

Music Guidelines for the Order of Celebrating Matrimony

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, West Des Moines, IA

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! We, in the music ministry, are pleased to offer you the support and assistance necessary to plan your sacramental union. As Catholics, we believe our celebrations must reflect our beliefs and draw us into God's presence.

As you plan your music, keep in mind that this is where the depth of your relationship and your personalities can shine. What do you wish to say to your loved ones who have gathered to share in your joy? How can the music draw those present into your prayer and strengthen and nourish their faith? Your family and friends are there to celebrate with you! Make them feel a part of your wedding by using congregational (singable) music.

Once you have set a date for your wedding and scheduled the church, please contact Emily Schmid, St. Francis of Assisi Music Director by emailing eschmid@saintfrancischurch.org or calling (515)223-4577. Emily will review with you the music guidelines, answer any questions you have, and help you find musicians. **Couples must meet with Emily before making any music selections.** Wedding music informational meetings are offered every other month at the parish and attending would fulfill the requirement to meet with Emily. Please email Emily for dates and times.

To assure that your wedding flows prayerfully and professionally; the following guidelines are stated here for you:

MUSICIANS: So that your wedding is beautiful, trained liturgical musicians should be used. St. Francis has many wonderful and talented musicians to select from, and you are encouraged to use them. Visiting musicians are permitted so long as they understand the nature and execution of sacred music and Catholic worship. Any visiting musicians will need to contact Emily to plan for your wedding adequately. St. Francis requires that an accompanist and vocalist be present at all weddings.

SELECTING MUSIC: All wedding musicians will use the music guidelines set for St. Francis to select music. These guidelines must be used even with visiting musicians and clergy. Musicians trained at St. Francis will select appropriate music with each couple. Couples using visiting musicians will choose their music with Emily. Music for weddings at St. Francis must support the Christian idea of love and marriage. In the Catholic Church we have an extensive history of music ranging from very traditional, to more contemporary sounds. When selecting your music, feel free to take samples from these different areas and genres of music. Unfortunately some music that has become synonymous with weddings is not permitted because the message and ideas behind the music are not consistent with Catholic Church teachings. The famous "Here comes the Bride" theme taken from the *Bridal Chorus* in the opera Lohengrin by Richard Wagner,

promotes anti-Semitic viewpoints in the music, and so is not permitted in Catholic weddings in order to promote ecumenism. Additionally, Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," a common recessional piece used in weddings, is not allowed because it accompanies a scene in Shakespeare's play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that does not promote the Christian view of marriage.

LITURGICAL MUSIC: All music you choose must be liturgical in nature (written for the church to be performed at the church). Secular love songs are not permitted. *Your wedding should be similar to that of a Sunday liturgy.* New revisions to the Rite of Matrimony in 2016 emphasize congregational singing so your music should encourage your guests to participate in your wedding through song. The latest revisions also changed how the processional is structured so only *one processional song* will be used during any wedding. We encourage couples to use a processional song that can be sung by the congregation, but an appropriate instrumental piece may be allowed. Singing during the processional is a way to gather your community in prayer, so talk to your musicians about how this may work for your wedding. All music will need to be approved by Emily Schmid, the St. Francis Music Director. Music must be selected and approved *at least two months* before your wedding although more time is encouraged (*see timeline below*). As a courtesy to musicians it is asked that no changes are made to the music after music director approval.

Always check with your musicians about their given repertoire (music they have learned and know well) before you select any song. Do not assume your musician knows any music you select. Given sufficient notice, musicians will be happy to learn a piece of music with which they are unfamiliar. Any new music for a wedding must be discussed with your musician ***no later than two months before*** your ceremony so that the musicians have adequate time to learn it.

MUSICIAN FEES: The cost for music will vary depending on a musician's experience level, how many musicians you have, and what type of instrumentation you desire. All musicians are free agents, and their prices may vary and change. St. Francis musicians are subject to availability. We also ask that you pay musicians *no later than two weeks prior to the wedding*. For complete list of musicians available through St. Francis, please contact Emily.

If you have any questions or need help with music suggestions, please feel free to contact Emily Schmid, St. Francis of Assisi Director of music, at eschmid@saintfranchurch.org, 515-223-4577 ex. 105

Planning Music Timeline

At least 4-6 months prior to the marriage:

- After meeting with Priests to plan date/time of wedding: Contact Emily Schmid, St. Francis of Assisi music director to set up a time to meet
- Read Music Planning Packet for Marriages before meeting with Emily
- Attend wedding music informational meeting OR meet with Emily
- Choose and contact Musicians

At least 2-4 months prior to the marriage:

- Meet with musicians to choose music

We suggest choosing your readings before meeting with your musicians so they can help you choose music that complements your readings. Your readings can be an excellent source for liturgical music ideas; please be open to their suggestions.

****Musician fees are handled between the musician and the couple. While meeting with your musicians, this is a good time to pay your musicians, so it is taken care of well before the wedding. Please have musicians paid *no later than two weeks prior to the wedding*.**

****This meeting is also the time to discuss any new music selections with musicians to make sure they have what they need to learn said music.**

At least 2 months prior to the marriage:

- Decide how the music will be listed in the worship aid/program, and obtain any copyrights if needed.
- Send all music to the St. Francis Director of Music for approval.

2-weeks prior to the wedding

- Pay musicians any un-paid fees

****musicians are not required to be at the dress rehearsal***