



YOUR WEDDING AT  
ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA

“Make your wedding a real celebration  
– because marriage is a celebration –  
a Christian celebration, not a worldly feast! ...

What happened in Cana 2,000 years ago  
happens today at every wedding celebration:  
that which makes your wedding full and profoundly true  
will be the presence of the Lord  
who reveals himself and gives his grace.  
It is his presence that offers the ‘good wine’,  
he is the secret to full joy,  
that which truly warms the heart.

It is good that your wedding be simple  
and make what is truly important stand out.  
Some are more concerned with the exterior details, with  
the banquet, the photographs, the clothes, the flowers...

These are important for a celebration,  
but only if they point to the real reason for your joy:  
the Lord’s blessing on your love.”

-Pope Francis,  
Address to engaged couples in Rome,  
February 14, 2014

# Congratulations!

We hope that your wedding will be a joyous and faith-affirming experience for you both. The parish staff is here to guide you through the necessary steps of planning for the Sacrament of Marriage.

## Weddings at St. Ignatius

To celebrate a wedding in St. Ignatius Church, either the bride or groom must be a Roman Catholic. It is expected that the couple take their faith and sacramental life seriously, as they prepare for this sacred occasion and a life together.

## For Registered Parishioners

A parishioner is defined as an active, registered member of St. Ignatius who resides in the parish boundaries or who lives in a neighboring community but has chosen to register and participate in the life of the parish. Register at: <https://www.stignatiuschestnuthill.org/register>. A priest or deacon from St. Ignatius will be assigned to complete the necessary paperwork with you.

## For Those Affiliated with Boston College

Though we are not part of Boston College, we welcome BC couples who are working with their own priest/deacon from Boston College with faculties from the Archdiocese of Boston. You would complete all necessary paperwork with your priest/deacon.

## Non-Parishioner/Destination Weddings

Non-parishioner Catholic weddings are welcome as a courtesy to a practicing Catholic couple. You are responsible for making arrangements with a priest or deacon of your choosing. When confirming your wedding date, the name of your presider will be required.

If you reside outside of the Archdiocese of Boston, you must complete all necessary paperwork where you currently reside. Canon law requires your parish priest to prepare you and complete the Marriage Preparation Packet according to your diocese's requirements. He will forward all materials to your chancery who will forward them to the Archdiocese of Boston for their approval, who in turn will forward materials to St. Ignatius on behalf of the couple and priest-preparer. All necessary paperwork is due at St. Ignatius no later than two weeks before your wedding date.

## Marriage Options at St. Ignatius of Loyola

Couples getting married in the Catholic Church know that their wedding day is much more than getting the right flowers or venue. Their focus is the couple's faith and trust in God's love in the sacrament. Take time as a couple to decide what type of ceremony is best for you. To marry in the Catholic Church, the bride and/or the groom must be a practicing Catholic.

## Nuptial Mass

The celebration of marriage that includes the celebration of the Eucharist is referred to as a Nuptial Mass. Similar to a Sunday Mass, the wedding includes:

- Introductory Rites
- Liturgy of the Word
- Rite of Marriage
- Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Concluding Rites

## Wedding Ceremony

A wedding ceremony is a celebration of marriage that follows the same structure as a Nuptial Mass, but omits the Liturgy of the Eucharist, so there is no communion.

- Introductory Rites
- Liturgy of the Word
- Rite of Marriage
- Concluding Rites

## Convalidation

A couple married in a civil ceremony may later wish to enter into a sacramental Catholic marriage. When they are ready to do so, they celebrate what is called a convalidation. It is important to realize that a convalidation is not merely a renewal of vows made previously, but is a new act of consent. This convalidation of marriage may be celebrated with a Nuptial Mass or a Wedding Ceremony, depending on the particular circumstances of the couple.

*So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.  
Matthew 19:6*

## Schedule Your Wedding Date

We schedule basically a year out. Scheduling should be made at least six months in advance and is subject to availability.

- You have the use of the church for a total of 2 hours on your wedding day, beginning 30 minutes before your Marriage Ceremony or Nuptial Mass. If you are late for the scheduled time of your wedding, your Ceremony/Mass may be shortened,
- Saturday weddings are scheduled at 11am, 1:30pm, or 5:30pm
- The church is available for weddings Monday through Friday typically from 5–5:30pm, but you would need to provide your own presider.
- Though we are not part of Boston College, dates may be affected by BC events that limit access to the church. Our fall dates are affected by BC football games. September through November dates cannot be confirmed until Boston College publishes their final schedule, usually in late January.
- Weddings are not scheduled on major holy days and holidays, including:
  - New Year's Eve and Day
  - Palm Sunday weekend through Easter Sunday
  - Thanksgiving
  - Christmas Eve and Day
  - Memorial Day
  - July 4th
  - Labor Day
  - Patriot's Day

**Please note:** As you make your plans, please be aware that there could be some construction happening on the church building beginning in Fall 2025. What areas of the church will be involved and an official timeline are not known at this time. We will make you are aware of any updates if possible when you schedule.

## The Rehearsal

A required rehearsal is scheduled the day before your wedding, typically at 4, 5, or 6pm, lasting one hour. Your rehearsal is the time to review and finalize all the elements of your wedding with our wedding coordinator who will be present at your rehearsal and wedding day to guide you. Anyone involved in the wedding should attend including your bridal party, readers, and ushers. It is important that you and the wedding party be on time for both the rehearsal and the wedding. If the services of a wedding planner have been retained, those person(s) and their associates have no authority on the church premises. They can attend as observers, but the liturgical norms of the Catholic Church will be provided by our coordinator and the presider.

## Church Fee

The church fee is \$1200 and must be paid in full within two weeks of your inquiry day to guarantee your requested date and time. This fee covers:

- All preparations and official paperwork;
- Reserved rehearsal time with our Wedding Coordinator;
- Two hours of reserved time for the wedding and taking photographs;

You can pay by check (made payable to St. Ignatius Church) or by credit card online: <https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/stignatius>, and select Wedding Payment from the drop-down menu. The size of your wedding attendance is not a factor in the fee.

## Music Fee

There is an additional music fee of \$475. The music fee includes:

- Organist/Keyboards
- Cantor

The music fee should be paid in full no later than two weeks before the date of your wedding.

You can pay by check (made payable to St. Ignatius Church) or by credit card online: <https://giving.parishsoft.com/app/giving/stignatius>, and select Wedding Music Payment from the menu.

If you pay online, please forward the email receipt to [russocu@bc.edu](mailto:russocu@bc.edu).

Additional musicians are also available for an added fee.

## Stipends

If you have invited your own priest or deacon to celebrate your wedding, it is customary to offer them a stipend between \$150-\$200. It is not necessary to give a staff priest or deacon a stipend, but one would certainly be welcome. It is customary to tip the wedding coordinator.

## Date Cancellation

If you cancel your confirmed date and have paid in full, a refund of \$600 will be issued. Any paid music fees will be refunded.

*Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.  
Romans 12:10*

# Before You Say "I Do", You Will Need To Do Some Paperwork!

## Newly Issued Baptism Certificates

If you are a baptized Catholic or Christian, you need to contact the church of your baptism to attain a **newly issued** baptismal certificate with the church seal and any notations of sacraments you have received. It can be mailed directly to St. Ignatius Parish, 28 Commonwealth Avenue, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467. Copies and scans are not accepted. Note that the baptismal certificates must be dated **no earlier than six months** before your wedding date.

## Preliminary Interrogatory Forms (PMIs)

Between three and five months before your wedding, you will need to schedule a meeting with your priest/deacon to complete your Preliminary Interrogatory Forms and discuss plans for your ceremony.

## Obtain Any Necessary Dispensation or Decree

- If you are a Catholic who is marrying a baptized non-Catholic (or a non-Christian), you have to receive permission (or a dispensation) to do so.
- If either party, regardless of religious affiliation, has been previously married, he or she will need either a death certificate (if the previous spouse died) or an ecclesiastical decree of nullity (in the case of divorce). Copies of these documents are required.
- Processing these necessary documents with the Archdiocese of Boston can take time depending on the circumstance. Make sure you start the process at least two months before your wedding date. For those residing outside the Archdiocese of Boston, consult with your local Archdiocese on their requirements.
- **If you are working with your own presider, you would complete all necessary paperwork with him and all documents forwarded to St. Ignatius. They must be received no later than two weeks before your rehearsal date.**

## Attend a Pre-Cana Program

You are required to complete a Pre-Cana marriage preparation program and provide a copy of the completion certificate before your PMI meeting. St. Ignatius does not offer a Pre-Cana course, but suggests these programs:

[The Paulist Center of Boston](#)

[Boston College Office of Campus Ministry](#)

[The Archdiocese of Boston](#)

## Obtaining a Massachusetts Marriage License

Both partners in a marriage must go together, in person, to any Massachusetts city or town clerk to fill out a marriage license application no more than two months before the wedding ceremony. **Once an application has been accepted, there is a three-day waiting period before you receive your marriage license.**

The license is valid for sixty days from the date the application was filed and must be brought to the church on the day of the wedding rehearsal. **There will be no wedding without a license.** More information is available at <http://www.mass.gov/portal/residents/getting-married-in-massachusetts.html>.

**The Marriage License with its accompanying pre-addressed envelope must be brought to the wedding rehearsal.**

## Forms for a Visiting Priest

If your priest/deacon is not affiliated with the Archdiocese of Boston, he will be required to send a **Letter of Good Standing** from his diocese or religious community. If the priest/deacon does not reside in Massachusetts, he must obtain a **Non-Resident Clergy Petition** and forward a copy to St. Ignatius. He cannot preside at St. Ignatius without us receiving these two documents before your wedding date. A digital form can be accessed online at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/pre/prepdf/nonresclergyapp.pdf>.

## Witnesses

For a Catholic wedding in the Archdiocese of Boston, an ordained minister (priest or deacon) and two other individuals act as witnesses to the marriage. Usually the Maid of Honor and Best Man, but anyone who have reached the age of reason and are capable of understanding the events of the ceremony can be a witness. These witnesses do not need to be Catholic or even baptized, but they must understand what they are witnessing. While a wedding can have more people stand up in the wedding party, only two are recognized as the legal and canonical witnesses.

# Planning Your Wedding Liturgy

## Who Plans The Wedding?

### The Bride and Groom.

To help ensure that couples experience the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, our parish policy is to communicate directly with **only the bride and groom**. This helps to maintain the integrity of the marriage process. We respectfully refrain, therefore, from responding to questions or requests from parents, wedding planners, or any third parties, even if delegated by the couple.

In advance of the wedding liturgy, couples meet with their presider to begin the planning process. They will receive literature to peruse and select the readings, prayers, and music that reflect their faith in God and each other, as they take their first steps in married life.

## Together for Life

St. Ignatius uses the “Together for Life” booklet. This guide to planning your wedding in the Catholic Church includes all of the information, prayers, blessings, and readings needed to plan a wedding during Mass, outside Mass, or between a Catholic and an unbaptized person. You will need to select an Old Testament reading, a New Testament reading, and your choice of the Prayer of the Faithful/Universal Prayer and who will be the readers. Your presider will select the Gospel. You will receive a Wedding Selections Form from us to make your reading and music selections. We also recommend using the online Together of Life Selection Form, <https://togetherforlifeonline.com/selectionform/sixthedition/>. Your selections are due two week before your wedding.

## Wedding Music

Music selections for Wedding Ceremonies and Nuptial Masses should be sacred and are required to follow the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and diocesan guidelines. Our Music Director, Allyn McCourt, **will assign** one of our resident professional cantors as well as an organ/piano accompaniment for every wedding. Recorded music is not permitted.

The music will be full and complete with organ/piano and voice, but we have a good roster of professional musicians should you be interested in an additional instrumentalist. A violin/viola with the cantor and keyboards is popular for weddings, but we also have cello, trumpet, oboe, guitar, and/or flute if available. Each added instrumentalist would be an additional fee.

If you were interested in booking any additional singer or musician, please contact Allyn at [mccourae@bc.edu](mailto:mccourae@bc.edu) no later than two weeks before your wedding.

All music needs, including outside musicians and/or singers, must be reviewed and approved with Allyn.

## Order of Service

The order of service varies slightly depending on whether you are having a Nuptial Mass or Wedding Ceremony. For the music choices themselves, we will email our Selections Form with linked recorded options, organized by the parts of the Mass. You can submit for approval any option you are interested in that is not listed.

### For both a Nuptial Mass or Ceremony, select the music for:

- All Processions (Groom, Parents, Bridal Party, etc.)
- Bridal Procession
- Responsorial Psalm
- Recessional

### If you are having a Nuptial Mass, also select the music for:

- Preparation of the Gifts/Offertory
- Distribution of Communion
- Post-Communion Meditation (optional)

## Bench Fee

If a couple decides not to use the parish musicians, there is a “bench fee” of \$250. This is standard practice to compensate the staff musicians for the lost engagement and for any additional preparations (music materials, arrangements, microphones, binder set-up, etc.) that would need to be addressed.

## Worship Aids/Programs

The couple or their family produces the wedding worship aid/program for the wedding. Couples are responsible for editing and printing. We do not create or print them at the church. The couple can create a program themselves or work with a local printer. Templates are available online. Wedding Programs can be brought to the wedding rehearsal and stored at the parish overnight.

*Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love,  
for I have put my trust in you.  
Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life.*

*Psalm 143:8*

## St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish Worship Space

There are no dressing or reception facilities in the church. All those participating in the wedding should arrive dressed and ready. Usually the bride will wait in the vehicle in which she arrives, but our Lannon Chapel in the lower church can be opened as a waiting area.

## Seating Capacity

The seating capacity for the church is approximately 635.

## Seating Arrangements

The Bride and Groom sit on the right side in front of the altar in the sanctuary. This is the appropriate posture for listening to the Word of God and the presider's homily. During the wedding ceremony, the bride and groom will stand and face each other in front of the altar.

Those selected to be readers would sit in the congregation, come forward to the ambo when they are invited, then return to their seats after the reading.



## Wedding Decorations

Please share these guidelines with your florist.

In planning decorations for any season or event, the General Instruction of the Roman Missal is an appropriate guide: church decor should be noble and simple rather than ostentatious. The liturgical setting of the church and sanctuary (i.e., all seasonal decorations) **are not to be altered for weddings and no seasonal decorations are to be moved; there are no exceptions.**

- Decorations on the outside railings or exterior doors are not permitted.
- **NO** materials such as rice, confetti, birdseed, or flower petals may be thrown on the front steps or down the aisle.
- For safety reasons, aisle runners are not allowed.
- Setup and **removal** of flower arrangements, decorations, and/or pew markers are the responsibility of the florist or other designated party, not the St. Ignatius Staff. **All must be removed immediately after your wedding.**

## Floral Decorations

St. Ignatius is elegantly and appropriately decorated each liturgical season. These decorations must stay in place and are not to be altered. Flowers are a beautiful addition to any church service and can be incorporated into the worship space.

We suggest the following three options:

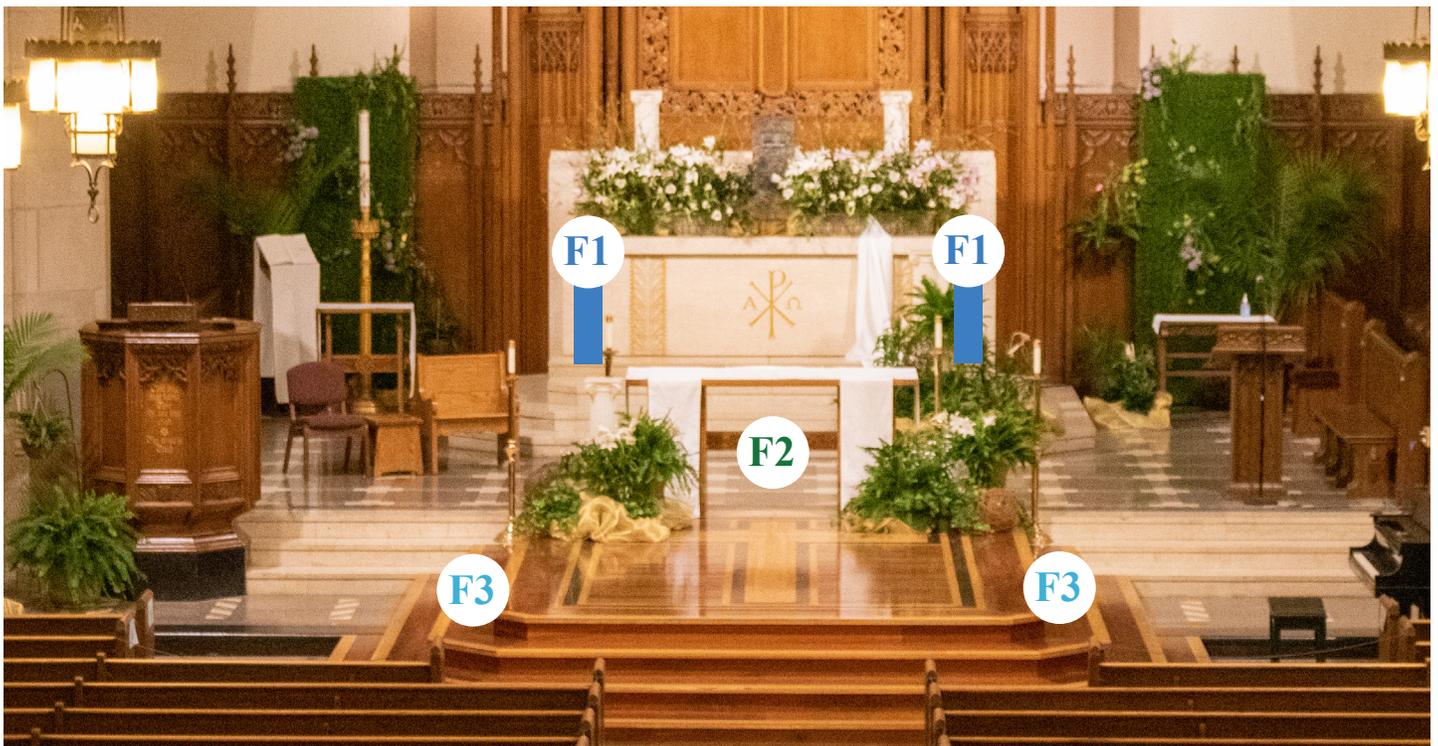
- **F1** Two arrangements on pedestals by the back altar.
- **F2** One arrangement in front of the altar.
- **F3** Two arrangements (not on pedestals) on the steps in front of the altar.

Flower arrangements are to be brought into the church at the beginning of your scheduled wedding reservation time unless earlier arrival has been approved beforehand.

Boutonnieres may be delivered to the sacristy prior to the ceremony.

## Pew Markers

- Pew markers are placed on the main aisle pew ends. The number of pew markers used is your choice.
- For the wedding party pews, you would need 6 markers, 3 on each side.
- For the rest of the front sections, add another 18, 9 on each side.
- For the back sections, add an additional 28, 14 on each side.
- Pew decorations are to be placed using pew hooks or elastic cord. No tape or nails are to be used.



Decorations in photo are an example of one of our seasonal displays; they change during the liturgical year.

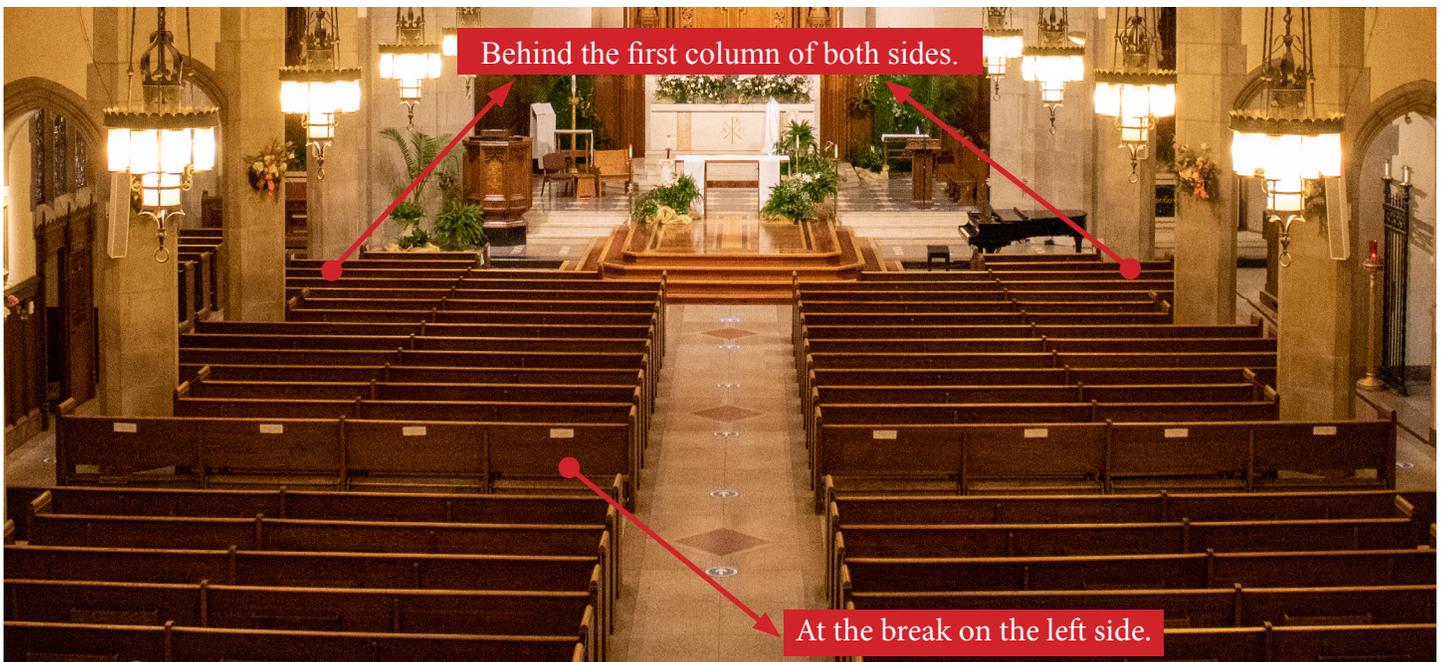
## Wedding Photography and Videography

The Wedding Liturgy is a sacred moment of rejoicing in prayer, song and gesture. While we understand your desire to record this moment, we ask you to observe the following guidelines so that the sacred joy of this day will not be intruded upon by photo and video equipment.

It is your responsibility that your photographer and/or videographer are aware of these guidelines before your wedding so that they can plan in advance what equipment to bring. Exceptions will not be made for any photographers and/or videographers.

- Flash photography is not permitted at any point except for the processional and recessional.
- Only the lighting available in the church may be used; no additional lighting may be brought into the church.
- Photographers and videographers cannot enter the sanctuary, impede the musicians, or stand/move in front of the guests and wedding party.

- After the wedding, the church will remain open for photos, provided there is time within your reservation. (a total of two hours beginning one half-hour before the wedding).
- All photographers and videographers are required to check in with our Wedding Coordinator when they arrive at the church and obey the directions given. Any aggressive behavior or disrespectful actions from the photographer or videographer will not be accepted and they will be asked to leave.
- Below are the approved locations where professional photographers may take photos (non-flash) and where videotaping equipment may be set up. No exceptions will be made.



## Parking and Transportation

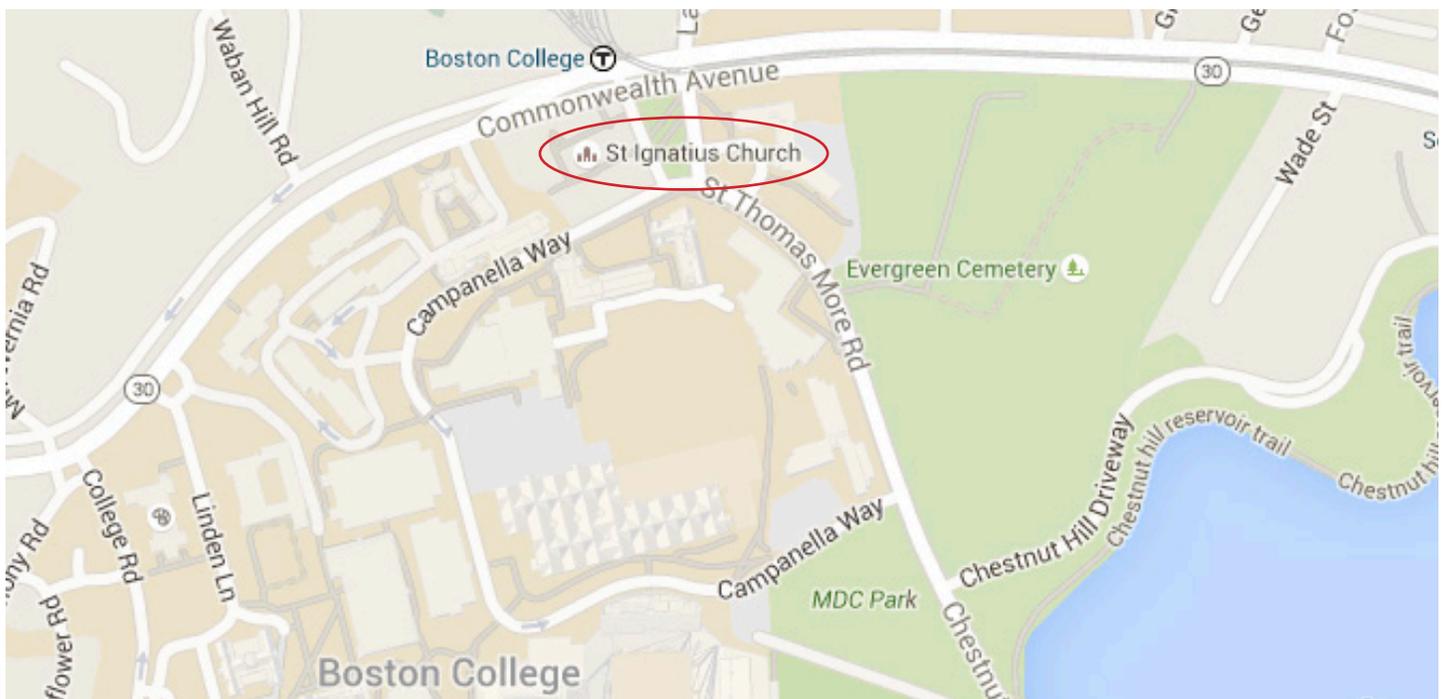
Parking is available in yellow spaces in the parking lot beside the church and in front of the church on Fr. Herlihy Drive. The curb space directly in front of the church is for the bride's vehicle.

Additional parking is available in the Boston College garage, which is beyond the church parking lot on the right side of Campanella Way. There are handicapped parking spaces on Commonwealth Avenue and at the top of the parish office driveway just behind the church. Please observe and honor all posted parking signage; vehicles may be towed. **We ask that you provide your guests with this information.**

## An Important Reminder:

Most trolleys and special vehicles rented for weddings cannot travel on highways or high-speed roadways. Check with your transportation company to determine actual travel time required to arrive at St. Ignatius Church for your wedding.

St. Ignatius of Loyola Church is located at 28 Commonwealth Avenue by Boston College in the picturesque Chestnut Hill neighborhood of Newton, just a short drive from downtown Boston and accessible by public transportation. For navigation purposes, note that our church is in Chestnut Hill, not Boston.



Best wishes! May God grant you all of life's blessings and love's joys.  
If you are residing in the parish area after your wedding,  
we invite you to register at St. Ignatius and  
hope you will become involved in our parish community.



### Saint Ignatius of Loyola Parish

28 Commonwealth Avenue, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

[stignatiuschestnuthill.org](http://stignatiuschestnuthill.org)

Contact:

For Wedding Inquiries: Carol Russo, 617.552.6102, [russocu@bc.edu](mailto:russocu@bc.edu)  
For Music Consultation: Allyn McCourt, 617.552.6114, [mccourae@bc.edu](mailto:mccourae@bc.edu)