BAYOULAND CHURCHES
WEDDING
POLICIES & GUIDELINES



Revised

January 2026

We congratulate you on your engagement and upcoming marriage. If you are considering one of the Bayouland Churches (St. Anne, Assumption or St. Philomena) as the place for you to celebrate the Sacrament of Marriage, we want to support and assist you in the best way possible as you embark on this especially important commitment in your lives. The purpose of this set of marriage guidelines is to enhance the liturgical celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. To avoid any misunderstandings, we ask that all communication be between the bride/groom, the Priest, and the wedding coordinator. Again, congratulations!

Scheduling a wedding at one of the Bayouland Churches

Please call 985-369-6656 and speak to Mrs. Tawanna Blanchard to inquire about the availability of your desired wedding date at St. Anne or Assumption. Please call 985-526-4247 and speak to Mrs. Trunell Landry to inquire about the availability of your desired wedding date at St. Philomena. After the bride/groom gives their desired date, the following criteria must be met before the date is confirmed:

- The date will then be given to the Priest, he checks his calendar, confirms the date, and gives his "okay" to either Mrs. Tawanna, Mrs. Trunell, or the couple.
- The name of the couple is given to Father and he will contact you. .
- The name of the couple is given to the Wedding Coordinator for the respective churches: Ms. Laure Hebert (985-513-0861) for St. Anne/Assumption, and Ms. Mona Boudreaux (985-665-2758) for St. Philomena. The Wedding Coordinators will contact you (by phone) with their information and meet with you about a month before your rehearsal and wedding, but they are available to answer any questions you may have before that time.
- **Please note that the wedding cannot be scheduled more than 14 months in advance and should be scheduled no less than six months in advance. The couple should schedule a meeting with Father during which he explains the preparatory process.**

After confirming the date with Ms. Tawanna or Ms. Trunell, please obtain a written letter from the priest or deacon (if from another parish) who will preside at the wedding stating that he will perform the wedding. If the Catholic party (bride/groom) is not a parishioner of one of the Bayouland Churches he/she must obtain a permission letter from the pastor of his/her Catholic parish church (registered or domicile).

Weddings at our Bayouland Churches are "normally" celebrated on Friday evenings at 7pm, Saturday mornings at 11am, or Saturday evenings at 7pm. No weddings will be scheduled at a time that interferes with the regular schedule of services in the parish (such as Reconciliation and Vigil Masses.) Weddings are prohibited on Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation, and during the seasons of Advent and Lent. The rehearsal is normally held the prior day (Thursday or Friday) at 6PM.

Wedding Fees

Please note that the status of being a registered and active parishioner of one of the Bayouland Churches must exist for a year prior to the request to schedule the wedding. The fee includes rental of the church. The deposit is due at the booking date; the remaining balance is due one month prior to the wedding. The deposit is non-refundable. Although music is required at weddings, this fee does not include the hiring of any musicians. Any accompanist or other musicians are hired and paid separately by the bride and groom.

1. If one or both parties are registered with one of the Bayouland Churches, there is a **$500 fee** (this includes the **$100 deposit**) plus **$150 fee to the Wedding Coordinator.**

2. For non-parishioners, the fee is **$1,250** (this includes the **$200 deposit**) plus **$150 fee to the Wedding Coordinator**. **(If another priest is requested, a written confirmation of the commitment by the priest who will officiate at the ceremony and marriage preparation is required.**

Wedding Coordinators

St. Anne/Assumption and St. Philomena each have a Wedding Coordinator. This is the only coordinator allowed to assist with the preparation of the wedding ceremony, to conduct the rehearsal, and assist with the ceremony itself. Regarding the planning of your ceremony, your Wedding Coordinator will telephone you initially.

The following is a brief outline of the Wedding Coordinator's job description:

1. Review (completely) with each couple the sections of the policy packet pertaining to the ceremony itself.

2. Explain to the couple the prescribed outline of the wedding ceremony itself, whether the wedding takes place within or outside of Mass.

3. Assist the couple in the selection of the scripture readings for their wedding.

4. Conduct the wedding rehearsal.

5. Be present to assist with the start of the wedding ceremony.

Marriage Preparation

1. The required waiting period prior to the celebration of marriage is 6 months, assuming no prior bond and the need for an annulment does not exist. No couple may be married any sooner than 6 months from the day that they approach the priest about being married.

2. The overall purpose of the process of marriage preparation is for the priest to assist the couple in discerning as best as possible the meaning of the sacramentality of marriage, to give the couple an opportunity to reflect on the strengths in their relationship, their faith life, and the challenges that they will face in married life, as well as to give the couple and priest a chance to get to know each other better.

3. The first element involved in marriage preparation is the completion of a **Prenuptial Inquiry,** to be administered by the priest facilitating the marriage preparation. A couple is then sent a relationship assessment to complete at home online. Once the results are processed the priest will then meet with the couple to review the results.

4. The couple is also required to register for a **Marriage Prep Program** at the discretion of the priest. These may include an online marriage prep program (www.catholicmarriageprep.com), Engage Encounter Weekend, Pre-Cana program, Called to Love Retreat, or in-house marriage prep with a sponsor couple (called "Witness to Love"). (Note: all these require a certificate of completion.)

5. At the discretion of the priest who is preparing the couple for marriage, couples may be required to take a **Natural Family Planning** class via online or in person. (Note: this also requires a certificate of completion.)

Ceremony Regulations

1. During the wedding ceremony, the following are not permitted: unity candle, wedding aisle runner, the throwing of any type of flower petals, rice, or any other similar materials.

2. Children standing in the wedding must be able to follow instructions as to how to process down the aisle without adult accompaniment. They are allowed to walk in procession. From that point on in the liturgy they are to be seated with an

adult other than those adults standing in the wedding party. They may walk out in procession at the end of the ceremony.

3. A couple may invite a friend or family member to assist with the distribution of Holy Communion, if that person is currently an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion in his or her Catholic parish.

4. Scheduling for the delivery of flowers to the church and for decorating the church must be organized through the Wedding Coordinator. Couples will be asked early on in the process whether or not they will leave their floral arrangements in church after their wedding for use during weekend Masses.

5. Photographers and Videographers are not allowed at all in the sanctuary area of the church. (The sanctuary area is the altar area.)

6. Flash Photography is only allowed during the procession and recession (exit out). ***No flash photography during Mass or Marriage Rite***.

7. Candles may not be attached to the pews. Any flowers, greenery or bows must be attached by ribbons to the pews.

Florists, photographers, and videographers

Florists, photographers, and videographers MUST follow all guidelines of The Bayouland Churches.

Aisle runners are not allowed. It is not permitted to throw or scatter flowers, flower petals, rice, or birdseed either inside the church building or in front of it. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to ensure that the florist returns at the end of the liturgy to remove arrangements, vases, candelabras, etc.; if this does not happen, the parish maintenance personnel will remove the decorations, flowers, etc., at an extra charge.

Alcohol & Drug Policy

Our parishes have a **zero-tolerance policy** on the use of, or being under the influence of, alcohol or drugs at the rehearsal and ceremony. The couple must sign the agreement and bring it back to the Church office.



Zero Tolerance Agreement
On Alcohol and Drugs

We, (bride) _____ and (groom) _____, who will be married at either St. Anne or Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church on (date) _____at (time)_____, with Father/Deacon _____ as the officiant, agree to be bound by St. Anne and Assumption's policy of Zero Tolerance of Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs, which is as follows:

We understand that if anyone involved with our wedding brings any alcoholic beverages or drugs onto any of the aforementioned church's property, either at the rehearsal or on the wedding day, or if anyone is intoxicated before either the rehearsal or the wedding ceremony, the wedding is subject to be canceled. We understand that our wedding party and guests will be asked to leave, that the church will be closed, and that the wedding will be canceled.

We also agree to share this information with our families and with those in the wedding party so that they are familiar with this policy and will follow it.

If we rent a facility for our reception on either of the aforementioned church's grounds, we agree to be bound by the policies in the rental agreement in regard to alcohol and drugs.

We have read this policy, and agree to be bound by it (signatures):

Bride: _____ Groom: _____

Present date: _____

(Two copies are to be signed: one to be turned into the parish office, and one to be kept by the Bride and Groom)



Zero Tolerance Agreement
On Alcohol and Drugs

We, (bride) _____ and (groom) _____, who will be married at either St. Anne or Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church on (date) _____at (time)_____, with Father/Deacon _____ as the officiant, agree to be bound by St. Anne and Assumption's policy of Zero Tolerance of Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs, which is as follows:

We understand that if anyone involved with our wedding brings any alcoholic beverages or drugs onto any of the aforementioned church's property, either at the rehearsal or on the wedding day, or if anyone is intoxicated before either the rehearsal or the wedding ceremony, the wedding is subject to be canceled. We understand that our wedding party and guests will be asked to leave, that the church will be closed, and that the wedding will be canceled.

We also agree to share this information with our families and with those in the wedding party so that they are familiar with this policy and will follow it.

If we rent a facility for our reception on either of the aforementioned church's grounds, we agree to be bound by the policies in the rental agreement in regard to alcohol and drugs.

We have read this policy, and agree to be bound by it (signatures):

Bride: _____

Groom: _____

Present date: _____

(Two copies are to be signed: one to be turned into the parish office, and one to be kept by the Bride and Groom)

Recap some of the most important policies:

- Couples may not be married any sooner than **6 months** from the date of request to the church for reservation of the wedding date.

- Couples are asked to pay a $100.00 non-refundable deposit (or $200 for those who are non-parishioners).

- Couples are asked to read and sign an agreement with the priest and church and pay a non-refundable deposit at the beginning of the preparation process.

- The date and time of any wedding is **tentative** until the proposed priest has affirmed his availability and the couple has read and signed the agreement form and paid their deposit.

- Children standing in the wedding must be able to follow instructions on how to process down the aisle without adult accompaniment. Children walking in the procession as a ring-bearer or flower girl are not allowed in the sanctuary and must be seated with an adult who is not in the wedding party.

- Unity candles and aisle runners are not permitted in the Church.

- All couples must use the church Wedding Coordinator for wedding planning. No other coordinators are allowed.

- Our parishes have a zero-tolerance policy on the use of, or being under the influence of, alcohol or drugs at the rehearsal and ceremony. The couple must sign the agreement and bring it back to the Church office.

We have carefully read through all of the "Bayouland Churches Wedding Policies & Guidelines," and we agree to follow all as stated and explained, as well as those set by the church's Wedding Coordinator. We also understand that it is our responsibility to communicate to others as appropriate those guidelines which pertain to their involvement in the ceremony (e.g., florists, photographers, wedding party). Please sign and turn in to our Parish Office when you come in to formally book the date and pay your deposit.

Bride's Name: (Print) _____;
(Signature)_____

Groom's Name: (Print)_____;
(Signature)_____

Bride's Phone Number_____Bride's
Email_____

Groom's Phone Number_____Groom's
Email_____