

Policies and Procedures for Weddings

SAINT JUDE *the* APOSTLE

CATHOLIC CHURCH

FROM THE PASTOR

SAINT JUDE the APOSTLE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Dear Bride and Groom,

Congratulations on your engagement and beginning your journey as a married couple. The information in this packet is designed to assist you in planning your wedding at Saint Jude the Apostle Catholic Church.

The clergy, staff and community of Saint Jude the Apostle want your wedding to be one of the most beautiful and memorable days of your life. We certainly understand that there are many details to take care of in planning your wedding ceremony and reception. However, we ask both of you to keep your primary focus on the sacramental union you are entering—you are not just planning a day, you are preparing for a lifetime together.

Please read carefully through these *Policies and Procedures for Weddings* at Saint Jude the Apostle Catholic Church. This information will assist you in maintaining a balance in your preparations, so that all the practical details—important as they are—do not overwhelm the importance of the sacrament.

The Saint Jude clergy, staff and wedding coordinators are here to advise and assist you, and will be happy to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

We pray for every blessing on you as you enter into married life together, and we will do all we can help you begin your life journey well and happily.

Sincerely in Christ,

Msgr. Joe

Pastor

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I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

A. Freedom to Marry

Church law requires that both parties be free to marry, that neither party was married previously. If either has been married before and your former spouse is still living, you will need to obtain a declaration of nullity of the marriage from the Archdiocesan Tribunal. A wedding date cannot be set until an annulment is granted. The parish can assist you in starting the process.

B. Interfaith Marriage

1. In an interfaith marriage, the Catholic partner promises to maintain his or her own faith and to do all in his or her power to ensure that any children born of the union will be raised in the Catholic faith. The non-Catholic partner makes no promises but is made aware of the promise by the Catholic partner.
2. In an interfaith marriage, the minister of the non-Catholic party may be invited to participate in the ceremony. The type of participation will depend upon whether or not the marriage will be celebrated with a Mass. Usually, however, it will involve participating in the readings and/or giving a blessing.
3. Church law does not permit the priest and minister to ask jointly for and receive the vows, nor does it permit the double recitation of the vows.
4. In some circumstances, permission will be given for a minister to officiate at the marriage in a location other than the Catholic parish. If you wish to obtain this permission, you will need to talk to one of the clergy. Such permission affects only the actual ceremony. You must still comply with the other provisions of Church law.

II. ARRANGING THE CEREMONY

A. Reserving the Date of the Wedding

1. It is essential to contact the parish as far in advance of your proposed date as possible. **Generally, a minimum of 6 months is necessary**, although during certain times of the year weddings are booked much farther in advance. You may contact the parish office via phone at **770-394-3896** or the website at **www.judeatl.com/marriage**
2. **To reserve the date and time for your wedding you must first meet with a priest or deacon of the parish.** Only a priest or deacon can authorize that a reservation may be made on the parish schedule.
3. All reservations are made on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact the Reservations Coordinator to check date availabilities. The reservation will be confirmed after your deposit has been received in our offices. (SEE PAGE 7 FOR FEES).
4. Weddings are held only on Saturdays, but may not be scheduled the Saturday before Palm Sunday or Holy Saturday.
5. Please do not reserve a reception venue until your wedding is confirmed on the Saint Jude master calendar.

B. Officiating Priest or Deacon

Contact the priest or deacon you wish to officiate at your wedding:

1. If your chosen priest or deacon is one of our Saint Jude clergy, he will guide you through the preparation procedures, and officiate at your wedding rehearsal and ceremony.
2. If you wish a priest or deacon from outside the parish to officiate, you must first contact him and ask that he contact Saint Jude the Apostle Parish. He will be asked to confirm in writing that he is both willing to officiate and willing to complete the necessary premarital instructions and paperwork. The permission required by Church law for him to officiate will be granted only after the completed paperwork has been received at Saint Jude the Apostle Parish. The documentation required by Church law must be received at Saint Jude the Apostle Parish at least one month prior to the wedding. Visiting clergy are expected to follow the policies of Saint Jude the Apostle Parish regarding the conduct of the ceremony and to cooperate with the Saint Jude the Apostle wedding coordinator and parish staff.

C. Saint Jude Wedding Coordinator

1. Consultation with a parish wedding coordinator is mandatory for all weddings. Our coordinator is a volunteer who will assist you with only the practical details of your wedding rehearsal and ceremony and can provide helpful suggestions. Your wedding coordinator is not a bridal consultant.
2. Approximately 6 weeks prior to your wedding date, the wedding coordinator will contact you to determine the details of your ceremony. If you have questions before that time, please contact the ministry leader (SEE PAGE 11).
3. Please be aware that the entire wedding rehearsal and wedding ceremony are under the direction of the officiating clergy, assisted by the wedding coordinator.

III. THE CHURCH SANCTUARY

A. The Church and Wedding Times

1. It is the responsibility of the bridal couple to ensure that the wedding party and family members arrive on time. The wedding ceremony will not be delayed for late arrivals.
2. The church seats approximately 500 guests and can accommodate an even greater number, if required. The main seating areas are in the nave of the church, on either side of the central aisle.

Scheduled Wedding Time	Preparation Time & Photography	Seating of Guests	Wedding & Additional Photography
11:00AM	10AM to 10:30AM	10:30AM to 11:00AM	11:00AM to 12:30PM
2:00PM	1PM to 1:30 PM	1:30PM to 2:00PM	2:00PM to 3:30PM
7:00PM*	6:00PM to 6:30PM	6:30PM to 7:00PM	7:00PM to 8:30PM

Care should be taken not to interfere with the regular **Saturday 5:00 pm Mass. The wedding party and photographers may not enter the vestibule until the church is completely empty. Wedding preparations and photography may not begin in the church until all parishioners have exited the building following this Mass. No one may block parishioners exiting the church facilities, walkways, or parking lot after Mass.*

3. No other rooms or facilities are scheduled for the use of the wedding party or guests except rest rooms and classrooms for gathering. These may be found next to the elevator and stairwell at the rear of the church and in a hallway behind the Stapleton Center.
4. Since Saint Jude is a busy parish, the Stapleton Center (below the church) might be in use during your wedding time.

IV. WEDDING REHEARSAL

1. Rehearsals will be scheduled for **Friday at 5:00 pm.**
2. The rehearsal is scheduled for a maximum of 45 minutes in the church.
3. The bride and groom are responsible for ensuring prompt attendance of the wedding party. Those attending should be present at least 15 minutes before the scheduled rehearsal time.
4. The entire rehearsal is under the direction of the officiating clergy, assisted by a Saint Jude volunteer wedding coordinator. A professional bridal consultant, if you hire one, may not direct any part of the rehearsal or ceremony.

V. FEES

A. Fee Structure for Church

1. There is no charge for the administration of sacraments.
2. The basic fees are to cover the costs for our facilities and services, and include the use of the church.
3. Fees and deposits are payable at the time the wedding reservation is made. Reservations are not considered confirmed until the $300 deposit is received. The balance is due 30 days prior to the wedding date. Please pay online.

B. Fee Schedule for Church

BRIDE and/or GROOM	FEE plus Deposit	TOTAL
If active registered parishioners	$750 + $300*	$1,050
If non-parishioners or inactive parishioners	$1,500 + $300*	$1,800

PLEASE NOTE: The determination of whether one is an active parishioner is reserved to the Pastor and is based upon registered membership in the parish, attendance at Mass, and commitment to the Church through volunteer and financial contributions. ***Parishioners must be registered and active for at least 6 months prior to booking a wedding.***

C. Deposit Refund Policy

The deposit of $300 will be refunded in full within one month, *only* if the church and all church facilities are left in good order following the wedding ceremony.

D. Official Stipends

1. An honorarium to the officiating priest or deacon is customarily provided by the groom. The amount is a matter of personal discretion, but we suggest it be commensurate with the cost of the wedding, the amount of time the officiating priest or deacon has spent with you in preparation, and your overall financial means. $350-500 is recommended. The honorarium should be given in **cash** in a sealed envelope the parish office the week before the wedding.

2. Stipends to altar servers at a wedding Mass are $30 per server to be given in **cash** in a sealed envelope to the parish office the week before the wedding.

3. Fees for instrumentalists and vocalists are $250 per instrumentalist/vocalist. Once musicians are determined, they must be paid directly (cash, check or Venmo) to reserve them for the wedding.



E. Cancellation Policy

Saint Jude the Apostle Catholic Church reserves the right to cancel the wedding if the legal requirements under State or Church law are not met.

VI. MARRIAGE PREPARATION

The most important aspect of preparation for the marriage is spiritual: to ensure your readiness to be united in the Sacrament of Marriage before God. Ideally, both partners should have an active faith involvement. For Catholics, this includes an active participation in a Catholic parish—at the very least being registered in a local parish and regular Sunday Mass attendance. Participation in the volunteer ministries and financial support of your parish is also desirable.

To prepare for your marriage the officiating priest or deacon will meet with you several times. In these meetings the priest or deacon will:

1. Start the necessary paperwork.
2. Discuss with you the Church's teaching concerning the Sacrament of Marriage.
3. Help you to choose a mandatory marriage preparation course.
   Approved programs include:
   a. Sponsor Couple Program (meet with a married couple for real-life sharing—6 sessions)
   b. Joy Filled Marriage (2 Saturday workshops)
4. Assist you in completing a premarital inventory.
   (This is a professionally designed instrument dealing with the issues and needs in marriage.)
5. Discuss the outcome of your marriage preparation course and premarital inventory.
6. Help you to plan the liturgical details of your wedding.

VII. REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

The following documents are required prior to your wedding:

1. *NEWLY issued* Baptismal Certificate with All Notations: This document is required for each Catholic bride and groom. Contact the church ***where you were baptized*** to obtain this certificate. It must be issued by the church of baptism not more than 6 months prior to the wedding date.
2. Certificate of Completion for your premarital preparation course.
3. Freedom to Marry Forms (Affidavits), 2 forms each for the bride and groom, must be completed, whether you are Catholic or not. Usually your parents complete these forms, but in certain circumstances, a person who has known you since at least your early teens may complete them pending pastor approval.
4. Bride and Groom Questionnaires—completed separately with the clergy member.
5. A Georgia Marriage License is required for any wedding taking place in the State of Georgia. For residents, the license can be obtained in any county. For non-residents, the license must be obtained in the county where the wedding takes place. Saint Jude Church is in Fulton County. Marriage license requirements may vary by county. Marriage licenses must be delivered to the parish office no later than the Monday before the wedding.

VIII. WEDDING CEREMONY

A. The Ceremony

1. The officiating priest or deacon will provide you with *Together for Life*, a book listing the options you have for the actual ceremony, such as scripture readings, psalms and various prayers. He will explain how to prepare the list of your selections. You will drop off your selections to the parish office (or email them to the Reservations Coordinator) no later than the week before the wedding. If you do not provide your own selections, or any selections are left blank, the officiating priest or deacon will make his own selections.
2. At Saint Jude, we assign 2 altar servers for a wedding.

B. Music and Program — Please refer to the Music and Liturgy Guide.

1. Marriage is a Sacrament of the Church. The music selected should reflect the dignity and grace of the Sacrament.
2. A directive from the Vatican prohibits the use of secular music in church, so all the music at your wedding, both vocal and instrumental, must be suitable for public worship.
3. The Director of Music and Liturgy will work with you regarding your instrumentalist(s) and vocalist(s) selections.
4. Streaming or pre-recorded music is not suitable for your wedding in a church.
5. Before you print your wedding program, the final draft must be reviewed and approved by the pastor not less than three weeks prior to the wedding. If Mass is being celebrated, please include in the printed program these Guidelines for the Reception of Holy Communion:

   All baptized Catholics who have received their First Communion, are practicing, and are not aware of serious sins may receive the Eucharist. All non-Catholics and Catholics not prepared to receive Holy Communion are encouraged to come forward to receive a blessing. Please cross your arms over your chest when you reach the priest or Eucharistic Minister.



Photos on cover, Page 7, and above courtesy of Brittany Anderson of Brittany Rae Photography.

Cumming, GA www.brittanyraephoto.com 678-773-6553

VIII. WEDDING CEREMONY

C. Flowers, Candles and Decorations

1. There are two silk arrangements always in place on stands against the wall behind the altar. These may stay in place if you wish, but under no circumstances may they be taken away from the church after the ceremony.
2. If you wish, you may replace the two sanctuary arrangements with your own, which you would arrange through Flower Craft, the florist the parish uses for sanctuary arrangements. The other optional placements for flowers are in front of the cantor podium and in front of the ambo. All must be removed immediately after the ceremony.
3. No floral arrangements may be placed on the altar, or in any location which will be an obstacle to liturgies or other events in the church.
4. No floral arrangements are permitted in the body of the church; decoration hanging from the end of pews is the only permissible decoration.
5. If you are in doubt about the size and/or placement of floral arrangements, please confer with your wedding coordinator.
6. If you would like to have a unity candle in your ceremony, tapers and a stand for the central unity candle are available, but you would provide your own unity candle.
7. **Liability concerns:** Due to fire and safety codes, flower petals and flowers, whether real or artificial, streamers, ribbons or bows may not be strewn on the floors. If you choose to have a flower girl in your wedding party, her role is to be strictly symbolic. No aisle runners are permitted. Pew decorations must be affixed with **ribbon only** and cannot block access in and out of the pews.
8. Sanctuary and vestibule furniture, flags, posters, banners, literature racks and other church furnishings must be returned to their original positions after the wedding.
9. **Nothing may be taped, pinned, stapled or otherwise affixed in any way to church walls, furnishings, floors or pews.**

D. Photography and Videography

As the bride and groom, you make the arrangements for photography and for videotaping of your wedding ceremony. It is your responsibility to advise the photographer(s) and videographer(s) of the regulations. You must stress that they keep in mind the sacred nature of the occasion and conduct themselves accordingly. Please share the following with your photographer/videographer.

1. Photography- The following regulations apply to photographing weddings:
    a. During the ceremony, the photographer **may not enter the sanctuary around the altar area, around the organ, or the center aisle.**
    b. Flash photography is not permitted during the ceremony by professionals or guests.
    c. The photographer is allowed approximately 60 minutes before the ceremony and 30 minutes after for posed photographs inside the church, after which time the sanctuary should be vacated.
    d. Any posed photographs involving the officiating priest or deacon are to be taken first.
    e. All persons providing photographic services are to be dressed for a formal church service.

2. Videography- The following regulations apply to videotaping weddings:
    a. All equipment must be set up at least 30 minutes before the scheduled time of the wedding.
    b. Video equipment must be **stationary** during the ceremony; **roving cameras are not permitted.**
    c. Cameras may not be set up anywhere around the altar.
    d. No floodlights or any other special lighting may be used during the ceremony.
    e. No wires may be laid down across any aisles.
    f. Nothing may be taped, pinned, stapled or otherwise affixed in any way to church walls, furnishings or floors.
    g. All persons providing videographic services are to be dressed for a formal church service.

IX. GENERAL REGULATIONS

For the sanctity of the church, protection of parish property, security of your guests and for the overall decorum of your wedding, these regulations will be strictly applied. It is your responsibility, as the bride and groom, to ensure that your wedding party, family, guests and suppliers are aware of and observe these regulations.

1. Saint Jude is a non-smoking campus. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the parish buildings or on church grounds.
2. No alcoholic beverages, including wine and beer, may be consumed on parish grounds or brought into parish buildings either at the rehearsal or at the actual ceremony. According to Church law, the Sacrament of Marriage may be denied to anyone under the influence of alcohol. Inebriated persons will be asked to leave the campus.
3. Prior to the wedding, light refreshments may be served to members of the wedding party where they gather.
4. No personal items may be left where the wedding party gathers. The parish cannot accept responsibility for the security of personal items. Please designate someone to remove all of the items prior to the ceremony.
5. No rice, bird seed, confetti, flowers or flower petals may be thrown or used on the parish grounds. Please advise your guests of this policy.
6. A receiving line is not to form at the back of the church. This should take place at the reception.



X. CONTACT INFORMATION

SAINT JUDE THE APOSTLE PARISH OFFICE

7171 Glenridge Drive NE, Sandy Springs, GA 30328
Office Hours: Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
Telephone: 770-394-3896

CLERGY

Pastor

Monsignor Joseph Corbett – Ext. 226

Parochial Vicars

Reverend Pete Coppola – Ext. 238
Reverend Thiago Jose Gomes (Portuguese/Spanish) – Ext. 239

Deacons

Reverend Mr. Gary Schantz: gschantz@judeatl.com
Reverend Mr. Stan Stewart: sstewart@judeatl.com
Reverend Mr. Joel Ballantyne: jballantyne@judeatl.com
Reverend Mr. Pablo Cepeda: pcepeda@judeatl.com

ASSISTING STAFF

Director of Music and Liturgy

Bryan Archer: barcher@judeatl.com – Ext. 261

Reservations Coordinator

Grace Pasden, Administrative Assistant to the Pastor
gpasden@judeatl.com – Ext. 236

WEDDING COORDINATORS

Ministry Leader

Kirsten Fionte: weddings@judeatl.com

After reviewing the contents, please let a priest or deacon of the parish know if you have any additional questions or concerns which have not been answered.

NO POLICY OR PROCEDURE MAY BE CHANGED EXCEPT BY THE PASTOR

XI. CATHOLIC WEDDING PLANNING

~ A YEAR TO SIX MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING ~

- ☐ Make an appointment with a priest or deacon to begin the process.
- ☐ Make $300 deposit **online**, then contact parish reservations coordinator to schedule date on the parish calendar.
- ☐ Complete the FOCCUS Pre-Marriage Inventory survey. The officiating priest or deacon will have the FOCCUS website send you each on-line links via email. Once you have both completed the inventories, schedule a meeting as a couple to discuss the results and subsequent marriage preparation meetings.
- ☐ Sign up for parish or diocesan marriage preparation (e.g. Sponsor Couple, Joy Filled Marriage).

BEGIN COLLECTING/COMPLETING PAPERWORK:

- ☐ Baptismal Certificates for Bride and Groom: Both the bride and groom must contact their church of baptism and request a recent copy of the baptismal certificate "with all notations" for their marriage file. It should be dated within 6 months prior to the ceremony. Consult with your officiant if you cannot obtain a baptismal certificate.
- ☐ Bride and Groom's Freedom to Marry Forms (Affidavits): (2 for each): These are to be completed by someone who has known you most of your life. Your parents are ideal, but other relatives or long-time friends are acceptable substitutes pending the pastor's approval. The signatures must be witnessed by a member of the clergy or notary public. The originals must be returned to the Saint Jude Parish Office for your marriage file. Copies are not acceptable.
- ☐ Marriage Preparation Course Certificate: As soon as the course is completed, the original certificate must be sent to the Saint Jude Parish Office for your marriage file.



~ THREE MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING ~

- ☐ Choose the people who will participate in your ceremony (lectors for first and second readings, as well as the Responsorial Psalm if not sung, gift bearers).
- ☐ Select the readings and prayers for your wedding using the *Together for Life* booklet. Email or deliver your choices to the parish office.

  NOTES:

  » Write in your selections using the guide in the back of the book. Email to the reservations coordinator.

  » Prayerfully consider which readings and prayers best express your relationship.

  » For additional information and suggestions for planning your ceremony, explore the "Understanding Your Catholic Wedding" page at *Together for Life* online.
- ☐ Meet with the Director of Music and Liturgy to discuss music and program.

~ TWO MONTHS BEFORE THE WEDDING ~

- ☐ Meet with a volunteer wedding coordinator to discuss details regarding your ceremony. You will be contacted by your coordinator between 6 to 8 weeks before your scheduled wedding date.

~ ONE MONTH BEFORE THE WEDDING ~

- ☐ Obtain a Georgia Marriage License. Saint Jude is in Fulton County. For more Information go to http://www.usmarriagelaws.com/marriage-license/georgia/
- ☐ Pay wedding fee **online**.
- ☐ Send a copy of your wedding program to the priest or deacon.
- ☐ Meet with the officiating priest or deacon for final session.

~ ONE WEEK BEFORE THE WEDDING/WEEK OF WEDDING~

- ☐ Bring your marriage license to the church office no later than the Monday before your wedding for your marriage file.
- ☐ Bring stipends in separate envelopes for the officiating clergy and altar servers to the parish office the week before the wedding.



XII. CAMPUS MAP



SAINT JUDE *the* APOSTLE
CATHOLIC CHURCH