

Grace Cathedral Wedding Assistant

- It's best to attend the wedding rehearsal the evening before the service. While not absolutely essential, it would be informative to do these until you feel comfortable with everything. Even then, since you're dealing with people, you'll know their names and faces all the better if you're at the rehearsal.
 - You'll want to arrive at least 30 minutes before the wedding. If you didn't attend the rehearsal, you'll need to get the order of procession from the verger. Also, find out if there is a Eucharist, and if there are to be Element Bearers. If you do Altar Guild too, arriving 50 minutes before should work about right.
 - If the line of guests goes down the front steps, it may be necessary to explain the need to close the guest book around 15 minutes before the service. This is the only way we can begin on time. Simply tell those who have yet to sign that they may do so at the reception. The guest book attendant will get the idea and let others know when they enter.
 - As needed, please assist the bride and her attendants (train, corsages, etc.). Many times a relative or friend will be helping along the way. But, when that's not the case, someone from the Cathedral will be very welcome. You, or the verger, should bring the bride's party to the narthex at 5 minutes before service time.
 - Ushers should direct gifts into the back pew, but sometimes ushers miss the rehearsal, and have not heard this instruction. Gifts should NOT be left unattended in the narthex. Afterwards, you might mention the gifts to a family member if they seem to have forgotten.
 - Ushers should not begin seating the grandparents or parents until the verger gives the okay. This happens during special music which begins at the service time. Guests arriving at this point are late – they find their own seat using a side aisle.
 - As needed assist with procession spacing and timing. The basic idea is:
 - + Clergy and Groom's party are at their places in the crossing when the first bridesmaid leaves the narthex
 - + Bridesmaids are evenly spaced so they span the full aisle length at one time
 - + Ring bearers and flower girls go after the Maid of Honor (M.H. is the last of the attendants)
 - + Bride and escort step into the doors during the trumpet fanfare, and start walking after the fanfare ends
 - You may need to remind the photographer of shooting only from the balcony/gallery, without flash, after the entrance procession. Some places have different customs than we, and they may be used to greater freedom than our practices allow. It's a distraction to the priest, the couple, and guests. The photographer should know, or have asked, but watch out just in case.
 - You will assist the Element Bearers at a Nuptial Eucharist. If the elements are being carried forward, just be sure they're ready and start up the aisle after the offertory sentence. They may have missed the rehearsal, and not know where to go and to whom they hand the vessels.
 - Due to air conditioning needs, the narthex doors should all be closed after the bride enters. To help the crucifer, when the departing procession approaches these doors, please hook them open again.
- Seldom, if ever, used: In bad weather the procession forms in S. Mary's Chapel. You would then move to the Cathedral narthex when the procession is ready to begin. The spacing used at the rehearsal takes effect only as they leave the Cathedral Narthex doors and start up the center aisle.
- Your help is greatly appreciated!!