

ABOUT BEING MARRIED AT ST. ANNA'S CHURCH

Entering Into the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony



“The union of two persons in heart, body, and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity. Therefore marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God.” The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony (Rev 2015)

St. Anna's Episcopal Church is located in an urban and diverse community. She sits quietly on the grand avenue of the Creole's, Esplanade Ave., between the French Creole neighborhood of the Treme, the world-famous French Quarter, and lesser known Marigny and Bywater neighborhoods. The church has a long history in New Orleans and is one of the oldest Episcopal congregations being founded in 1846. St. Anna's offers a lovely and intimate setting for any wedding. St. Anna's worship tradition is Anglo Catholic in form believing that such a form represents for us the Holy Mysteries and Beatific Banquet that all of God's children are called to. However, we will work with you on designing the perfect ceremony.

Forward by Fr. Bill Terry, Rector

As rector and priest, I have an obligation to both the church catholic and to all who come to us to ensure, as much as possible, that the sacraments are validly and authentically administered. While our focus is on the spiritual life, we are very mindful that our God, in the person of Jesus, represents both our spiritual and physical realities. To these ends and in fulfillment of our mission as a house of divine presence we welcome you and invite you to read and consider what we offer. We also wish to make it known that this church and its fellowship support the right of all human beings to have full access to all of the sacraments regardless of sexual orientation.

Do I have to be a member of St. Anna's Church to be married there?

No. However, if you live in New Orleans, you will be asked to begin attending St. Anna's Church early on. Faith, like our bodies, should be exercised in order to fully appreciate and be absorbed in the sacrament of the moment. At least one of the two must be a Baptized Christian. It is, of course, desirable that both have some inclination toward a life in Christ.

May I be married at St. Anna's if I do not live in New Orleans?

Yes. But pre-marital counseling must be arranged with local Episcopal clergy. (*see below**)

May we write our own vows?

No. St. Anna's follows the Book of Common Prayer for all sacraments and or as authorized by General Convention and our Bishop for trial use.

Will you do same sex unions/marriages/blessings?

Yes.

May pastors of other faith traditions co-officiate?

Only priests licensed by the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana may officiate a sacrament of the church in New Orleans. However, discuss what you wish with the Rector of St. Anna's Church, and some form of recognition may be considered.

Do you require pre-marital counseling (aka pre-Canaan)?*

Yes. We will not waive this requirement (required by Canon). Normally, you will meet with clergy staff for a minimum of four one-hour sessions and as many as eight one hour sessions. The general thrust of this is not to point out faults or reasons why one should not be married but rather to highlight the sacramental nature of an honest and open relationship. High priority will be placed on spirituality and understanding marriage as a continuing sacrament. And, yes, there is homework.

If either of you have been divorced...

If either partner has been divorced additional counseling may be required. Also, it is important to note that Canon Law requires that permission to wed must be given by the Bishop if you have been twice divorced. You must make an application for this at least 60 days prior to the desired wedding date.

And if we aren't Episcopalian? If neither person is a member of the Episcopal Church, please direct your request to the Rector and include "why you want to be married at St. Anna's". Because it is a sacrament of the church one of you must be a baptized Christian (as per Canons of the Church).

How do we go forward?

By indicating a desire to go forward with St. Anna's you are indicating a willingness to open yourselves up to the possibility of transformation by sacrament. Preparation for matrimony, we believe, should be a high priority in your life and you are taking a first step in making it a priority by accepting our invitation to be married at St. Anna's Church. Following is a list of steps that must be taken which also includes documents that will initiate the process:

- ✚ Establish contact with St. Anna's Parish Administrator, Deacon Luigi, and send us a written request for a marriage packet (this may be done by email Luigi@stannanola.org or regular mail). You may already have done so in receiving this brochure.
- ✚ Request a TENTATIVE date for your wedding (at least 74 days in advance) from the Parish Administrator. Reconfirm this date along with a deposit sixty days in advance.
- ✚ You will be sent, or you may pick up a kit that will include several documents that must be filled out and returned. The form titled "The Celebration and Blessing of A Marriage-

Liturgical Planning.” This is a multi part *working document*. This document may take some time to finalize. The “*Declaration of Intent*” should be filed with us soonest. *If you are an Episcopalian, you should have or are asked to purchase a Book of Common Prayer.*

- ✚ If you are divorced (twice) we must have the “Request to Remarry” completed and delivered to St. Anna’s. This must be completed no less than 60 days prior to wedding.
- ✚ Schedule your first counseling session with St. Anna’s Parish Administrator. *If you are out of state or not local, please make arrangements with St. Anna’s Rector for counseling at a location convenient to you or possible Zoom meetings with the St. Anna rector.*

With all of the above being accomplished we will be well on our way to a wonderful and life long experience in the sacrament of Holy Matrimony!

Final thoughts and observations:

- ✚ The form of the marriage will follow the Book of Common Prayer or as authorized.
- ✚ A fee schedule is attached to this booklet.
- ✚ We can and will perform weddings away from the church but still recognize it as a sacrament.
- ✚ In general music must be approved by the clergy in charge and musicians should be booked through the church unless otherwise agreed. This must be completed 45 days in advance.
- ✚ Weddings are not performed during Holy Week or Lent.
- ✚ Flowers are not permitted during Advent greens are acceptable.
- ✚ St. Anna’s can seat 175 - 200 people.
- ✚ Generally, the altar flowers remain at the church for the Sunday service.
- ✚ Readings from the Bible are as per the Book of Common Prayer or as may be agreed.
- ✚ Generally, incense is used for all solemn rites of this church, unless otherwise agreed.
- ✚ The Parish Hall is available upon request.
- ✚ Rose petals are not permitted to be thrown for weddings.
- ✚ We understand the necessity for wedding planners they can be very helpful. But please understand that their ‘authority’ ends at the church doors that said, we will do our best to work with them as much as possible.
- ✚ Music must be agreed with clergy and must be sacred music, genre is open, classical, gospel, contemporary we are open to various forms.