

WEDDING MUSIC GUIDELINES

*St. Celestine Catholic Church
Celestine, IN*

Introduction

Everything about the wedding ceremony should witness to all those present your understanding that you are entering a sacred and holy union – a sacrament. Therefore, everything about the service, including the music, calls for careful planning that will contribute to this understanding. If it does not, then it is unsuitable for your wedding celebration because it is unworthy of the occasion. Everyone present at your wedding should be led by the dignity and beauty of the liturgy to a deeper understanding of Christian marriage, and consequently, to a greater commitment to it. In a sense, your wedding is your gift to your family and friends. It is your invitation for them to enter into, and share your faith – your love, your prayer.

Because you have chosen to invite Christ to make your love a sacrament, the music you choose for your wedding must express this unique and distinct encounter. Just as you would not expect to pronounce your vows in street language, so you would not expect to hear “everyday” love songs within a ceremony celebrating Christian married love. Certainly “*your song*” will have a place later in the day’s festivities; but during the wedding liturgy itself, the emphasis should be on God’s love for you, your love for God, the love of the community for you, your love for them and how these support and confirm your love for each other.

General Guidelines

The wedding liturgy must employ ACTIVE participation by the people gathered for the celebration, just as on any weekend celebration. The wedding guests should be able to participate in the celebration through witnessing, actions, word and singing.

Therefore, wedding couples should provide their guests with good liturgical music, competent musicians that can confidently lead the assembly in song, and music with texts for the liturgy. An “Order of Worship” or “Liturgy Guide” in which music and texts are included is a good way of doing this. Lisa Wagner, the music director at St. Celestine, can supply you with copies of the music if necessary. If the music itself is not included in the wedding liturgy guide, then we suggest that you print the book and page number of the hymns in the guide, so that your guests may easily find them and join the cantor when he or she is singing.

Musicians and Fees

The music director can provide you with names of musicians and cantors, but you are responsible to employ them on your own. It is your responsibility to discuss the fee with them. All fees should be paid before the wedding. (NOTE: IF YOU EMPLOY MUSICIANS OUTSIDE ST. CELESTINE PARISH, YOU STILL MUST FOLLOW THE MUSIC GUIDELINES OF THIS PARISH.) Also, it is helpful if they are somewhat familiar with Catholic Church music ministry.

Appropriate Musical Choices

The Church offers this guidance when choosing particular music for any wedding liturgy. “Particular decisions about choice and placement of wedding music should grow out of three judgments:

- 1) The liturgical judgment: Is the music’s text, form, placement and style congruent with the nature of the liturgy?
- 2) The musical judgment: Is the music technically, aesthetically and expressively good, irrespective of musical idiom or style?
- 3) The pastoral judgment: “Will it help this assembly to pray?”

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Therefore, secular music (popular love songs) is *never* appropriate for use during the wedding liturgy. All music, beginning with the *Seating of the Mothers* through the *Recessional*, should fit the above guidelines. Secular music is best sung or played at the wedding reception, the rehearsal dinner or other wedding and engagement festivities, otherwise it must be used for the prelude only.

The church documents make no provision for pre-recorded music during the wedding liturgy. Live liturgical music with active participation of the assembly is normative. If pre-recorded music must be used at a wedding liturgy on a rare occasion, that music should meet the liturgical judgment quoted above.

The traditional “wedding march” by Wagner has nothing to do with the Sacred Liturgy and may not be used. The origin of this composition borders on the profane and ridiculous. The “Bridal Chorus” (“Here Comes the Bride”) from Wagner’s opera, *Lohengrin*, accompanies an illicit ceremony, a tragic bedroom fiasco.

Guide to Planning Your Wedding Music

In this section, we have provided a list of appropriate music for the various parts of the wedding liturgy. Before each section is a brief explanation of what happens at that point in the liturgy. The selections listed are accessible to all professional parish liturgical musicians. This is not a comprehensive list! The parish music director will be able to assist in determining whether or not a song not on this list is acceptable. You will also want to look at the parish hymnal, *Breaking Bread*. It also has many songs that would be appropriate for the wedding.

Order of Worship

Listed below, you will find section headings that name the points during the Mass/Ceremony where songs may be placed. Listed below that are songs that are appropriate for use during each of these.

Prelude: 3-4 songs (If any contemporary songs are to be used, this is the only time during which they would be appropriate.)

Seating of the Mothers and Grandmothers:

Processional: 1 or 2 songs (usually 2...one for bridesmaids, one for bride)

Gloria

Responsorial Psalm

Alleluia or Gospel Acclamation

Lighting of Unity Candle (optional)

Preparation of Gifts

Holy, Acclamation, Great Amen

Sign of Peace

Lamb of God

Communion Processional 1-2 songs

Recessional

Prelude:

Some secular songs *may* be used during the prelude. However, they must be appropriate for use in church and preferably make reference to your acknowledgement that you are here in the presence of the Lord, asking for his blessing upon your union, and/or for the prayers of your family and friends for you and your marriage. Some appropriate hymns and songs for the prelude are:

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| 1. Covenant Hymn | Rory Cooney |
| 2. In This Very Room | Ron & Carol Harris |
| 3. How Beautiful | Twila Paris |
| 4. The Gift of Love | Hal Hobson |
| 5. In Love We Choose to Live | Jeanne Cotter |
| 6. I Will Choose Christ | Tom Booth |
| 7. May God Bless You | George Van Grieken |
| 8. When Love is Found | Brian Wren |
| 9. Where Love is Found | Dan Schutte |
| 10. Wherever You Go | Gregory Norbett |
| 11. Wherever You Go | David Haas |
| 12. Where There is Love | David Haas |
| 13. Wedding Song (There is Love) | |
| 14. Love Will Be Our Home | Steven Curtis Chapman |
| 15. I Will Be Here | |

16. Grow Old With Me	John Lennon
17. The Servant Song	Richard Gillard
18. Whither Thou Goest	
19. Parent's Prayer	
20. Perhaps Love	John Denver
21. You Raise Me Up	
22. Sometimes	_____ Mancini
23. Household of Faith	
24. Ave Maria	Franz Schubert
25. God is Love	David Haas
26. Through the Eyes of Love (Instrumental)	
27. The Wind Beneath My Wings (Instrumental)	Larry Henley and Jeff Silbar
28. Theme From Ice Castles (Instrumental)	
29. Surely the Presence	Laney Wolf

Seating of Grandmothers:

These hymns or songs are suggestions for the seating of the grandparents:

1. On This Day O Beautiful Mother	Louise Lambillotte
2. Ave Maria	Franz Schubert
3. Sometimes	(Mancini)
4. Jesu, Joy of Men's Desiring	Johann Sebastian Bach

Seating of the Mothers:

This song is considered the beginning of the actual wedding ceremony and should therefore, be a church hymn and/or religious in nature. Some suggestions are:

1. On This Day, O Beautiful Mother	Louis Lambillotte
2. Beautiful Mother	
3. One Mother to Another	Sarah Hart and Laurie Webb
4. Ave Maria	Franz Schubert
5. Parent's Prayer	Stephen Curtis Chapman
6. The Prayer	Tony Renis, et al

Processional/Recessional Music

The purpose of the processional music is to unite and focus the assembly at the entrance of the presider, any liturgical ministers, wedding attendants and the bride and groom. Before the processional, you may want to select appropriate prelude music to be played as your guests arrive. It is recommended that instrumental music be used for a portion of the prelude. Suggestions for this can be found later in the section entitled *Solos and Other Assembly Songs*. However, sung music can be used to help prepare the guests for the actual beginning of the wedding ceremony itself. All of the following suggestions are appropriate for the processional and recessional (not limited to these only):

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| 1. Trumpet Voluntary | Henry Purcell |
| 2. Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring | Johann Sebastian Bach |
| 3. Canon in D | Johann Pachelbel |
| 4. Trumpet Tune in D | Henry Purcell |
| 5. Ode to Joy | Ludwig van Beethoven |
| 6. Hornpipe | Handel |
| 7. Love is the Sunlight (Instrumental) | David Haas |
| 8. The Masterpiece | J.J. Mouret |

Gathering Songs

For a Wedding during the Mass, after the entrance procession couples may choose to sing a gathering song to unite the assembly in prayer. While a gathering song isn't required, it is particularly helpful when families come from different Christian backgrounds, as a unifying agent for the assembly.

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| 1. All Are Welcome | Marty Haugen |
| 2. This Day was Made by the Lord | Christopher Walker |
| 3. Christ be Our Light | Bernadette Farrell |
| 4. Gather Your People | Bob Hurd |
| 5. Rain Down | Jaime Cortez |
| 6. Sing of the Lord's Goodness | Ernest Sands |
| 7. Canticle of the Sun | Marty Haugen |
| 8. Companions on the Journey | Carey Landry |
| 9. Give Thanks to the Lord | Dan Schutte |
| 10. Here I Am, Lord | Dan Schutte |
| 11. Table of Plenty | Dan Schutte |
| 12. Love is the Sunlight | David Haas |

Glory to God (Gloria)

The Gloria follows the processional, introductory rite and greeting by the celebrant, just as at Sunday Mass, and must be sung at all Wedding *Masses*.

The following Glory to God settings are very appropriate:

1. Glory to God from the Mass of Christ the Savior Dan Schutte
2. Glory to God from the Mass of Renewal Curtis Stephan

Responsorial Psalm

The Psalm follows the first reading, and it is highly recommended that it be sung. The cantor intones the refrain, the assembly repeats it, and the cantor sings the verses.

The following Psalms and psalm settings are very appropriate:

1. Psalm 34: Taste and See
2. Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and Merciful
3. Psalm 128: Happy Are They Who Honor the Lord
4. Psalm 145: Our God is Compassion
5. Psalm 98: All the Ends of the Earth
6. Psalm 24: I Have Loved You
7. On This Most Holy Day Dan Schutte
8. Where Love is Found Dan Schutte
9. Where There is Love David Haas
10. We Praise You
11. Psalm 128 To Walk In God's Path David Haas

Gospel Acclamation

Before the presider proclaims the Gospel, the cantor and assembly sing an Alleluia. If your wedding happens to take place during Lent, you will need a Lenten Gospel Acclamation that doesn't include an alleluia. The parish music director can help you with appropriate suggestions.

1. Celtic Alleluia Christopher Walker
2. Alleluia from the Mass of Christ the Savior Dan Schutte
3. Alleluia from the Mass of Renewal Curtis Stephan
4. Alleluia, Give the Glory Ken Canedo
5. Halle, Halle, Halle Marty Haugen
6. Lenten Gospel Acc. (From Mass of Christ the Savior) Dan Schutte
7. Lenten Gospel Acc. (From Mass of Renewal) Curtis Stephan

For Weddings not within a Mass, please refer at this point to page 9.

Lighting of the Unity Candle

It is done after the exchange of rings and before the General Intercessions. It should be brief and if music is used to accompany the action, it should also be brief, only accompanying the action, and not prolonging the ceremony. It should also, of course, follow the guidelines mentioned above in the section entitled, "Appropriate Musical Choices". Appropriate song choices may be found in the section on page 9 entitled: "Solos and Other Assembly Songs".

Preparation of Gifts

If your wedding is taking place within Mass, you may either have instrumental music played during this time, or the assembly or the cantor may sing an appropriate song. Keep in mind that this is a relatively short period of time; therefore, choosing a song that can be ended early is the best choice, if sung. Here are a few suggestions:

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| 1. Endless is Your Love | Tom Kendzia |
| 2. The Summons | John Bell |
| 3. The Servant Song | Richard Gillard |
| 4. Wherever You Go | Gregory Norbet |
| 5. When Love Is Found | Brian Wren |
| 6. Where There is Love | David Haas |
| 7. Bridegroom and Bride | David Haas & Marty Haugen |
| 8. Love One Another | Jeanne Cotter |
| 9. Blest Are They | David Haas |
| 10. Only a Shadow | Carey Landry |
| (there are wedding verses for this hymn which may be used by the cantor) | |
| 11. Canticle of the Sun | Marty Haugen |
| 12. Here I Am, Lord | Dan Schutte |
| 13. On Eagle's Wings | Michael Joncas |
| 14. I Have Loved You | Michael Joncas |
| 15. We Are Called | David Haas |
| 16. We Have Been Told | David Haas |
| 17. Center of My Life | Paul Inwood |

Eucharist Acclamations and Lamb of God

If you are celebrating your wedding during a Mass, the Holy, (a.k.a. Sanctus) the Memorial Acclamation, the Amen and Lamb of God will need to be sung by the assembly. The cantor will assist the assembly in singing their parts. The following settings are available at St. Celestine Parish at this time:

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| 1. Mass of Christ the Savior | Dan Schutte |
| 2. Mass of Renewal | Curtis Stephan |

Sign of Peace

1. Let There Be Peace on Earth
2. Prayer of St. Francis
3. Wherever You Go

Other appropriate songs are listed in the section below entitled: “Solos and Other Assembly Songs”

Communion Processional

If you are celebrating your wedding during a Mass, then you will want to choose a Communion Processional that can be sung by the cantor *and* the assembly as they come forward to receive Holy Communion.

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| 1. Endless is Your Love | Tom Kendzia |
| 2. You Are Mine | David Haas |
| 3. Song of the Body of Christ | David Haas |
| 4. Taste and See | James Moore |
| 5. Table of Plenty | Dan Schutte |
| 6. The Supper of the Lord | Laurence Rosania |
| 7. One Bread, One Body | John Foley |
| 8. Companions on the Journey | Carey Landry |
| 9. Eat this Bread | Jacques Berthier |
| 10. Blest are They | David Haas |
| 11. Here I Am, Lord | Dan Schutte |
| 12. Bread of Life | Rory Cooney |
| 13. I Am the Bread of Life | Suzanne Toolan |
| 14. On Eagle’s Wings | Michael Joncas |
| 15. Servant Song | Donna McGargill, OSM |
| 16. We Have Been Told | David Haas |
| 17. You Are Mine | David Haas |
| 18. Where Love is Found | Dan Schutte |

Solos and Other Assembly Songs

The following selections are a small sampling of other songs that may be used at various times during the wedding liturgy, as a prelude, or during the entrance of parents and grandparents. The music director can give you some guidance on the most appropriate time for the songs to be used.

(These may be used during the prelude, or during the ceremony.)

1. When Love is Found	Brian Wren
2. Bridegroom and Bride	David Haas & Marty Haugen
3. Love One Another	
4. We Have Been Told	David Haas
5. Wherever You Go	
6. Where There is Love	David Haas
7. The Servant Song	Richard Gillard
8. Come and Journey With Me	David Haas
9. Love is the Sunlight	David Haas
10. Blest Are They	David Haas
11. In Love We Choose to Live	Jeanne Cotter
12. Here I Am, Lord	Dan Schutte
13. I Have Loved You	Michael Joncas
14. On Eagle's Wings	Michael Joncas
15. The Summons	Marty Haugen
16. Ave Maria	Franz Schubert
17. Hand in Hand	Steve Angrisano
18. Only a Shadow	Carey Landry
19. Where Love is Found	David Haas
20. Christ Be Our Light	
21. Loving and Forgiving	
22. Surely the Presence	Laney Wolfe
23. We Are Called	David Haas
24. Endless is Your Love	Tom Kendzia
25. You Are Mine	David Haas
26. Come and Journey With Me	David Haas