

Stella Maris
Catholic Church



Founded 1845

1204 Middle Street
P.O. Box 280
Sullivan's Island, SC
29482

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TO: THOSE WHO INQUIRE ABOUT MARRIAGE AT STELLA MARIS
FROM: REV. MSGR. LAWRENCE B. McINERNEY
RE: WEDDING POLICIES/COHABITATION OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE

Enclosed is a rather detailed listing of policies about weddings along with information about marriage preparation. In presenting these policies about weddings, I acknowledge that there seem to be many rules about the ceremony. It might help you to know that all of them are based on past experiences and are offered in the hope of making your wedding ceremony as beautiful, meaningful, and spiritual as possible. Before you proceed to ask me to witness your wedding, there is an important question I ask you to address:

Are you living together or planning to live together before the wedding? If the answer is "yes", please do not ask me to witness your marriage unless you are willing to separate and live apart until the wedding. Here's why: After twenty-five years of working with cohabitating couples and trying to help them build stable marriages, I find the situation has not gotten better, but worse. The most recent statistics available to me show that 50% of all couples entering marriage today will divorce, but 65% of cohabitating couples will divorce. Besides, there is a moral problem. The presumption is that when two people with romantic interest in each other live together, they are living a sexual relationship. The constant teaching of Christianity in Scripture and Sacred Tradition is that sexual activity belongs only in marriage. Sex outside of marriage is a serious sin. People in the state of serious sin cannot receive the sacraments of the living (sacraments to be received in the state of grace, i.e. Holy Communion, Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders) without committing sacrilege (cf. I Cor. 11:27-28).

I realize there are couples who commit to a chaste relationship before marriage even as they live together. This, however, also causes a problem in the sin of scandal (an action likely to induce another to do wrong). Many people today have seen so many couples cohabitating before marriage that they have no idea that cohabitation before marriage is wrong. With a loving concern for you, your marriage and the sanctity of marriage, I urge you to address this question before celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony. With this understanding, if you are ready to proceed towards a wedding in Stella Maris Church, please telephone me (or the person you will ask to witness your wedding) for an appointment. May God bless you.

- Msgr. McInerney

Wedding Guidelines

Stella Maris Catholic Church
Sullivan's Island, South Carolina

(revised – June, 2013)

Stella Maris Catholic Church is in high demand for weddings. Typically, Catholics are married in the church in which they are registered and active. Non-parishioner requests will be considered on an individual basis. Once the church is reserved, the reservation will be firmly held regardless of parishioner status.

The following guidelines draw upon Canon Law, Church rubrics, and pastoral experience; they apply to all couples wishing to marry at Stella Maris.

1. **All arrangements are to be made by the bride or the groom personally.** (No third parties - i.e. privately-contracted wedding coordinators, parents, etc.)
2. **Parishioners/Non-parishioners:**
 - a) **Registered parishioners** who attend Mass regularly for a sufficient period of time and who are canonically free to marry may schedule a wedding at Stella Maris. We are only able to verify regular attendance at Mass if parishioners use the envelope system. Regrettably, in the past some couples have registered solely to obtain the use of the church for weddings. Final determination of active parishioner status is to be made by the pastor.
 - b) **Non-parishioners** may use the church as well as the services of the Director of Liturgical Music and the Parish Wedding Coordinator if permitted by the Pastor. Usually, Stella Maris does not provide the services of a priest or deacon for non-parishioners; non-parishioners should provide their own priest or deacon to officiate at weddings and to provide marriage preparation -- the Diocese of Charleston requires that couples contact the priest or deacon six months prior to the wedding date. **Catholic non-parishioners** must obtain written permission from their proper pastor *prior to scheduling* a wedding at Stella Maris.

3. Reservations

The attached reservation form must be completed and returned to the Parish Office, before a wedding can be scheduled in the Church Calendar. Tentative reservations are not accepted.

- a) A reservation *must include* the name, address, and telephone number of the Catholic priest or deacon who has already agreed to witness the marriage. Should the clergyman cancel due to unforeseen circumstances, it is the responsibility of the couple to obtain a replacement and to notify the Parish Office immediately.
- b) Visiting priests or deacons will be given the necessary delegation to witness the marriage once they have presented the Pastor with the required pre-nuptial papers (including necessary permissions, dispensations and verification that the couple is free to marry).
- c) Reservations must include an offering for the use of the church. For **active, registered parishioners** (minimum, one year) no offering is required. For others, including **non-parishioners**, the offering for the use of the church is **\$800.00**. If the wedding is cancelled, a refund will be made (less a \$50.00 office fee).
- d) Couples will receive a letter of confirmation from the parish after submitting the form to reserve the church. If no confirmation is received within two weeks, couples should notify the Parish Office.

4. Dates and Times

- a) No weddings are scheduled during the penitential seasons of Lent and Advent.
- b) Weddings may not begin any later than **2:00 PM** on Saturdays. The wedding party and the photographers must vacate the church **no later than 3:30 PM** to accommodate parish confessions and preparation for the Saturday Vigil Mass.
- c) Sunday weddings are not celebrated at Stella Maris.

5. Music

The Director of Liturgical Music is Mr. Jack Cleghorn. Couples should contact him immediately after scheduling the wedding. His fees, policies, and contact information are found below in the "Guidelines for Wedding Music". Mr. Cleghorn plays the organ at all weddings held at Stella Maris Church.

6. Flowers

- a) Any florist may be used
- b) A maximum of four arrangements are allowed.
- c) The two main arrangements are usually placed in the brass urns located on the altar. Because of their age, our urns have smaller capacity and require a smaller papier-mâché liner. We have a stock of these liners and make them available to florists. Additional smaller arrangements may be placed in any appropriate containers in front of the two statues but the space is very limited.
- d) Floral pew markers or bows may not damage the pews (no tacks, nails, pushpins, scotch tape, or metal clips). The floral markers or bows should be tied to the pew or attached with masking tape.
- e) Flower petals may not intentionally be dropped or spread on the floor.
- f) Artificial flowers and greenery are not appropriate and may not be used.
- g) Arbors may not be erected in the church.
- h) It is the responsibility of the florist to coordinate delivery of the flowers to the church at a time convenient to the pastor and staff. If additional flowers, such as corsages and boutonnieres are to be delivered to the parish center, it is the responsibility of the florist to insure that someone will be available to receive them.
- i) Flower arrangements are usually left in the church for use the following Sunday. Couples who wish to remove their flowers should inform the church office to insure that we have flowers for Sunday.

7. Furnishings

- a) Only those candles, candlesticks, and candelabrae provided by the church may be used. (Pew Candles and Unity Candles are not allowed).
- b) The ambo and the altar are fixed furnishings and cannot be moved.
- c) Statues, the votive candle stand, and certain seasonal appointments like the Paschal Candle are not to be moved.
- d) The church will provide kneelers, chairs and other items to be used within the ceremony.
- e) Aisle runners are a safety hazard and are not allowed.

8. Photography

- a) Photographers and videographers must be respectful and unobtrusive. They are not to be visible to the congregation during the ceremony.
- b) Flash photography and light bars may not be used during the service.
- c) The wedding party is invited to pose for photographs immediately following the ceremony (30 minutes maximum)

9. Rehearsals

- a) Rehearsals must begin and end promptly. If the rehearsal is not begun within fifteen minutes of the scheduled time, the church is to be locked and the rehearsal is to be postponed until one hour before the scheduled start of the wedding.
- b) Rehearsals need not last longer than forty-five minutes.
- c) Those who need to attend the rehearsal include:
 - ✓ bride and groom
 - ✓ maid/ matron of honor and best man
 - ✓ bridesmaids and groomsmen
 - ✓ flower girls and ring bearers.
 - ✓ lectors (with their readings)

10. Wedding Coordinator

The Parish Wedding Coordinator is Jane Ellen Herron. Her fee is **\$100.00 for active parishioners** and **\$150.00 for non-parishioners**.

11. Miscellaneous

- a) Fees for the Director of Liturgical Music, cantors, additional musicians (if any), and the Wedding Coordinator are to be paid at the time of the wedding rehearsal. Checks can be given to Ms. Herron.
- b) The marriage license must be given to the Wedding Coordinator at the time of the wedding rehearsal. The priest or deacon cannot witness a wedding without a valid South Carolina marriage license.
- c) Rice is not to be thrown on church property; birdseed may be thrown as a substitute (outside only).

12. Wedding Mass /Wedding Ceremony:

The Marriage Rite may be celebrated either within the context of the Mass or outside of the Mass.

- a) A Nuptial *Mass* may be celebrated when both the bride and the groom are practicing Catholics.
- b) If either the bride or the groom is not a practicing Catholic, the Rite of Marriage is usually celebrated outside of the Mass (a Wedding “Ceremony”) because the Roman Catholic Church does not have inter-communion with other denominations.
- c) Outlines for both the Nuptial Mass and the Rite of Marriage *outside of* Mass are attached as addenda to these guidelines.
- d) Using materials provided in Marriage Preparation sessions, couples may select the readings for the liturgy and the form of the vows they take.
- e) Neither the Nuptial Mass nor the Rite of Marriage *outside of* Mass accommodates non-liturgical elements or rituals. [These include, but are not limited to: writing one's own vows, reading poetry during the service, and the lighting of the so-called "Unity Candle"].

13. Programs

- a) The preparation and printing of an Order of Worship is not required.
- b) If so desired, the Director of Liturgical Music may be contracted to design and reproduce an Order of Worship. Because of errors in the past, we do not encourage couples or their friends to produce their own Orders of Worship. Those who elect to prepare their own must have them approved by a priest or a deacon before having them printed.

14. Decorum

- a) Couples, wedding participants and guests are expected to conduct themselves with reverence, dignity, and prayerful quietude in the church.
- b) Receiving lines are to be held at the wedding reception (not at the church).
- c) Alcoholic beverages are forbidden on church premises (including the church, the hall, the parking lots, and the grounds).

15. Facilities

- a) Stella Maris does not have a brides' room for dressing prior to the wedding. **If requested in advance**, the Library in the Parish Hall may be used as a gathering area for the bride and her attendants. If the library is used, it should be left clean and all personal items removed before the wedding party departs. No food or beverages are to be consumed in the library.
- b) Stella Maris can not accommodate wedding guests in need of a dressing/changing location.
- c) Restrooms are located at the far end of the Parish Hall. There are no restrooms in the church.

16. Marriage Preparation

- a) Diocesan law requires a minimum of six months notice for clergymen witnessing weddings. This individual has the responsibility of preparing the couple for marriage and completing the pre-nuptial paperwork.
- b) Couples are required to attend a recognized marriage preparation program such as Pre-Cana or Engaged Encounter. Space in such programs is limited; arrangements should be made early. (See attached Addendum for information).

17. Special Circumstances

a) **Previously married/Divorced**

In accord with the teachings of the Gospel, the Roman Catholic Church holds that marriage is a permanent commitment. Any person who has been previously married and divorced, whether Catholic or not, is not free to marry in the Catholic Church. In such cases the Church's Marriage Tribunal will investigate the previous marriage to see if it might be declared null; the parish staff is available to assist parishioners in this process. Without a decree of nullity in hand, no wedding date can be set.

b) **Cohabitation**

Living together before marriage is contrary to the moral law. Statistically, cohabiting couples have a higher divorce rate.

Guidelines for Wedding Music

Contact

Couples wishing to have wedding music are required to book the Director of Liturgical Music (MusicAtStellaMaris@gmail.com) as soon as the date and time of the wedding have been confirmed.

Bookings must be made by the bride and/or groom; intermediaries, such as wedding planners, parents and relatives are not authorized to act on the couple's behalf.

"Standard" Wedding Music Options

Couples inclined towards tradition are encouraged to consider the "Standard" option, a collection of popular wedding selections, including "Ave Maria", "Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring", "Canon in D", "The Prince of Denmark's March" and "Allegro Maestoso" from Handel's *Water Music*.

"Custom" Wedding Music Option

Couples inclined towards tradition who desire to have input in the musical selection process are encouraged to consider the "Custom" option, whereby more freedom in respect to repertoire, instrumentation and personnel is given. Any Alteration of the "Standard" option changes the status of a Wedding to "Custom" option.

- **Consultation & Fee**
 - Couples must schedule a consultation with the Director of Liturgical Music.
 - The Consultation will last approximately 45 minutes and will take place in the Music Office (the Old Rectory, located to the right of the church).
 - The consultation fee should be given at the time of the meeting.
 - During the consultation, the DLM will invite questions and suggestions.
 - In preparation for consultations, couples are strongly encouraged to choose readings and a responsorial psalm; suggested psalms and readings are provided by the priest. Couples are encouraged to bring liturgical reference/planning booklets provided by their priest and other pertinent materials.
 - **Important Notice:** It is not necessary to scour the Web, purchase recordings, or hire free-lance musicians prior to meeting with the DLM. The Recommended repertoire list combines standard wedding selections with less-familiar works.

- **Organist**
 - It is understood that the Director of Liturgical Music will play the organ for all weddings at Stella Maris.
 - Couples must obtain permission from the DLM before employing a guest organist. Guest organists must have proper credentials and knowledge of Roman Catholic liturgical practices.

- **Cantor/Soloist**

- The Director of Liturgical Music will recommend a cantor.
- Couples must obtain permission from the DLM before employing a guest cantor.
- Guest cantors must have proper credentials and knowledge of Roman Catholic liturgical practices.
- Couples are discouraged from inviting non-professional friends/family-members to cantor; it is preferable to invite such individuals to perform as soloists; liturgical music (including the Responsorial Psalm) should be led by an experienced cantor.
- **Guest cantors/soloists are required to rehearse with the DLM prior to the Wedding Day.**
 - **A rehearsal fee will be added to the overall balance.**
- The DLM is available to serve as cantor from the organ console while playing. It is preferable, however, to employ a separate cantor to sing the Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation.

- **Instrumentalists/Guest Musician(s)**

- Instruments such as the trumpet, flute, violin, and cello complement the organ.
- Woodwind trios, string quartets, brass quintets, harp and classical guitar may also be used effectively in a wedding.
- **Instrumental ensembles may not be used as substitutes for the organ.**
- The DLM will recommend and contract guest musicians.
 - *It is highly unusual for non-professional musicians to play for weddings at Stella Maris.*
- **All guest musicians, professional and non, must procure suitable musical scores and arrangements independently. Organ scores must be provided to the DLM prior to the scheduled musical rehearsal.**
- **All guest instrumentalists/singers are required to rehearse with the DLM prior to the Wedding Day.**
 - **A \$50 rehearsal fee will be added to the overall balance.**

- **Recorded Music**

- The playing of recorded music in the church is strictly forbidden.

- **Ceremony**

- It is customary for the organist to play 15-20 minutes of prelude music prior to the liturgy.
- Weddings are expected to begin on-time; Visiting clergy are asked to note that the entire liturgy (from Procession of the Bride until the Final Blessing) should not exceed one hour in length if a Nuptial Mass is celebrated; less for a wedding ceremony outside Mass.

“Standard” Wedding Music Option

<p>Consultation Fee</p>	<p align="center">\$50</p>
<p>Director of Liturgical Music Fee</p> <p>Mass/Ceremony & Programs (150 guests) Due at Wedding Rehearsal; payable to “Jack A. Cleghorn”</p>	<p align="center">\$250 Non-Mass Standard \$300 Mass Standard</p>
<p>Cantor Fee</p> <p>Mass/Ceremony</p> <p>Due at Wedding Rehearsal; payable to cantor.</p>	<p align="center">\$150-250</p>

“Custom” Wedding Music Option

<p>Consultation Fee: Due at Consultation; payable to “Jack A. Cleghorn”</p>	<p align="center">\$50</p>
<p>Director of Liturgical Music Fee</p> <p>Mass/Ceremony & Programs (150 guests) Due at Wedding Rehearsal; payable to “Jack A. Cleghorn”</p>	<p align="center">\$350 Non-Mass Custom \$400 Mass Custom</p>
<p>Cantor Fee</p> <p>Mass/Ceremony</p> <p>Due at Wedding Rehearsal; payable to cantor.</p>	<p align="center">\$200-250</p>

****Guest Musicians**** Fee estimated between \$200 and \$300 per player relative to professional experience.

****Organist/Cantor Combo Option**** an additional \$50 will be added to listed fees.

RESERVATION FOR A WEDDING AT STELLA MARIS CHURCH

I have read, understand, and fully agree to the conditions stipulated in the wedding guidelines for Stella Maris Church, and in accord with them, I hereby request to reserve the church for my wedding.

(Signature)

(Date)

Bride's Name: _____

Groom's Name _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

E-Mail _____

Date of Wedding: _____

Time: _____

Date of Rehearsal: _____

Time: _____

Name and Address of the priest or deacon who **has already agreed** to perform the ceremony:

Telephone No. of priest or deacon: _____

Are either the Bride or Groom, REGISTERED ACTIVE PARISHIONERS of Stella Maris Church?

Yes No

Comments or additional information:

Please return this form with the offering for use of the church, to:
STELLA MARIS CATHOLIC CHURCH
POST OFFICE BOX 280
SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, SC 29482

ADDENDUM A
OUTLINE FOR A NUPTIAL MASS

PRELUDE MUSIC *

PROCESSIONAL *

GREETING

PENITENTIAL RITE

OPENING PRAYER

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING (OLD TESTAMENT) **

PSALM *

SECOND READING (NEW TESTAMENT) **

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ALLELUIA)

GOSPEL **

HOMILY

RITE OF MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

EXCHANGE OF CONSENT (See Ritual for options) **

BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS

BIDDING PRAYERS - GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR AND THE GIFTS ***

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

SANCTUS, MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION AND AMEN

LORD'S PRAYER

NUPTIAL BLESSING

EXCHANGE OF PEACE

AGNUS DEI

THE HOLY COMMUNION

HYMN OR SOLO EUCCHARISTIC MUSIC DURING COMMUNION *

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

CONCLUDING RITE

FINAL BLESSING

DISMISSAL

RECESSIONAL *

POSTLUDE *

* Denotes a choice that is to be made with the Director of Liturgical Music from the list of approved musical selections appropriate to the Rite of Marriage.

** Denotes a choice to be made in consultation with the Wedding Director.

*** The couple must decide if the gifts of bread and wine will be presented, or already be present on the altar.

ADDENDUM B
OUTLINE FOR THE RITE OF MATRIMONY OUTSIDE OF MASS

PRELUDE MUSIC *

PROCESSIONAL *

GREETING

OPENING PRAYER

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING (OLD TESTAMENT) **

PSALM *

SECOND READING (NEW TESTAMENT) **

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ALLELUIA)

GOSPEL **

HOMILY

RITE OF MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTORY

ADDRESS

EXCHANGE OF CONSENT (See Ritual for choices) **

BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS

(OPTIONAL: BIDDING PRAYER - GENERAL INTERCESSIONS)

NUPTIAL BLESSING

DISMISSAL

RECESSIONAL *

POSTLUDE *

* Denotes a choice that is to be made with the Director of Liturgical Music from the list of approved musical selections appropriate to the Rite of Marriage.

** Denotes a choice to be made in consultation with the Wedding Director.

ADDENDUM C

Dates and locations for marriage preparation classes can be found at the Diocese of Charleston's website. See address below.

<http://sccatholic.org/living-joyfilled-marriage>