

2020-2021 Wedding Guidelines

Weddings frequently involve large gatherings of family and friends who join to celebrate the Sacramental union of their loved ones. More often than not, the wedding party and guests are not living in the same home and may live outside of the Lafayette area. Moreover, they may be unfamiliar with Covid-19 directives in Fatima parish.

The Church follows guidance from the State of Louisiana and from the CDC with respect to best practices during the current pandemic. Therefore, we ask **and require that everyone attending the rehearsal and/or wedding wear a mask at all times. The bride is asked to make known to her guests through mail or social media that masks are to be worn while in Church.** Our Lady of Fatima Church will provide a mask to anyone who might not have brought one.

Many thanks for your cooperation in this matter, which is vital to the health and safety of those who come to Church.

Common Questions and Answers:

Do masks have to be worn at the **Wedding Rehearsal by all attending at all times**? Yes, except for children under the age of 3 years and adults for whom Governor John Bel Edwards made an exception because of COPD or similar conditions.

Does everyone have to wear a mask? All guests and the wedding party **must must wear a mask into the Church and during the wedding (except those under 3 years of age and those adults mentioned previously.)**

Do you have to wear a mask to Communion? **A mask must be worn when going up to receive Communion. For the reception of Holy Communion, wear your mask and maintain six feet of distance. After the dialogue "Body of Christ, Amen," step forward to receive the Body of Christ in your hand. Step to the side, withdrawing your mask to receive Our Lord as you place the Host in your mouth.**

Where does the wedding party put their masks before processing to their pew? The wedding party may leave their masks in their pew before the wedding starts so that they have them readily available after the procession.

During the wedding procession do the wedding party & family members who process up the aisle have to wear a mask during the procession? No. Before the wedding, they should place their masks in the pew where they intend to sit, so that they have them readily available after the procession.

Do vendors (photographers, videographers, wedding coordinator) have to wear a mask at all times? YES

Do the Bride & Groom and their witnesses who come onto the altar for the vows (Best man & Maid of Honor) have to wear a mask on the altar? No.

The bride, bridesmaids, flower girl, and Bride's mother and father should go directly to the Bride's Room to wait for the ceremony to begin. There is a bench outside this room for overflow should your party be too large for the Bride's Room.

The groomsmen should go to the Choir Oratory room when arriving to Church where they will wait for the ceremony to begin. Please ask the Wedding staff where this room is located if you do not know where the Choir Oratory room is located.

The Groom's parents and grandparents, who will process up during the ceremony, should go directly to the Cry Room in front of the Men's Bathroom, to wait until time for the ceremony to begin.

Guests may enter the Church 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.

The Church is required by the State and CDC to meet the mandated CDC Safe Practice Guidelines in order to reopen and stay open for the future. The required 6ft of social distancing when seated in our building allows us a capacity of 228 PEOPLE (THIS NUMBER INCLUDES THE WEDDING PARTY AND GUEST).

For this reason, we ask that the bride provide the Church with the number in the wedding party (ushers, groomsmen, bride's maids, junior bridesmaids, flower girls, ring bearer, photographers, videographers, wedding coordinator, parents, grandparents, and their family members that will arrive before the wedding starts). The Bride will be provided a Wedding Party Count Form whereby she will provide her wedding party numbers to our Church prior to the wedding.

A member of the Church staff will be stationed at the Church entrance with a counter to assure the Church does not exceed the mandated number of 228 people capacity. Once the allowed capacity is met, the Church Entrance door will be closed.

Every other pew in the church is closed off to accommodate social distancing.

Wedding guest **MUST enter** through the one door (that will be propped open) on the side of the Church that faces the parking lot near the rear of the church. In the event it is raining, the door under the portico facing the Church parking lot will be propped open.

It is suggested that your Wedding guest park in the Church parking lot for easier access to the one door that will be open for entrance. We discourage anyone from parking on the Oakview Blvd. side of the church because the doors are locked on that side of the church along with the glass doors facing Johnston St.

Handicapped guest can gain access easiest from the Church portico entrance on the Church parking lot side when necessary. Please alert the Parish Wedding staff if you have a family member(s) that need this door opened for a handicapped family member.

Our staff will remind guest to not congregate in the large foyer area in the back of Church. They will promote that guest take a seat in the Church readily so that guest may enter without creating a crowd in the one entrance area.

At the end of the Wedding both sets of Church doors, facing the church parking lot, will be propped open for guests to exit.