

## **Directives for Weddings with COVID-19 precautions**

*The Basilica has adopted the following directives, intended to protect wedding couples, guests, vendors and employees from infection. Please review these carefully. They follow the guidelines set forth by the diocese and local health officials. These will accompany, and where necessary supercede, the regular guidelines found on our wedding website until further notice. **It is the couple's responsibility to ensure all guests are aware of these necessary practices.** If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Liturgy Office at (574) 631-4288.*

### **Updated Timing:**

- **Couples will be permitted to enter the Basilica 20 minutes prior to their weddings. All couples will have 1 hour and 20 minutes for their liturgy AND photos.** The shortened time allows for a thorough cleaning of the Basilica before and after all weddings. We apologize for the inconvenience and are grateful for your cooperation and understanding as we work to keep all parties safe.

### **Planning Recommendations:**

- Couples are welcome to create programs. However, please note that **all congregational singing is suspended at this time.** This means that all hymnals have been removed from the pews, and programs cannot include music or instructions that encourage singing. A soloist and organist are permitted to provide music for listening only.
- Seating will take time so please ask all guests to arrive **15 minutes prior to the wedding. We are not able to extend your time in the Basilica if you are not ready to begin on time.**

### **Face Coverings:**

- **Face coverings are required by everyone in the Basilica at all times during the wedding rehearsal. There will be no exceptions to this policy.**
- **At the directive of our local bishop, all wedding guests and participants are required to wear face coverings.** The bride, groom and presider are the only people who do not need to wear face coverings at any time during the wedding. Please see the guidance below for other particular exceptions:
  - The members of the wedding party must wear face coverings until the ceremony begins. They are then permitted to process into the Basilica without face coverings. If the wedding party would prefer not to carry them in the procession, place a second set of face coverings in the pews at the seats of the wedding party so that they may put them on as soon as they arrive at their seats. The wedding party should keep their face coverings on for the recessional.
  - The lector is permitted to remove their face covering to proclaim their reading, but must put their face covering back on when they return to their pew.

- The maid of honor and best man do not need to wear them during the vows, as long as they are the only members of the wedding party who stand with the bride and groom at that time.
- After the recessional, we recommend the couple anticipate a maximum of four photographs, in any desired configurations (immediate families, wedding party, etc.). During this time, those being photographed do not need to wear face coverings. Anyone not being photographed must continue to wear their face coverings.
- Couples are encouraged to provide ushers with extra masks for any participants who do not bring their own. **Guests are not permitted to enter the Basilica without a face covering.**
- Vendors are required to wear face coverings when inside the Basilica. There are no exceptions to this rule. Couples must ensure vendors are aware of this restriction.

### **Seating:**

- All guests are asked to enter the Basilica through the south facing doors (main entrances of the Basilica). The middle doors will be reserved for the Bridal party.
- Households will be seated together. All households will be seated 6 feet apart. **This leaves 48 spots for households. (Larger households may take up two spots). We estimate that between 100-125 people will be able to fit in the main nave of the Basilica.** This includes parents and grandparents.
- We recommend that wedding parties are seated in the transepts (the pews in the short “arms” of the church). If not, the total number of guests must be decreased to ensure the wedding party is seated 6 feet apart in the main pews.
- Ribbons and ropes have been used to restrict seating in pews. No couples are permitted to move these ropes/ribbons.
- Please ensure you have the following roles filled for your wedding day.
  - Greeters - stand at door to ensure all participants are wearing masks and use hand sanitizer when they enter the Basilica. Hand sanitizer will be provided by the Basilica.
  - Ushers - walk guests to seats to ensure that all households sit in available seats. Ushers should not walk arm in arm with guests.
- Seating will take longer than usual. Please emphasize to guests the need to arrive early and wait patiently at the door until they are seated. As a reminder, please be sure to share these guidelines regarding masks, seating, and spacing with your wedding guests.

### **During the Liturgy:**

- **First, please note that your wedding coordinator will walk you through all of the below at your rehearsal.**
- The wedding party must process single-file down the aisle. No couples are permitted to process down the aisle together.
- The bride and groom and their parents are permitted to process down the aisle together, both at the beginning and end of the ceremony.

- The wedding party is required to stand 6 feet apart. If the party is too large for the Basilica sanctuary steps to accommodate this, only part of the wedding party will be able to stand, or members must stand to the side of the sanctuary.
- We recommend that the bridesmaids are seated in the sacristy side transept and the groomsmen in the dome side transept. We recommend that only the Maid of Honor and Best Man stand with the couple for the vows.
- Please refrain from holding hands during the Our Father.
- There is no physical exchange of the Sign of Peace.
- Communion will only be distributed under the species of the bread. We will not distribute via the cup (even for the bride and groom). The Presider will serve as the Eucharistic Minister. If you expect more than 100 people to receive Communion, we recommend asking one person to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. This person will follow the same requirements as the presider when distributing Communion.
- Presiders (and extraordinary ministers) are required to wear a mask to distribute Communion. They must use the provided hand sanitizer immediately before distributing to the faithful.
- If there is any contact with the faithful during the distribution of the Eucharist, we ask the presider or extraordinary minister to pause, use the available hand sanitizer and continue distribution.
- Ministers/Volunteers for liturgy:
  - Greeters - Stand at doors to hand out masks and encourage use of hand sanitizer (see above under "Seating"). Hand out programs if using.
  - Ushers - Guide participants to seats (see above under "Seating").
  - Lectors - We recommend inviting no more than three people to serve as lectors; one each for the First Reading, Second Reading and Intercessions.
  - Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion - You may invite one person to minister the host if you are expecting more than 100 communicants (see above under the directives for Communion).
  - There will be no Offertory Procession. Gifts will already be located near the altar, so please do not invite gift-bearers.

### **Following the Liturgy:**

- The wedding party and guests are asked to keep facial coverings in place until you leave the Basilica.
- We ask for your understanding as we keep the space clean and safe for you, and for everyone using the Basilica throughout the weekend.

*Updated December 15, 2020*