

**Our Lady of Lourdes Wedding Guidelines**  
2621 Colonial Blvd., Violet, LA 70092 \* (504) 682-7070  
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, F 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Marriage, as one of the 7 sacraments of the Church, is central to the life of the Church and of society. In marriage a husband and wife devote their lives to each other in self-giving love, following the example of Jesus who gave Himself up to death for His bride, the Church. We are very pleased that you're considering getting married at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church and want to help you to live out your marriage as a witness to the love of God in the world.

**Times Available for wedding:**

- † Friday evening outside of Lent & Saturday between 10 am & 1:30 pm or 6:00 pm or later.
- † Weekdays, depending on the parish schedule. Contact office for details.
- † There are no weddings during Lent except for extenuating circumstances.
- † Please schedule your wedding at least 8 months in advance.
- † You must contact a priest or deacon before it can be put on the schedule, and he will give you a form to allow us to schedule your wedding.
- † All weddings take place in the Church, except for extreme extenuating circumstances.

**Who can be married at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church?**

- † Anyone, whether parishioners or non-parishioners, can be married at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church as long as at least one of the parties is Catholic and the couple meets the legal and canonical requirements to be married. These will be explained to you by the priest or deacon preparing you.

**Civil Requirements:**

- † Marriage License – You must obtain a marriage license at least 72 hours before the wedding but no longer than 30 days before the wedding. Bring the license to the celebrant as soon as you get it.
- † You must be at least 18 years old to marry, or 16 with parental permission.

**Church Requirements:**

- † Baptismal Certificates dated within 6 months of the date of the wedding.
- † Meetings with a priest or deacon for marriage preparation.
- † Participation in an approved Marriage Preparation Program, the priest or deacon preparing you can explain the options.
- † NFP classes are part of marriage preparation. Ask the priest or deacon preparing you for details.

**Church Fee:**

- † There is no Church use fee for weddings. All donations to the Church or minister are appreciated.

**Cancellation Policy:**

- † If it is deemed necessary for Our Lady of Lourdes to cancel a wedding due to circumstances beyond its control (i.e. Hurricanes, major repairs, etc.), we will refund the deposit and balance, if any, on the church fee only. No other expenses incurred by the bridal party will be reimbursed. As much advanced notice as possible will be given.

**Arrival:**

- † It is recommended that groomsmen arrive 45 minutes prior to the wedding; they may gather in the sacristy in the back of the Church
- † Bridesmaids ought to arrive 30 minutes prior to the wedding; they may gather in the front sacristy.

**Wedding Mass or Service:**

- † A wedding Mass, with the Eucharist, is normally chosen for couples where both the bride and groom are

Catholic.

- † A wedding service, without the Eucharist, is normally chosen for mixed religion couples. If a mixed religion couple desires to have the full Mass, it must be approved by the celebrant of the wedding.

#### Music:

- † You must use the Our Lady of Lourdes music ministers for your wedding if they are available. If you wish to use other musicians, they must be approved by the pastor or the music coordinator.
- † Most of our music ministers charge \$175 for the wedding. A list of pre-approved music ministers is available in the parish office.
- † Only Christian hymns or instrumental music are allowed.
- † The music ministers usually do not attend the rehearsal.

#### Church Decorations:

- † Seasonal decorations (Christmas trees, coverings on the statues during Lent, etc.) must remain in place.
- † The use of the unity candle for weddings is no longer allowed, as of the newest revision of the Rite of Matrimony.
- † Pew bows must be attached by string or rubber band to prevent scratching of the pews.
- † Flower arrangements at the altar, statues, and ambo may be left in place, but all other decorations and flowers must be removed immediately after the wedding. During Lent all flowers and decoration must be removed. It is the responsibility of the couple to inform the florist of this policy.
- † Silk petals may be thrown if they are picked up immediately after the wedding. Rice, bird seed and other such throws are forbidden by our insurance policy, as they pose a threat of slipping.
- † Arches are not allowed in the sanctuary or by the altar.
- † The Church does not provide programs.

#### Bridal Party:

- † The bridal party is allowed a maximum of 18 persons, i.e. bride and groom, maid of honor, best man, 7 bridesmaids and 7 groomsmen.
- † No low-cut gowns or bare shoulders.
- † If the bridal party wears gloves, they must receive communion on the tongue.

#### Photography and Videography:

- † It is the responsibility of the couple to hire the photographer and/or videographer, if desired.
- † They are not allowed to enter the sanctuary, but may go anywhere else in the Church.
- † Photographers and videographers are not allowed to stand on the furniture or place equipment on the furniture.

#### Readers and Gift-bearers:

- † The couple may desire to have family members or friends involved in the wedding ceremony.
- † You may choose up to 4 readers: for the first reading, responsorial psalm, second reading, and intercessions.
- † You may have up to 3 gift-bearers to bring up the bread, wine and water for the Mass.
- † This should be organized with the priest or deacon who is celebrant.

#### Nota Bene (Note Well):

- † Please arrive on time for the rehearsal and wedding. We are a busy parish with a full schedule, so punctuality is very important.
- † *The bride and groom must be able to give totally free consent to their vows. The use of alcohol or drugs diminishes that ability. Therefore, if the bride or groom is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, THE WEDDING WILL NOT PROCEED.*