

# HAVING YOUR WEDDING AT ST. FRANCIS XAVIER CATHEDRAL

## *What is the Sacrament of Marriage?*

In the Sacrament of Marriage, a man and woman promise to make present the living love of Christ for each other. In the course of living out the mystery of your love, you become a source of God's presence for each other and for the community in which you live. Although marriage is very personal, it is never private because it has a profound impact upon us, a community of the faithful, who will be praying for you and supporting you in your life together. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us: "The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament" (CCC, 1601).

## *What are the requirements for a Catholic to be married?*

The teaching of the Catholic Church prescribes that baptized Catholics must marry before an ordained minister of the Catholic Church and two adult witnesses. A special dispensation (permission) given by the Bishop would enable such a marriage to take place in a Protestant church before a minister of that church. In such an instance, we follow the same marriage preparation program as if the marriage were to take place in a Catholic Church. Sacraments can only be celebrated in a church or place/holy ground where the faithful gather regularly. This means a Catholic wedding cannot be celebrated in a backyard, park or favorite flower garden.

## *What are the requirements to be married at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral?*

Full, participating membership at a Catholic Parish is required to have your wedding at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral. If you are a registered and participating member of St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, you may request to be married by our Pastor and Rector, Fr. John W. Girotti. His ability to do your marriage preparation and perform the wedding is always subject to his availability. When those to be married are registered full members of another Catholic parish, permission to be married at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral Parish must be given by the pastor of the parish where you are registered. Catholics not currently registered in any parish are to register and be participating and supporting members of a parish for six months before the intended wedding date. Adherence to the policies of the Cathedral, including the Dress Code (see information below), is required of all couples who are married at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral.

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## *What do we need to do to have a wedding at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral if we belong to another parish?*

Wedding couples, who are not members of Saint Francis Xavier Cathedral Parish, may have wedding ceremonies at the Cathedral provided that they complete the following requirements:

- The reserving of the Cathedral is tentative until we receive a letter from the pastor from the parish where you are registered giving us permission to celebrate your wedding here. **It is your pastor's responsibility to arrange for your marriage preparation and perform the ceremony with the Rector of the Cathedral's delegation.**
- If your pastor is unable to have the wedding liturgy and another priest or deacon will be celebrating the wedding ceremony, we must have a letter of his acceptance of these responsibilities, delegation and verification of faculties.
- All necessary paperwork must be filled out by the pastor of the bride or groom or the priest or deacon witnessing the wedding.
- The Sacrament of Marriage may be celebrated by a deacon if the wedding ceremony is held outside of the Wedding Mass.
- Couples of mixed Christian faiths or another faith tradition may celebrate their wedding at the Cathedral only if one of the wedding couple is a registered member of a Catholic parish.

## *What other requirements must be met to have a wedding at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral?*

The Cathedral's Dress Code: St. Francis Xavier Cathedral is the spiritual home for over 350,000 Catholics in Northeastern Wisconsin. It also is a beautiful and holy house of prayer where God is present at all times. As such, it is vitally important that the clothing of the bride, groom, bridal party and guests not detract from the solemnity of wedding rehearsal or the wedding ceremony, or be a source of scandal for anyone present.

For the bride and bridesmaids, the dresses must be modest and becoming of a Christian woman. Bare shoulders are permitted, but the cut of the neckline of your dress must not be revealing and your dress must be secured by straps over the shoulders that make sure that everything stays in place. You and your bridesmaids will be more comfortable for the day if your dresses fit well and are of a modest design. Little jackets and shawls are also an option. Please view the Wedding Photo Slideshow for examples of modest wedding attire. If you have questions about whether your choice of dresses and formal attire is

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appropriate for a wedding at the Cathedral, please contact us at 920-432-4348 or email a picture to [sfxavier@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sfxavier@sbcglobal.net).

For the groom and groomsmen, pants must be fitted and not overly baggy or low cut. Formal clothing must be befitting of a Christian gentleman.

We also ask that your wedding guests adhere to the same dress code as the wedding party. If your attire is deemed inappropriate, there will be shawls/scarves distributed by the Cathedral staff before you are admitted into the church.

### *What does it cost to have a wedding at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral?*

The Diocese of Green Bay has set the recommended wedding stipend (fee) for any church in the Diocese at \$75.00. Please keep in mind that it is a great privilege to have your wedding at the Cathedral. It is a very beautiful and sacred church, and you will have a dedicated team of professionals at your disposal to help make your wedding day a wonderful beginning to your married life together. We ask that you keep in mind that it costs our Cathedral Parish roughly \$500 to provide this wedding for you, which includes maintenance staff, a sacristan, administrative duties, and building upkeep/utilities. Please prayerfully consider being generous beyond the \$75.00 stipend and paying the full amount. The \$500 to cover the cost of having your wedding at the Cathedral is a very reasonable amount when placed in perspective with the other costs of your wedding day celebrations. These fees are requested thirty (30) days after the tentative scheduling of the wedding date. The Bishop Wycislo Center may be rented for an additional \$150 for dressing before the wedding. These fees do not include the musician fees; this is privately arranged with the musicians. A gratuity (besides the stole fee/rental fee) from \$50 - \$150 is suggested for the priest or deacon, but this is at your discretion.

### *How do we go about scheduling a wedding at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral?*

Please call the parish office (920-432-4348) at least nine months prior to the intended wedding date to speak with the Cathedral's wedding coordinator to schedule your wedding ceremony. Weddings are normally scheduled on Friday afternoons at 3 p.m. or Saturdays at 1 p.m. Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays or on Civil Holidays. Please note that there are some times in the church liturgical year when the celebration of weddings is less appropriate. For example, the season of Lent – Ash Wednesday through Good Friday – is a time of penance in the life of a parish community. Also, if a major feast falls on a Friday or Saturday, weddings should not be scheduled on that day. At the Cathedral, if there is a major Diocesan liturgy on a Saturday such as Priest Ordination, weddings will not be scheduled on that day. The scheduling of any wedding at St. Francis Xavier Cathedral is always subject to the availability of the Cathedral's calendar and the approval of the Pastor and Rector.