

St. Edward's Catholic Church

**407 Beech Street
Texarkana, AR 71854
(870)772-1115**

Dear Friends,

We at St. Edward's Catholic Church congratulate you as you begin to make plans for your wedding day. The Church takes very seriously the commitment you are about to make, and we want very much for your wedding preparation and service to reflect the sacredness of that Commitment.

As you begin the process leading toward your wedding day, we offer to you the Guidelines for Weddings at St. Edward's Parish. These guidelines have been carefully thought out and reflect both the desire we share in common for a glorious day for you, and the need for clarity of what is appropriate for a wedding in the Catholic Church.

Please read over these guidelines carefully. Share them with your florist, photographer, wedding consultants and whoever is assisting you in your plans. Know that we are here to assist you in making your wedding day the one you hoped and planned it would be.

In Christ

Rev. James P. West, Pastor

Wedding Guidelines St. Edward's Catholic Church Texarkana

Because most brides and grooms want to make their wedding beautiful and memorable, we offer you the following guidelines for your wedding day. If there are any items not covered here, or if you have any questions not addressed in these guidelines, please contact the office so that we may assist you further.

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING: Weekend weddings may occur on Saturday mornings, early Saturday afternoons (none scheduled later than 1:00 p.m., and Saturday evenings (none earlier than 7:00 p.m.) Weddings may be scheduled on other days of the week excluding Sundays. Rehearsals are normally scheduled for the evening before the wedding. The scheduling of your wedding should be done through the Church office and after having consulted the Priest or Deacon who is going to officiate at your wedding.

NORMS FOR WEDDINGS: It is a requirement of the Diocese of Little Rock that couples participate in a marriage preparation program. It is strongly recommended that you contact whoever is officiating at your wedding (or your parish priest/deacon) at least six months prior to the wedding date. If you have questions regarding the preparation program or about having a Minister other than those assigned to St. Edward's Catholic Church, please contact Father West at the Church office for information.

LEGAL DOCUMENTS: Anyone who marries in the State of Arkansas/Texas must obtain a marriage license from any Court House within the State. Your marriage license is normally good for sixty days; please give the license to the Officiant at the rehearsal. Please be aware that if the Officiant does not reside in Arkansas, he is required by law to obtain Minister's Credentials at any Court House within the State. Please contact the Court House to determine what is necessary in order for him to obtain these credentials.

SANCTUARY DEPARTMENT: Please remember that the Church building is a sacred place of worship and that both members and guests should act accordingly at rehearsals and weddings. We urge the bride and groom to advise their wedding parties of this fact so that all will refrain from loud talk and any behavior disrespectful of our place of worship. Also, no food or drinks are allowed within the church, out of respect for the sacred nature of the space. Additionally, courtesy and respect would lead us to leave the Church and our grounds as we found them.

BRIDAL ROOM: St. Edward's Catholic Church has made every attempt to provide your bridal party with a dressing room. We encourage you to make full use of this room, and we ask that you arrange for someone to clear the room immediately following the ceremony. We ask that no food or beverages be brought into it. And, of course, smoking is prohibited in all our facilities on campus.

FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS: Please have an awareness of the size of the sanctuary in planning your wedding ceremony. Large arrangements should not encumber

movement in the sanctuary, nor become a visual obstacle to the congregation. Your guests will want to have full view of the entire ceremony, and florists should keep this in mind. In particular, the following items should be given special attention:

1. If candelabra or Unity Candles are used, plastic floor protection must be employed. Regardless of what you hear, there is no such thing as "drip less candles," given the vagaries of air conditioning and the movement of air in the sanctuary area.
2. If your ceremony is scheduled for a Saturday evening, floral arrangements may be placed in the Church in the afternoon. However, please remember there is a 5p.m. Mass each Saturday and the floral arrangements must not interfere with this ceremony. When in doubt, your florist should contact the Church office. It is also important that the florist give prior notice to the office on when they plan the set-up so that the Church will be available and open.
3. The Catholic Church celebrates liturgical seasons (e.g., Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost) in a special way. Please be aware that the Church will already be decorated for these events and that these decorations will remain in the Church even during the wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR WEDDING: You are encouraged to use a professional photographer for your wedding service. **You are also encouraged to have as many photographs as possible taken before the ceremony.** However, all photographs are to cease in the Church one-half hour prior to the wedding ceremony. Please advise your photographer that no flash pictures are to be taken during the ceremony (exceptions being made for the procession and recession). That no photographs which good taste would deem inappropriate for a worship space are to be taken. When in doubt -ask! The Wedding Coordinator will instruct the Photographer on where he/she can stand during the ceremony for photographing your special day. This will not be determined by the photographer or videographer. Please inform him/her that lack of cooperation will lead to his/her removal from the ceremony. Sadly, at times in the past, professional photographers/videographers have impeded the prayerful celebration of this most sacred moment. We do not want such distraction at your ceremony. *Also, please advise your photographer/s that there is a 30-minute time limit for filming following the ceremony.* Most photographs can be taken before the wedding, exceptions being the wedding party. We have people who have to clean the church and lock the doors and cannot stay for a 2-hour photography session.

MUSIC: Selection of music/hymns should be arranged with the parish organist and Ministers. Please be aware that secular songs are prohibited. There are professional fees for the organist (and soloists) as seen below. If you choose another, a "Bench Fee" will apply.

ACOLYTES (SERVERS): If you wish to supply altar servers for your wedding ceremony, you may do so. For wedding ceremonies "outside of Mass" acolytes are not necessary, though we will certainly use them if you so desire. Unless they are family members, acolytes are generally paid for serving (see fees below).

RECEPTIONS: The Parish Hall is available for receptions if you so choose. Receptions are limited to three (3) hours. Evening receptions are to end by eleven o'clock. The serving of any alcohol beverage is to cease at **11:00 p.m.** The use of rice is prohibited as it is fatal to birds and makes for a slippery sidewalk. To reserve Parish Hall, you need to contact the church office. Fees for use of the hall are as follows:

CHURCH FEES

1. USE OF THE CHURCH

For Parishioners who have been visible in "Time, Talent and Treasure," there is a fee of **\$200.** This Fee covers utilities, i.e., air conditioning/heating/lighting for both rehearsal and wedding service, and for services rendered by lay staff in assisting you in your wedding plans.

2. USE OF HALLS

A. Parish Hall - \$300.00 (Active Parishioners)
500.00 (all others)

3. Organist & Soloist: The fee for the organist is \$100.00.

(Bench fees: \$75)

Soloist: By Arrangement

4. 5. Acolytes: \$10 per acolyte

6. Clergy: There is never a charge for any priest's/deacon's administration of any Sacrament. However, people do ask about how much to "give" the priest at weddings. We simply leave that decision to what the Sacrament and marriage mean to you.

A \$100 DEPOSITS PER BUILDING NEEDS TO BE PLACED WHEN RESERVING CHURCH OR BUILDING, BALANCES ON BUILDINGS AND FEES FOR ORGANIST AND/SOLOIST DUE NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS BEFORE WEDDING!