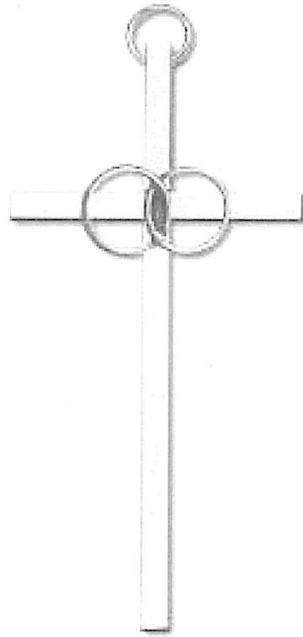


*Sts. Simon & Jude*  
*Catholic Parish*  
***Wedding***  
***Handbook***



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## *What is a Christian Marriage?*

*“Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of a sacrament. The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life.”*

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, CCC 1660-1661*

The Catholic Church believes and teaches that Christian marriage is the union of a baptized man and woman who freely enter into a covenant of love with each other in Christ for the purpose of giving and receiving love and for the procreation and education of children.

Married couples live their sacrament by the way they care for one another, love one another, and are enthusiastic for one another as husband and wife. In their daily love for each other, their children, and the larger community, they become a living sign (a sacrament) for all of how much Jesus loves us and wishes to embrace us as His brothers and sisters. As they work their way through marital and family crises and struggles, they are witness to the power of the Holy Spirit at work in all our lives.

In order to live out this ideal Christian marriage, couples must have the ability to give and receive love and to sustain an intimate relationship. They must also have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and His Body, the Church.

- *Marriage is a covenant relationship (I will love you unconditionally), not just a contractual relationship (I will love you if you love me).*
- *The principal goals of marriage are the mutual love of husband and wife and the openness to new life.*
- *Marriage enables a couple to sustain a close intimate relationship.*
- *A Catholic marriage assumes that a couple has a relationship with Christ and His Church.*

# *Your Wedding at Sts. Simon & Jude*

## *Wedding Dates and Times*

Weddings may be scheduled in either the Chapel (which seats up to 100 people), or in the Church (which seats 750+ people).

Weddings are typically celebrated on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. or 2:00 p.m. Friday evening weddings may be scheduled if the Church is available. Special weekday wedding dates are permitted only if the parish schedule allows.

There are no weddings on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligations.

## *Rehearsal Dates and Times*

Rehearsals are generally on the evening before the wedding between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Rehearsals last approximately 1 hour. Since multiple rehearsals are often scheduled for the same evening, rehearsals must start and end on time.

## *Liturgical Ministers Who Will Serve and Assist in the Wedding Liturgy*

You are encouraged to invite family and friends to take part in the wedding ceremony by participating in the various ministries of Lector, Altar Server, Musician, Cantor, and Presenter of the Gifts, Celebrant, Con-celebrant, and Deacon. Generally, the people that you choose for these various ministries should have some experience fulfilling that particular liturgical role. During the early stages of your planning, the person helping you to prepare for your marriage should be made aware of whom these people are.

**Presiding Clergy:** Our Priests/Deacons are pleased to preside at your wedding! If you would like to request a particular Sts. Simon & Jude priest or deacon to marry you, please let the person helping you prepare know of this request. A visiting priest or deacon is also welcome to officiate at your wedding but must receive delegation from the Pastor of Sts. Simon & Jude. The visiting priest/deacon must follow the wedding liturgy guidelines of our Parish. Clergy from outside the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston must have the testimonial of suitability for ministry from his own religious superior or Bishop before he is allowed to exercise ministry at Sts. Simon & Jude.

**Altar Servers:** The church will provide you with servers at no additional cost. You are free to ask a friend or family member to serve in your wedding, provided they are experienced and of the age to serve (fifth grade or older). Discuss with your presider the details about how many will be needed.

**Lectors:** Those who are given the responsibility of reading the Holy Scripture should read in a manner in which they “proclaim” the Word to the assembly. We ask that all Lectors chosen be trained. Be sure to give the Lector(s) copies of the readings well in advance so they will be prepared. Lectors are encouraged to participate in the wedding rehearsal to become familiar with the church microphones. Lectors can be provided if needed.

**Music and Musicians:** Take care in selecting musicians and singers for your wedding. The persons chosen for this portion of the liturgy are referred to as music ministers, indicating that their service is a ministry and is not to be taken lightly. Pastoral musicians are best suited to provide the music. They are familiar with the flow and rhythm of the liturgy, can suggest suitable music, and are skilled at leading and inviting the assembly to join in the sung prayer. **Note:** If you are asking people who are not music ministers at our parish to do music at your wedding they need to contact the Music Coordinator in the Parish office before any musical selections are finalized.

**Lasso & Arras:** During a Wedding Liturgy these items are allowed and take place following the exchange of rings. If a couple chooses to include the tradition of the Lasso, the most appropriate place for the lasso is following the Eucharistic Prayer and for the arras following the exchange of rings.

**Wedding Coordinators:** Sts. Simon & Jude's Wedding Coordinator will be on site for the rehearsal and on the wedding day to ensure the celebrations proceed smoothly, promptly, and according to guidelines. Wedding Coordinators hired by the couple will, at all times, defer to the Parish Wedding Coordinator for direction. Let the Wedding Coordinator know in advance if an outside wedding planner is to be in attendance.

**Unity Candles & Flowers to Mary:** The unity candle and/or flowers to Mary may be done at the wedding rehearsal. These are not part of the wedding ceremony.

# *The Marriage Preparation Process*

## *The Initial Interviews*

Preferably nine (9) months to a year before the tentative marriage date, couples should contact the Parish office to obtain preliminary information and to inquire about the availability of their wedding date. The couple should send a wedding inquiry from the website, then the office will contact you with the following steps to take, and the Pastor's Assistant will then set up a meeting with the pastor.

After getting acquainted with you and briefly discussing the different facets of marriage, the many areas of joy, and challenges that you can expect, he will review with you the marriage preparation programs you will be experiencing in order to help you discern and strengthen your life-long commitment to one another. Finally, he will assist you in completing the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Prenuptial Questionnaire.

At this point, payment of the Wedding Fee will be required to formally reserve the wedding space. (Fees payable online).

If your wedding ceremony is to take place at another approved location, there will be a "Preparation Only" wedding fee payment required in order to enter into the Marriage Preparation Program.

Please refer to p. 8 of this Marriage Handbook for information on the applicable Wedding Fees.

## *Documents Needed*

### Parish Registration

Typically the Catholic individual or their parent(s) would already be a registered member of Sts. Simon and Jude Parish for at least 6 months prior to the request for a wedding date. Non-parishioner requests for marriage at Sts. Simon & Jude will be accommodated for an additional fee of \$200 (see Wedding Fees p.8).

If you are not living in our Parish boundaries and are not a registered parishioner of Sts. Simon & Jude Catholic Church, we will need a letter from the Pastor of the Church you belong to stating that (1) you are a registered parishioner there and (2) the Pastor of the Church gives you permission to be married at Sts. Simon & Jude.

### Baptismal Certificates

Baptismal Certificate issued within six (6) months before the wedding date is required (not the original Baptismal Certificate). Please call the Church of your Baptism and request a new Baptismal copy with all notations on the reverse side. If you are not confirmed, we strongly recommend that you be confirmed before your marriage; however, you may still be married if not yet confirmed.

### Affidavits of Freedom to Marry

You will each be asked to name two (2) people who know you well and would be willing to testify that you are free to marry. The people you choose can be parents, other relatives, or friends who know you well.

### Marriage License

The marriage license should be obtained 1-2 weeks prior to the ceremony. In Texas, marriage licenses are valid for 30 days and have a 72-hour dormant period (you may not use it until 72 hours after purchase). A marriage license can be obtained at any courthouse in the state of Texas. The marriage license should be given to the Wedding Coordinator at the wedding rehearsal.

In Montgomery County, the wedding couple and the witnesses do not sign the marriage license; it is signed only by the presiding Priest or Deacon. After your wedding, the Church will record your marriage in the Sacramental Register of the Parish and mail the license back to the Montgomery County Clerk's Office for you. The County Clerk will record the information in the public records of the County and will return a certified copy to you, usually within 6 weeks after the wedding.

Other Documents: In particular cases, if other documents are needed, the Priest or Deacon will ask for them.

# Wedding Fees & Honorariums

The fees below do not cover the entire costs of having your wedding here, but they do help defray the expenses of hosting your wedding.

## Sts. Simon & Jude Basic Wedding Fee:

*Includes facilities and some of the programs, and materials as noted below. **The Wedding Fee is due in order to reserve your date and to begin Marriage Preparation Programs.** See details below for additional program fees, options, exceptions, and inclusions.*

### Church

Main Sanctuary (seats 750+)

- *Parishioners* \$650.00
- *Non-Parishioners* \$850.00

Chapel (seats up to 100)

- *Parishioners* \$200.00
- *Non-Parishioners* \$400.00

Preparation Only (wedding ceremony elsewhere)

- *Parishioners* \$200.00
- *Non-Parishioners* \$400.00

*Preparation Program Fees will also apply as shown on the following page.*

### Ceremony

Priest and/or Deacon Stipends *Suggested fee of \$150.00*  
*Clergy honorarium amount to be determined by the couple and given to the Wedding Coordinator at the wedding rehearsal*

Music Ministry

- *Pianist/Organist* **\$250.00**
- *Cantor* **\$250.00**

***Paid directly to each, not part of the Wedding fees.***

Wedding Coordinator *included*



**Preparation Programs** (Sessions and Materials)

- |   |                    |                 |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Prepare/Enrich                       | <i>all couples</i> | <i>\$35.00</i>  |
| 2. God's Plan Seminar                   | <i>all couples</i> | <i>\$75.00</i>  |
| 3. Natural Family Planning              | <i>all couples</i> | <i>Varies</i>   |
| <i>For all childbearing age couples</i> |                    |                 |
| 4. United in Christ                     | <i>all couples</i> | <i>included</i> |

All wedding fees must be paid in full two weeks before the Wedding date. These fees can be paid online or check to be brought to the office.

***Use of the Groom's and Bride's Rooms***

We invite the wedding party to use the Bride's and Groom's Rooms and adjacent restrooms for dressing. The following policies are to be observed:

1. The Rooms are available for the wedding party one and one-half (1-1/2) hours before the wedding.
2. **NO SMOKING** in this area or any area of the complex.
3. **NO FOOD OR DRINK** (except bottled water) in this area or any area of the complex.
4. **Alcohol is not permitted.**
5. Please leave the rooms neat and clean. For safety and security, please designate a family member or friend to care for your personal belongings. Wedding parties must remove all personal belongings from the rooms immediately following the wedding ceremony. Please assign someone, other than members of the wedding party, to make sure that this is done.

# *Marriage Preparation Programs*

*Preparing for marriage is truly a thought-provoking, challenging and life-giving experience. It is also a process, that if done right, takes some time. Engaged couples often express their sincere excitement and willingness to expend whatever time and effort it takes in the interest of having a great marriage; one that will be fulfilling and last a lifetime. We invite you to take this opportunity to not only fall more deeply in love with your fiancé, but also to fall in love with marriage!*

*The following are the required programs for engaged couples to help prepare you for your life-long marriage to each other; work with your priest/deacon/ wedding coordinator to select and reserve your spots. Please refer to the Wedding Fees and Honorariums Schedule (page 9) for information on additional costs associated with some of these programs.*

## *1. Prepare/Enrich*

It is one of the most widely used programs for dating, engaged, newlywed, and married couples with over 3,000,000 couples and 100,000 trained facilitators and marriage mentor couples.

Its customized design will help you target the topics you need and want to talk about as a couple. It begins with a customized online assessment that identifies a couple's strength and growth areas.

After your initial meeting with the pastor, you will be assigned a mentor couple and begin your participation in our Quarterly Program which involves a combination of one-on-one sessions with your mentor couple and participation in 3 group sessions with them and other couples.

These sessions help the couple discuss and understand their assessment results, as they are taught proven relationship skills.

## *2. Natural Family Planning, NFP*

You will learn the Art of Natural Family Planning; a highly effective, healthy way to plan your family that has no side effects, is environmentally sound, and can improve your marital relationship through increased communication and husband involvement.

### *3. God's Plan For a Joy-Filled Marriage Seminar*

This seminar will provide you with a rich understanding of the teachings of the Church and offers you the tools to live married life as God intended. You will attend this Saturday Seminar with other Engaged Couples. The goal of this program is to present a summary of God's plan for marriage and to offer practical suggestions for embracing it in your own lives. *God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage* offers a refreshing, liberating vision of marriage and sexuality—one that helps you fully embrace, and even celebrate, God's glorious plan for your life.

### *4. Rejoice Counseling*

This is intended to help you and your partner discuss several important issues, ranging from finances to children so that you are both on the same page. It can also help identify conflict areas and equip you and your partner with tools to navigate them successfully.

### *5. United in Christ; Wedding Liturgy Preparation*

You will be given a booklet, which explains the various choices you have in planning your Wedding Ceremony. Included in the book are scriptural passages from the Old and New Testament that speak about marriage. The idea is for you to tailor the Wedding Ceremony according to what is most meaningful and pertinent to you. To complete the process, you will meet with your Priest/Deacon 4 to 8 weeks prior to the date of the wedding.

## ***Celebration of the Holy Matrimony Liturgy***

*A Catholic wedding takes place in the context of the Sacred Liturgy. The Rite of Marriage may be celebrated within a Liturgy of the Word or within the Nuptial Mass. It is preferred, but not required, that the Nuptial Mass be celebrated when both parties are practicing Catholics. During the Rite of Marriage, the Church seeks God's blessings for the newlyweds and the couple professes their solemn vows to God and to each other.*

### ***Nuptial Mass (with Eucharist)***

#### *Introductory Rites*

*Entrance (Opening) Song  
Greeting and Opening Prayer*

#### *Liturgy of the Word*

*First Reading (Old Testament)  
Responsorial Psalm (sung)  
Second Reading (New Testament)  
Gospel Acclamation (sung)  
Gospel  
Homily*

#### *Rite of Marriage*

*Consent  
Exchange of Vows  
Blessing and Exchange of Rings*

#### *Prayers of the Faithful*

#### ***Liturgy of the Eucharist***

***Preparation of the Altar  
Eucharistic Prayer  
Our Father  
Nuptial Blessing  
Reception of Holy Communion***

#### *Concluding Rite*

*Final Blessing and Dismissal*

### ***Liturgy of the Word***

#### *Introductory Rites*

*Entrance (Opening) Song  
Greeting and Opening Prayer*

#### *Liturgy of the Word*

*First Reading (Old Testament)  
Responsorial Psalm (sung)  
Second Reading (New Testament)  
Gospel Acclamation (sung)  
Gospel  
Homily*

#### *Rite of Marriage*

*Consent  
Exchange of Vows  
Blessing and Exchange of Rings*

#### *Prayers of the Faithful*

*Our Father  
Nuptial Blessing*

#### *Concluding Rite*

*Final Blessing and Dismissal*

## *The Liturgical Procession*

*All members of the wedding party are full participants in the worship of God; therefore all process in the same manner as the Christian community does at a Sunday liturgy (down the Center Aisle).*

<b>Seating of Guests</b>	<b>Seating of Guests</b>
<i>Prelude</i>	<i>Prelude</i>
Seating of Grandparents	Seating of Grandparents
Seating of Parents	Seating of Parents
<i>Entrance Procession</i>	<i>Entrance Procession</i>
Cross Bearer and Altar Servers	Cross Bearer and Altar Servers
Deacon (with Book of the Gospels)	Deacon (with Book of the Gospels)
Presider (Priest or Deacon)	Presider (Priest or Deacon)
Groomsmen/Bridesmaids[as couples]	Groomsmen/Bridesmaids[as couples]
Ring Bearer(s) and/or Flower Girl(s)	Ring Bearer(s) and/or Flower Girl(s)
Groom and Bride	Groom (with father and/or Mother) Bride (with father and/or Mother)

The Rite of Marriage places the couple last in the procession in order to emphasize their primary role in the celebration of the sacrament. The bride and groom confer the Sacrament of Marriage on each other and as equals assume shared responsibility for this lifelong commitment. Catholics believe that the bride and groom give themselves to each other as equal partners, and as one, they give themselves and their marriage to God. That is why the rite directs the bride and groom to walk in together or to be escorted by both their parents.

This the preferred practice according to the Church's teaching about the Sacrament of Marriage. Does this mean it would be inappropriate to go with tradition? Not necessarily. Parents play a major role in our lives, and sharing this moment with them is a gift. But there are ways to blend tradition with what the rite asks for. For example, the groom might walk in first with his mother and/or father, followed later by the bride with her father and/or mother. Discussing these options with your family and parish ministers will also give you some valuable time to reflect on the role your family has had in your relationship and maybe even help mend divisions.

# *Liturgical Recessional*

Groom and Bride

Ring Bearer(s)/Flower Girl(s)

Groomsmen/Bridal Attendants [as couples]

Altar Servers [if any],

Priest and/or Deacon

Parents (as married couples, if applicable)

Guests

## *Music for Your Wedding*

For such an important occasion as your wedding, there should be music, and it should be performed well. It should celebrate the Christ-centered life of love you are beginning together.

It is our desire and practice to follow the official guidelines of the Galveston-Houston Diocese and the guidelines set forth by the American Bishops. We ask for your cooperation in selecting the music for your wedding.

Only liturgical music should be performed during the wedding ceremony. Hence, popular love songs and ballads, which do not directly reflect and relate to the Christian-religious dimensions of marriage, are not appropriate for the wedding ceremony. These songs should be reserved for reception.

There should be participation by the congregation were called for by the Rite of marriage (e.g. Lord's Prayer).

It is parish policy that the arrangements for music be made two (2) months prior to the wedding. Music must be approved by the Music Coordinator, Donna Finney, phone: 281-367-9885 ext. 135 or email [finneyd@ssjwoodlands.com](mailto:finneyd@ssjwoodlands.com). This person can be reached by calling the Parish Office.

# *Music for the Wedding Liturgy*

*Very few things can impact the beauty of a wedding ceremony the way music can. The Church says, "The quality of joy and enthusiasm which music adds to community worship cannot be gained in any other way." MCW #23 Singing is part of every sacramental celebration and in fact adds significant beauty to the ceremony.*

## *General Considerations\**

A wedding ceremony is first and foremost a sacred celebration, a liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church. The integrity and dignity of the Catholic liturgy must be respected and maintained. The wedding liturgy should be very similar to the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist you attend here at Sts. Simon & Jude each week.

The Church makes every effort to help the engaged couple in preparing the wedding liturgy, but it is and will remain the Church's liturgy. Couples are encouraged to read, pray about, and choose the scriptures that will be proclaimed at the wedding, pray over and select the appropriate prayers and responses, and also to use their experience of attending Sunday Mass to help them in selecting appropriate music for the wedding liturgy.

The primary purpose of music in any liturgy is to help people pray. Music selections should express not only faith of the couple but also the common faith of the whole Church. Many pieces of music, which speak of love in purely secular terms, are not appropriate for the wedding ceremony and would be more appropriate at the wedding reception. Music for the wedding liturgy must express a sacred text and what we as Roman Catholics believe about marriage.

Please remember it is the entire assembly that worships at the wedding. As much as possible, music – particularly hymns, responses, and acclamations – should facilitate active participation by the entire congregation. A cantor functions as a LEADER of the assembly's sung prayer. Solo songs should be used only at those points in the service when participation by the assembly is not essential.

\*Note during Lent there are no processional or recessional songs played. Music is allowed only to support audience participation.

## *Musicians*

Professionally trained musicians outside of Sts. Simon & Jude Parish are permitted to provide music for a wedding Liturgy with permission from the Music Coordinator. Outside musicians can create problems if they are not trained and familiar with Catholic Liturgy. Your musician(s) must be approved and contact, Donna Finney for approval of all music selections.

## *Music Selections*

**Preludes:** Piano: Ave Verum Corpus (Mozart); A Special Day (Palmer); Pastoral Symphony (Handel); Laudate Dominum (Mozart), Caro mio ben (Giordani)

**Processionals:** \*Remember the priest and altar servers followed by the bridal party, and finally the bride and groom with their families will all walk down to this one song.

- |                                    |        |                                    |       |
|------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Glory and Praise to Our God     | BB545  | 5. All Glory, Laud, and Honor      | BB13  |
| 2. Canticle of the Sun             | BB424  | 6. Holy, Holy, Holy                | BB204 |
| 3. For the Fruits of this Creation | BB419  | 7. This Day God Gives Me           | BB635 |
| 4. Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee    | BB 542 | 8. Hear Us Now, Our God and Father | BB658 |

### **Recessionals:**

- |                                |       |                                     |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. All Creatures of Our God... | BB538 | 5. Holy God, We Praise Thy Name     | BB197 |
| 2. Alleluia! Sing to Jesus     | BB721 | 6. Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the Holy | BB171 |
| 3. In the Day of the Lord      | BB576 | 7. Morning Has Broken               | BB623 |
| 4. For the Beauty of the Earth | BB594 | 8. O God, Beyond All Praising       | BB536 |

*Note: Any recessionals and processionals are interchangeable. For Example, A couple may choose a Processional: "Morning Has Broken" and "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" for the Recessional*

### **Psalms: (with musical settings)**

1. Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and Merciful.
2. Psalm 89: Forever I Will Sing
3. Psalm 145: I Will Praise Your Name
4. Psalm 34: I Will Bless the Lord

**Alleluia:** Celtic Alleluia – BB375 (to be used with Mass of Creation) **or** Alleluia, Mass of Christ the Savior – BB912 The verse is: "This day was made for the Lord; Let us Rejoice and Be Glad."

**MASS SETTINGS:** *For full mass only (does not include a Liturgy Service)*

*\*Mass of Creation BB871-875 (Glory to God, Holy, When We Eat This Bread, Amen, Lamb of God)\*Celtic Alleluia BB375 Or Mass of Christ the Savior BB 911-919 (with Alleluia for that mass setting.*

### **\*Offertory:**

- |                               |       |                          |           |
|-------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Here I am Lord             | BB373 | 6. Love Goes On          | BB477     |
| 2. When Love Is Found         | BB659 | 7. Endless is Your Love  | BB487     |
| 3. We Are Many Parts          | BB584 | 8. Where ever You Go     | BB661     |
| 4. What Wondrous Love is This | BB480 | 9. Love One Another      | BB474     |
| 5. Where Love is Found        | BB656 | 10. Ave Maria (Schubert) | Not in BB |

### **\*Communion Songs:**

- |                           |       |                            |       |
|---------------------------|-------|----------------------------|-------|
| 1. Taste and See (Moore)  | BB333 | 6. Bread for the World     | BB343 |
| 2. I am the Bread of Life | BB327 | 7. Taste and See (Kendzia) | BB344 |
| 3. Pan de Vida            | BB334 | 8. Bread of Life           | BB320 |
| 4. One Bread One Body     | BB339 | 9. Behold the Lamb         | BB337 |
| 5. Eat This Bread         | BB335 | 10. Ubi Caritas            |       |



# *Music Personnel*

## **Pianist / Organist**

Couples wishing to be wed at Sts. Simon & Jude are strongly encouraged to use the recommended organists/pianists (experienced and accomplished performers.)

## **Cantor / Vocalist**

Sts. Simon & Jude has available for weddings a number of excellent male and female Cantors (song leaders). Couples may request a particular soloist. We will be happy to supply any cantors requested. The Music Coordinator, Donna Finney must approve cantors and soloists from outside Sts. Simon & Jude.

## **Payment: Cash / Check**

After making arrangements with Donna, for musicians and fees, please make checks payable to *each musician* for your wedding. \*One payment of ½ the fee for *each musician* can be made 4 weeks in advance, but the final payments must be received at *least 2 weeks before the wedding date*. Payment may *not* be made at the wedding rehearsal or on the day of the wedding.

At your meeting with Donna, make arrangements to either bring her the payment at the meeting or mail or bring the payment to the church office with Attn: Donna Finney on the envelope. The address is 26777 Glen Loch Dr., The Woodlands, TX 77381.

## *Photography/Videography at the Wedding Liturgy*

Photographs provide lasting memories of the wedding ceremony. The taking of these photographs, however, must never distract the clergy presider, bride, groom and their guests at the wedding from the prayerful dignity of the liturgy of Christian Marriage.

Careful observance of the following policies is expected.

### ***POLICIES FOR WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS:***

1. The Church is available for photography no earlier than **ONE AND ONE-HALF (1-1/2) HOUR** before the wedding. Pictures must be completed **15 MINUTES** before the wedding.
2. Setup of photographic equipment must be completed **10 MINUTES** before the wedding begins.  
**THE WEDDING LITURGY MUST START ON TIME.**
3. The photographer is not allowed in the **ALTAR AREA** for the taking of pictures or videos during the liturgy.
4. **NO FLASH** photography **DURING THE CEREMONY.**
5. Picture taking after the ceremony is limited to **30 MINUTES** immediately following the wedding.
6. A still-photographer is allowed to move as long as he/she remains out of the view of the congregation.

### ***POLICIES FOR WEDDING VIDEOS:***

1. Video equipment may be set up in the Church no earlier than **ONE (1) HOUR** before the wedding.
2. Video cameras are to remain stationary.
3. **Neither professional nor guest video people are allowed in the altar area during any part of the wedding liturgy.**
4. Persons making videos using wireless microphones must check with the Facilities Manager to insure there are no frequency conflicts with the parish's wireless microphones.
5. Bright lights on video cameras are not allowed.

Photographers and videographers are to show respect with proper dress when working in sacred space. No jeans, shorts, t-shirts, ball caps, or hats.

## *Floral at the Wedding Liturgy*

The Church building of Sts. Simon & Jude Catholic Church is a sacred place where we gather, pray, and celebrate. The architectural beauty of our Church and the furnishings of the celebrations of liturgy are designed to express a sense of unity and “noble simplicity.”

Decorations used at weddings should be appropriate to the space and of a quality that reflects the dignity of Christian Marriage.

The following policies are provided in order that the beauty of the Church be respected and maintained.

### **POLICIES:**

1. Decorations are not required. The natural beauty of the Church and its décor already enhance the dignity of the wedding ceremony.
2. **Décor for weekend Masses including special seasonal décor (Advent, Christmas, Lent\* and Easter) may not be changed or moved.** During these times, additional décor should be appropriate to the season. Please consult with the Wedding Coordinator for this information.  
\*Lent: No flowers are permitted except the ones being carried by the wedding party.
3. All existing plants, flowers and pedestals in the Church are to be left in place unless specific permission has been given to remove them. Contact the Parish office for permission. If moved, return all items to their original place after the ceremony.
4. If flowers or plants are to be left in the Church after the wedding ceremony, please inform the Wedding Coordinator at the rehearsal.
5. **FLOWERS:** Two (2) arrangements may be used in the sanctuary space (altar area). Sanctuary flowers should be large enough to be visible but never obstruct the Altar. One arrangement can also be placed in front of the Ambo. No plastic or artificial flowers of any sort may be used.
6. **POTTED PLANTS:** Plants used must have waterproof pot covers or be placed in saucers to protect the carpeting. Suggestion: Use potted plants instead of flowers and then use the potted plants in the couple's first home.
7. **PEW DECORATIONS:** Pews must not be scratched. Use of plastic clips, tape, Velcro, staples, clamps, floral pins, etc., is not allowed. Bows, greenery or floral sprays may be used only if attached with a ribbon loop.
8. **FLOWER PETALS:** Flower petals (real or artificial) may not be thrown or dropped down in the aisles. Rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals, etc., may not under any circumstances be thrown on the Church grounds.
9. **RUNNERS:** Aisle runners are not allowed.
10. **CANDLES:** Existing sanctuary candles are used in the wedding ceremony.
11. The Church is available for floral setup no earlier than one and a half (1 ½) hours before the wedding unless prior arrangements have been made. Florists, please respect this schedule.
  - a. Florists are responsible to reclaim any pedestals, etc., they provide immediately after the ceremony. The Church should be left in the same order it was found. Florists are responsible to clean up any leftover pedals, twigs, etc.



# *Miscellaneous Considerations*

## *The Wedding Party*

All members of the wedding party (attendants, ushers, parents, readers, etc.) are expected to attend the rehearsal.

The bride and bridal attendants are asked to please be mindful of the necessary modesty of dress that is appropriate for the reverent respect for the Church and the liturgy.

Attendants: Bridal attendants and groomsmen should be kept within a reasonable number (1 – 6).

Children in the wedding party: Please be sure that Flower Girls and Ring Bearers are of an appropriate age of maturity.

We encourage at least two additional people (male or female), separate from the groomsmen, to serve as ushers. Their primary responsibilities are to welcome and seat guests and family members.

## *Use of the Church*

**Time Allowed:** The Church is reserved for your use 1-1/2 hours before the wedding and 1 hour after the wedding. This is the time available for floral decoration, picture taking, and clean up. It is imperative that weddings must begin and end at the scheduled time.

**Clothing:** No clothing may be delivered directly to the Church or Church offices.

**Guest Register:** A guest register may be placed in the Narthex (gathering area just outside the entry to the Church).

**Receiving Lines:** No receiving lines are held at the Church.

**No Smoking, Food or Drink** (other than bottled water) is allowed in the Church.

**Rice, Birdseed, Confetti, Flower Petals, etc.** may not, under any circumstance, be thrown on the Church grounds or inside the Church.

**Aisle Runners:** For your safety, aisle runners may not be used in the Church or on the Church grounds.

## *Conclusion*

The celebration of your marriage as a sacrament is one of the most important things you will ever do. The rest of your life will be affected by what you do on that day. Please pray together for the wisdom and grace you need to prepare properly. Come to the altar prepared in spirit to be blessed by your love for each other. If any of us can be of help to you before or after your marriage, please contact us.

### *Prayer for Engaged Couples*

*Lord God, Heavenly Father,  
The source of all love,  
The wise plan of your providence has  
brought this couple together.*

*As they prepare themselves  
for the sacrament of marriage  
and pray for your grace,  
grant that, strengthened by Your blessing  
they may grow in their respect for one another  
and cherish each other with a sincere love.*

*Bless and guide this couple as they prepare to  
celebrate this beautiful sacrament.  
Give them patience during times of stress  
Give them reassurance in times of doubt;  
Strengthen their love for one another,  
for their family and friends, and for You.*

