

Decoration Suggestions and Restrictions for Wedding Liturgies

Copies of this page are available from the parish office and at www.stmarygr.org to share with your florist. You are responsible for making sure they receive these guidelines.

The building will be open no sooner than 2½ hours before the wedding liturgy. On Saturday afternoons, any rented items must be removed no later than 4:00 PM. It is very important to plan floral deliveries and pickups accordingly!

Because of the style of our church building, we encourage those responsible for flowers and decorations at weddings to strive for beauty in **simple rather than extravagant** ways. The church is ornate, and does not require much for decorations to achieve the desired effect. One should be able to sense something special (and nothing trivial) in everything that is seen, heard, touched, smelled and tasted in our liturgy. When this is overlooked, the people at a wedding liturgy may feel like spectators at a show.

As a guest of our parish, do not move any existing flowers, furnishings, candles, plants, seasonal decorations, etc. without explicit permission from our staff. The church environment—especially during the Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter seasons—takes **priority** over any other décor, including decorations for a wedding. The church is the place where the parish faith community gathers for prayer, and existing church decorations for the regular liturgies may not be removed.

Decorations or arrangements may not be placed on the altar. (The *altar* is the sacramental table, not to be confused with the *sanctuary*, which is the raised area at the front of the church.)

Decorations may not be so large as to **obstruct the view** of the sanctuary furnishings from anyone in the church, nor should they ever **hinder any ritual movement** and action. Specifically, no decorations in the sanctuary should be taller than 40" (the height of the altar). Decorations on the main floor level should be no taller than 60". Plant stands may be used to raise smaller decorations within the height limits. The use of arches, decorative fencing and/or extra candelabra are not allowed. (As a general rule, anything artificial is less than appropriate for worship, including artificial flowers.)

St. Mary's has a wedding (unity) candelabra which you may use. It is adjustable in height, and holds two tapers and a 3" pillar candle. The candles are not provided by the parish. A photo of the candelabra is available upon request.

Aisle runners are a safety hazard and are not allowed.

Possible decorations (flowers or bows, for example) placed on the pews should be used to offer hospitality to the entire assembly, not to emphasize the aisle or to set apart special seating. If used, flowers or bows used on the center ends of the pews may also be matched by decorations on the outside ends of the pews. There are 25 pews on each side of the main aisle, although placing decorations on each and every pew appears excessive in our space. **No tape, tacks, or wire are to be used.** Chenille wire stems (pipe cleaners) are suggested.

For reasons of safety and cleanliness, we cannot allow balloon launches, or allow flower petals (fresh or artificial), rice, birdseed or confetti to be thrown or scattered, inside or outside the church. These all cause special problems.