

INFORMATION FOR THOSE  
CONTEMPLATING MARRIAGE  
AT  
ST. AUSTIN CATHOLIC CHURCH



All of us of St. Austin Catholic Parish offer our congratulations on your engagement, and we pray that God will bless and guide you in your preparation for marriage! Your wedding day will be a very special one for you and we want to do all that we are able to insure that it will be filled with joy; that it will be a blessed, holy and prayerful celebration.

Preparation for your marriage should begin no later than six months in advance of your desired wedding date, and preferably nine months in advance. The first step is to obtain a *Wedding Request Form* from the receptionist at the Parish Office. Fill out the form completely and return it to the receptionist. Within a week or so, after the availability of dates and times has been determined, you will be contacted by one of St. Austin's clergy or his delegate who will guide you through the marriage preparation process.

You may wish to include the following in your wedding invitations:

For those who will be attending the wedding rites at the Church, please note the following:

- Parking is available on the streets around the church, behind the church and around the fence that encloses the school playground and under the north portions of the parish center/gym. DO NOT park in the reserved spaces for priests.
- The church is a dedicated sacred space for worship and contemplation. As Catholics we believe Christ, is fully present in the form of bread, which has been consecrated at Mass and is kept in the Tabernacle (located on the high altar). This is reserved in the Tabernacle for distribution to the sick and homebound. Please respect our tradition and join us in silent prayer as you enter the church.
- Come dressed for a sacred celebration. Attire with bare midriffs, short dresses/skirts, high slits, skin-tight outfits, plunging necklines, or backless gowns are not appropriate for church. You may consider wearing a shawl or wrap over the shoulders while in the church.
- Photos with or without flash and video cameras are not to be operated by wedding guests during the wedding. Professionals have been hired to perform these tasks and follow specific directions out of respect for the sacred worship.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

# St. Austin Catholic Church

## Wedding Information



2026 Guadalupe Street Austin, Texas 78705

512.477.9471 [www.staustin.org](http://www.staustin.org)

## PAPER WORK REQUIREMENTS

As your preparation proceeds, the clergy you are working with will ask the Catholic party or parties to provide an updated copy of their baptismal certificate with notations. This must be a recently issued copy, not the “family heirloom” copy. This certificate may be obtained by contacting the church in which you were baptized, and requesting that one be sent to you. If your confirmation is not noted on your baptismal certificate, please bring the assisting priest a copy of your confirmation certificate. While confirmation is not required in order to be married, it is strongly recommended that you celebrate that sacrament prior to the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Christians baptized in other Christian churches must also provide a copy of a baptismal certificate or other proof of baptism.

**If either of you, whether Catholic or not, has ever been previously married, in either a civil or a religious ceremony, you need to *immediately inform the priest* of this. These previous marriages are recognized by the Catholic Church so you must speak with the clergy about any previous marriage and its implications on your freedom to marry in a Catholic ceremony.**

## MARRIAGE PREPARATION

The celebration of a sacrament, including the Sacrament of Matrimony, is a vital and important part of the life of the Roman Catholic Church. Your love for each other is an example, a sign, of how God loves his people, and how the Church needs and is nourished by the witness of your love and fidelity to each other and to your family.

Because the Church considers marriage a sacrament, that is, a sign of the presence of God among us, and takes the marriage commitment very seriously, certain preparation is necessary and expected. This includes, but is not limited to:

- ◆ ongoing conversation with the clergy preparing you for marriage,
- ◆ attendance at an Engaged Encounter Weekend, Diocesan Marriage Formation Program or St. Austin Sponsor Couple Program.
- ◆ attendance at weekly Sunday Mass and participation in the parish ministries

## WEDDING COORDINATOR

After your wedding date has been placed on the parish calendar, please contact Ms. Pat Lucksinger, the Parish Wedding Coordinator, to discuss your wedding, the use of the church, and to arrange a tour the church and bride's dressing room. The Wedding Coordinator will attend your rehearsal and be present to assist you the day of your wedding. The Wedding Coordinator can be reached in the Parish Office at 512-477-9471 x322 or by e-mail [plucksinger@staustin.org](mailto:plucksinger@staustin.org). During your tour, you will be given a Wedding Set-Up Form that should be filled out and returned to the Wedding Coordinator no later than two weeks prior to your wedding. The parish wedding coordinator is the sole wedding coordinator who works with the clergy-presiders. Other wedding coordinators cannot assist with the Wedding Rites and the elements associated with the actual Wedding Liturgy.

## MARRIAGE LICENSE

The marriage license must be in the hands of the parish wedding coordinator no later than the time of the wedding rehearsal. For information about obtaining the required civil marriage license, contact the county clerk's office. A marriage license issued in one county of Texas is valid in any Texas county.

## WEDDING TIMES

St. Austin Catholic Church is a very busy place on Saturdays; for that reason marriages are scheduled only at 11 a.m., 2 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. and each wedding is allowed a three-hour block of time. More about this later in this brochure. No weddings are scheduled in the Season of Lent and Holy Week. (Ash Wednesday through Easter Sunday.)

## REHEARSAL TIMES

Wedding rehearsals, no longer than one hour in length, are usually conducted on Friday at between the hours of 4 and 7 p.m. Holidays on Friday will necessitate a rehearsal time other than Friday.

## FEES

At St. Austin we strive to celebrate all the sacraments with ceremony, dignity, beauty and prayerfulness, and in the manner intended by the Roman Catholic Church. Please keep in mind that the model for the celebration of a marriage is the Sunday Eucharist. The parish provides the services of several members of the staff, formation for the couple and a dignified environment to help facilitate the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage.

The cost for the use of the church, the bride's dressing room and the parish parking garage for your guests, and for the services of the clergy, organist, cantor and wedding coordinator is \$1,625 for those who, at the time the wedding request is made, are registered and contributing parishioners of St. Austin Catholic Parish. If you do not choose to use the parking garage, the cost of the wedding is \$1,325.

The cost for the use of the church, the bride's dressing room and the parish parking garage for your guests, and for the services of the clergy, organist, cantor and wedding coordinator is \$2,125 for non-parishioners who request the celebration of their marriage at St. Austin. If you do not choose to use the parking garage, the cost of the wedding is \$1,825. For the purposes of requesting marriages at St. Austin, a parishioner is defined as a registered member of the parish at the time the wedding request is made and who has made traceable financial contributions to the parish; or whose parents are currently registered and contributing members of the parish. Parishioner status is determined at the discretion of the pastor.

A non-refundable deposit of \$250 is payable when your wedding date has been confirmed and is required to reserve the date and time of your wedding. The remainder of the cost is due in full no later than two weeks prior to the wedding. A personal gift to the clergy is certainly appropriate, and is solely at your discretion.

The services of any additional musicians are the financial responsibility of the couple and will be paid by you directly to the individuals providing the service.

## THE BRIDE'S ROOM

Paulist Hall is available for the bride and her attendants 1-1/2 hours before the scheduled time of the wedding through ½ hour after the wedding. Please do not expect the use of this room any earlier or any later. The St. Austin wedding coordinator will unlock Paulist Hall at the following times: 9:30 a.m. for a 11 a.m. wedding, 12:30 p.m. for a 2 p.m. wedding, 6 p.m. for a 7:00 p.m. wedding.

We recommend that you not leave valuables in Paulist Hall during the ceremony. The wedding coordinator will lock the room during your wedding, but St. Austin Catholic Parish cannot be responsible for items left unattended.

Paulist Hall should be left clean and orderly. **Please note that SMOKING, the consumption of any form of TOBACCO, ILLEGAL DRUG use or ALCOHOL, including champagne, wine, or beer and FIREARMS or WEAPONS of any type (including swords) are not permitted anywhere on St. Austin property including the parking lots.**

No dressing room is provided for the groom and groomsmen. At the discretion of the priest presiding at the wedding, the groom and his attendants may assemble in the sacristy\* of the church prior to the ceremony.

No food, drink (other than water), tobacco products of any sort, or alcohol are permitted anywhere in the church building, including the sacristy. All Catholic who will receive Holy Communion should refrain from drink and food (according to the Church's fasting guidelines) prior to the celebration of a Mass.

**The Church's requirements for fasting before Mass should be observed by anyone 12-59 years of age and whose health permits them to participate in the fast.**

\*The sacristy is a designated room for the clergy to prepare for the Liturgy. Conversations and other activities MUST be reverential in nature.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO TAPING

In order to preserve the solemnity and prayerfulness of your wedding, photographers and videographers may not enter the sanctuary (the altar area) or the “old” choir room adjacent to the sanctuary during the ceremony. They may photograph the wedding from a designated location in the balcony or from the center aisle, behind the last seated guest. (The videographer is permitted to set up a stationary, “unmanned” video camera in the old choir room adjacent to the sanctuary, however he or she must start the camera before the ceremony begins and may not enter that room during the ceremony.) They may not move about the church during the ceremony with the exception of the recessional. In order not to detract from the religious nature of the ceremony, flash photography (professional or amateur) is not allowed during the ceremony with the exception of the procession and recession. Videographers may not use any additional light source and must film from a stationary location.

Please see Appendix 2: “Policy for Photographers and Videographers at St. Austin Catholic Church” for additional guidelines concerning your wedding photography. **We request that you give a copy of these guidelines to your photographer (and videographer), and discuss the details with them at the time you contract for their services, but certainly no later than one month prior to your wedding.** If your photographer/videographer has any questions, he or she may discuss them with the wedding coordinator or the clergy before the wedding.



## FLOWERS AND CANDLES

It is a long-standing tradition that the flowers placed in the church for your wedding are an offering of thanksgiving to God. For that reason your flowers should remain in the church after the wedding. In order to help you keep your expenses down, we encourage couples with weddings on the same day to coordinate their flowers and share the cost. The wedding coordinator will be happy to assist you with these arrangements. If for some reason you are not planning to use arrangements of fresh flowers for your wedding, please inform the wedding coordinator two weeks prior to the wedding.

Floral arrangements for 7:00 p.m. weddings must be in place no later than 4:00 p.m. Your florist may not deliver flowers or other decorations between 4:30 and 6:15 p.m because a Mass is celebrated at 5 p.m. Any candelabra or aisle decorations may not be put in place until after the Saturday evening Mass, which means at about 6:30 p.m.

Because of the serious and dangerous problems caused by wax dripping on the terrazzo floor and pews, only dripless candles in metal casings approved by the parish wedding coordinator may be used.

Only church candles may be placed on the “high” altar. The church lighting cannot be dimmed due to its age and all lights must be “on” prior to, during and after the wedding for safety concerns. No additional lighting (i.e. spots) may be used during the Liturgy.

Any free-standing flowers and/or candles may not be placed in such a way as to inhibit the movement of the ministers during the marriage rite. No garland of any kind may be used inside or outside the church. Ribbons, bows, or candles must not obstruct entrance into the pews from either the side or center aisles.

Please see Appendix 1: “Policy for Florists” for additional guidelines concerning decorations for your wedding. **Please give a copy to your florist when you order your flowers and other decorations, but certainly no later than one month prior to your wedding.** If they have any questions, they should immediately call the wedding coordinator.

## MUSIC

After your wedding date has been reserved, you should make an appointment with Dr. John J. Hoffman, Pastoral Associate for Liturgy and Music, and Organist of St. Austin Catholic Parish. He plays for all weddings at St. Austin. He will arrange for the services of a parish cantor (who leads the assembly in singing the hymns and responses, and can sing certain solo compositions). He will also schedule a consultation with you and help you to plan appropriate music for your wedding ceremony approximately 4 months prior to the wedding. Should you wish to have additional musicians or singers, he can assist you in engaging their services or the services of one of St. Austin's choirs. These musicians may only supplement the ritual music.

Music for your wedding may be selected from many different styles, however, it must express the religious and liturgical nature of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Dr. Hoffman may be contacted at 477-9471 x326 or by e-mail at [jhoffman@staustin.org](mailto:jhoffman@staustin.org).

## LITURGICAL APPROPRIATENESS

At St. Austin we believe that our church has a simple and noble beauty. We take care to add only those things which are necessary for the liturgical rites celebrated here. On occasion, banners and other hangings are hung along the walls of the church in the color of the liturgical season of the time: white or gold for Christmas and Easter, purple or violet for Lent and Advent, red for feasts such as Pentecost and green for the rest of the year which is called the Season of Ordinary Time. These hangings may not be removed or changed.

The furniture in the sanctuary or chancel, that area that includes the altar and ambo (pulpit), and any seasonal decorations are placed there for specific purpose, meaning and symbol. They are not to be moved.

The Catholic Church encourages those contemplating marriage during the liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent to take into consideration the special preparatory or penitential nature of these seasons. These seasons are more somber in character and the Marriage Rites should respect this tradition. The priest assisting you can tell you if your desired date falls within one of these seasons.

During the seasons of Lent, Easter, Advent, Christmas, and for specific solemnities throughout the year, the readings for a Mass must include at least the Gospel of the day for any Masses celebrated after 4 PM.

## OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS OF CONCERN

For the safety of those attending your wedding:

- ◆ The use of an aisle runner in the church is not permitted.
- ◆ Flower petals, rice, birdseed, confetti, bubbles, etc. may not be thrown anywhere on parish property. Releasing of butterflies, doves, etc. is not permitted.
- ◆ The assembly is not permitted to hold lighted candles, bells, flower petals, butterflies, etc.
- ◆ Reception-receiving lines are not permitted at the church because of time constraints.
- ◆ For security and safety reasons, please do not leave purses, cameras, valuable property unattended at any time. Do not allow children to wander around the church property unaccompanied by an adult.
- ◆ Food and drink are not permitted in the church or its ancillary rooms (i.e. sacristy.) This includes non-alcoholic drinks.
- ◆ The ability to dim lights is not available. All lights will remain on prior to, during and after the ceremony for safety concerns. No additional lighting is permitted in the church (i.e., spot lights).

Some of your guests may not be familiar with our Catholic tradition of gathering in silence upon entering the church. All your guests, including the wedding party even at the rehearsal, should be instructed that the church is a sacred place and conversations and should be kept to a minimum.

The attire (wedding gowns, attendant dresses and guest attire) should be modest in nature befitting the sacred character of the celebration in the church. Gowns and dresses with bare midriffs, short dresses/skirts, high slits, skin-tight outfits, plunging necklines or backless gowns are not dignified or appropriate for the wedding rehearsal, marriage Rites and/or Mass. Please inform your wedding party and guests.

## CONCLUSION

Many people comment about the reverence, prayerfulness, beauty and peace they experience during worship at St. Austin. These comments affirm our belief that we should always remain true to our identity as Catholics and celebrate the Rites in the best manner possible. Our highly talented and experienced staff offers quality service in a prayerful manner. Please be assured that you, your family and friends will experience the Church at its best.

Sometimes the couple may be concerned about the guests who will not be familiar with the Catholic wedding Rites. Please be assured that in most cases your guests expect you to honor our Catholic heritage and want to witness your marriage in our faith tradition. There is no need to worry about inhospitality. Our staff will always strive to make everyone feel welcomed and comfortable.

Please be assured of the prayers of the parish staff and the entire St. Austin's community as you prepare, not only for your wedding day, but for your life together as husband and wife. God bless you and your families and friends.

## A SPECIAL NOTE TO THE COUPLE AND THEIR PARENTS:

Parents often express a desire to assist with the planning and execution of the wedding. However well intentioned this may be, only the couple alone with the presider (priest or deacon), the music director and the parish wedding coordinator will plan the Rites, the environment and music for the wedding. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

The parish is well aware that weddings in our culture seem to demand a lot of couples and families. Photographs, flowers, gowns, rings, receptions, dinners, invitations and many other details require a great deal of time from the couple. We, however, invite the couple to find time to pray. We encourage all couples to attend Mass frequently, fully engage in your wedding formation, and become active in the parish ministries. We look forward to celebrating with you and hope you will join us in our prayer and ministries.

God's blessings to you,  
Clergy, Musicians and Wedding Coordinator

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