

Guide for Celebrating Weddings at Assumption

Welcome

Assumption is a regular parish like many other churches in Syracuse but it is also quite unique because of its long history, the many alums associated with its school and of course the beauty and feel of the place. You are welcome!

If at least one of you is a baptized Roman Catholic then we can proceed with this process. If not you may want to talk to us about becoming a Catholic.

People get married at Assumption because of one of three usual reasons. From each of these flows a course of action.

A. Assumption is already my parish

This is where I worship on Sunday. I belong here because of proximity to the church or I have chosen to come here and have registered in the parish.

1. Meet with the friar for initial meeting and set a date for the ceremony and the rehearsal
2. Complete the Pre-Marriage Inquiry form
3. Receive the wedding planning book
4. Get newly issued baptismal certificate
5. Arrange to take a marriage preparation course
6. Meet with Presider of your wedding to plan the ceremony
7. Celebrate the Sacrament

B. I belong to another parish

1. Meet with the pastor of the church closest to you to get his permission in writing to get married at Assumption. (Technically only your pastor can witness your ceremony). This is easy to get and pretty standard. You can also ask him to preside at your ceremony here at Assumption. It's all good!
2. Ask the pastor if he would like to do the "paper work" there and transfer to us for planning and holding the ceremony or whether he would prefer we do the paper work here.
3. Once the initial paperwork is done meet with the friar to set a date for the ceremony and the rehearsal.
4. If you would like your own parish priest to witness your marriage at Assumption then you continue with him for the planning of the ceremony. (Note that he would still have to follow our policies).
5. If you would like one of the friars here to celebrate the ceremony you would continue with us to plan the wedding.

C. I don't really have a parish yet

1. If you live in the greater Syracuse area and you don't have a parish yet and would like to consider being part of Assumption you would follow the instructions above for section A of this guide. We will be happy to work with you to both develop your faith life and help you prepare for marriage. We want to make sure that you understand the spiritual significance of a marriage in the Catholic Church.
2. If you live outside of the greater Syracuse area and don't have a parish yet, the first step would be to find yourself a parish where you live and then follow the instructions above for section B.

Civil Requirements

A New York State license is required for the wedding. These are valid for 60 days after it is issued. Contact the municipal clerk in any NY city to obtain one. The license must be submitted to the parish 1 week before the wedding.

Day & Time of Weddings

Most wedding take place on Saturdays at either 10AM or 1PM and possibly 1:30PM. We can't do later because it interferes with the evening mass at 4:00pm. Weddings are not held on Sundays. We also are doing more and more weddings late Friday afternoons.

We start weddings on time! No delays except for a life/death emergency. You will have a 10 minute grace time and then the ceremony starts getting cut or simply cancelled. Groomsmen and groom should be at Church no less than 45 minutes before the wedding and the bride at least 15 minutes before the wedding. Plan ahead. No excuses. Sorry to sound grumpy but we've been there and seen the consequences of delays. Plus it's really rude.

Ceremony

We will work with you to create a meaningful celebration in keeping with the Church's tradition. You have a lot of choices to make and people to include in the ceremony.

1. **Music:** You must use our organist and cantors. There is a fee for this. If you would prefer a different type of music like guitar please talk with the friar. The key is that the music must be liturgical music and must be done by professionals. The presider reserves the right to review the music. The "Here Comes the Bride" march is not used at Assumption because of its origins and significance.
2. **The Entrance:** Well over 50 years ago the Church revised the way in which weddings are supposed to begin. Rather than focusing on the bride and her entrance the focus is on the couple, bride and groom. The liturgy ideally calls for them to be there to greet their guests and then process down the aisle together to begin their life together in presence of their

parents, family, friends and God. The value here is to highlight the equality of husband and wife rather than to continue the tradition which reflects an old way of thinking where the wife was passed on from one man to another. However, many parishes have not adopted this new direction and we wouldn't be surprised if you've never heard of this.

Here are some options that might work for you:

- a) **Bride & Groom Together:** Enter as described above with a procession including the altar server, priest/deacon, the bridesmaids and groomsmen paired off, then the parents of the groom, the parents of the bride and then the bride and groom together.
 - b) **Bride & Groom Meet $\frac{3}{4}$ down the aisle:** Have the same procession as above but then the groom come in with his parents (or just one) gets down most of the aisle of the church, stops, says goodbye to his parents and turns around towards the back. The bride comes in with her parents (or just one) and meets her groom. They say goodbye to her parents who take their seats and then the bride and groom finish the walk together to the altar.
3. **Non Catholic Customs:** Often people have seen customs at weddings that do not reflect our Catholic ritual. But we do not do the "unity candle" or such customs which were actually designed for the wedding reception. We do accommodate the very ancient Filipino customs which are approved by the bishops of that country. We also do not allow for the throwing of confetti or rice in or outside the church.
 4. **Wedding Coordinator:** Assumption has a wedding coordinator that is required (for a fee) who will assist with the rehearsal and be present for the wedding to make sure that everything begins smoothly. If you have your own wedding planner they may help you in all things but not with the ceremony or be involved during the wedding itself.
 5. **Photography:** We appreciate that you want to have nice pictures and/or video of your wedding day. However we have strict guidelines for photographers so that they do not distract. There should be only one or at the most two people involved in taking pictures. They cannot be in the way or noticeable. They must use flash sparingly and most important they must meet the presider at least 15 minutes before the wedding. Photographers who fail to comply will be asked to leave. Seriously! We can recommend a good photographer to you. No, we don't get a cut!
 6. **Decorations:** Flowers are welcome. We only allow fresh flowers in the church. You may leave some or all in the church or take them afterwards for the reception. Usually it's appropriate to have something large at the foot of the Altar, at the foot of the Lectern and if you want a couple of smaller ones on the back former high altar. Consult with our Wedding Coordinator. We do not allow any runners, carpets, lighting, scaffolding or other alterations to the church. Please not that during special season such as Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter the church will already be decorated. You will need to accommodate your plans to what will already be in church.

7. **Costs:** How much will all this cost? There is a suggested offering of \$800 for the church with a non-refundable \$200 deposit. The balance is paid two weeks before the wedding. This is to maintain this beautiful church and to keep it heated and cool in season. The church fee does NOT go to the friar or priest. The Wedding Coordinator fee is \$100 and the music starts at about \$200. That being said nobody will be denied a wedding in the Catholic Church because they can't afford it. If it's a hardship please speak to the friars. That being said... the offering to the church should be consistent with what a couple spends on photographers, flowers, reception etc.

8. **Contact Information:**

Friar Rick Riccioli, OFM Conv.	315.706.8260	friarrick@assumptionsyr.org
Mrs. Joanne Amato, Wedding Coordinator	315.451.9015	
Mr. Glenn Armstrong, Music Director	315.445.8856	

Marriage Preparation Courses: www.syracusediocese.org