



Church of the Nativity

1061 Folly Road
Charleston, South Carolina 29412

843-795-3821
NativityCharleston.org

Guidelines for Weddings

Nativity welcomes weddings for parishioners and non-parishioners at our church.

Fees

There is a building fee of 1,500 dollars. This is required to reserve the Church of the Nativity for your wedding. A date is reserved once you receive confirmation of your payment.

The building fee only covers use of the church. It does not cover:

- The honorarium that is traditionally given to the priest celebrating the wedding.
- The Church Wedding Coordinator's fee.
- The musician's (organist / cantor) fee.

The honorarium and fees should be given to the church wedding coordinator no later than the rehearsal.

Time Line

- At least six months prior to the wedding date, the couple must meet with the priest performing the wedding.
- If the couple are not members of Nativity Church they need to meet with a priest or deacon at their parish to request they handle the wedding paper work. This should be done at least six months prior to the wedding date.
- It is suggested the couple contact the Music Director and Church Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible after your wedding date has been confirmed to schedule each of them for your wedding.
 - ◇ Nativity's Music Director, Courtney Reed, 843-795-3821 x23 or e-mail music@nativitycharleston.org.
 - ◇ Nativity's Wedding Coordinator, Mary Smith, at dre@nativitycharleston.org. She is the church coordinator to be contacted even if you have a wedding planner.
- Marriage Preparation Programs
 - ◇ An engaged couple must participate in a Pre-Cana or Catholic Engaged Encounter marriage preparation program. The schedule of dates and locations in South Carolina can be found at <https://sccatholic.org/marriage-preparation> and www.cee-sc.org for these programs.
 - ◇ Couples residing outside the Diocese of Charleston may use a marriage preparation program approved by their Catholic diocese. Please note, dates fill up fast so register soon to coordinate a time that works with your schedule.
- Baptismal Certificates - must be dated within six months of the wedding.
 - ◇ Catholics: Contact the church where you were baptized and ask them to send a copy of your baptismal certificate to Nativity.
 - ◇ Baptized Non-Catholics: Please contact the church where you were baptized and ask them to send a letter to Nativity on official church letterhead verifying your baptism.

- Additional Non-Parishioner Paperwork

- ◇ Catholics who are not members of the Church of the Nativity must obtain a letter from their Pastor to verify his approval for your wedding to take place outside your home parish.
- ◇ Catholics who do not reside in the state of South Carolina must receive written permission from their Bishop for all dispensations and other special permissions required by Church law. The Priest or deacon of your home parish can explain how to get your Bishop's written permission. Your Bishop will then send his written permission to;

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

This permission must be received by the Diocese of Charleston no later than 45 days prior to the wedding.

- Couples requesting a priest or deacon other than Nativity's Pastor to be the celebrant for their wedding must receive permission from Nativity's Pastor. Priests or deacons from outside the Diocese of Charleston must provide Nativity with written documentation verifying their good standing in their diocese or religious order. This letter must be received at least 45 days before the wedding. The priest or deacon should attend the rehearsal.
- Affidavits
 - ◇ There are two affidavits for the bride and two for the groom required by the Diocese of Charleston regarding the free status of the bride and groom to marry.
- No later than 45 days prior to the wedding, Nativity must be provided with;
 - 1) your attendance certificate for Pre-Cana or Catholic Engaged Encounter or other approved program
 - 2) baptismal certificates or a letter verifying one's baptism
 - 3) letter from the pastor of one's home parish (if other than Nativity)
 - 4) completed affidavits.

- A few weeks before the wedding couples should review with the priest the readings and other details of the ceremony. It is also suggested that Catholics receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation shortly before their wedding.
- Marriage License
 - ◊ The license may be obtained at the Courthouse in Charleston (843-958-5183 for information). The license must be applied for at least 48 hours prior to the wedding. The license must be presented to the priest at the rehearsal. Without a marriage license the wedding will be delayed or canceled.

Other Details

- Saturday weddings are normally scheduled to start between 11:00 am - 2:00 pm.
- Rehearsals are typically the day before the wedding at 5:00 pm. (Confirm this with the priest or deacon officiating your wedding.)
- Weddings held during Lent must respect the special nature of this liturgical season. Flowers cannot be placed in the altar area.
- Readings: Couples should coordinate with the priest about the readings and readers for their wedding. A Catholic wedding has three readings: one from the Old Testament, one from the New Testament, and the Gospel (read by the priest or deacon). Prayers of the Faithful should also be selected.
- The primary Eucharistic Minister will be the priest officiating at the wedding. If you are having a large wedding and will need additional Eucharistic Ministers please discuss this with the priest.
- Flowers must have a protective plate underneath to prevent water from leaking on the floor. Pew Markers are permissible as long as they tie or slip on the end of the pew. No tape may be used.
- The Diocese of Charleston does not permit unity candles during the wedding.