



ST. MARGARET, QUEEN OF SCOTLAND

ST. THOMAS CHAPEL • SPRINGFIELD

Post Office Box 100 • Albany, Louisiana 70711-0100 • 225.567.3573

10 April 2022

Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

Dearest Parishioners and Friends:

Christ the Lord elevated marriage to the status of a sacrament by virtue of baptism. Marriage is also a sign of the new covenant established by God through the Blood of his Son. This covenantal institution began with the creation of man and women and was inscribed into the nature of humanity itself. Neither the man nor the woman was meant to be self-sufficient; on the contrary, their differences point to their complementary relationship. Marriage implies an intimate union between them and an irrevocable commitment between man and woman.

The Lord invites all of us – married or not – to contemplate the generous, faithful, and fruitful love made visible in Christian married life that ultimately serves as a sign to us of the love that Christ has for the Church. By seeing this grace made visible, we are strengthened to follow, with greater courage, our most high calling – to love in truth, a vocation revealed in the person and mission of Christ Jesus.

St. Margaret congratulates you on your upcoming nuptials! While under normal circumstances, Catholics marry in their home Church parish, we welcome all Catholics interested in our community of faith. Approval of your pastor will be necessary, and there are some other requirements to determine your freedom to marry according to the laws of the Church and of the State of Louisiana. But we are glad to journey with you!

While this process might sometimes seem overwhelming, rest assured knowing that St. Margaret embraces her own unique but holistic program of marriage preparation to assist and guide you. Our community asks that you approach one of our clergy members with plenty of time (at least six months) to make these important arrangements and to begin preparation.

Married couples participate in God's plan of creation and salvation. St. Margaret is pleased to participate with you and to assist you in experiencing a memorable wedding all while supporting your life together for years to come!

Yours in the Lord,

Very Reverend Jamin Scott David, JCL
Pastor

St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland

Wedding Policies



Civil Marriage Guidelines

Civil requirements in Louisiana for marriage are minimal. A couple must obtain a license to marry from the Clerk or Court in a civil Parish and then profess their vows before someone authorized to officiate at weddings in the State. Thus, at St. Margaret, before marrying, the couple must secure a wedding license (it need not be from Livingston Parish but *must* be from a Parish within Louisiana). This license should be brought to the Wedding Rehearsal.

Guidelines Applicable in the Catholic Churches of Louisiana

The Church helps persons seeking marriage prepare adequately for it. This aids them to make a good decision to commit themselves freely and totally. In 1978, the Catholic Bishops of Louisiana established a common Marriage Preparation policy that was refined and updated in both 1988 and 2008. It can be found on the Diocese of Baton Rouge's website www.diobr.org. Some requirements include:

- Preparation must begin at least six months before the anticipated wedding date. The priest or deacon who officiates at the wedding normally has primary responsibility for conducting this preparation process, either personally or through his delegates.
- Special circumstances will necessitate additional evaluation by a diocesan counselor. These include marriages involving minors, extramarital pregnancy, parental disapproval, or psychological and behavior issues, to name a few.
- A priest or deacon may refuse to witness a wedding for a variety of reasons. In doing so, he must explain how the couple may overcome the specific circumstances that causes the problem. In cases of delay or refusal to witness the marriage, an appeal may be made to the Diocesan Bishop directly or through the Dean. No other priest or deacon may officiate at a wedding which another cleric has delayed or refused to witness without permission.
- If a couple attempts marriage contrary to the laws of the Church, a validation is permitted only after the couple has completed the above requirements and a period of six months has elapsed since their wedding "outside the Church."

These policies remain in effect at St. Margaret. Additionally, the pastor of St. Margaret has established other policies and procedures which are detailed on the following pages. These policies may be modified in whole or in part at his discretion.

Scheduling a Wedding

A request to schedule a wedding and reserve St. Margaret Church or St. Thomas Chapel must be made in person at the Offices of St. Margaret located in the Hall of Saints. No reservation requests will be accepted by phone or email. No reservation is accepted until the groom and bride contact one of the priests or deacons assigned to St. Margaret and only after the initial meeting.

One of the clergymen assigned to St. Margaret will meet with the bride and groom. At this meeting, the couple will discuss with him the course of marriage preparation. If the marriage is to take place at St. Margaret or St. Thomas, and one of the clergymen assigned to St. Margaret is to officiate, the clergyman will immediately begin the process of wedding preparation by completing the *Pre-Nuptial Inquiry* with the couple. If there is no indication of any canonical or civil impediment to marriage, the clergyman performing the interview will officially schedule the wedding.

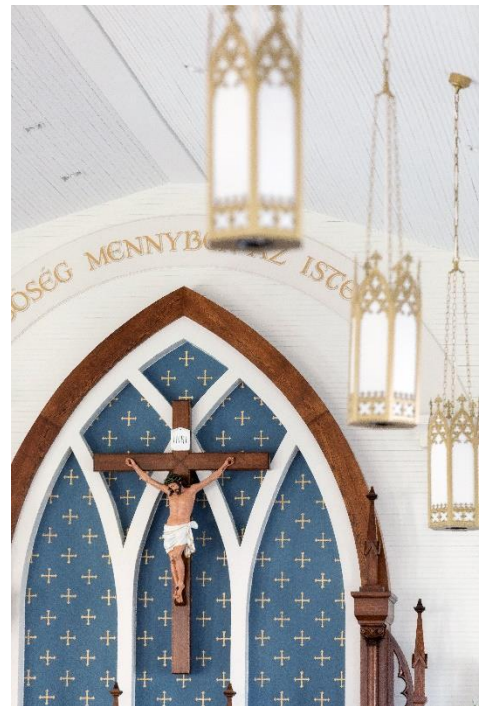
Should one of St. Margaret's assigned clergy *not* be the person officiating at the wedding, the couple should first approach a Catholic priest or deacon to ensure that he will provide the necessary premarital preparation in conformity with diocesan particular law and that he plans to officiate. Catholics who are not parishioners of St. Margaret should approach their own pastor, for his permission will be needed. Once the priest or deacon agrees to celebrate the wedding, he should call St. Margaret to discuss potential wedding plans with the clergy.

The Wedding Liturgy

The Catholic Church expects that weddings between two active Catholics should take place within the context of a nuptial Mass. When a Catholic marries a baptized person of another religion, Church regulations indicate that Mass is not part of the wedding ceremony. An important reason for this is that non-Catholics are not permitted to share in Holy Communion, and a wedding celebration is meant to emphasize the couple's and family unity. For various serious reasons, Mass may be permitted for a so called "Mixed Religion" wedding. When a Catholic marries an unbaptized person, Church law does not provide for Mass to be celebrated at all.

It occasionally happens that, at the last minute and due to some serious reason, such as illness, a foreseen officiant is not able to preside at a wedding and another priest or deacon must substitute. In the latter case, a foreseen wedding Mass may not be possible.

The standard format of the entrance procession for weddings at St. Margaret and St. Thomas is that family members (grandparents, parents) are typically seated before the liturgical procession. Thereafter, ministers are followed by the officiant and groom, bridal party, and then the bride. Thus, a cross-bearer, servers, lectors, the groom, and participating clergy precede the wedding party. At St. Margaret and St. Thomas, the groomsmen are to escort the bridal attendants up the entire length of



the aisle. The last person to enter the Church is the bride and her escort. These proceed forward to the place where the bride meets the groom and then move into the sanctuary.

The recessional is typically led by the newly married couple, followed by attendants, and parents and grandparents (if desired).

St. Margaret and St. Thomas allow a maximum of eight (8) bridal attendants and eight (8) groomsmen for wedding liturgies. Flower girls, ringbearer(s), or “junior brides/bridesmaids” are not included in this total.



The Time of Weddings

Weddings may be scheduled at St. Margaret or St. Thomas on most Mondays through Fridays at a reasonable hour. Most weddings take place at St. Margaret and at St. Thomas on Friday or Saturdays. A wedding can be scheduled any time before 8:00PM on Friday. On Saturday, weddings can be scheduled between 9:00AM and 1:00PM and 6:00PM and 8:00PM. Time must be allowed to clean and prepare the church building for regularly scheduled confessions at 3:00PM and the Saturday evening Mass at 4:00PM.

There are other time restrictions, however. Weddings may never be scheduled on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Holy Saturday. Weddings at St. Margaret and St. Thomas are not permitted on Sunday. There are other time restrictions based upon the liturgical calendar of the Parish.

In addition to the wedding ceremony, a wedding rehearsal is usually scheduled. It may be held up to seven days before the wedding, always at a time approved by St. Margaret. St. Margaret's Wedding Coordinator leads all rehearsals. It is expected that the entire wedding party, parents of the bridal couple, persons serving as readers and ushers, and all others with special roles in the ceremony attend the rehearsal. These rehearsals must start on time as frequently they are preceded or followed by other rehearsals, weddings, or services in our Churches.

Required Documents

Engaged persons in time must provide the following to the priest or deacon who will officiate at the proposed wedding. It is recommended that these documents be procured before a couple's first meeting with the priest or deacon. These documents will be included in the permanent pre-nuptial file that will live in St. Margaret's archives:

- A **new, certified** copy (that is, with the Parish's seal affixed) of the Catholic baptismal certificate for anyone baptized as a Catholic or received into full communion.
- A photocopy of any prior civil or church wedding certificate(s), divorce decree(s), or annulment(s) for any prior marriage(s), and death certificate(s) of any previous spouse.

Marriage Preparation at St. Margaret

At the couple's first meeting with the priest or deacon, he will utilize a standardized test instrument to help verify the couple's readiness to marry and to promote discussion between the parties prior to the wedding. St. Margaret uses the PREPARE/ENRICH inventory that targets marriage expectations, personality issues, communication issues, conflict resolution, finances, social time, sexual issues, parenting, dealing with family and friends, spirituality, and flexibility.

Instructions for this test instrument are emailed by a third-party vendor to the couple after the initial meeting. After successful completion, its findings will be explained as part of the marriage preparation process.

For those being prepared for marriage by St. Margaret's clergy, these couples are then assigned a Sponsor Couple from St. Margaret. After sharing the standardized test results with this couple, the sponsor couple will arrange with the groom and bride five to six in-home sessions where the Catholic Church's doctrines regarding matrimony will be carefully explained. These appointments are made directly with the sponsor couple at a mutually agreeable time and place. The clergyman officiating at the ceremony will typically join both couples at the final session in anticipation of the upcoming nuptial celebration.

Couples who are prepared by a cleric not assigned to St. Margaret should anticipate participating in a preparation program (Engaged Encounter, Pre-Cana, or Sponsor Couples) and will also be administered an evaluation instrument (FOCCUS, PREPARE/ENRICH, PMI, or Relate). Records of participation in this preparation and of the evaluation instrument will be kept in the pre-marital folder housed in St. Margaret's archives.



St. Margaret's Wedding Coordinator

St. Margaret employs a staff member responsible for oversight of weddings. While a couple is always free to engage the services of a bridal consultant, the supervisory authority of St. Margaret's pastor and our employed wedding coordinator necessarily takes precedence over all others. Decisions shall always conform to their decision.

Within one month of scheduling the wedding, the couple should arrange a meeting with the wedding coordinator to discuss details regarding the liturgical celebration. Currently, Mr. Landon Goings serves in this role. He can be reached at the parish office or by contacting him via email at lgoings@stmargaretstthomas.com

Fees

The fee for a wedding at St. Margaret Church or St. Thomas Chapel is as follows:

- \$500 for registered, contributing parishioners;
- \$1,000 for registered, non-contributing parishioners;
- \$2,000 for all others.

Please note that the status of a registered, contributing parishioner must exist for a full year prior to the request to schedule the wedding. These fees are not arbitrary but include the rental of the Church, utilities, and maintenance. This fee is payable in full at the time the wedding is officially scheduled at the beginning of the preparation process. Twenty-five (25%) of the fee paid is non-refundable. The fee is to be paid by check or money order to “St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Church.”

There is never a *required* fee for a priest or deacon who officiates at a wedding at St. Margaret. Should individuals or families wish to provide him or other attending ministers with a personal gift, this must be paid to him/them directly. It is customary in the United States for the bride and groom to give a gift to the officiant on the occasion of the wedding; this is very much appreciated.

No one is ever denied the services of the Church due to an inability to pay! Persons who due to poverty must have the simplest of weddings (that is, with the minimum of two witnesses, no flowers, photography, catering, reception, etc.) will be accommodated as much as possible.



Guidelines for Sacred Music

Music at Catholic worship is normative and so required at weddings at St. Margaret or St. Thomas. Please note that fees mentioned elsewhere *do not* include the required fees to musicians. Instead, couples must contract separately for the services of musicians. It is preferred that St. Margaret's musicians are utilized because of their familiarity with the space and instruments. St. Margaret's Coordinator of Music Ministry must always determine that another musician is competent and sufficiently trained.

Couples should thus contact St. Margaret's Music Ministry Coordinator – Mrs. Jane Wear at janerwear@gmail.com – to arrange for appropriate music.

Beyond an organist/pianist, requests for other or additional musicians are not infrequent. If a Mass is celebrated as part of the liturgy, a vocalist must serve as cantor. Ultimately, the Coordinator of Music Ministry must approve of persons to fulfill these roles based upon their musical skill and experience, and proper familiarity with Catholic liturgy.

No matter who provides the required musical assistance, the fee paid to St. Margaret is not reduced or paid to them, even in part. The couple must contract with and pay all these musicians, including the Coordinator of Music Ministry, directly. St. Margaret recommends that both the amounts of other

musicians' requested fees – which are set by them, and not by St. Margaret or any other Church organization – and the timing/scheduling of payments to them be agreed upon at the time of the hire.

Music for the wedding must be sacred or classical in nature and appropriate for liturgical use. It must assist the gathered assembly's worship and prayer. It is required that St. Margaret's Coordinator of Music Ministry assist in the selections of the musicians and of the music. Questions of suitability are decided by this Coordinator in consultation with the Pastor who has the final authority.

If the wedding liturgy includes Mass, a vocalist must serve as cantor, and the responsorial Psalm, Gospel acclamation, the "ordinary" parts of the Mass are sung. St. Margaret's usual vocalists are recommended for hire in this role. Since the role of cantor is a more specialized singing role, a vocalist proposed as cantor must be approved by the Music Ministry Coordinator.

Décor, Environment, Dress & Behavior

Floral arrangements and other elements of décor are frequently part of a wedding environment. A competent florist can contribute greatly to the liturgical environment by his or her artistry. These guidelines should be shared with the florist to ensure proper adherence to them. St. Margaret's recent renovations dictate a conservative and balanced approach to decorating. Excessive or gaudy use of flowers is prohibited. Simplicity at St. Margaret and St. Thomas ensures elegance.

Only living or fresh-cut floral arrangements are allowed. Silk or any type of artificial flowers are not permitted. No more than three floral arrangements are to be placed on the floor of the sanctuary area. They may be placed in front of the presider's chair, the ambo, and the altar at St. Margaret and on two stands near the presider's chair and in front of the altar at St. Thomas.



Trellises and other elaborate constructions are prohibited. Flowers are not permitted on the altar table itself or on the reredos at St. Margaret. They may not block the congregation's view of the altar, even when Mass is not celebrated. Florists and decorators who have not done arrangements for weddings at St. Margaret or St. Thomas are strongly urged to visit and become familiar with the space. St. Margaret's staff can offer conventional decorating tips to adhere to these guidelines. Floral arrangements should be delivered no more than 90 minutes prior to the wedding liturgy and should not interrupt other scheduled liturgies taking place in the worship space. St. Margaret asks that one or more floral arrangement(s) be placed in the sanctuary for the wedding to remain there from the time of the service through the next week. Other remaining flowers and decorations must be removed immediately following the wedding ceremony. If this does not take place, extra décor will be discarded by St. Margaret. Intentional or flagrant violation of these guidelines will preclude individuals or firms from doing business at St. Margaret or St. Thomas in the future.

The use of all candles and a Unity Candle are strictly prohibited. On the north and south walls of St. Margaret are four consecration candles, which are lit on certain Solemnities and feasts. As such, they are not to be utilized as wedding decorations.

Nothing may be attached to the tops of any of the pews at St. Margaret or St. Thomas to prevent damage. Aisle runners are not allowed. It is not permitted to throw or scatter flowers, flower petals, rice, birdseed, or bubbles, either inside the Church or on the east plaza in front of it.

St. Margaret is a sacred space. All attendees at a wedding should refrain from bringing food, beverages, and gum on the St. Margaret property. Because of the sacred nature of what is being witnessed, members of the bridal party – especially the bride and groom – and their families are strictly prohibited from having alcohol on their person; they should refrain from drinking any alcoholic beverages before the wedding.

Because the wedding takes place in a holy place, modesty in dress for all should be observed.

Photography & Videography

Photographers and videographers unfamiliar with St. Margaret should attend the rehearsal for the main purpose of becoming familiar with the liturgical space and to predetermine the various locales he/they will use to record images of the wedding. These guidelines should be shared with any photographer(s) to ensure proper adherence to them.

Photographers must do their job with reverence and dignity and in such a manner that is quiet and not distracting to the officiant, the couple, the wedding party, and the congregation. As professionals, photographers should wear clothing matching the dignity of the celebration taking place, comport themselves professionally, and setup and use their equipment in a clean and non-distracting manner.

Photographers shall not obstruct the “line of sight” of the officiant or congregation through the ceremony. Video cameras should be mounted on suitable, fixed tripods. Movement of cameras from one location to another is discouraged. Flash photography is permitted so long as it does not cause undue disruption. Photographers and videographers are not allowed in the sanctuary, nor should they block any aisles, especially for the distribution of communion or procession or recession.

“Posed photography” can take place in St. Margaret or St. Thomas for a brief period before or after the wedding if no other scheduled events take precedence. The pastor or wedding coordinator will determine the availability and length of this time and advise couples about it.

Intentional or flagrant violation of these guidelines will preclude individuals or firms from doing business at St. Margaret or St. Thomas in the future.

Done on the 10th of April 2022, Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion.


Very Reverend Jamin Scott David, JCL
Pastor



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St. Margaret Wedding Policy Acknowledgement Form

By signing this form, the named groom and bride indicate that they have read the St. Margaret Wedding Policies and agree to strictly adhere to all tenets contained therein.

Name of Groom (LAST, First Middle)

Name of Bride (MAIDEN, First Middle)

Groom's Phone Number

Bride's Phone Number

Groom's Email Address

Bride's Email Address

Proposed Date & Time of Wedding

Proposed Date & Time of Rehearsal

Celebrant

Signature of Groom

Signature of Bride

Date Signed

For Office Use Only:

☐ Parishioner ☐ Non-Supporting/Newly Registered Parishioner ☐ Non-Parishioner

Deposit Payment Amount: _____ Date Received: _____

Balance Due Amount: _____ Date Received: _____

Upon receipt of this form, a copy of it is to be sent to the Pastor, the Proposed Celebrant, the Parish Secretary, the Sacramental Coordinator, and the Director of Music.



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St. Margaret Zero Tolerance Agreement for Weddings

As a couple preparing for marriage either at St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland Church, or St. Thomas the Apostle Chapel, we agree to St. Margaret's policy of zero tolerance regarding possession of alcoholic beverages and/or drugs on church property and the consumption of either or both immediately before the rehearsal and wedding.

We understand that if anyone involved in our wedding brings any alcoholic beverages or drugs onto the Church's property, either at the rehearsal or on the wedding day, or if anyone is intoxicated or otherwise under the influence of alcohol or drugs during the rehearsal or at the wedding ceremony, that person will be asked to leave the Church premises. Despite the situation, the Pastor and/or clergy reserve the right to cancel the wedding altogether should such a situation arise.

We agree to share this information with our families and with those individuals in our wedding party to make them aware with this policy and to encourage them to fully adhere to it.

By signing this policy, we agree to what is stated above.

Signature of Groom

Signature of Bride

Date Signed

The original document is to be retained in the couple's pre-nuptial folder and a photocopy of it is to be given to the couple.