

Immaculate Conception Church Hawthorn Wedding Guidelines

Wedding Times

Weddings may be held any day of the week except on special Church Holy Days, provided the date does not conflict with regularly scheduled parish services.

Saturday weddings may be scheduled no earlier than 10 am and no later than 4 pm. The afternoon wedding party must vacate the Church buildings and grounds by 5:30 pm due to 6pm Mass held on Saturday night.

Sunday weddings must work around the set Mass times of 9:30am, 11am and 5pm.

Access to the church is available from 9am on Saturday.

The wedding party is expected to arrive at the Church dressed and ready for the ceremony. Space is provided only for waiting for the ceremony. The bathroom facilities are located at the back of the church near Lynch St.

Fees

There is a AUD\$1000 fee for the use of the church. The said amount must be paid before the chosen and agreed upon wedding date can be scheduled on the church calendar. The booking is for the time period of one hour.

Your priest will require a separate fee. Please discuss this with him at your first meeting.

Wedding Preparation Classes

Catholic Care offers a highly recommended pre-marriage course
<https://www.catholiccarevic.org.au/directory/services/pre-marriage-education>

Wedding church co-ordinator

Immaculate Conception Church provides a liturgical wedding co-ordinator who will manage all the activities at the rehearsal and on the day of the wedding.

The coordinator will lead you through your wedding rehearsal and/or assist your priest at the wedding rehearsal.

On the day of your wedding they will manage the opening of the church building and gates, lighting, church microphones, preparation of the altar and sanctuary, etc. Outside wedding coordinators must work with the church coordinator.

THE WEDDING COORDINATOR IS TO BE TREATED WITH COURTESY AND RESPECT AT ALL TIMES.

Church capacity and seating

The church seats approximately 500 people. The building is wheelchair accessible by use of the eastern transept entry on the Glenferrie road side of the church.

There are 4 columns of 15 pews each in the main body of the church. Totalling 60 pews. Each pew can comfortably seat 6 adults.

The western transept has 9 pews. The eastern transept has 6. These pews seat approximately 10 adults.

The pews in the main body of the church measure 99 cm high and 64 cm around the top at the indent.

The centre aisle measures 20.5 metres from the church inner wooden entrance doors to the bottom sanctuary step and 16 metres from glass doors to bottom sanctuary step.

Order of Service

It is recommended that an order of service is created so as to allow your guests to follow and participate in your wedding ceremony. The order of service usually takes the form of a booklet and includes the chronological order of the wedding ceremony. It includes your chosen readings, prayers of the faithful, Gospel, etc. An example of the booklet will be presented to you during your wedding preparation. A draft of the booklet must be confirmed by your Priest prior to its printing.

Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal is usually performed the week leading up to the date of the wedding. Half an hour is normally allocated for the rehearsal. It is expected that you and all involved parties arrive on time and are organised so the rehearsal is not compromised. Please have a copy of your music either in the form of a CD or iPod. If you have organised musical accompaniment in the form of a pianist or organist you must inform the parish office prior to the rehearsal.

There is a wedding coordinator who will look after you at the rehearsal and on your wedding day to ensure everything runs smoothly.

We understand that a wedding is an exciting and happy occasion and take this time to remind you that talking over, ignoring and disrupting instructions during your wedding rehearsal will compromise its desired result, of helping you on your wedding day.

Please arrange your wedding rehearsal time with Berny Kirwan at the Parish Office (8862 4020).

Parking

Parking can be difficult around the church especially on the weekend. We suggest informing your guests to leave some extra time to arrive and find a park. There is parking available behind the church accessed via Lynch Street.

The bridal cars are welcome to park in the front of the church for the duration of the church booking. They are to vacate the church premises at the conclusion of the booking.

Wedding party arrival

The bride should arrive on time. It will take at least ten minutes to move from your vehicle to the front entrance of the church and you will be walking down the aisle traditionally ten minutes late.

Pre-planned late arrival is strictly forbidden. Late arrival of the bride can cause serious inconvenience to your guests and celebrant. Late arrival can result in the shortening of your wedding ceremony or it will be postponed until after other weddings or mass services.

If you arrive early the wedding coordinator will keep you inside your vehicle until all guests have arrived.

Entering church

Immaculate Conception Church Hawthorn is located on the corner of Glenferrie and Burwood Road. There are two possible front entries for wedding cars. It is recommended that your driver is informed of the entries prior to your wedding day. The gate on Burwood road is wide enough to allow average sized cars to enter, larger cars and limousines find it difficult to access due to a tight turn which is required to enter. The gate on the corner of Glenferrie and Burwood road is wider and can fit all average sized vehicles, limousines and horse and carriages. Due to low hanging tree branches a bus is unable to fit, although it is able to park on Burwood road in front of the church.

Unity candles

Unity candles are a beautiful way to symbolise joining of two families through your marriage. Unity candles consist of three candles two smaller candles to represent each family, often displayed with the bride and groom's surname on their appropriate candle. A larger candle represents the new unity between the married couple.

The two family candles are lit and the beginning of the ceremony by a member of the two families (e.g. the mothers of the bride and groom). They take the light flame from the church altar candles and light their family candle. After the bride and groom have said their vows they each take the flame from their respective family candles and together light their unity candle.

The church can provide tapers to light the candles.

The unity candle is optional and not a required part of the ceremony.

Pen/Stationary

The church provides a beautiful pen for the signing of the register, although you are more than welcome to use your own stationary if preferred. Please inform your priest and wedding coordinator of your decision so as to make sure the pen/s are placed with the wedding certificate and register prior to the commencement of the ceremony.

Ringling of church bells

The church bell will be rung by the wedding coordinator at the conclusion of each wedding. It is a beautiful announcement to the community of your new matrimony.

Flowers

The Parish does NOT arrange flowers for weddings. The church may be decorated either by you or by a florist, with flowers of your own choice.

It is recommended that you call the Parish Office about a month prior to your wedding ceremony to enquire if there are any other weddings on your day, and whether the other brides may like to share church flowers and the associated costs.

There are two wooden floral pedestals which can be arranged as desired with your selected flower arrangements. Floral arrangements can remain in the church after your wedding if prior consent is given by the parish office. Flowers must be removed from the church after a wedding if the wedding date is during lent or if there is a wedding subsequent to yours (either the same day or next).

Flowers are NOT to be placed on the altar, they may be arranged on the sanctuary and on pew ends. Please consult with the parish office for a suitable time for you or your florist to arrange the flowers.

Photographers and videographers

Photographers and videographers are to remain discreet and follow directions from our wedding coordinator. Both photographer and videographer are not allowed on the sanctuary during the ceremony. They will be invited onto the sanctuary at the priest's discretion, normally during or after the signing of the marriage register and certificate.

Church decorations and furniture

During holy celebrations at differing times throughout the year, the church will have liturgical decorations. This is most likely during Christmas, Easter and when the parish primary school is preparing to celebrate sacraments. When the church is decorated in this special way, the wedding party must adapt to the decorations already in place. A great deal of preparation and effort is spent on adding to the beauty of parish liturgical celebrations, which are central to our liturgy and are not removed for events, including weddings.

The re arrangement of pews is strictly prohibited. The alignment of pews is designed in a specific order to the benefit of the congregation. The use of free standing chairs is available if required for musicians or guests needing specific seating.

Music

Organ – Our fine pipe organ is available if you wish to use it.

Specialist skills are needed to play this instrument, so only our approved organists will be provided with a key. A list of organists can be obtained from the parish office or alternatively the name of your organist must be provided to the parish office a week prior to the first time they play the organ (e.g. the rehearsal or wedding day)

CD/iPod – If you wish to use CDs, iPods etc. please bring these to the church for your wedding rehearsal, to see if they are compatible with our sound system. You will need to elect someone (friend or family member) to operate the music if it is played through our sound system as our wedding coordinator cannot operate the music.

Musical accompaniment – If you choose live musical accompaniment (e.g. string quartet) chairs are provided.

You are welcome to enquire if one of our musicians is available to play at your wedding.

Georgina Docherty 0433 842 880
Vocalist, leads the 9:30 am Parish Choir
www.threesopranosmusic.com

Fiona Dyball 0477 002 813
Vocalist, 11 am Choir Mistress & Music Consultant at the Parish

Stringhouse Ensemble
Includes Patrick Shannon, musician at Sunday Mass
Stringhouse.ensemble@gmail.com
instagram: @stringhouse.ensemble

Stefanie Dingnis 0451 308 560
Vocalist at our 6 pm Saturday mass

Catherine Meade 0414 969 931
Vocalist at our 11 am Sunday mass

Jane Matheson 0433 574 993
Pianist at our Sunday masses

General policies

The church is to be left as you found it.

Confetti, rose petals and rice are strictly forbidden.

Failure to comply will incur costs for cleaning and / or repairs.