

## MUSIC



*“A cry from deep within our being, music is a way for God to lead us to the realm of higher things. As St. Augustine says, “Singing is for the one who loves.” Music is therefore a sign of God’s love for us and of our love for him . . . By its very nature song has both an individual and a communal dimension. Thus, it is no wonder that singing together in church expresses so well the sacramental presence of God to his people. (Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, USCCB, 2007)*

**Regardless of the choice of the accompanist, cantor (song leader), vocalist, or other musicians, every bride and groom must meet with the Liturgy & Music Coordinator to select and approve music for the wedding liturgy and discuss musicians for hire.** The Liturgy & Music Coordinator will also give a tour of the facilities for use on the wedding day (bride’s room, groom’s room, etc.).

At least one music minister (ie., cantor, vocalist, or accompanist) hired for the liturgy must be a current music minister at St. Michael’s. Any outside musicians must be approved by the Liturgy & Music Coordinator.

The Church’s understanding of marriage is reflected in your selection of wedding music. The meaning of a sacramental marriage transcends the legal and romantic to focus on the profound meaning of covenant, commitment, and love. Similarly, the music must go beyond love songs to an expression of God’s love for us.

Consider the texts of your songs. Do they narrow, or rather widen, your vision of Christian married love? Do the words manifest what Christ brings to human love? Do they help the gathered community pray and worship together? Do they uphold the beauty of human love? Whatever the source of your songs, study the words.

Similarly, consider the music, and ask for the musicians’ judgments. Much music, such as the theme from *Lohengrin* (“Here Comes the Bride”), was used for a dramatic purpose in direct opposition to Christian values. For this reason, Catholic churches do not allow such music to be used.

Appropriateness is the key word when choosing your music as well as all the other elements in your liturgy. Since your wedding celebration is a religious event, popular secular music is not appropriate within the celebration itself. Those secular songs which have meaning for you as a couple could be incorporated into your reception. **The final judgment on allowed music is made by the Liturgy & Music Coordinator.**

When hiring musicians, remember that they are trained people who have spent time and money developing their skills. Out of justice, they should be adequately paid for their services. If you determine their fee when you hire them, you will avoid misunderstandings later.

We require the hiring of at least one parish cantor or musician as they are most familiar with liturgy in your parish. An experienced cantor will be an invaluable aid in inviting people to full participation in the wedding liturgy and help to guide them through it. Having a cantor would not preclude having a friend or family member sing a special song, and allow them to concentrate on that rather than all the other music, including the responses and the psalm.