
Baptismal Certificates	
Wedding License	
Time of Wedding	
Use of the Church	
Rehearsal.....	Page 2
Minsters of the Ceremony	
Gifts	
Bride's Room & Groom's Room	
Flowers.....	Page 3
Art & Environment	
Food & Beverage	
Photography.....	Page 4
Selection of Music.....	Page 5
Programs	
Security	
Rehearsal Dinner & Reception	
Facility Use Payment Information.....	Page 6
Facility Usage & Other Fees.....	Page 7
Order of the Wedding Mass.....	Page 8
Florist Guidelines.....	Page 9
Photography Guidelines.....	Page 10
Ushers & Host Couple Guidelines.....	Page 11

# *Sts. Anne & Joachim*

## Wedding Guidelines

Congratulations! The Catholic Community of Sts. Anne & Joachim are happy to celebrate your marriage with you. We extend to you our support, prayers, and best wishes as you begin preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage and your life together within a faith community.

*"The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament," Can. 1055*

A lot of effort goes into preparation for a wedding, and we want to do our share to make your wedding a memorable celebration for you and your family. Hopefully, this guide will assist you with selections and suggestions.

You, the bride and groom, are the ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage and family and friends gather to give witness to this sacrament by their liturgical participation. The tone, attitude, readings, and music will reflect your understanding of this important sacrament and encourage participation by those in attendance.

A wedding Mass or Liturgy differs only from a Sunday Mass celebration in that the Marriage Ritual is incorporated into the celebration. It is important to remember that by choosing to be married in the Church, you are choosing the Church's ritual and liturgy. You are showing an expression of your faith, not merely a production for the private viewing of family and friends.

Great care should be taken for this to be an occasion of reverence, grace, beauty, and openness to the Spirit of God.

If you wish to have clergy not assigned to Sts. Anne & Joachim witness your marriage, you will need to discuss this with the pastor of Sts. Anne & Joachim. Officiating clergy from outside our diocese need to provide a letter from their diocese indicating they are in good standing with the Church.

We, at Sts. Anne & Joachim are happy to assist you and wish to make this event a memorable occasion.



# Wedding Preparation

## Meet with the Director of Sacramental Preparation

- Meet with Sue to:
  - Request your wedding date for approval.
- Once your wedding date has been approved:
  - Set the date and time for both the wedding ceremony and the rehearsal.
  - Review parish wedding guidelines.
  - Submit Required Fees
    - \$200 security deposit.
    - Pay Wedding Facility Bundle Fee/Non-Parishioner Wedding Fee. (If applicable)
  - Complete the “Fully Engaged” Pre-Marital Inventory.

## Marriage Preparation Seminar & Natural Family Planning

- Register for a Natural Family Planning (NFP) Sessions.
- Register for a Diocesan Marriage Preparation Seminar.

## Meetings with the Priest

- The appointed priest will contact you 5-6 months before the wedding to begin pastoral marriage preparations.
- Bring the following documents to your first meeting:
  - A copy of your Baptismal Certificate.
  - Any annulment documentation, if applicable.
- Review a draft of your wedding program one month prior to your wedding.

## Meet with the Director of Music

- Schedule a meeting with Patrick, the Director of Music, 4-6 months before the wedding to discuss music selections and guidelines.
- Select Readings for the Ceremony

## Select Liturgical Ministers for the Ceremony

- Choose your:
  - Proclaimer
  - Ushers
- If you are having a Mass with your ceremony choose your:
  - Extra Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
  - Altar Servers
    - If you do not know any altar serves they will be assigned for you.
- A Sacristan will be assigned for your wedding.



## Florist & Photographer

- Provide your florist and photographer with guidelines

## One Week Before the Wedding

- Bring the marriage license to the parish office.
- Pay Stipends (Musicians, Altar Servers, Sacristan)
- Request gift/guestbook table(s) if needed in the gathering space.
- Complete parish registration if you plan to remain in the parish after your wedding.
- Bring a copy of your wedding program to rehearsal.

**BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATES:** If you are Catholic, you need to provide a current baptismal certificate from your home parish. This proves that you are free to marry. If you are not Catholic, a copy of your baptismal certificate is required.

**WEDDING LICENSE:** Weddings are regulated by the state of North Dakota, you must secure a North Dakota marriage license. This can be obtained 60 days prior to the wedding date at the courthouse which is located at 211 9th Street South, Fargo, ND. Bring your marriage license to Sue in the parish office one week prior to your wedding. The wedding cannot proceed without it.

**TIME of WEDDING:** You and the priest will decide the time for your wedding liturgy.

Weddings may be scheduled:

- Friday afternoon or evening
- Saturday
  - Afternoon – no later than 2:00pm with Mass
  - Afternoon – no later than 2:30pm without Mass
  - Evening – no earlier than 7:00pm
- Any other time during the week with approval from the pastor.

All activity must be finished, the church cleared and ready by 4:00pm on Saturday for Reconciliation and Mass. No activity can begin in the church or gathering space before 6:30pm on Saturday.

**USE of the CHURCH:** Please remember that you are asking to use Our Lord's House for your wedding. He is always present in the tabernacle. It is important that you act respectfully during the rehearsal, the wedding and taking of pictures. The dignity you show as a couple will be evident to others and they in turn will act with dignity.

Please keep this in mind as you choose your wedding dress and that of your attendants. You will never regret modest tasteful attire that represents your recognition of the sacrament you are about to receive.

**REHEARSAL:** This usually occurs the night before the wedding usually between 5pm - 7pm. Rehearsal generally lasts one hour. Due to the priest's schedule, it is necessary that the rehearsal be held to an hour and a half, and you are asked to have all parties respect this fact. Everyone's prompt arrival will keep things flowing. **If there are both a wedding and a rehearsal set for a Friday, these times will be coordinated, but the wedding always takes precedence.**

If you would like the priest to attend your rehearsal dinner, please extend him the invitation in advance.

The rehearsal is the time to be sure that everyone knows and is familiar with the role they will have on the wedding day. It is not the time for musicians to practice, but to see how the ceremony will flow. Schedule their practice through the Director of Music for a separate time.

To receive all the graces God intends to give you in the Sacrament of Marriage you need to be in the state of grace. Please make arrangements with the priest for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at a time convenient for you before your wedding date.

## MINISTERS of the CEREMONY:

**The Assembly:** Your family and friends who gather for your wedding are participants in the ceremony, not mere spectators. Keep them in mind as you plan the liturgy.

**Proclaimers:** You can choose who you would like to proclaim the readings you have chosen (choose someone who is able to proclaim the readings in a loud clear voice so that they are understood by everyone present). If this person is also a significant person in your lives, that is all the better. The readings recall our story and remind us of God's ever-abiding presence in our lives. At a wedding Mass, the proclaimers must be Catholic.

**Ushers:** These individuals welcome and seat your guests. You will want to be sure to give them instructions regarding seating arrangements for special guests. Otherwise, seating is recommended to create a balance on both sides.

Ushers are expected to attend the rehearsal to receive instructions from the priest. They need to be in the church at least one hour before the ceremony.

No later than twenty minutes before the wedding is to begin, they need to begin seating your guests; this will ensure that your wedding begins on time.

Typically, at the end of the ceremony ushers go to the front of the church to usher out the guests. If the bride and groom plan to return to do this, be sure you tell your ushers of this plan.

Please ask your ushers to clean up the church after the wedding. Ask them to remove any excess programs, Kleenex, etc. and place them in the wastebaskets in the Gathering Space. They should check with the priest before leaving to make sure all things have been done.

**GIFTS:** A gift table can be set up if you would like. Please make your request one week before your wedding. Please plan for your gifts to be removed from the church before the wedding ceremony. We are not responsible for loss/damage to gifts.

**BRIDE'S ROOM and GROOM'S ROOM:** The Ave Maria Room is for the bride and her attendants. The groom and groomsmen, may use the youth center (lower level, under the parish office) You are responsible to leave all areas clean and orderly. We suggest that no personal items be left unattended. The parish is not responsible for any lost/stolen items.

**FLOWERS:** Only live flowers and plants are to be used in the church; this includes bridal & bridesmaids' bouquets, groom & groomsmen boutonnieres, corsages, and any flower decorations.

The church is always decorated according to the liturgical season. Your florist should be aware of the need to work within the seasonal décor of the church. If you wish to leave any flowers for the church, please notify us in advance and we can assist.

Scheduled decorating by our Arts and Environment Committee will have preference over your decorating. Check with the Director of Sacramental Preparation with any questions about time for decorating.



**ART & ENVIRONMENT:** Please make sure things are left as they are. No sanctuary furniture may be moved at any time. Keep in mind that the festivity of this occasion does not require elaborate decorations or their expense.

Bows or ribbons need to be fastened to the pews with great care. No staples or tape can be used. Please consult with the Director of Sacramental Preparation on what you plan to do.

**The following items are prohibited at the wedding ceremony:**

- Flower petals may not be sprinkled by flower girls for safety reasons.
- Glitter is not allowed on anything (pew bows, programs, flowers).
- The use of an aisle runner is not allowed for safety reasons.
- Feathers of any kind may not be used (pew bows, wedding dress, or decorations)
- Rice is not to be thrown inside or outside of the church at any time.

All items brought in for the wedding must be removed from all areas of the church immediately following the ceremony.

Following the wedding all trash (flower boxes, containers, tissue) must be disposed of in wastebaskets provided. Please make sure someone from your wedding party is responsible for taking care of this request.

**Smoking:** Smoking is not allowed in the church.

**Alcohol:** Alcohol is not allowed in the church or on church property (except in the case of the reception in the church social hall). Your wedding day is a time for celebration. We want your day to be a celebration and time of thanksgiving to God for His blessings. Unfortunately, it has happened that members of a wedding party have used alcohol as part of their celebration before the wedding ceremony. This can cause an embarrassing situation for the bride and groom, as well as the priest. If alcohol is found or detected in the church or on church property, the priest reserves the right to postpone the wedding. We want your day to be a prayerful and joy-filled day. Please convey this to your wedding party.

**Food & Beverages:** Food and beverages can be served in the breakfast nook, Ava Maria room and youth center. Please do not take any food or beverages anywhere else in the church complex. It is expected that all items be disposed of properly. Absolutely no food or beverages are to be taken into the church. Please realize that you have the responsibility to maintain the cleanliness, dignity and respect of the church property and facilities always.

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** This is an important part of preserving your wedding and all its beauty. It is encouraged that formal photos be taken well in advance of the ceremony to allow for plenty of time and to avoid unnecessary delays leading to the reception. This way you ensure time to have the photos you want and show consideration to your guests by not delaying the reception. Photos must end at least one-half hour before the ceremony (an hour is even better). If you want to have photos begin several hours before the ceremony, check the time with our Director of Sacramental Preparation.



No rearranging of the furniture, flowers, etc. can be done. No furniture is to be stood on while taking pictures. During the ceremony, no one should move around the sanctuary, center aisles or interfere with the ceremony.

Please respect the time of prayer during the ceremony by using no flash. Time for close-up photos can be during the processional and recessional. Please convey these requests to your photographer.

Please keep in mind the dignity and sacred character of the church while pictures are being taken. Your example will convey this sentiment to your wedding party.

Videotaping of the ceremony is acceptable from the back of the church or from the choir loft. Check with the Director of Music if you wish to tap directly into our sound system at least one month before the wedding. (However direct wiring into our sound board is NOT permitted.) The person videotaping the ceremony should be stationary to avoid distraction.

**SELECTION of MUSIC and MUSICIANS:** The Catholic Church has very definite liturgical guidelines, some of which apply to weddings. Our music director must be contacted as soon as possible once the wedding date is set to review these guidelines.

As a general policy, musicians of Sts. Anne & Joachim should be contacted to sing and/or accompany them at weddings. They will be a valuable aid to your guests who may not be familiar with Catholic liturgy and may need direction when to sit and stand, as well as when to sing. They are most familiar with the liturgy of our parish. A list of parish musicians may be obtained from the music coordinator. It is helpful if the musician is currently active in a Catholic Church.

It is the policy of Sts. Anne & Joachim that any musicians who play/sing for a wedding should have musical training and be liturgically trained. Approval from the music director must be obtained for anyone using our equipment.

These guidelines do not preclude you from having a friend or family member sing a special song, but rather releases them from the burden of knowing all hymns, responses, and psalms.

Other instruments, such as woodwinds and brass greatly enhance the celebration. Ask the music director for suggestions.

Music that is not liturgical may not be used at Sts. Anne & Joachim. Music on tape or CD may also not be used. There are no exceptions to this policy. Music that is “popular” or “secular” may be played at the reception, but not during the wedding. Our music director has a list of music selections to choose from.

Please remember that musicians are trained people who have spent time developing their skills. Out of justice they should be adequately paid for this service. The \$175 fee for the musician and the \$250 fee for the accompanist reflects a one-hour rehearsal the day of the wedding as well as the wedding ceremony. Any additional rehearsal time will be at a rate of \$50/hour. Payment of these fees are to be dropped off in the parish office or mailed to the music director at church one week prior to the wedding.

Patrick McGuire - Director of Music  
pmcguire@stsaaj.org



**PROGRAMS:** A printed program (worship aid) including music, prayers and responses will encourage participation of your invited guests.

A draft of your program needs to be reviewed by the priest (if he's not available, by the Director of Music or the Director of Sacramental Preparation) at least one month before the wedding and before the printing of the program to make sure the liturgy parts are in proper order.

**SECURITY:** No items are to be left unattended anywhere in the church. The church cannot assume responsibility for lost articles. It is suggested that you ask someone to go through the church after the wedding for any personal items inadvertently left behind.

**REHEARSAL DINNER & RECEPTION:** If you would like to hold your rehearsal dinner at the parish, contact the Events Coordinator, Connie Savageau, to schedule your dinner and review the policy on use of the social hall. If you desire to hold your reception at the parish, contact the events coordinator to schedule your reception and review the policy on use of the social hall.

Connie Savageau - csavageau@stsaaaj.org.



**Wedding Party Facility Responsibilities**

- Rooms are to be left in the same condition found
- All garbage thrown in receptacles
- Any furniture moved is to be put back in its original location
- Only rooms included in Wedding Agreement are for your use during wedding prep: Ave Maria Room, Breakfast Nook and Youth Center
- Turn lights off when leaving

All Marriage Preparations Couples



**Sts. Anne and Joachim**  
Fully Engaged  
[https://ppay.co/uMludk\\_mik](https://ppay.co/uMludk_mik)

Facility Bundle Sts. A&J Parishioners




**Sts. Anne and Joachim**  
Wedding Facility Bundle (\$250)  
[https://ppay.co/dl\\_lKdHy9iWA](https://ppay.co/dl_lKdHy9iWA)

Facility Use Non-Parishioner



**Sts. Anne and Joachim**  
Non-Parishioners Wedding Fee (\$1,000)  
<https://ppay.co/8QW1ySl6Tw>

Facility Bundle Non-Parishioner



**Sts. Anne and Joachim**  
Non-Parishioner Wedding Facility Bundle (\$500)  
[https://ppay.co/c47\\_gKvpcQ](https://ppay.co/c47_gKvpcQ)

# FACILITY USAGE

**Parishioners:**

- A \$200 refundable Security Deposit is required upon booking your date.
  - Check or Cash ONLY
- Use of the facility itself is free of charge up to 3 hours (parishioners only)
- Wedding Facility Bundle (\$250) includes use of the following: (from 8am- an hour after the wedding)
  - Ave Maria Room
  - Breakfast Nook
  - Youth Center
  - Gathering Space

**Non-Parishioners:**

- A \$200 refundable Security Deposit is required upon booking your date.
  - Check or Cash ONLY
- A \$1,000 fee for use of is required upon booking your date for all non-parishioners who elect to hold their wedding at Sts. Anne & Joachim. This fee allows use of the facility for 3 hours.
- Wedding Facility Bundle (\$500) includes use of the following: (from 8am- an hour after the wedding)
  - Ave Maria Room
  - Breakfast Nook
  - Youth Center
  - Gathering Space



**WEDDING FACILITY BUNDLE:** Payment for the Wedding Facility Bundle is due one month after your wedding date has been approved. This is necessary for parish event planning.

The Wedding Facility Bundle does not include any costs associated with the renting of the Holy Family Social Hall for a wedding reception or the fees for musicians, sacristan and altar servers.

**OTHER FEES:**

- Marriage Encounter or Marriage Preparation Weekend.....Varies
  - Paid through Fargo Diocese
- Natural Family Planning Instruction.....Varies
  - Paid to NFP Instructor
- Fully Engaged Inventory .....\$40
  - Paid through Sts. A&J
- Pianist .....\$250
- Cantor .....\$175
- Altar Servers .....\$25 (each)
- Wedding Day Sacristan .....\$50

**Clergy Offering:** Please consider offering a gift the priest for the work and the time he has shared with you and for you during the months of preparation, rehearsal, and wedding day.



## ORDER OF THE WEDDING MASS:

### Procession:

- The servers and clergy begin the procession; the priest goes to his chair
- Groom processes with parents or alone, bows, and stands at the front of the aisle
- Bridal party processes in with bridesmaids and groomsmen together; they bow and go to their place on the sanctuary steps
- Bride processes in with parents or father; the groom comes forward to take her arm and they go to their place at the top of the steps
- Both sets of parents are in the second pew, along with other immediate family
- After a short time, the wedding party disperses: the bridal couple to their chairs in the sanctuary, the wedding party to the front pews

The priest begins Mass as usual

The first reader approaches ambo for reading and returns to the pew after it is done

The cantor sings the Responsorial Psalm from the ambo

The second reader approaches ambo for reading and returns to the pew

The priest/deacon proclaims the Gospel and the homily is given

### Marriage Rite:

- After the homily, the wedding party and couple come forward to their usual positions on the sanctuary steps; the priest is below them on the floor of the church
- The questions/vows/rings all take place
- The wedding party returns to their pews

The general intercessions are offered

The Liturgy of the Eucharist as usual; couple kneels and stands at their spot

After the Lord's Prayer, the priest will approach the couple for the Nuptial Blessing

If the couple wishes to give the Sign of Peace (and perhaps flowers to the parents), they leave their spots and do so, and then return to their chairs

The couple receives Communion at their chairs and remain there (either sitting or kneeling) during Communion

After Communion, the priest will approach the couple for the final blessing.

The wedding party and couple assemble one last time in their usual spots on the sanctuary steps; the priest will formally introduce the newly married couple, and they may kiss now.

After a kiss, the couple leaves first down the aisle as the recessional music begins and the wedding party follows.

The couple may either receive the guests as they leave in the gathering space of the church, or they may return into the church and greet their guests as the latter leave their pews, one by one

The Best Man/Maid of Honor are to go the sacristy to sign the Marriage License

## Sts. Anne & Joachim Catholic Church Florist Guidelines



The Church is always decorated for the liturgical season. The florist needs to be aware of this and work within the seasonal décor.

Please make sure things are left as they are, no sanctuary furniture can be moved at any time.

Only live flowers and plants can be used in the church. It is appreciated if the flowers are left for the weekend liturgies as a gift to the church, but we understand you may want to take them to your reception.

Tasteful simplicity should be the objective to creating a pleasing environment whereby the bride and groom are the focal point. Nothing should distract from the tabernacle altar, ambo, or bride and groom. The dignity of your ceremony will be enhanced if you follow these guidelines.

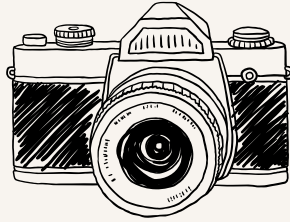
Decorations for the pews may be fastened only with ribbon and bows. No tape, staples or items that may mark the finish are to be used.

- No aisle runner will be used for safety reasons.
- No rice, birdseed, confetti, or balloons are allowed on the church property.
- No feathers or glitter of any kind may be used (pew bows, wedding dress, or decorations)

**Please Inform your florist of the above guidelines.**



## Sts. Anne & Joachim Catholic Church Photography Guideline



It is encouraged that formal photos be taken well in advance of the ceremony to allow for plenty of time and to avoid any unnecessary delays leading to the reception.

Photos must end at least one half hour before the ceremony. Check with our Director of Sacramental Preparation to see about photos beginning several hours before the ceremony.

Please keep in mind the dignity and sacred character of the church while pictures are being taken. Your example will convey this respect to others in your wedding party.

No food or beverages are allowed in the church during the photographs.

No rearranging of the furniture, altar, flowers, etc. can be done by the photographer. No furniture is to be stood on while taking pictures.

During the ceremony, no one should move around the sanctuary or center aisle or interfere with the ceremony in any way. Your photographer must respect this time of prayer and no flash pictures are to be taken. Close-up photos could be taken during the processional and recessional.

Videotaping of the ceremony is acceptable from the back of the church or from the choir loft. Check with the Director of Music if you wish to tap directly into our sound system at least one month before the wedding. (However direct wiring into our sound board is NOT permitted.) The person taping the video should be stationary to avoid distraction.

**Please Inform your florist of the above guidelines.**



# Sts. Anne & Joachim Catholic Church

## Ushers/Host Couple Guideline

These are the individuals you have asked to welcome and seat your guests.

They need to attend the rehearsal to receive instructions from the clergy. They need to be at the church at least one hour before the ceremony.

### Duties before the wedding are:

- Greet and welcome guests.
- Hand out programs (if needed).
- Seat people promptly starting at least twenty minutes before the ceremony. Be sure they know if there is specific seating for special guests.
- Due to the atmosphere of our gathering space they may need to approach guests and ask that they escort them into the church to be seated.
- Seating should be balanced between both sides of the church; escorting guests close to the front.
- Know where the gifts are to be placed.
- Know if they are to be responsible for caring for and removing gifts from the church after the wedding.

### Duties after the wedding are:

- Usher guests out of the church.
- Remove all programs from the church.
- Carefully remove any bows/decorations from the pews.
- Know what decorations do not belong to the church and are to be removed.
- Remove the gifts from the church.
- Make sure the church is in proper order and any items picked up.
- Make sure all areas used for the wedding are picked up and cleaned.
- Make sure all personal items have been removed.
- They should check with the priest before leaving to make sure all things have been done.

