

Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel & St. Therese Parish

1715 N. Zarzamora, San Antonio, Texas 78201

735-9126 Fax: 735-1389

Wedding Guidelines

The following guidelines are to help you plan your wedding Mass at Little Flower Basilica.

First, contact the **pastor** to schedule your **wedding date** and time before making any other wedding arrangements. You cannot secure a wedding date with the parish secretary. This needs to be done a **minimum** of **six months prior** to your wedding date to allow ample time for attending the necessary classes, and, **four** meetings with one of the Carmelite Priest, a meeting with the Wedding Coordinator/Organist, Thelma Montez (see below), and the wedding rehearsal.

Each couple is responsible for obtaining records of their:

- a) Baptism (Catholics and Non-Catholics) – **Needs to be an updated copy with current date.**
- b) First Communion (Catholics only)
- c) Confirmation (Catholics only)

These records will be kept in your **permanent** file at Little Flower Parish.

The Archdiocese of San Antonio requires that all couples who wish to marry in the Catholic Church, **must attend:**

- the Archdioceses Weekend Seminar plus Natural Family Planning follow-up.
- or
- the Archdiocese Weekend Retreat, plus Natural Family Planning follow-up.

Each couple is responsible for scheduling 4 meetings with a priest. Please call Fr. Jim Curiel at 735-9126 to schedule these meetings. The 4 meetings need to conclude one month before your wedding date.

The pastor requires the couple (those Catholic) to go to confession within one week of their wedding. Please make arrangements to see a priest and make a good confession.

Your wedding is first and foremost a religious celebration rather than a social celebration. Social and cultural customs are not discouraged, as long as they are appropriate and reasonable. Often, most of these customs can be observed at the reception, rather than in the church.

Wedding dates can only be scheduled by the Pastor at the time of your scheduled appointment. If you need to reschedule your already scheduled wedding date, you will need to schedule an appointment with the Pastor.

Wedding Mass Time Schedule

Saturday's at 12:00 p.m. or 2:30 p.m.

Stipend

Parishioners: \$500

Non-Parishioners: \$1,000

A parishioner is regarded as an individual that has been attending and supporting the Parish a minimum of one year prior to scheduling your wedding.

\$200 from the church stipend needs to be paid immediately to secure your wedding date after meeting with the pastor. This is **non-refundable**.

This price includes:

- a) Utilities (air conditioner or heater)
- b) ½ hour to decorate pews, set up flowers etc. (prior to Mass)
- c) 1 hour of Mass
- d) ½ hour to take photos (after Mass)
- e) Meetings (4) with the priest
- f) Meeting with the Wedding Coordinator/Organist, **Thelma Montez**
- g) Church music: **Organist, Thelma Montez AND Soloist, Elaine Bir** (soprano)
- h) Rehearsal

It is acceptable to have your meetings with a priest from another parish and/or have additional music arrangements, however, the stipend remains the same. The church stipend may be paid in full or in installments. All payments are made through the **parish secretary** and a receipt is given upon payment. The **final payment**, however, must be received **no later** than **two weeks prior** to the wedding date.

Wedding Coordinator/Organist

1. Contact the Wedding Coordinator/ Organist, **Thelma Montez (647-8393)**, as soon as your wedding date and time are arranged with the pastor.
2. Obtain the book, **Together for Life**, from the secretary, which contains all the liturgy selections for the Mass.
3. Fill out the **Selection Sheet** provided in the book, **Together for Life**.
4. Call and arrange a **meeting** with **Thelma Montez** approximately **two months prior** to your wedding date to plan your liturgy and music. Please bring your **completed** Selection Sheet to the meeting.
5. Thelma Montez will conduct the **rehearsal**. The pastor will not be present.

Guest Priest

If you chose to bring your own priest, the couple is responsible for paying the guest Priest his stipend directly to him. It is not included in the church stipend.

Attendants

The Maid/Matron of Honor and Best Man are seated in the sanctuary near the altar with the bride and groom. The remaining wedding party is seated in the second pews (and more if needed) of the basilica behind the parents (and grandparents).

Church Decorations

- a) **Floral arrangements:** Floral arrangements are allowed Altar Communion Rail, if desired. The arrangements, however, are **NOT** provided by the basilica and are at your own expense.
- b) **Pew decorations:** Pew decorations are allowed, however, adhesive tape is **NOT** allowed to secure them. You **MAY** use hooks, elastic or ribbons to hang decorations.
- c) **Unity candles:** Unity candles are optional and are **NOT** provided by the basilica. The candles are placed on the left side of the altar, or can be placed on a stand or pedestal provided by yourself.

d) **Floor runners:** Floor runners are allowed, but are NOT provided by the basilica. If you desire to use a runner, the length of the aisle is 114 feet.

e) **Rice:** The throwing of rice, birdseed, artificial nor natural roses, and the blowing of bubbles are NOT permitted on the basilica grounds.

Photographers/Videographers

All photographers and/or videographers need to check with the wedding coordinator and/or the priest before the wedding to make sure what is and is not allowed in the basilica. They are welcome to come to the rehearsal to speak with the coordinator and witness the Order of the Mass. Semi-formal attire is required by the pastor for anyone who will be in the sanctuary. This means coat and tie or tuxedo for the men and a dress or slacks for the women. If you decide to have a professional photographer for your wedding, your family and friends will not need to take any photographs during the mass.

Security

Security officers are available upon request through the parish secretary. The officers are provided from the San Antonio Police Department at \$25 per hour. The patrolled areas are the parking lot and Kentucky Avenue on the side of the basilica. If you desire security officers for your rehearsal and/or wedding, you need to let the parish secretary know at least one week prior to your rehearsal date to guarantee availability. The rehearsal is approximately 1 ½ hours and the wedding is 2 hours.

Schedule Appointment w/Pastor

If you have chosen to marry at Little Flower, please call (210) 735-9126 to schedule your appointment.

Please be aware that you **must** have the following paperwork with you at the time of your appointment with the Pastor. Your wedding **will not** be reserved if you are missing any of the following:

- Updated Baptismal Certificate for each of you. (The certificate must have current date and sacramental notations on the reverse side). If your updated baptismal certificate is missing your first communion and/or confirmation notation, please bring the original certificate. If you were baptized in another faith, you will need to provide a letter from the church.
- A letter from your current parish stating that you are registered and attending regularly and that you have permission to marry at Little Flower Parish.
- The \$200 deposit may be given in the form of a check, cash or credit card. Should you later cancel your wedding the deposit is non refundable.
- Please have the names of your witnesses available. (The official witnesses, those that sign the wedding license, are the Maid/Matron of Honor and the Best Man. There is not a separate couple chosen for this honor.
- Nothing is permitted of which is not in accordance with the tradition and rubric of the liturgy.