



Policies for Weddings at Christ Our King Catholic Church Mount Pleasant, South Carolina

The Christ Our King Parish community rejoices with you in your engagement to one another, and we will walk with you as you approach one of the most important days in your life, the beginning of the sacred covenant of Christian marriage.

In asking to be married in the Catholic Church, you are publicly proclaiming your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and asking to live as Disciples of Christ in the Sacrament of Marriage. The sacred liturgy of your wedding, which begins your married life by the solemn exchange of marital consent, is above all else an act of worship, and we will help you prepare both for that happy day and for the lifetime of marriage that follows your nuptial liturgy.

Reserving Christ Our King Catholic Church

Please contact the Parish Office a minimum of at least six (6) months prior to your proposed wedding date.

Christ Our King Parishioners — Either the bride or the groom must be registered at Christ Our King for at least 3 months before scheduling a wedding date and be a visible and practicing Catholic on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and have a record of Mass attendance through the use of offertory envelopes. As a courtesy to our registered, active parishioners who meet the above criteria, the Parish will consider offering the use of the church to those parishioners' children and grandchildren.

Non-Parishioners — Either the bride or the groom must be a practicing Catholic in their local parish. In order to secure a date, a letter from the bride or groom's Pastor must be received stating the following:

1. The bride and/or groom are active, registered parishioners of their parish. Form A is to be completed and provided with the Agreement and Fees.
2. The Pastor grants permission for the bride and/or groom to be married at Christ Our King Catholic Church (Form A)
3. The Pastor or his delegate will handle all the prenuptial paperwork and marriage preparation – Form B is to be completed and provided with the Agreement and Fees.

In order to ensure that the couple planning to get married is aware of and has approved all preparations and changes, **all arrangements are to be made exclusively by the bride or groom personally.**

Please note: At least the bride or groom must be a Catholic in good standing, and only Roman Catholic ceremonies celebrated according to the norms of the Catholic Church's sacred liturgy are permitted at Christ Our King Catholic Church – Form C.

Selecting a date and time at Christ Our King Catholic Church

Weddings are celebrated on Saturdays at either 11:00am or 2:00pm. Weddings may also be celebrated on Fridays at times which do not interfere with the carpool schedule of Christ Our King - Stella Maris School. Friday weddings should be at 1:00pm or 5:00pm.

Days on which weddings are not celebrated include: First Fridays, Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation, the weekend after Easter, Thanksgiving weekend, the weekend after Christmas, New Year's Eve, and All Souls' Day (November 2nd). Some dates may be excluded due to parish events, including other wedding rehearsals. Nuptial Masses during Lent are not allowed. However, a Nuptial Liturgy performed by a deacon is permitted during Lent. Nuptial Liturgies during Lent should be planned and executed in a manner appropriate to the penitential season of Lent.

What must be done prior to the wedding?

Wedding preparation and marriage preparation are two different things. The wedding preparations are necessary, but the marriage preparations are of primary importance.

The Catholic Church requires all engaged couples to attend an approved pre-marriage counseling program. Our sole desire is that couples become married in Christ and stay married. Everything the Church asks and does is towards this end. Specific details on this program will be provided at your initial meeting with a deacon of the parish.

Parishioners of Christ Our King will receive their marriage preparation from a deacon or other person designated by the pastor who will also assist them in completing the necessary paperwork. Couples who live out of town or are non-parishioners must make arrangements for their pre-marriage counseling in their local area.

Should the wedding take place within or outside of Mass?

Perhaps a definition of terms may be helpful to make this determination. Every Catholic Mass requires a priest and consists of the *Liturgy of the Word* (Introductory Rites, Readings, the Homily, and General Intercessions) and the *Liturgy of the Eucharist* (the bread and wine are consecrated and become the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ, distribution of Holy Communion). The Rite of Marriage in both cases takes place after the Homily; however, for a wedding outside of Mass, usually with a deacon and not a priest, the liturgy immediately moves from the General Intercessions to the Nuptial Blessing, the Lord's Prayer, and the final blessing (i.e., there is neither Consecration nor distribution of Holy Communion).

For the sake of the wedding party and their families, it is often the case that weddings between a Catholic and a non-Catholic are celebrated outside of Mass. This helps to prevent any misunderstandings for the non-Catholic bride/groom and his or her family, who may not be Catholic, since Holy Communion cannot be extended to non-Catholics. However, if this is your situation and you wish a Nuptial Mass, please discuss it with the pastor or the person completing your Marriage Preparation.

Who plans the wedding ceremony?

The Church is not a passive participant nor an unconcerned party to the wedding. The Nuptial Mass, like all liturgies, is a public, liturgical action of the Church and her sacred liturgy is the chief reason Catholics desire a Catholic wedding. The basic form of the wedding liturgy, then, is given by the Church, and it is beautiful in its format.

The bride and groom will be given appropriate options from the liturgy from which to select.

There is an ancient tradition in which the bride may leave a flower or bouquet in front of Our Lady's statue, asking for her intercession as did the couple at the wedding feast of Cana. This is optional.

Your presider and/or the parish's wedding coordinator will help you in planning the ceremony. The parish staff will work with the bride, the groom, and their presider to plan the wedding.

Clergy

The Pastor or the Parochial Vicar are the customary celebrants of marriage in the parish. The Pastor may delegate other clerics (deacons) of the Catholic Church to witness a marriage in the canonical boundaries of Christ Our King Parish.

If you are a member of another parish and are using Christ Our King's facilities, your own priest or deacon should be invited to officiate at your wedding. Visiting clergy must obtain the required delegation from the Pastor and provide proof from his diocesan chancery that he is a priest or deacon in good standing.

Delegation will only be granted when all the required paperwork, permissions, and dispensations have been completed and sent to the Parish office. This delegation cannot be sub-delegated. Also, the visiting clergy must abide by the Parish's wedding policies and only celebrate the liturgy according to the approved, Catholic form. If a non-Catholic clergy member is requested to take part in the ceremony, this can be arranged. We are guided by the Ecumenical Guidelines of the Diocese of Charleston.

The Parish Wedding Coordinator (Required)

Nicole DeNeane, our Wedding Coordinator is responsible for implementing the policies and customs of Christ Our King Parish. The wedding coordinator represents the parish and speaks with the authority of the Pastor. She is well instructed in the nuptial ceremony, guidelines, and protocols. Nicole serves many vital functions before, during, and after the wedding. Nicole assists the bride and groom, consults with the celebrant, conducts the rehearsal, gives direction to the wedding party, and ensures that the guidelines enumerated herein are observed.

Even if you have engaged a professional wedding planner, the Parish Wedding Coordinator will still direct the activity at the rehearsal and wedding ceremony. Once the wedding is scheduled, Nicole will contact you about your wedding arrangements.

Who plans the music?

All music at Christ Our King Church is planned and coordinated with our Parish Director of Liturgy and Music, Mr. Scott Atwood in consultation with the bride and groom. Only sacred approved music is permitted. The parish's Music Director serves as the organist for the wedding.

The cantor for your wedding, which is not optional, is provided by our Director of Liturgy and Music. We will do our best to honor any cantor requests based on availability of our staff.

Couples should contact the Director of Liturgy and Music (Scott Atwood) within a few weeks of booking the church (atwoodscottn@gmail.com). Mr. Atwood will set-up a consultation meeting. Consultations usually take place in the church on Saturday afternoons. If Saturday afternoons are inconvenient, an alternative time can be found.

The Wedding Music are guidelines are as follows:

- Mr. Atwood's services include the preparation of an Order of Worship (or program) for the liturgy, which allows your guests to follow the Liturgy and to actively participate in the celebration of your wedding. Couples are asked to provide a list of names for inclusion in the program; selected readings should also be included.
- Mr. Atwood will select a psalmist/cantor from the roster of parish cantors; if the couple has a preference, they may indicate it at the time of the consultation.
- If additional instrumentalists are desired, Mr. Atwood will contract them.
- In special circumstances, a guest singer may be allowed to perform an "Ave Maria" or another sacred solo, provided he/she rehearses with Mr. Atwood in advance.
- The playing of recorded music in the church is forbidden.
- Parish musicians do not attend the rehearsal.

Liturgical Furnishings

The furnishings for the Sacred Liturgy are provided by the church. The furnishings in the sanctuary are fixed and cannot be moved. To help in your planning, Christ Our King Catholic Church seats approximately 600 people.

The cost of a wedding for a registered, active parishioner of Christ Our King

For a **registered, active parishioner** there is no facility use fee for the church; however, there are members of the parish staff that will be involved in celebrating your wedding liturgy. The fee for the Parish Wedding Coordinator is \$300. The recommended stipend for a priest celebrant is \$250. The recommended stipend for a deacon celebrant is \$200. The standard organist fee is \$300; the standard cantor fee is \$200. Cash or checks made payable to the various individuals should be given to the parish wedding coordinator at the rehearsal. There is also a \$100 non-refundable administrative fee to track and ensure the necessary canonical paperwork is prepared, executed, and filed for your wedding. Your marriage will not be considered valid in the church without this critical paperwork.

Your wedding date/time is secured when both your signed Wedding Agreement (Form D) and the administrative fee are received by the offices of Christ Our King. The \$100 administrative fee should be paid by check to Christ Our King Catholic Church and delivered to the attention of Betsy Dalton, Pastoral Assistant or by Venmo @christourkingmtpl with the couples' names and the wedding date noted. The non-refundable administrative fee is to track and ensure the necessary canonical paperwork is prepared, executed, and filed for your wedding. Your marriage will not be considered valid in the church without this critical paperwork.

The cost of a wedding for a non-parishioner

Non-parishioners are welcome to celebrate their wedding at Christ Our King Catholic Church. The facility use fee is \$1,500. This fee helps to cover the maintenance, HVAC, and upkeep of the church, all of which are primarily borne by the parishioners.

There are members of the parish staff that will be involved in celebrating your wedding liturgy. The fee for the Parish Wedding Coordinator is \$300. The recommended stipend for a priest celebrant is \$250. The recommended stipend for a deacon celebrant is \$200. The standard organist fee is \$300; the standard cantor fee is \$200. Cash or checks made payable to the various individuals should be given to the parish wedding coordinator at the rehearsal. There is also a \$100 non-refundable administrative fee to track and ensure the necessary canonical paperwork is prepared, executed, and filed for your wedding. Your marriage will not be considered valid in the church without this critical paperwork.

Your wedding date/time is secured when your signed Wedding Agreement (Form D), at least 50% of the facility use fee, and the administrative fee are all received by the offices of Christ Our King. If the wedding is canceled, a refund of the facility use fee will be made less a \$300 office fee. All checks should be made payable to Christ Our King Catholic Church and delivered to the attention of Betsy Dalton, Pastoral Assistant or paid by Venmo @christourkingmtpl with the couples' names and the wedding date noted. The remaining 50% (\$750) of the facility use fee is due two weeks prior to the wedding.

Other Items for Consideration

Flowers and Church Decor

Throughout the year, the church decor reflects the liturgical season with banners, altar cloths and seasonal arrangements. **None of these items in the sanctuary are to be disturbed.** Listed below are guidelines to follow:

- The furnishings for the sacred liturgy are provided by the parish. This includes all vestments, books, candles and candlesticks, kneelers, chairs, and other elements as needed. We cannot use family heirlooms in the celebration of the sacred liturgy. Our church's furnishings are fixed and cannot be moved. Bows, floral arrangements, candles, etc. may not be attached to the pews. Aisle runners pose a hazard and may not be used.
- Christ Our King will provide floral arrangements for the altar, delivered to the church by our florist in a size that accommodates our planters. Following the wedding, the flowers shall remain in the church as your gift for our weekend Masses. You may request certain colors for

the floral arrangements, and we will do our best to accommodate you.

- No additional floral arrangements may be placed anywhere in the church.
- Bows and ribbons may be used to mark the pews in the center aisle. However, do not use wire, tape, pushpins, thumbtacks or anything that would damage the wooden pew. Please remove pew markers before leaving the church after the liturgy.
- The church is available one (1) hour prior to the ceremony. Please give the Wedding Coordinator advance notice.

Decorum & Protocol

The church is not a venue. It is the house of the Lord, and respect should always be given to the presence of the Eucharist in the church. Please keep modesty in mind when planning dresses for the bride and her attendants: strapless and spaghetti strap dresses are not appropriate for a church unless the shoulders are somehow covered.

To maintain a spirit of quiet prayer and preparation in the church, the groomsmen usually act as ushers and should seat guests as they arrive. The nave of the church is not an appropriate place to “catch up” with people – this is the purpose of the reception. Additionally, receiving lines are not permitted at the church and should be included in your reception plans.

Due to other events scheduled in the church, the church will only be available **one hour prior to and 90 minutes after the wedding start time**. Please plan accordingly. (E.g. for a 2 p.m. wedding, the church opens at 1 p.m. and must be vacated by 3:30 p.m.)

No rooms in the church will be available for use by the wedding party. No one is permitted in the sacristy at any time.

The Rehearsal

The Rehearsal is scheduled for the evening before the wedding at 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. Please be on time so that the rehearsal can begin promptly. The rehearsal is limited to one hour. The Wedding Coordinator and celebrant will lead you through the liturgy during the rehearsal. The bride and groom must both be present and participate. Because of the nature of the sound system and acoustics of the church, please have your lectors present so that they may practice their readings at the rehearsal.

Bridal Party

While Christ Our King is a large church, the sanctuary space is limited. Bridal parties with more than 8 attendants on each side will be seated in the front pews throughout the wedding. Only the Maid of Honor and Best Man will be invited into the sanctuary at appropriate times during the wedding. At no time are children permitted on the altar.

Ring Bearers and Flower Girls

All children in the wedding party should be at least 5 years old. We do not permit the dropping of

flower petals on the floor.

Photographs and Video Recording

To protect the sacred character of your wedding liturgy, the requirements for photography at the church may be different from your experience of other weddings. Please review the following policies and attached guidelines with your photographer/videographer prior to the wedding. Any questions should be directed to the Wedding Coordinator.

- The Parish Wedding Coordinator will show your photographer(s) and videographer(s) where they are permitted to stand during the wedding. It is extremely important that they remain respectful of the sacred space.
- Photographers and videographers must remain stationary and behind the last row of guests during the ceremony and not be a distraction. Most importantly, they are not to enter the sanctuary at any time during the ceremony. The use of flash or any other bright lights are prohibited during the ceremony.
- Due to other events scheduled in the church, the church and gardens will only be available **one hour prior to and 90 minutes after the wedding start time**. Please plan accordingly. (E.g. for a 2 p.m. wedding, the church opens at 1 p.m. and must be vacated by 3:30 p.m.)

Military Style Weddings

We welcome our military men and women to wear their uniforms. Military swords and other secular weapons (real or ceremonial) may be worn but are never permitted to be used inside the church. Ceremonial displays, such as the saber or sword arch, are permitted in the narthex and outside the church.

Food, Smoking, Alcohol, Cell Phones and More

No food or drink is permitted in the church or anywhere on the grounds of Christ Our King before, during, or after the wedding and rehearsal. The use of chewing gum or tobacco is also prohibited at all times. The wedding party is expected to refrain from using any alcoholic beverages before both the rehearsal and the wedding. The Wedding Coordinator has permission from the Pastor to remove from the church anyone under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Please remind everyone in the wedding party to preserve the sacred character of this event. All cell phones must be turned off so that they may not disturb the sacred liturgy.

No rice, birdseed, confetti, bubbles, or flower petals are to be used in the church, in front of the church, or on the parking lot outside the church. These objects pose a hazard to others.

Important Addresses:

Christ Our King Catholic Church
1149 Russell Drive
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464

Diocese of Charleston
Office of the Chancellor
901 Orange Grove Road
Charleston, SC 29407

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

1. **Wedding Agreement:** This document needs to be signed by the bride and groom and returned to the parish along with the administrative fee and facility use fee (non-parishioners).
2. **Documentation for Non-Parishioners seeking to be married at Christ Our King Catholic Church:** Within 30 days of a confirmed wedding date, the following documents need to be completed by the couple's pastor and returned to the parish.
 - Pastor's Permission to Marry (Form A)
 - Marriage Preparation Agreement (Form B)
 - Marriage Officiant Agreement (Form C - only required if couple is bringing a celebrant)

These documents can be found on our website and will be provided to you via email.

Non-parishioners also need to provide the name and email address of the contact person at their parish who will be responsible for having the other two/three documents signed and returned to Christ Our King. Non-parishioners are expected to send at least 50% of the facility use fee and the administrative fee to the parish office (1149 Russell Drive Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464) along with the signed Wedding Agreement. Your wedding date and time will be secured and confirmed upon receipt by Christ Our King of these checks and the signed Wedding Agreement.

3. **Marriage File:** Your marriage file consists of several important documents including the prenuptial questionnaire, newly issued Certificates of Baptism (Catholics) or proof of baptism (non-Catholics), a certificate or proof of completion of an approved premarital course, and, if necessary, a Decree of Nullity. The marriage will be recorded in the parish wedding registry, and the marriage file will be maintained at Christ Our King.

Parishioners of Christ Our King will have this paperwork collated by the pastor and/or his delegate.

Non-parishioners are expected to have this paperwork completed by their parish. Because your marriage file must be approved by your (arch)diocese and then sent to the Diocese of Charleston for their approval, it is imperative that you plan to complete your marriage file **no less than 60 days prior to your wedding**. Once your marriage file has been approved by your (arch)diocese and the Diocese of Charleston, it will be sent to Christ Our King for recording. Without this paperwork, there can be no wedding.

4. **Civil License:** A civil license for a marriage in South Carolina can be obtained from the marriage license bureau in any county courthouse in the state. The couple must apply for the license in person; you will receive the license the next day. You will be given three (3) licenses plus a self-addressed envelope. Please bring these to the church office. Please do not sign any of them. The rehearsal for the wedding will not happen without this license, nor will the wedding be celebrated without this license. For this reason, it is recommended that you not wait until the week of the wedding to apply for the license.



TOP TEN TAKEAWAYS FROM OUR WEDDING GUIDELINES

1. We welcome you and your families to Christ Our King Catholic Church. As a sacred space, we invite you to embrace its spiritual atmosphere throughout your wedding journey.
2. Our parish is here to guide you towards a beautiful, sacred ceremony that honors Catholic tradition.
3. Each parish may have unique or regional customs. We are happy to discuss our specific practices to ensure a smooth celebration.
4. Our church's decor reflects our community's faith. We appreciate your understanding in preserving its arrangement for your special day.
5. Timely completion of paperwork and preparation is necessary for a joyful wedding day. We are here to assist you through this process.
6. Your wedding plans will be crafted collaboratively between you, your fiancé(e), and our dedicated parish staff.
7. We welcome bridal parties of all sizes. Parties larger than 8 on each side will be comfortably seated in the pews, with the couple, Maid of Honor, and Best Man in the sanctuary.
8. To maintain our schedule, we kindly limit post-ceremony photography inside the church and the gardens to one hour.
9. For Nuptial Masses with over 100 communicants, we welcome the assistance of an experienced and authorized Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion from among your guests.
10. Our Director of Liturgy and Music will work with you to plan beautiful music for your wedding/nuptial liturgy. Please arrange any additional musicians at least 6 months in advance.
11. Ideally, lectors should be individuals who exercise this ministry in their home parish. Celebrants will reserve the right to ask for replacement lectors if their proclamation and delivery of the Word during the rehearsal is deemed insufficient.

Christ Our King Catholic Church
1149 Russell Drive, Mount Pleasant, SC 29466
Office: 843-884-5587



GUIDELINES FOR WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS

When photographing and video graphing a wedding at Christ Our King, we ask that you keep the following rules in mind:

1. Flash photography is permitted only during the processional, recessional, and in pre- or post-wedding pictures. No flash photography or additional lighting may be used during the liturgy.
2. Photographers and videographers must remain behind the last row of guests in the back or off to the sides at all times during the wedding. They must also remain stationary during the ceremony.
3. Photographers and videographers are not permitted in the sanctuary at any time. Unmanned cameras are not permitted in the sanctuary.
4. The Parish Wedding Coordinator will share appropriate places where you can stand during the ceremony.
5. Please be sure your bags and additional equipment are kept out of the way of guests. The parish will not be held responsible for any broken or misplaced equipment.
6. The parish does not have centralized audio with a single direct out for sound recording. Please make the necessary arrangements for your sound and recording needs (Zoom, Tascam, etc.).
7. Post-wedding photography is limited to one hour.
8. Church furniture and decorations may not be moved.

Please contact the Parish Wedding Coordinator if you have any additional concerns or questions.

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