St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church
Marriage Protocol and Policies for Marriages Performed

It is the responsibility of the Bride and Groom to distribute these procedures to any florist, photographer, videographer, wedding consultant, limousine service, etc., prior to their wedding so that they are aware of the protocol of St. Charles Church.

A Catholic wedding is a sacred time in which the couple unites their love and the love of God. The Church is a sacred space and nothing done in the church building or during the ceremony should ever detract from that. On the contrary, everyone involved in the ceremony participates in the celebration in a prayerful and respectful way.

In order to maintain the sense of sacredness and to facilitate your role as photographer, florist, etc., for this wedding, we offer the following guidelines for anyone involved with weddings performed at St. Charles Borromeo Church. The following Marriage and Protocol policies should be duplicated and given to any individuals that are involved in your wedding ceremony at the Church.

REHEARSAL

The rehearsal date and time is coordinated with the couple at their earliest convenience and is scheduled in accordance with the church availability. It is important to be prompt so that there is no interference with other scheduled rehearsals or ceremonies being held in the church. As many of the participants should be at the rehearsal as possible. Any photographers or video individuals are welcome to come to the rehearsal in preparation of the wedding ceremony. The following are some appropriate suggestions for your wedding party for the night of the rehearsal and also the day of the wedding:

- **Silence, respect and reverence while in the Church**
- **No food, drink or chewing gum.**
- **No alcoholic beverages on church grounds, including the parking lots.**
- **Cellular phones off or placed on vibrate. When receiving or making a call, please exit to the vestibule of the Church.**
- **Proper and respectful dress at the rehearsal. No shorts, tank tops or beach wear**.

FLOWERS

Flowers and decorations are to be used in a sensible and restrained manner. There is little time between ceremonies at this church, so you may find it helpful to keep the decorations simple. **NO LIT CANDLES ARE PERMITTED IN THE AISLES, ON THE PEWS, OR ANYWHERE OUTSIDE THE CARPETED AREA.**

It is also the custom of this parish that two arrangements of flowers at the main altar be left at the church to be used for Mass on the following Sunday. If the bride wishes to have a small bouquet for the Blessed Mother Altar, she must make arrangements with her florist for this bouquet.

PEW DECOR

For pew decorations: **ONLY RIBBON OR RUBBER BANDS MAY BE USED. NO TAPE, THUMBTACKS, METAL OR PLASTIC HOLDERS, STAPLE GUNS, OR OTHER MEANS OF FASTENING ARE PERMITTED.** To refinish the pews because of damage would be a great expense for the church. Please do not mar them. If pew decorations are used, they are to be **REMOVED IMMEDIATELY** following the ceremony by the florist or family.

AISLE RUNNER

Use of an aisle runner on the main aisle is discouraged due to the terrazzo flooring. It would slide easily and can be a safety hazard. If used, it must be secured to the floor in a certain way. **NO TAPE** is permitted down the aisle as it removes the finish on the terrazzo floor and is very costly to refinish. Please check with the Wedding Coordinator before arranging for one. Also, the **FLORIST MUST REMOVE THE AISLE RUNNER IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE CEREMONY.**

UNITY CANDLE

The candles for the Unity Candle Ceremony are supplied by the couple. St. Charles will provide the candelabra holder for the candles. Candles needed for this ceremony are one (1) center candle approximately 3" in diameter and two (2) side candles approximately 7/8" or 1" in diameter. Any height and white or off-white is most appropriate.

RICE

There is to be **NO** throwing of rice, confetti, birdseed, rose petals, etc., in or around the church, vestibule or in the area in front of the main entrance. It poses a possible danger to persons who might slip on the terrazzo floor or steps.

OUTSIDE MUSICIANS

It is customary that all music be arranged with Mr. Jim Drollinger, our Music Director, for your wedding celebration. He will also provide soloists or a choir if you choose. But, if you have made arrangements for outside music, (Mariachis, Harpist, Chamber, etc.) all outside musicians must be discussed with Mr. Jim Drollinger before performing at St. Charles. We ask that your musicians be in touch with him well in advance of your wedding. He will guide you with the music selections that are appropriate for a nuptial celebration. We also ask that any harpist, mariachis, chamber music etc., set up their equipment outside the altar area. They may be on either side of the church. The Wedding Coordinator will help them as to the proper location.

PICTURES

Pictures are permitted to be taken during the ceremony, but the photographer should be as unobtrusive as possible. Observe the ***"basic line of sight"*** rule throughout the ceremony, which means, if the guests can see you, you're in the wrong place. To be specific, avoid the following areas:

- **In front of the center pews**
- **The center aisle in front of the last pew with guests in it**
- **Any part of the carpeted area or sanctuary**

Flash is permitted. Again, he or she should never interrupt or be within the carpeted sanctuary area during the ceremony. **PLEASE DO NOT STOP THE WEDDING PROCESSION AT ANY TIME COMING INTO THE CHURCH FOR A POSED PICTURE.** A wedding is not merely a social occasion. It is primarily a sacred celebration. Because of this, we have a responsibility to safeguard the sacred character of a wedding celebration. **POSED PICTURES IN THE SANCTUARY FOLLOWING THE CEREMONY ARE NOT PERMITTED.**

There is to be no picture taking by the photographers one-half hour prior to the scheduled start of the ceremony. This eliminates any problems with the ceremony starting on time, which is most important, thus freeing the ushers to be available to seat the guests when they arrive. Also, please do not enter the choir loft area without consulting with the Music Director or Wedding Coordinator prior to each wedding.

If your photographer wishes to use the grounds around the church for posed pictures of the bridal party and/or family, he or she is welcome to do so with discretion. Because of the scheduling of the weddings at St. Charles, courtesy between photographers of each wedding is imperative.

VIDEO

Video is permitted and one camera, manned or unmanned, may be placed in a certain area in the sanctuary during the ceremony. Please consult with the Wedding Coordinator as to this location. This camera must be stationery and at no time is permitted to freely move around. If the videographer wishes to have more freedom, then he or she must remain outside the carpeted sanctuary area. Please do not move any of the furniture on the altar, as it is placed there for a certain purpose. Also, we ask that you do not move any of the wedding party during the ceremony for your accommodation. Video cameras must not disrupt the previously made arrangements for the wedding party's position in the sanctuary. **NO EXTRA LIGHTING OR FLOODS** are to be used by the video operator at any time, either for the procession coming in or during the ceremony. Also, please do not enter the choir loft area with any equipment before consulting with the Music Director or Wedding Coordinator prior to each wedding.

LIMOUSINE

There is a white painted area in front of the church for limousine parking. If you should arrive early and there is another limousine for the previous wedding parked in front of the church, the parking lot across the street may be used for your limousine to wait. If your wedding party is planning to delay their departure from the church after your ceremony for picture taking, then we ask that your limo driver please be courteous and allow the next limousine to park in front of the church.

The Priests and Staff would like to thank you in advance for your courtesies and considerations in following these protocols and policies for St. Charles Church. With your cooperation, the Bride and Groom will be able to experience the sacredness of this very special day with little or no tribulations