

**SAINT ANN CHURCH  
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**St. Ann Marriage Guidelines  
(Non-parishioners)**

(Revised 10/11/2016)

Thank you for considering St. Ann Church in Lenox, Massachusetts, for your wedding! Also, congratulations on your engagement. We have compiled these guidelines because we want your day to be as perfect and special as it can be, but we also want to preserve the integrity and appearance of our beautiful and historic church, while making sure your priest or deacon understands their responsibilities as the celebrant for your special day. Below is a list of our guidelines that we hope will direct you and your celebrant through your wedding day. After reading this, the bride or groom is required to initial each paragraph of these guidelines, and return a copy to St. Ann's rectory office confirming that you have read and will abide by our parish wedding guidelines.

**For the record, you are considered a non-parishioner because of St. Ann's definition of a registered member, therefore eligible for use of the church for a wedding, is as follows:**

To be considered eligible to be married in one of our three parishes, the prospective bride or groom must be registered or have registered family members at St. Ann, St. Vincent de Paul or St. Patrick parish. A "registered family" is defined as having been registered at one of these three parishes for 5 years or longer. The couple should contact the Pastor at least one year in advance of the wedding. The church date must be set **FIRST – before making any other arrangements.** This way the church date is secure and this eliminates conflicts for everyone involved.

**CHURCH / FEES:**

- A church usage fee of \$1,200 is required for the rental of St. Ann Church for your wedding. This fee does not include the monetary gift given to the priest or deacon who will be the celebrant of your wedding. If a guest priest or guest deacon is officiating at your wedding, it is expected that you will speak to them about the proper fee that they are expecting to receive. A non-refundable deposit of \$200 is required within two weeks of speaking to the church secretary, to reserve your date. **Due to the high demand for wedding dates at our church, if we do not receive confirmation from you, via a deposit, within two weeks, we will not be able to hold this date for you. The balance of the rental fee is due one month before the wedding date.**

As a Non-Parishioner it is expected that a visiting priest or deacon will be the celebrant for your wedding.

- Altar Servers – Normally, St. Ann Parish does not use altar servers for weddings. If your priest requires one, please inform the church office as soon as you know.
- Weddings require a custodian. Our custodian will be in immediately following your wedding; therefore, **an additional \$25 (cash or check payable to St. Ann’s Church)** is required for his services. Please, either leave this fee in an envelope marked “custodian” or ask the priest or deacon to leave it in the Priests’ Sacristy on the dressing table.
- St. Ann Church ***does not*** allow birdseed, rose petals or rice to be thrown. It’s dangerous for people to walk on, (especially in high heels!) it’s extremely messy, and the rose petals stain our carpet. Silk rose petals are acceptable. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.
- St. Ann Parish does allow aisle runners, but from past experience, they are not encouraged due to the possibility of your wedding guests tripping on them. If you choose to use an aisle runner, you must inform your florist and they will make the necessary arrangements. It is the florist job to properly fasten the runner to the carpet well in advance of the beginning of the celebration. Our aisle is 110 feet from altar to the main doors of the church.

**RECORDS / PAPERWORK:**

**BOTH PARTIES, CATHOLIC OR NOT CATHOLIC, MUST BE FREE TO MARRY PRIOR TO THE ST. ANN SECRETARY BOOKING ANY WEDDING. IF AN ANNULMENT IS PENDING, NO WEDDING DATE CAN BE BOOKED UNTIL THE ANNULMENT IS FORMALLY GRANTED AND THE ANNULMENT PAPER WORK IS RECEIVED BY THE ST. ANN PASTOR. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

- Your priest celebrant or deacon celebrant is responsible for preparing and sending all paperwork from your diocese to the Diocese of Springfield (Massachusetts).
- Your license may be obtained anywhere in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. For the future, you should remember where you obtained your license, as that is where the priest or deacon must send it and where your civil record of marriage will be kept. The license is good for 60 days after applying for it. Don’t wait, as there is a three-day waiting period.
- Please know that you must file for your civil marriage license together as a couple, however, only one person is required to pick it up after the 3-day waiting period. Also, if the priest or deacon is not given the license at the rehearsal, the marriage cannot be celebrated the next day. No exceptions.
- A blood test is no longer required in Massachusetts before a license can be issued.
- Pre-Cana or some other Marriage Preparation Opportunity (ex: Heart-to-Heart, Engaged Encounter Weekend, etc.) is required by this Diocese (as in most), and is a prerequisite. Please arrange with your priest or deacon to make your Pre-Cana class as soon as you can.

- You will need to provide your priest or deacon with a **new** copy (not your original) of your **Baptismal Certificate**. It is necessary that the address of the church where you were baptized be on the new certificate. Also, please provide a copy of your **First Communion** and **Confirmation certificates**. **Note:** having made your confirmation is **NOT REQUIRED TO BE MARRIED IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**. May we suggest however, that if this pertains to you, you might consider speaking to your priest or deacon and possibly making your confirmation in the spring with the young adults of your parish. \_\_\_\_\_
- The church office will need the **full** names of your best man or maid of honor (witnesses) and celebrant prior to the wedding date so that wedding certificates can be typed with the appropriate names and left for you in the church. \_\_\_\_\_
- If you are under 18 years of age, you need to have your parents signed permission to get married. If this pertains to you, please speak to your priest. \_\_\_\_\_

**WEDDING TIMES / REHEARSAL:**

**Times for weddings at St. Ann's are as follows:**

Friday: **Afternoons and evenings**

**Saturday:** between 10 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Absolutely no weddings are allowed after 1:00 due to confessions at 3:00 p.m. (A 1:00 p.m. wedding **must** be finished and the church empty by 2:30 p.m.)

**Saturday evening** weddings are permitted after 6 p.m.

**SUNDAY WEDDINGS ARE NOT HELD AT ST. ANN'S, ST VINCET De PAUL OR ST. PATRICK PARISHES.**

- Wedding rehearsals should also be booked with the church, so that nothing else is booked in that time slot. As soon as you and your priest or deacon agrees on this day and time, the church must be informed. \_\_\_\_\_

**UNITY CANDLE:**

- If you plan on using a Unity Candle during your wedding, please know that it is your responsibility to provide the actual Unity Candle and two side candles. St. Ann's does have the holder for the three candles and will be happy to provide the holder if the couple would like to use it. \_\_\_\_\_

**PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOS:**

- Photographs/videos may be taken discreetly during the Mass or Service. All photographers and videographers must see the Celebrant prior to the start of your wedding as different priests have different preferences. \_\_\_\_\_
- If your photographer will be taking pictures in the church following a Saturday afternoon wedding, photographs must be completed by 2:30 p.m. so that the church can be prepared for 3 p.m. confessions. \_\_\_\_\_

### FLOWERS:

- The couple shall take care of arranging for wedding flowers and decorations. Please advise your florist to use clips, ribbons, or rubber bands to secure any bows to the pews. Tape is not allowed because it removes the varnish from our beautiful wood pews! Your church flowers may be left or taken, following the wedding. Please inform your florist that the church is open by 8 a.m. on the weekends. There are 29 pews on each side of the church. **Important** - If your florist takes down or moves any of the church decorations that are in place prior to your wedding, it is expected that they will replace them immediately following your wedding. \_\_\_\_\_

### MUSIC:

- **MUSIC:** The couple is responsible for making **all the arrangements for the music**. Music, of course, is extremely important for any wedding and it is expected that your church music which lends an air of “sanctity” and “mutual love” to your very special day. **All couples must** contact our music director, Mr. Ron Ramsay at 413-344-6988 or roneramsay@gmail.com. If you are questioning whether you need a vocalist or not, our pastor highly suggests that you hire one. It is our pastor’s opinion that having a singer/organist accompany an organist is well worth your money. **You are responsible for contacting Ron and it would be prudent to call him as soon as possible.** \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, these marriage guidelines were prepared to answer your marriage questions. If you still have questions, however, please call your priest or the pastor at St. Ann’s and he will be more than happy to help you. For more information on our parish please go to our website at <http://www.stannlenox.org/>

If you *do* download these guidelines from our website, please know that the next step is to call St. Ann’s Rectory and consult with the secretary or pastor.

God Bless you both as you prepare for your special day.

### PRIEST/DEACON:

- As explained to you when you called to book your wedding date, the wedding couple is responsible for arranging the services of a Catholic Priest or Catholic Deacon to direct and perform your wedding rehearsal and ceremony. **THE FOLLOWING SECTION OF INFORMATION IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!** Enclosed with these guidelines is an additional copy of the Priest/Deacon responsibilities for you to forward to the priest or deacon preparing the paperwork for your wedding. It cannot be stressed enough that your priest or deacon must be sent these responsibilities as soon as they have agreed to assume the responsibility of being your celebrant.



## **PRIEST/DEACON RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- The Priest or Deacon is responsible for preparing **ALL PAPERWORK PRIOR TO THE WEDDING**. The pastor at St. Ann kindly requests that the priest or deacon preparing the paperwork contact him **AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**, by calling (413) 637-0157.
- Any impediments (ex: a prior marriage outside of the Catholic Church, etc..) and dispensations, **MUST BE TAKEN CARE OF BY THE PRIEST/DEACON PREPARING THE PAPERWORK AND SENT TO THE CHANCERY IN THE DIOCESE IN WHICH THE COUPLE RESIDES. ONCE THAT CHANCERY**
- **HAS PROCESSED THE PAPERWORK, THEY IN TURN WILL FORWARD IT TO THE CHANCERY OFFICE OF THE DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD (P.O. BOX 1730, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01101-1730)**. It cannot be stressed enough that the Chancery of Springfield must have the paperwork one month prior to the wedding date.
- Any Priest or Deacon must request delegation from the pastor at St. Ann, at least three months prior to the date of the wedding.
- **SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE:** If the priest or deacon does not reside in Massachusetts, he needs civil permission from the Secretary of State's office. A document for this purpose may be obtained by calling the Chancery office at (413) 732-3175.
- If the priest or deacon performing the ceremony would like an altar server, please notify the rectory office as soon as possible.
- **MARRIAGE LICENSE:** It is the preference at St. Ann Church that the couple give the civil marriage license to the priest or deacon at the rehearsal. The priest or deacon then completes and signs the marriage license and he assumes the responsibility of mailing it back to its place of origin.
- It is also the practice at St. Ann that the pastor notifies the church of baptism regarding the Catholic party(ies)'s who have just married. And he completes the marriage record in the St. Ann Marriage Record Book.
- **Finally**, the pastor will have the marriage record book ready in order for the celebrant to sign in the sacristy.