

MARRIAGE PREPARATION & WEDDING LITURGY Guidelines

We know that all of us need God's blessing at all times, but at the time of their engagement to be married, Christians are in particular need of grace as they prepare themselves to form a new family.

Let us pray, then, for God's blessing to come upon this couple: that as they await the day of their wedding, they will grow in mutual respect and in their love for one another; that through their companionship and prayer together they will prepare themselves rightly and chastely for marriage. Strengthen their hearts, so that they will keep faith with each other, please you in all things, and so come to the happiness of celebrating the sacrament of their marriage. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

St. Maximilian Kolbe . . . pray for us.

St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish
Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Revised 5/20/2022

St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish
5720 Hamilton-Mason Road
Liberty Township, Ohio 45011
513.777.4322
<http://www.saint-max.org>

Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! We at St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish want to do all we can to assure that your wedding will be a prayerful, memorable, sacred, and joyous occasion.

This booklet provides necessary information about:

- Marriage & Wedding Liturgy Preparation
- Sacramental Requirements
- Necessary fees
- Contact Persons
- Guidelines for photographers and videographers
- Guidelines for florists

If you have any questions, please contact the parish office.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Jim Riehle, Pastor

BEFORE WE BEGIN...

These guidelines are meant to be complementary to the book *And the Two Shall Become One*, the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. You will be provided a copy of this publication at the “Before We Say I Do” Orientation Session. It contains valuable information about the sacramentality of marriage, as well as the many details of the wedding liturgy. It also includes all of the many options for Scripture readings, spoken prayers, and musical choices. This document and the various wedding preparation sessions will make reference to it, so it would be important as a couple to spend some time reading both these guidelines and that publication.

WHY A RELIGIOUS CEREMONY?

You have chosen to marry each other in the presence of God, family, and the community of faith. The role of the priest or deacon is that of the official representative of the Roman Catholic community, as well as the state of Ohio. When celebrated sacramentally, marriage is an action of the Church in and with Christ, and a sign of the love Christ has for you and the Church. You choose to celebrate with a community that has helped to form your values built on the Gospel that Jesus gave us. It is a union in which we believe Christ to be totally present. The exchange of your vows is the external sign of the commitment you have to one another and to the Church.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION AT ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

Before the sacrament of Holy Matrimony can be celebrated, the Church requires us to make an assessment of your readiness for marriage. For this reason, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati requires **at least six months of preparation** prior to the wedding date. Couples are encouraged to contact their parish well in advance of their desired wedding date. St. Max recommends contacting the parish nine months to a year ahead of time.

The first step in the marriage preparation process is to request an initial meeting with the pastor. *(Please know the actual celebrant for your wedding will be determined at a later date.)* At that meeting, a tentative date and time for the wedding and the wedding rehearsal will be established. Those dates will remain tentative until all marriage preparation has been completed and the necessary documentation is supplied.

Choosing the Date and Time:

- Weddings on Friday evenings may be scheduled no earlier than 5:00 PM.
- Weddings within Mass on Saturdays can be scheduled either at 1:00 PM or 1:30 PM;
- Weddings outside of Mass may be scheduled no later than 2:00 PM.
 - This is because the Sacrament of Penance is celebrated at 3:00 PM each Saturday, followed by 4:30 PM. Mass.
- If a couple would like a different time, this should be discussed with the pastor.

Arrival times on your wedding day:

- The florist can typically arrive by 11am to set up in the church
- The church, hospitality room, and St. Patrick's Room are available to your bridal parties for preparation and/or pictures typically by 11:00am the day of your wedding. Please call the parish office to confirm. If you have other needs, please let us know.

- **PLEASE NOTE:** Archdiocesan policy strongly discourages the practice of weddings that fall within Mass being held after 3:00 PM on a Saturday or the day before a holy day. The liturgical texts for wedding Masses after 3:00 PM must adhere to the liturgical and Scriptural texts that are proper for that Sunday or holy day. Therefore, the couple will not be able to choose the readings for the wedding Mass. This does not apply to a celebration of marriage outside of Mass.
- Due to the subdued and penitential nature of the liturgical season, it is not the practice of St. Maximilian Kolbe parish to celebrate weddings during Lent or Holy Week.
- Weddings are also not celebrated at St. Max on the following dates: January 1, December 24, December 25, or December 31.
- Couples who choose to marry on solemnities, certain feasts and holy days of obligation should keep in mind that the assigned prayers and readings of the day's Mass must be used. (The holy days of obligation are: January 1, the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God; August 15, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary; November 1, the Feast of All Saints; December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception; and December 25, Christmas.)
- Dates to avoid:
 - Secular holiday weekends such as Thanksgiving, 4th of July, etc.
 - No weddings will be scheduled on Festival Weekend (the weekend when the parish celebrates St. Max's Feast Day, in August.)

SACRAMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

Ideally, Catholics should be fully initiated in the Church, having received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, before they receive the sacrament of Holy Matrimony. Any individual who may have been baptized Catholic but has not received the other sacraments of initiation (Eucharist and Confirmation) is encouraged to do so. Please consult with the pastor if this is the case.

For baptized Catholics, a current baptismal certificate (with notations) must be issued from the church where the sacrament was celebrated. **This certificate must be dated no earlier than six months prior to the actual wedding date. Older records are not acceptable.**

Baptized Christians of other denominations need to provide a record of their baptism as well.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS

There are several required elements in the marriage preparation program here at St. Max. These programs emphasize the importance of preparing not only for an authentic and prayerful wedding liturgy, but also preparing for a life together upholding the teachings of the Church and reflecting the love of Christ for His Church in and through your married life.

They are as follows:

- a. A “Before We Say I Do” marriage preparation session is held at the parish several times a year. At this meeting, the couple will begin the process of formation and of preparing the wedding liturgy. **All couples must attend ONE of these sessions, during which they will begin the process of planning the wedding liturgy. Plan to attend AT LEAST SIX MONTHS, and PREFERABLY NINE MONTHS before your wedding date.**
- b. FOCCUS, a pre-marriage compatibility inventory which demonstrates readiness for marriage
- c. Mentor Couple Program: a series of meetings with one of the mentor couples from the parish marriage preparation team that takes place after the FOCCUS inventory to assist in preparation according to your mutual schedules.
- d. Engaged Encounter Weekend, Pre-Cana Day, or God’s Plan for a Joy-filled Marriage. (Please refer to additional flyers/parish website for information.)
- e. Natural Family Planning Classes (NFP)
- f. If Catholic, the bride and/or groom are encouraged to go to confession prior to receiving the sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

*These requirements may vary based upon the needs of the couple or at the discretion of the presider (the priest or deacon).

PARISH MEMBERSHIP REQUIRMENTS

Either the bride, groom, or one of their families must be members of St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish. Catholics are highly encouraged to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Matrimony in their parish. Exceptions are made at the discretion of the pastor. Couples seeking to marry in a Catholic church other than their parish must obtain permission from their “home” pastor.

RITE OF MARRIAGE WITHIN OR OUTSIDE OF MASS

Either the bride or groom must be Roman Catholic in order to be married in the Roman Catholic Church. Ordinarily if both the bride and the groom are practicing Catholics, the sacrament of Holy Matrimony is celebrated within Mass as the celebration of the Holy Eucharist reflects the unity of Christ and His Church as well as the sacramental union of the bride and groom.

If either the bride or the groom are not active members of the Church or if only the bride OR groom is Catholic, and therefore the couple is unable to receive Holy Communion together, the wedding liturgy is normally celebrated outside of the Mass. At these liturgies, a permanent deacon typically serves as the presider.

If both the bride and groom are Catholic but most of the people who will be attending the wedding will not be Catholic, it is important to talk about the choice between the rite celebrated within or outside of Mass.

It is important to prepare a wedding liturgy which will provide a prayerful environment for the two of you as well as for everyone who will be present. The active participation of all present is an important way people join in prayer for the two of you as your marriage begins.

PREPARING THE WEDDING LITURGY

The planning for the wedding liturgy usually begins early in the preparation process and is completed with the presider and/or pastoral staff. Preparing a joyful and prayerful wedding liturgy will provide a solid foundation for preparing the other details of your wedding day.

Because marriage is a partnership of life and love, planning is best done together if it is to adequately reflect the faith of both parties. While it is important to listen to the ideas of parents and friends, we encourage you to accept their suggestions graciously while you reserve the decision-making for the two of you in consultation with the parish staff. Like other meetings for preparation, the meetings to prepare the liturgy should include both bride and groom.

REHEARSAL

During your initial conversation with the pastor your wedding rehearsal will be scheduled. Ordinarily the rehearsal is held on the day before the wedding at 6:00 PM. Rehearsals may be scheduled at different times in conversation with the pastor.

It is helpful if those chosen as lectors, gift-bearers, servers, and Communion Ministers are present for this rehearsal (See details below about these ministers). Musicians are not present for the rehearsal.

Your attention to being on time will be greatly appreciated by all involved. Due to the fact that we often have more than one function scheduled in the church on a given evening, we are unable to wait more than 15 minutes for latecomers before beginning the rehearsal.

Wedding rehearsals are conducted by the presider and/or one of our wedding assistants and will last no more than one hour.

WEDDING ASSISTANTS

The parish provides a wedding assistant who will facilitate the wedding rehearsal, be available to answer your questions, and assist in the wedding liturgy itself. Her/his stipend is included in the parish fees. (See below for details.)

There is no need for any other “wedding coordinator” for the liturgy itself besides the parish personnel. If you have hired a “wedding coordinator” to work on other aspects of your wedding day, they are asked to leave the details related to the liturgy to the parish staff and wedding assistant.

VISITING CLERGY

Any Roman Catholic priest or deacon in good standing is welcome at St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish with approval of the pastor. In cases of mixed religion, the minister of the non-Catholic person is welcome to participate along with parish clergy, pending approval from the pastor. A visiting priest or deacon will verify that he will officially witness the wedding by either calling or writing the parish. At this time, the priest or deacon is to also inform the pastor of St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish whether he is doing the marriage preparation or whether the preparation will happen at the parish.

Rehearsal date and time need to be confirmed with the visiting priest or deacon AND the parish to use the building. If the couple does their preparation with a visiting priest or deacon, they are still required to prepare the liturgy in consultation with the parish’s pastoral associate for worship and/or wedding coordinator.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

Hospitality

It is very important that your guests feel welcome. More and more frequently the bride and groom and their families are acting as ministers of hospitality, greeting guests as they arrive for the wedding. This gesture goes a long way toward making the guests feel welcome.

If not the couple themselves, it would be helpful to ask a few friends or family to greet people and distribute worship aids.

It is important that greeters be friendly, smiling and welcoming. This initial hospitality will go a long way to encourage and maximize the assembly's active participation.

Lectors

One lector each is needed for the First Reading, the Second Reading, and the Universal Prayer, (sometimes referred to as the General Intercessions). The Responsorial Psalm is generally sung by a cantor. You may choose three different people or ask one person to read all three texts. Note that only one person may read the intercessions.

It is the expected norm of the Church that lectors are members of the Catholic Church. If the sacrament is celebrated outside of Mass, the readers may be from any Christian tradition. Lectors should be familiar with Catholic liturgical practices, and comfortable with public speaking, if not liturgical proclamation.

The selection of readings used for wedding liturgies are found in *And the Two Shall Become One* and on the parish website. Please provide the lectors with the text of the selected readings BEFORE the night of the rehearsal so that your lectors may be well prepared! During the liturgy, the readings will be proclaimed from the Lectionary at the ambo. Please invite the chosen lectors to the rehearsal.

Servers

Servers assist the presider (deacon or priest) in various ways during the wedding liturgy. Couples are encouraged to ask **two** family members or friends that have serving experience to act as altar servers for their wedding liturgy. If this is not possible, the parish will provide the servers.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (Mass)

In addition to the priest, and depending on the number of invited guests, it is sometimes necessary to add one or more Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Extraordinary Ministers of Communion must be trained and commissioned for this ministry here at St. Max or in their own parish. If you are unable to secure these individuals, the parish staff can help by asking some of our parish ministers.

Distribution of Holy Communion

Quite often many of the guests at a wedding liturgy come from a variety of faith backgrounds. We welcome our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and as always we pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in the Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and that some day we will fulfill Christ's prayer for us "that they may all be one" (Jn 17:21). However, because the Eucharist is the Real Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ and is thereby the central sign of unity in our faith and worship, members of those churches and faith communities with whom we are not yet fully united are not admitted to Holy Communion. Additionally, in order to ensure reverence and to minimize confusion for guests of different faith traditions, it is recommended that Holy Communion at wedding Masses be distributed to the congregation only under the species of the Host. The couple, if they are practicing Catholics, will receive Holy Communion under both kinds, i.e., the Host and the Precious Blood. This will be left at the discretion of the presider and in discussion with the bride and groom.

Gift Bearers (Mass)

In the usual way, gifts of bread and wine are brought forward in procession to the altar at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Couples are encouraged to invite 2 family members to carry the bread and wine.

WORSHIP AID/PROGRAM

The primary reason for printing a worship aid (aka "program" or "order of service") is as an aid to the participation of the gathered assembly in the wedding liturgy. Secondly, a program provides a

place to list the members of the wedding party, etc., and for the inclusion of other texts, and often becomes a wonderful keepsake.

The parish provides a worship aid which will include the parts necessary for the people's active participation in the liturgy, the order of the rite and any other music and texts for the assembly. Couples can choose the format of the worship aid— either 8 ½ x 14 booklet or 11x17 trifold and include some words of greeting/thanks.

If you need to provide a program in addition to this, it is your responsibility to design and print. **The parish's worship aid must be distributed to all guests as a measure of hospitality and to enable their participation in the liturgy.**

MUSIC

A parish staff musician will normally be the organist/pianist and serve as leader of song. If you wish, the parish may contract additional musicians (cantor, flute, trumpet, violin, etc.) whose stipends would be paid by the couple on top of normal parish fees. Other musicians may be used in consultation with the parish staff musician, but they should be pastoral musicians serving in music ministry. While friends and family members may have musical talents, those gifts might best be shared at the rehearsal dinner or the reception.

Please be attentive to the Church's guidelines for sacred music within the wedding liturgy as found in the booklet *And the Two Shall Become One*. **As it is a liturgical service of the Church, secular/popular music is not appropriate for the wedding liturgy within OR outside of Mass.** The parish website for engaged couples includes a variety of choices for each element of the wedding liturgy.

FACILITIES

The Catholic Church requires that the celebration of the sacrament of Holy Matrimony take place in the sacred setting of the church building. This has a profound effect on all aspects of the rehearsal as well as the celebration of the sacrament itself. The church is a consecrated place. Therefore, appropriate attire, proper behavior and reverence for this sacred space is expected. Unnecessary noise and loudness at rehearsals is to be avoided.

GYM/KITCHEN & CONFERENCE ROOM – Our parish has two facilities for receptions or rehearsal dinner that are available for a reasonable fee, separate from the wedding fee. The facility policy is available on request or on our website. Please call the parish office with questions.

FURNISHINGS – The furnishings in our parish church have been both artistically and theologically placed. Therefore, the furnishings must remain in the same positions in which they are found. In short, the altar, ambo, chairs for couple and clergy, and congregational seats may not be moved.

LITURGICAL SEASONS AND DÉCOR - If your wedding is scheduled during the liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Easter or Pentecost, or near dates like Thanksgiving, etc., please be aware that the décor of the church will reflect the particular colors and character of these liturgical seasons and will not be altered for individual celebrations like weddings. The Christmas and Easter Seasons, for example, will find the church well adorned with flowers. Please keep this in mind as you choose floral arrangements. You may find that you do not need to purchase any additional flowers during these times of the year.

FLOWERS, CANDLES & PEW BOWS – We suggest simplicity in the use of flowers. Flowers may be placed on the floor in front of the altar and/or ambo. Flowers are never placed on or above the height of the altar. If there is more than one wedding on a given date, couples may consider sharing the expense of having arrangements made. Flower arrangements may be left at the church for the parish to enjoy during weekend Masses or taken after the ceremony.

Pew Bows are optional. Pew Bows should be affixed AFTER 4:30 PM Mass is finished for evening weddings and must be removed after pictures are finished. **NOTE: No tape of any kind may be used on the pews to affix aisle decorations**, as it is harmful to the wood. It is suggested that large rubber bands be used instead. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make arrangements for someone other than a wedding party member to place bows and to remove them after the wedding.

Aisle candles and candelabras are not permitted.

We will provide your florist a copy of the parish guidelines.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO – We permit professional photographers to take pictures without flash during the ceremony, **but only from the back of church (out of sight)**. During the entrance procession and the procession out of the church at the end, a flash may be used. Videotaping during the ceremony must be done with a stationary tripod and is permitted only from the back of church. **At no time may a photographer enter the sanctuary or disrupt the ceremony.** Please enjoy taking posed photographs in the church after the wedding, however all photography after the wedding must be completed by 3:00 PM (afternoon wedding) or 8:15 PM (evening wedding.)

We do ask that you remember during the photo session that you are in a place of prayer, and that no one stand on any of our chairs or pews. We will provide your photographer and videographer a copy of the parish guidelines.

UNITY CANDLE – The use of a “unity candle” is not a part of the Catholic wedding liturgy and is therefore not permitted at St. Max. The principal symbol of Christ’s presence in the sacrament of marriage is the bride and groom, and the rings they exchange.

DEVOTION TO MARY – If a couple has a genuine and sincere devotion to the Blessed Virgin, talk with the presider or pastoral staff about the possibility of including such a devotion in the wedding liturgy.

AISLE RUNNER – Aisle runners are not permitted.

SIGNS – A welcome sign for guests is allowed in the gathering space. No signs of any kind are allowed within the worship space announcing the entrance of the bride, etc.

WAITING ROOMS – The Hospitality Room may be used as a gathering room before the ceremony for the bride and her attendants. The Conference Room may be used as a gathering room before the ceremony for the groom and his attendants. It is the wedding party's responsibility to tidy the space before leaving. 6:30 PM weddings should plan to arrive at 5:15 PM. 1:00 PM weddings should plan to arrive at 11:45 AM.

RECEIVING LINE – In keeping with the reality that the church is a sacred place of prayer, there is to be no receiving line at church following the ceremony. The receiving line more appropriately takes place at the reception.

RICE, BIRD SEED, CONFETTI, SPARKLERS, GLITTER, BUBBLES, FLOWER PETALS, AND HELIUM BALLOONS – Due to maintenance and other concerns, no rice, bird seed, flower petals of any kind (silk or live), confetti, or glitter may be thrown, strewn or dropped inside or outside of the church. Helium balloons, bubbles, and fireworks (including sparklers) are also not permitted.

ALCOHOL - Bringing alcoholic beverages onto parish grounds for a pre-nuptial celebration is completely inconsistent with the sacred character of the celebration of the sacrament. Even champagne in the bride's room, as traditional as it may be for some families, is not permitted. **There is to be no consumption of any type of alcoholic beverage on church premises before or after the wedding ceremony, or during the rehearsal. Additionally, the Church is forbidden to witness the marriage of anyone who is under the influence of alcohol and one cannot enter into a legal contract (including marriage) if under the influence of alcohol. DO NOT DRINK BEFORE YOUR WEDDING.**

No food of any kind may be brought into the church. It is recommended that you provide bottled water for your wedding party.

SMOKING – Smoking is prohibited. Our campus is smoke-free.

*****IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BRIDAL PARTY, THEIR FAMILIES AND GUESTS TO OBEY THESE RULES AND ALL LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS.*****

SEATING - The bride and groom will normally be seated to the left of the altar in the sanctuary. Normally, the groomsmen sit on one side of the church (right as you are facing the altar) and bridesmaids on the other (left as you are facing the altar). Additional seating requirements beyond the bridal party and immediate family (parents and grandparents) are the responsibility of the bride and groom to discuss with their ushers in advance. Traditional, escorted seating by ushers is permitted but will normally require three or four ushers and must not delay the start of the liturgy.

PROCESSION

The purpose of the procession which begins the wedding (or any other liturgy) is twofold. The need for the wedding party, ministers and couple to get to their places in church is obvious. Less obvious perhaps is the liturgical reason for processing. The ministers, couple and witnesses move through the gathered assembly as a reminder of our journey of faith. Your faith brings you to this point in life where you stand before this gathering of God's people to officially profess your love for each other.

The possibilities for processions will be discussed in detail at the wedding liturgy preparation workshop (see a fine explanation in *And the Two Shall Become One*) but for now, we encourage couples to seriously consider having both parents accompany them (bride AND groom) down the aisle.

Three options for taking this approach would be:

- 1) Wedding party enters as couples, followed by the groom with his parents and bride with her parents;
- 2) Priest or Deacon enters with the groom, wedding party enters as couples, with the bride being escorted by her parents.
- 3) Groomsmen are in place and meet bridesmaids at cross aisle, with the bride escorted by her parents last.
- 4) Groomsmen are in place with the groom at the sanctuary steps and the bridesmaids entering on their own.

RING BEARER, FLOWER GIRL, AND JUNIOR BRIDESMAID/USHERS - It is important to consider the age of children involved in these roles and determine whether their presence will add or distract from the reverent solemnity of the celebration. It seems to work best if very young children in the wedding party walk in the opening procession then sit with a family member rather than with the wedding party. Also, if a young child is serving as a flower girl or ring bearer, they must be able to walk on their own or be walked alongside or carried by an adult. No strollers or wagons of any kind are allowed to be used in the entrance or closing processions of the liturgy.

NOTE FOR RING-BEARERS: The wedding rings are blessed within the Rite of Marriage. Therefore, the rings need to be accessible during the rite. It is recommended that the actual rings are not brought forth in procession, but already in the sanctuary in preparation for the rite.

FEES

The fee for weddings celebrated for parishioners at St. Maximilian Kolbe Church is \$350.00. Make checks payable to St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish. This fee includes:

- Use of the parish facilities
- The services of the parish wedding assistant at the rehearsal and the wedding liturgy itself.
- Materials and events of the formation process
- The necessary paperwork required by the Archdiocese. (FOCCUS instrument, Sponsor Couple programs, etc.)
- NFP Class (The cost of NFP Classes taken elsewhere may be reimbursed up to \$135.00)
- The stipend for the principal musician.

Should you choose to employ the services of additional musicians in consultation with the pastoral associate (cantors or instrumentalists), their fees are not included in this total and should be paid directly to those musicians. **Again, the use of any musicians other than parish musicians is at the discretion of the Pastoral Associate** and Director of Music. An approximate stipend can vary, but typically runs between \$100-\$200 per extra instrumentalist.

*****FEES MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE PARISH OFFICE AT LEAST 14 DAYS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING DAY OR YOUR WEDDING MAY BE POSTPONED.*****

DON'T FORGET...

Bring the following items with you to the parish office at least 2 weeks prior to the wedding liturgy:

- Check for Wedding Fee (\$350)
- Check for the additional musicians (if used)

Bring to the wedding rehearsal or on the wedding day itself: Marriage License and Certificate (By state law, the deacon/priest is not permitted to perform a wedding ceremony without the legal documentation of a marriage license.)

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

The celebration of the sacrament of Holy Matrimony is a celebration for the whole Church, and in particular the whole parish community. We all rejoice with you in your new life together and we pledge our prayers and support for you in your new ministry to one another.

If you will be living within the St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish community, please register as a new family even though you are already registered as an individual. Registering in the parish is important for our records and your continued involvement in the parish. We invite you to participate in parish life and regularly worship with us. If you will be living elsewhere, please register at a parish and become actively involved in the life of your new community.

Through the intercession of St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary, may our Lord continue to bless you abundantly.

PHOTOGRAPHER'S/VIDEOGRAPHER'S GUIDELINES

St. Maximilian Kolbe Parish
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Liberty Township, OH 45011
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The church building and the liturgies that take place within it are sacred. Therefore, photographers and videographers must be sensitive to our parish in respecting the wedding liturgy as a sacred event. The following are required directives for all professional photographers and videographers to follow.

1. Excessive movement during the ceremony is a distraction to those gathered in prayer and detracts from the ceremony as it is being celebrated. Photographers may station themselves in the center aisle, as necessary, during the entrance procession. However, **during the liturgy, photographers may make use only of the back of church, not moving around in the side aisles or in the front. You may not move down the aisles during the ceremony or enter the sanctuary platform.** Please consult with the parish office if you have any questions.
2. Flash pictures may be taken before or after the liturgy and during the processional and recessional only. **No flash pictures are permitted during the liturgy.**
3. Church furnishings, i.e., the altar, ambo and congregational seats may not be moved or stood upon under any circumstances. Seasonal and/or liturgical decorations may not be moved.
4. Immediately following the ceremony, photographs of the wedding party may be taken in the sanctuary. The furniture in the sanctuary is not to be moved in any way, nor should anything ever be put on the altar. No one is permitted to stand on pews, tables, or chairs.
5. All picture taking must be completed by 3:00 PM (for afternoon weddings) or 8:15 PM (for evening weddings) making it possible for the couples to join their invited guests at the reception and allow the wedding assistant to clean and close the facility.
6. It is strongly encouraged that as many pictures of the wedding party be taken prior to the ceremony as possible. Weather permitting, the church garden areas may be used for outdoor photos. Please note: No photography may take place in church or gathering space between 2:45 pm and 6:15 pm on Saturday. Picture taking must be completed at least 30 minutes before the ceremony begins. Set-up and picture taking outside may begin no sooner than 2 hours prior to the wedding.
7. NO photography equipment is to be left up during the celebration.
8. No additional lighting may be brought into the church for the ceremony.

FLORIST'S GUIDELINES

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The church building and the liturgies that take place within are sacred. Therefore, florists must be sensitive to our parish in respecting the wedding liturgy as a sacred event. The following are required directives for all florists to follow.

1. Flowers are considered adornments for the place of worship. No parish plants or flowers already in place may be moved for a wedding, and no flowers may ever be placed on the altar itself. They may be placed in front of the altar and/or in front of the ambo. The altar stands 39 inches. All floral arrangements must be shorter than 39 inches.
2. The altar cloth may not be removed or replaced with another for the wedding.
3. Sanctuary furniture, decorations or flowers may not be moved for the wedding by the florist or anyone else. Seasonal decorations provided by the parish are integral to the parish liturgical celebrations and may not be moved or removed.
4. Pew bows or decorations are optional. Pew bows should be affixed AFTER 4:30 PM Mass is finished for evening weddings and must be removed after pictures are finished. Please make arrangements for someone other than a wedding party member to place bows. No tape of any kind may be used on the pews to affix aisle decorations, as it is harmful to the wood. It is suggested that large rubber bands be used instead.
6. It is the responsibility of the florist to deliver altar flowers at a time which is convenient for the parish. Please call the parish office in the week prior to make arrangements for delivery time.