

Archdiocese of Palo

Commission on Worship

GUIDELINES

(EVENT/WEDDING COORDINATORS; PHOTOGRAPHERS, VIDEOGRAPHERS, "SUPPLIERS")

A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. The Archdiocese of Palo has the obligation to preserve the solemnity of its Rites and Ceremonies, especially and particularly those pertaining to weddings. The primary coordinator of weddings in the parish church is the Parish Priest himself.
2. In the case when a couple needs a lay wedding coordinator, event/wedding coordinators, photographers, videographers and other wedding "suppliers" may be welcome to offer their services. This is to ensure that the celebration be truly respected and celebrated accordingly.
3. However, a particular Parish Church, through its Parish Priest and/or its legitimate representative, reserves the right to **admit or refuse** such lay wedding coordinators, photographers, videographers and other suppliers *maybe due to previous uncorrected offense/s and/or incorrigible attitudes despite repeated reprimands*. It is advisable then that the couple tap reliable coordinators, photographers, videographers and other suppliers for their event.

B. PRE-CEREMONY ARRANGEMENTS

1. Couples who are to be married in Church should have already complied with the **necessary requirements** in order for the ceremony to proceed. The *Canonical Interview* and the *Marriage Banns* should have already been addressed. *Mixed marriages, marriage with a foreigner* and similar cases should already have been settled with the Chancery Office.
2. Couples are allowed to select the **Scripture Readings** for their wedding ceremony with careful reflection and discussion preferably together with the officiating priest. This, however, CANNOT BE DONE during SUNDAYS and HOLIDAYS of OBLIGATION, especially during the "STRONG SEASONS" (*Advent, Lent, and Easter*) of which the Mass Formulary and the reading/s of the day is/are to be followed.
3. All Church weddings are to be coordinated with the Parish Priest. In case the couple chooses a **Church Wedding Director or Coordinator or Planner**, said coordinator shall orient the bride and the groom of the Church's Wedding Guidelines as prepared by the Commission on Worship of the Archdiocese.
4. Church Wedding **practices / rehearsals** are also encouraged so as to assure fluidity of the celebration during the Wedding day. Schedule for and time for practices shall be coordinated with the Parish Office.
5. Use of Church Premises/ and grounds for **pre-nuptial photos** should be properly coordinated with the Parish Office.
6. Music is a form of prayer that allows the community to fully participate in the wedding. Thus, pre-selection of the **music** to be sung during the wedding ceremony is highly encouraged.

C. THE CEREMONY

1. ***Reverence and respect*** are highly expected from the participants during the liturgical celebration. No unnecessary activities are allowed during the ceremony. Hence, everyone is expected to attend the ceremony with full, active and conscious participation. For example, everyone should be standing while the Gospel is being proclaimed, seated during the Homily, and kneeling during the Consecration, among others.
2. ***“Participants”***. Only those who have been baptized and have received their First Communion can “actively participate” in the Church Wedding (*this refers to the Commentator, Readers, Psalmist, etc.*). It is preferable that the members of the entourage should also be baptized, if not practicing Catholics, lest the desired solemn Catholic Wedding Ceremony gets converted into no more than a “show”. Non-Catholics, who may be attending the ceremony, are most welcome. They should, however, be advised to conform to the norms of the celebration as sometimes their in-action (*i.e. not standing when everybody else is standing, or not kneeling down during consecration, etc.*) distract either the celebrant priest and/or the other participants of the celebration. If they cannot promise to conform, they better not enter the Church.
3. ***Sanctuary Area***. Only the bride and the groom, commentator, lectors, altar servers and the officiating priest/s are allowed within the Sanctuary.
4. ***Movements***. Only necessary and minimal movements are allowed during the ceremony. However, *during the Consecration (of the Host and Wine), no movement is allowed.*
5. ***Talking*** should be minimized while inside the Church to observe the solemnity of the celebration.
6. ***Photographers and videographers*** should not distract the attention of the couple or the congregation from the sacredness and solemnity of the ceremony and the Mass. The lay Wedding Coordinator shall also take charge of *freelance* photographers.
7. Only sacred, religious and liturgical ***music*** is allowed to be sung and played during the wedding ceremony. Secular and popular music are not allowed during the liturgical wedding celebration. The couple may be required to submit a list of songs to be sung for the Processional March and the Mass proper.
8. ***Children*** are not allowed to play, run around, and make noise while inside the Church, especially as the ceremony progresses. It is then advisable that children-members of the entourage (*flower girls, ring bearers, arrhae bearer, Bible bearer, etc.*), although they may be cute and adorable, be already of ages seven (*7 years old*) and above, as they hopefully comport themselves better in Church, lest the parents of younger children “steal the show” from the couple.
9. ***On Missalettes***. A missalette is not a requirement for church weddings. Parish churches do have the formulary for nuptial (or wedding) mass. If the couple insists on having one printed for their wedding, the printed material may not include the entire Mass formulary but it should at least contain a particular song (or songs) used at Mass, the readings (especially those chosen by the couple) and the Nuptial Rite itself.

D. THE DRESS CODE

1. Participants of the Wedding Ceremony are encouraged to ***dress modestly***.
2. Males should be in barong or formal suit (*or in semi-formal attire as the case may be*). Females should be in formal dresses befitting a solemn celebration. Thus, tubes and off-shoulder dresses are discouraged. No wearing of slippers or sports shoes is allowed.

3. Wedding coordinators, photographers and videographers should be properly dressed during the ceremony. It would be preferable that they wear a distinctive uniform and credentials for easy identification.

E. MAINTAINING CLEANLINESS

1. The use of rice, glitters and poppers will only be allowed outside the Church to prevent any damage and to keep the Church premises clean. Only petals, if these are utilized, will be allowed inside the Church. However, they have to assure that the premises are cleaned after the ceremony. Other churches have their own cleaners who can be hired to do this.
2. Releasing of doves, butterflies, birds of any kind, balloons and bubbles inside the Church are STRICTLY prohibited.
3. No foods and drinks are allowed inside the Church during the wedding rehearsals and the ceremony proper. At most, only babies with milk bottles are allowed. Children, if they want to eat, are advised to go out of the Church so as not to distract the ceremony.

F. DECORATIONS

1. **Flower decorations** are best fresh. Floral arrangements on the aisles and the pews should not obstruct the view of the participants during the ceremony.
2. Decorations on the altar and the sanctuary should reflect the sanctity of the area and enhance, and not supplant it. Normally, flowers should remain there after the wedding. Other decorations on the aisle, and/or on the pews, and/or at the entrance of the Church, however, may be taken away.
3. The use of **tapes** (*scotch, masking & packing*), **staples**, **nails** and **tacks** on the pews are STRICTLY PROHIBITED.
4. No **arcs and canopies** are allowed on the altar/sanctuary. If ever these are used, they should be positioned so as not to obstruct the main view of the altar/sanctuary. At most, they may be used at the entrance of the Church.

G. TIME

1. The couple should try their best to start the ceremony at the scheduled time. The “Filipino time” is a myth; either “we start on time” or “we are late”! The wedding coordinator should see to it that this is followed.
2. Time for the wedding ceremony should be limited to two and a half hours (2, ½ hours) from the processional to the end of the picture-taking as other activities and ceremonies may have been scheduled afterwards.

H. OFFENSES

1. In the event that anything (*of Church properties*) is damaged because of improper handling and use by the photographers, videographers, coordinators and decorators, it is understood that the couple/responsible party is responsible to pay for the damages incurred.
2. The couple, coordinator/s, photographer/s, and videographer/s agree and bind himself/herself/themselves to the set guidelines by the Church. Violation of any of these guidelines is tantamount

to penalties and sanctions as well as probable banning of the company or individuals from doing future coverage at the Church.

3. It is understood that coordinators, photographers, and videographers should avoid committing the mentioned offenses to avoid penalties and probable banning.

I. REMINDERS

1. Not following the guidelines by the Church.
2. Crossing the center aisle during the Consecration.
3. Not bowing or genuflecting when crossing the center aisle.
4. Using camera flashes during the Consecration.
5. Using and charging of cellular phones and other gadgets inside the Church.
6. Making unnecessary noise during the Mass
7. Making distracting movements during the Mass.
8. Smoking.
9. Littering.
10. Running inside the Church.
11. Other activities that are considered distracting to the Church event.
12. Refusal to follow and obey instructions of the Church Staff and personnel pertaining to the proper and orderly coverage of the ceremony.
13. Unruly behaviour of the coordinator, photographer, videographer or any member of their crew.
14. Making malicious comments or berrismiting the reputation of the Church or its representative and employees.

J. SAMPLE AGREEMENT

I, _____ hereby affix my signature this ___ day of _____, 20___ to indicate the agreement and consent to the abovementioned rules and regulations for coordinators, photographers, videographers and other “suppliers”, which have been thoroughly and properly discussed and understood by us with the Parish Priest/ Administration Office.

(Lay) Event/Wedding Coordinator

Noted:

Parish Priest / Representative