

HANDOUT FOR MUSICIANS

Music has long been an integral part of any public Catholic worship. Since the purpose of the Church Wedding is to celebrate the religious dimension of marriage, the music especially needs to reflect this. Pop music, Broadway music and music written for other media are not music written for use in the church. Texts which are limited to personal dialogue between two people in effect negates the communal, and perhaps the spiritual, dimension of worship. Texts which violate the form of liturgical language, neither representing God speaking to us nor our addressing God, are also inappropriate. Musical selections such as secular ballads and love songs, while they have personal meaning to the couple, are best left to the reception where other dimensions of the wedding celebration prevail. Once again, the music known to the couple from participating in Mass on Sunday is the model we follow.

There has been much discussion of the use of “The Bridal Chorus” (Here Comes the Bride”) from Wagner’s “Lohengrin” and “The Wedding March” from Mendelssohn’s “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” for processional and recessional music. Many couples are unfamiliar with these two operas and what the music represents in each. This music accompanies the actions of a forced marriage with an unwilling partner, ending in murder and suicide and a staged, illicit wedding, set up to be ridiculed. Neither piece of music represents the marriage of two people committing their lives to each other in Christian love. Both operas mock what we understand as Christian marriage and the music that accompanies them has been determined inappropriate by Church authorities. As such, this music is not acceptable or permitted in this diocese.

Using Sunday Mass as the model, the Church encourages the use of congregational hymns when possible and prefers musicians to support the traditional sung portions of the Mass – acclamations and responses – prior to choosing any solo pieces. Suitable instrumental processionals and recessionals are certainly appropriate. Careful selection of the music during the ceremony is crucial since music has the power to encourage or stifle the participation of the assembly.

HANDOUT FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS

It is important that the recording process not distract members of the assembly from the act of worship. Therefore, please ask the priest presiding at the wedding ceremony to indicate those locations in the church which are most advantageous for videotaping and still photography. This will prevent any roaming through the church and interfering with the ceremony. The placement of any video equipment within the sanctuary is not permitted.

We ask that flash photos taken by the guests be kept to a minimum to avoid distractions during the ceremony. For the professional photographer, discretion is asked in the use of flash photos during the ceremony. The church will be open for the taking of pictures before and after the wedding, provided there is no conflict with other scheduled liturgies. Other lighting, including flash, could be used at these times.

Pictures are to be taken in a reverential way, mindful of good order in the church and the sacredness of the place. Therefore, the church will be open for the taking of pictures after the wedding. We do ask you to be mindful of other weddings and, especially on Saturday afternoons, to complete your picture taking by 4:00 p.m. because of confessions.

Please remember that the style and movement of the procession is under the direction of the presiding minister in consultation with the couple.

Please be aware that quite often people are praying in the Church of St. Peter. We ask that you do your best to keep a low volume of noise and conversation while taking pictures for the sake of reverence and respect for those praying.

Revised: June 2018

HANDOUT CONCERNING DECORATIONS

Most bridal couples want to convey an atmosphere of gracious welcome to their guests. Flower arrangements in the church can help guests feel welcome. How one decorates the church is a matter of personal taste and budget, but there are a few general guidelines you must follow.

“Flowers, plants and trees – genuine, of course – are particularly apt for the decoration of liturgical space, since they are of nature, always discreet in their message, never cheap or tawdry or ill-made: (Environment and Art in Catholic Worship, para. 102).

“Decoration should never impede the approach to or the encircling of the altar of any of the ritual movement and action, but there are place in most liturgical spaces where it is appropriate and where it can be enhancing” (EACW, para 102).

“the whole space is to be considered the arena of decoration, not merely the sanctuary” (EACW, para. 102).

A. Flowers and Plants

Flowers are not required, but are welcomed, Fresh flowers are the ideal for any sacramental use, signifying the sacrifice of Jesus’ life for our salvation. Flowers arrangements and a pair of candelabras belonging to the parish may be rented. If you would like to see these, please consult the Wedding Coordinator. You must have your decorating plan approved in advance by the Wedding Coordinator. Please consider that we have many seasons and special feasts in our liturgical calendar and the church is decorated accordingly. (i.e. Advent and Lent are purple; Easter is white; Pentecost – Red and Ordinary Time – green). Seasonal decorations cannot be removed or disrupted for a wedding. The Wedding Coordinator may allow flowers to be moved or banners taken down, but they must be stored carefully in the working sacristy and must be replaced immediately after the wedding.

B. Aisle and Pew Decorations, Candles and Candelabra

The presence or lighting of the paschal or Easter candle would be welcome as a symbol of the risen Christ in our midst. this candle is a symbol of the baptismal call to live in the light of Christ. (cont...)

Aisle runners are strongly discouraged because there is no practical need for them. Ribbons, flowers or candles may **NOT** be taped to the pews, but should be affixed in a manner that will not cause damage to the pews. The Baptismal Font may **NOT** be moved.

We do **NOT PERMIT** use of rice, birdseed, balloons or confetti in or around the premises of the church or our halls. If these are used beyond your control, you are responsible to see that someone cleans up afterwards.

None of the church furnishings may be moved for the wedding.