

St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church Guidelines

Celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! We at St. Mary Magdalene are here to support and guide you through your marriage and wedding preparation.

Getting Started-confirming eligibility 6-8 months prior to your wedding

Follow the steps below to determine eligibility and confirm your preferred wedding date and time.

Step	Action
1	Read these Marriage guidelines.
2	Email weddings@stmm.net to begin the process. The wedding coordinator will reach out to you to discuss your date, ceremony, and next steps.
3	<u>Make a church offering or deposit to reserve your wedding date.</u> For participating and supporting members of StMM there is a donation of \$300 for weddings or convalidations with a Liturgy of the Word or Nuptial Mass in the main church. This defrays expenses for your wedding, such as heat, air conditioning, lighting, maintenance, and to compensate those who help with setting up the facility for your day. \$150 donation should be made for smaller weddings and Convalidations in our Chapel. For those who are non-contributing or non-members the donation is \$800. Half the fee is due at booking and the remainder two months prior to your wedding. Checks should be made payable to: St. Mary Magdalene Church Mail checks to: STMM 625 Magdala Place Apex, NC 27502 Attn: Julie Hoffman - please reference your wedding date
4	Review the Marriage Preparation steps and contact the Marriage Prep Coordinator - Katie Lowell katieannlowell@gmail.com

Note: The days and times for weddings at St. Mary Magdalene Church are:

- Saturdays at 11:00 am or 2:00 pm (*with rehearsals on Friday evening, beginning at 5:00 pm*)
- Friday Evenings (*rehearsals on Thursday evening*)
- Other days of the week may be available, but never Sundays

Beginning your wedding preparation 4-6 months before your wedding

Step	Action
	• Begin completing the necessary paperwork and schedule a Prenuptial Investigation with a StMM Priest or Deacon as outlined in the Marriage in the Diocese of Raleigh

Beginning your ceremony preparation 3-6 months before your wedding

Follow the steps below to prepare for the wedding ceremony.

Step	Action
1	Contact Andrew Witchger, the Music Director to plan your wedding music. (music@stmm.net) <u>Only contact outside musicians after receiving approval from the Music Director.</u> The Music Director provides names of vocalists, cantors or instrumentalists that are available for consideration. Fees for all musicians are paid directly through the Music Director and are not set by the church.
2	Choose Scripture reading selections from the <i>Together for Life</i> booklet the Wedding Coordinator gives you or view it online. The priest selects the other choices from the book. <i>Note:</i> The <i>Together for Life</i> booklet guides you through the wedding liturgy with choices of prayers and readings that are most often used in the wedding liturgy.
3	Obtain a Marriage License Application from the Wake County [or any North Carolina County] Register of Deeds, available 60 days before your wedding. For information: http://wakegov.com/rod or call (919) 856-5490 (both the bride and groom are required to be present together at the ROD office). Bring your marriage license on the day of the wedding rehearsal and give it to the Wedding coordinator. The Priest returns it to the County.

Completing your ceremony preparation *1 month-two weeks before the wedding*

Step	Action
1	Complete the Ceremony Overview form you receive from the wedding coordinator.
2	Email the wedding coordinator to set a date/time to review the wedding details.
3	Complete a draft of your wedding program (worship aid) and send it to the wedding coordinator for review <i>prior</i> to having the final version printed. Note: Most couples provide guests with a worship aid. We are happy to provide a template for your reference.

Contacts:

- Priest – Fr. Michael Coveyou mcoveyou@stmm.net
- Ceremony Wedding Coordinators - Amy Fisher and Stephanie Laird weddings@stmm.net
- Sacrament Coordinator - Sarah Sansone sansone@stmm.net
- Marriage Prep Coordinator - Katie Lowell katieannlowell@gmail.com
- Music Director - Andrew Witchger - music@stmm.net

Planning the ceremony: Frequently asked questions

Should we have a Nuptial Mass or Liturgy of the Word ceremony?When both parties are Catholic, it is presumed there is a Nuptial Mass. If one party is of another faith, the ceremony usually does not include a Mass. You may discuss this with the priest and the Wedding Coordinator. If having a Nuptial Mass, the church provides two altar servers when available. We recommend a \$10 cash gift to each Altar Server.

May I have a private wedding planner?Private wedding planners help keep the secular aspects of your wedding day running smoothly; however they do not participate in the Church rehearsal or planning of the liturgy. The rehearsal and ceremony are the traditional liturgy of the Church. If you hire a wedding planner, please let them know that our Wedding Coordinator, under the direction of the Priest, takes care of all matters pertaining to the Church rehearsal and ceremony.

May I have the following?

In the interest of safety, time, and maintenance the following are *not* permitted:

- Aisle runners
- Rice, birdseed or confetti
- Flower petals (silk or live) scattered by a flower girl
- Unity wedding candles – these should be reserved for the Reception

- Receiving lines after the ceremony which delay the photographers
- Alcoholic beverages & tobacco products are prohibited on the Church grounds

May I have a memorial candle?

If you wish to have a candle burning near the altar in memory of a loved one(s), please purchase a dripless/smokeless candle from a craft store and print the appropriate information in your wedding program.

What flowers may we have? The church does not provide flowers and they are optional. If desired, we recommend two large flower arrangements placed on the ledges on each side of the Tabernacle behind the altar that will remain at the church for weekend Masses. Please ask your florist to set them in disposable containers to be placed on our vases or they can provide their own disposable vases. Flowers should arrive two hours before the wedding.

May we have pew bows or greenery?

Pew bows/pew greenery are permitted; these items must be attached by ribbons to avoid damage to the wooden pews. Scotch tape or similar substances are damaging to wood and should not be used.

Are there guidelines for the wedding gown or bridesmaid dresses?

We ask that you are mindful that your ceremony is in a Church and you honor the sanctity of the ceremony. Dresses should be on the modest side with no bare shoulders, thin straps, plunging necklines, or deep backs. This applies to the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. Many bridesmaids have chosen to wear a jacket or shawl during the ceremony then remove it for the reception (and even photos). If you have any questions, please email us and we will gladly help.

Are there guidelines for the photographer? Your wedding is a sacred event; therefore photographers should conduct themselves in a professional manner with respect for the Church liturgy and for those who attend your wedding. A good photographer is virtually “invisible” and should not be a distraction. The church Wedding Coordinator will inform the photographer what locations photographs can be taken and when it is appropriate to take pictures. Flash photography during the ceremony should be avoided.

Are there guidelines for the videographer? Video cameras must be on a stationary tri-pod and are only permitted in designated areas. The Wedding Coordinator will guide the videographer where the proper tri-pod location is in the Church.

Is there a Bride's room? There is a room available for the bride and her attendants one hour before the wedding. This room is to be used for dressing only, please do not schedule to have your hair/make-up stylist work with you in this room. Be sure to secure valuables elsewhere. The groom and groomsmen should arrive at the Church in full attire.

May we take pictures after the ceremony? The wedding party and families may return to the Church for formal pictures. Due to the Saturday 5pm Vigil Mass and other events that take place at StMM, we can only permit 30-minutes after the wedding for pictures to be taken. The first photo should be with the Priest.

We are here to assist you with all of your wedding plans and look forward to serving you in your marriage preparations. Please email all questions to weddings@stmm.net