



# ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

ABIDE IN CHRIST AND BUILD HIS KINGDOM

## Wedding Policies

4500 Duxhall Drive | Lincoln, NE 68516 | Church: (402) 423-1239

[WWW.SAINTPETERLINCOLN.COM](http://WWW.SAINTPETERLINCOLN.COM)

Dear Friends,

Congratulations! You have chosen the sacrament of marriage as your lifetime vocation. What an important step you are taking in your life. You have probably spent many hours planning and dreaming of your wedding day and your life together. Now comes the time to plan your wedding liturgy. We feel this is the most important part of your wedding day, and we want to help you make it the most blessed and joyous ceremony it can be. St. Peter Parish has compiled the following wedding policies to be used as a guide for the planning of your wedding liturgy.

In His Mercy,  
Fr. Chris Stoley

**Who can be married at St. Peter?** Anyone who is an active member of St. Peter Parish can be married in the parish church. If the bride or the groom is not an active member, but a member of their immediate family is an active member of the parish, then the couple may be married in the church. By “active member”, it is meant that the person is a registered member of St. Peter Parish and is regularly attending weekly Mass. Canon Law makes no distinction between being married in the bride’s home parish or the groom’s home parish. St. Peter can do the marriage preparation for those couples temporarily living here who will be returning to their home parish for their wedding liturgy. The Christian moral code clearly prohibits cohabitation by the prospective bride and groom. Though cohabitation is not grounds for refusing a church marriage, it is a cause for scandal.

**The Diocesan Marriage Policy:** The policy shall be adhered to for all weddings. This includes the procedures and timetables involved in the assessment and marriage preparation processes. A copy of the policy is available from the parish priest.

**Celebrant:** The St. Peter priest who assists the couple in their preparation will be the celebrant at their wedding. Concelebrants are welcome. If either the bride or groom has a brother, uncle, or nephew who is a priest, he will be granted permission to concelebrate the Mass or ceremony with a St. Peter priest. If he is a priest from outside the Lincoln Diocese, he will need to send a letter of good standing to the Lincoln Chancery. He need not be involved in the marriage preparation process. Couples planning a wedding at St. Peter Church, but receiving their marriage preparation outside of St. Peter Parish or the Diocese of Lincoln, must inform the priest overseeing their preparation that he is responsible for providing the pastor of St. Peter with the completed pre-nuptial file. This file must include written verification that the couple has successfully completed marriage preparation according to the requirements of his diocese. It must be submitted **at least one month before the wedding date.**

**Marriage Preparation Coordinator:** The role of the marriage preparation coordinator is to help you connect with your mentor couple, review the FOCCUS inventory with you, assist you in completing your marriage preparation requirements, and answer any questions you have about the marriage preparation process.

**Anne Hubbell**

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**Wedding Coordinator:** The primary role of the wedding coordinator is to be your contact person for all wedding questions concerning the ceremony and to assist you with following the Wedding Policies. (Wedding Music questions are handled by Mary Odgaard, cf. wedding music guidelines). The wedding coordinator will help answer questions regarding the many wedding day choices and will attend the rehearsal and the wedding to help make sure your special day runs smoothly. **Please contact the wedding coordinator by phone or email to set up an initial meeting** once your date is set with the church secretary and you have been contacted by a parish priest. You will meet about a month prior to the wedding date where she will help confirm readings and details of the rehearsal and wedding day.

**Rebecca Kreifels**

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**Dates:** According to the universal law of the Church, weddings cannot take place during Holy Week (Palm Sunday until Easter Sunday). Weddings also cannot take place on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation. At St. Peter Church, we reserve the last weekend in April for First Holy Communion so weddings may not be available then.

**Time of Ceremony:** Weddings at St. Peter include a three-hour reservation of the church: one hour for the ceremony, one hour for photos, and one hour for the rehearsal the evening before. Rehearsals take place from 4:00–5:00pm (September–End of May) or 5:00–6:00pm (End of May–August).

Friday Summer Weddings: 4:00pm ONLY ; Friday Weddings during the school year, please call Parish Office for availability

All Saturday Weddings: 1:00pm, 1:30pm, or 2:00pm (only for ceremony with no Mass)

Saturday afternoon wedding slots are from noon-3:00pm for pictures. The wedding must end at 3:00pm to allow for confessions and evening Mass, beginning at 4:00pm. If either the bride or groom is not Catholic, the wedding liturgy will be celebrated without a Mass. **Times may be adjusted due to our school schedule. Please call and discuss with your priest to verify times of wedding rehearsal and wedding day.**

**Rehearsal:** Rehearsal will take place the evening before the wedding. The time needs to be arranged with the wedding coordinator and authorized by the priest so it can be placed on the parish calendar. The wedding party should meet the priest and wedding coordinator in the vestibule of the church. **Please remember to bring the marriage license to the rehearsal.** Rehearsal should begin on time and dress and behavior should be suited to the House of the Lord.

**Your Wedding Reservation Includes:** The Bride's Room: this room includes a bathroom, a sink, large mirrors, and a spacious seating area. St. Paul Outside the Walls: this larger conference room has several tables and chairs, as well as bottled water and a sink. Please contact our Parish Office for a tour of the facility or for room specifications.

**Stipend:** The fee to reserve the church is free for active parishioners but all donations are welcome. The fee for non-active parishioners and non-parishioners is \$600. Active parishioners participate in the life of the parish by giving time, talents, and a tithe. They renew this commitment each year in the discipleship renewal. The fee for the wedding coordinator is \$250. The suggested stipend to the officiating priest is \$100 and \$100 to the priest who does the marriage prep. The recommended stipend for the altar servers is \$15 each.

**Attendants:** To maintain proper focus during the wedding, please limit attendants to a modest number. There should be less than 8 attendants on each side. This should include the best man and maid of honor.

**Flower Girls and Ring Bearers:** While flower girls and ring bearers are not necessary, please consider the maturity and disposition of the child when choosing flower girls and ring bearers. **Ages 4-8** are the parameters. We discourage using any child that is too young to participate in the Mass or ceremony. Children in the wedding must be able to walk down the aisle unassisted.

**Altar Servers:** Altar servers must be boys who are trained in the church. You may ask family members or friends to be altar servers at your wedding Mass or the wedding coordinator will line up altar servers for you. You need only two servers for the wedding Mass. A wedding ceremony does not require altar servers.

**Candle Lighters:** Candle lighters are not allowed for weddings at St. Peter Church. All candles are lit by the altar servers or acolytes before the wedding ceremony begins.

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**Lector/Reader:** The lector/reader for your wedding Mass must be Catholic and familiar with the appropriate protocol for reading the Scriptures at Mass. It is suggested that the lector/reader familiarize himself/herself with the parish sound system. They should come to the rehearsal to practice.

**Music and Musicians:** Music in a Catholic wedding is sacred and Christ centered. It directly reflects the holiness of the marriage sacrament. All wedding music must be approved by the St. Peter organist/pianist and is ultimately approved by the officiating priest. Secular or recorded music is not allowed. The St. Peter organist/pianist provides all music at all weddings requiring an organ or piano. If additional outside musicians are approved, the organist/pianist ensures the overall coordination of wedding music during the ceremony. All music information is provided in a separate [“Wedding Music Guidelines”](#) document in your wedding information packet. **Please contact the music coordinator by phone or email to set up an initial meeting** once your date is set with the church secretary and you have been contacted by a parish priest.

**Mary Odgaard**

**Cell: (402) 525-6458**

**Email: [mzodgaard@gmail.com](mailto:mzodgaard@gmail.com)**

**Decorations, Flowers, Candelabra, Aisle Runner:** To keep the church looking beautiful for all occasions, nothing is to be taped, tacked, or attached to the pews. When choosing floral arrangements, keep in mind the simple elegance of the church. Real flowers may be placed on either side of the back steps in front of the high altar. It is recommended that arrangements should be kept to a maximum of 36” high. Flowers may also be placed in front of the ambo and lectern, not to exceed 48” high. Flowers can be placed on either side of the statues of Mary and Joseph. **No flowers may be placed on or in front of the altar.** St. Peter will accept donations of wedding flower arrangements to be used for decoration for the upcoming Masses. Due to the threat of fire and dripping wax, **no candelabra may be used.**

**Flowers to Mary’s Altar:** Since these customs are not a part of the official rite of marriage, they can take place before the introduction of the couple and exit from the sanctuary if they are desired. Culture adaptations per the wedding rite are acceptable, this should be discussed with the priest doing the wedding ceremony beforehand. Unity candles are not permitted at the church.

**Photography and Videography:** Pictures are to be taken either one hour before the liturgy or immediately following. Non-flash photography may be taken during the wedding ceremony provided they are not disruptive and cause no delays in the ceremony. Posed pictures may be taken before or after the ceremony. If pictures are taken before the ceremony, they should be completed at least 20 minutes before the ceremony begins to allow for the seating of guests. If pictures are taken after the ceremony, they must be completed before confessions and evening Mass. During the taking of the posed pictures, it must be remembered that the church is a sacred place, and a reverent quiet is to be maintained. If it becomes excessively loud or disruptive, pictures will be moved to another location.

Videotaping may be done with a stationary camera located in the choir area of the sanctuary or a professional videographer may video the ceremony from the back or far sides of the church. Photographers and videographers may NOT proceed up the center aisle or cross in front of any of the guests. St. Peter Church also has the capability of live streaming your wedding. Please call the parish (402) 423-1239 to set up live streaming if you wish.

**Attire:** The bride, groom, and all attendants must be properly and modestly attired. The bride and her attendants should not wear anything that is very low cut in the front or in the back or is immodestly short. The groom and his attendants should be properly attired in dress clothes. No jeans are allowed. These rules are not intended to limit your personal expression but are necessary to maintain proper decorum in the House of the Lord and respect the dignity of the Sacrament of Matrimony.

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**Food and Beverage:** Out of respect for God, no food, drink, gum, or smoking is allowed in the church proper. **Alcohol is NOT to be consumed anywhere on the church grounds.** Likewise, no members of the wedding party should be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs during the rehearsal or wedding ceremony.

**Dismissal of the Congregation:** Dismissal of the congregation will be done by the ushers, row by row, after they have ushered out the parents and grandparents. The bride and groom **may not** usher out their guests. A receiving line may be formed in the courtyard (weather permitting) or to the far side of the vestibule.

**Rice, Confetti, etc.:** The throwing of rice, confetti, bird seed, flower petals, or any other material is not allowed in the church or on church grounds due to safety and custodial problems.

## **General Information:**

**Sanctuary:** seats 800

**Pews:** 20 rows of pews on either side of the center aisle. 18 rows of pews on the far-right side and 18 rows of pews on the far-left side of the church.

Lower level of the church is handicap accessible by an elevator located in the northwest corner of the main floor of the school.

**Church Office:** 4500 Duxhall Drive, Lincoln, NE, 68516 (402) 423-1239

Office Hours: 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday (see bulletin for any adjusted office hour times)

## Marriage Preparation

**Your marriage preparation (if done in the Lincoln Diocese) will consist of:**

**Initial Contact with the Priest.** You and the priest will set up an initial meeting where you will review the preparation policy, receive important paperwork, and discuss the use of Witness to Love.

**Engaged Encounter Weekend.** Schedule and attend an Engaged Encounter retreat 3-6 months before your wedding. Dates and registration can be found at: [www.lincolndiocese.org](http://www.lincolndiocese.org). Under the heading 'Offices', select 'Family Life and Discipleship', then click on 'Marriage Preparation and Engagement'. Follow the link under 'Step 2. Register for Engaged Encounter.' Space is limited so register early.

**Complete the FOCCUS Inventory.** After your initial meeting with the priest, you will complete the FOCCUS (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding, and Study). This is completed online.

**Choose a Mentor Couple.** Mentor couples should be married at least five years and must be active parishioners at St. Peter. Select a mentor couple from the parish website that you admire and view as a source of faith formation. If you have another couple in mind to serve as your mentors, discuss those options with the priest. After reviewing the mentor couple bios, please email Anne Hubbell at [anne-hubbell@cdolinc.net](mailto:anne-hubbell@cdolinc.net).

**Review the FOCCUS Results.** You will review the results of the FOCCUS inventory with the Marriage Preparation Coordinator before your first meeting with your mentor couple.

**Meetings with Your Mentor Couple.** You will schedule six meetings with your mentor couple to discuss various topics including communication, family life, living your vows, the theology and sacrament of marriage, and more. A priest will join for the fifth meeting with your mentor couple.

**Fertility Awareness Methods Introductory Session.** Attend an introductory session on Fertility Awareness Methods. One session is required with the option to schedule follow-ups. Dates and registration can be found at: [www.lincolndiocese.org](http://www.lincolndiocese.org). Under the heading 'Offices', select 'Family Life and Discipleship', then click on 'Fertility Awareness Methods'.

**Meeting with the Wedding Coordinator.** You will meet once with Rebecca Kreifels to discuss the wedding policies and the details of the wedding and rehearsal days. All future communication can be completed by email. Contact information can be found on the previous pages.

**Meeting with the Director of Music Ministry.** You will contact Mary Odgaard to discuss reserving a pianist/organist and vocalist for your wedding. Your pianist/organist and vocalist will be able to assist you in selecting the instrumental and vocal music for your wedding. Contact information can be found on the previous pages.

**Final Meeting with the Priest and Wedding Liturgy Planning.** Schedule a final meeting with the priest to conclude your marriage preparation and solidify liturgy plans.

## Marriage Documents

**Baptismal Certificates.** Obtained from the church where the baptism occurred. Certificates should be no older than six months.

**Affidavits of Freedom to Marry.** Completed in the presence of a Catholic priest by two witnesses, one for the bride and one for the groom.

**Marriage License.** Present your marriage license to the priest before or at the rehearsal.

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