

Marriage Preparation Information

Congratulations on your engagement. As you look forward to celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage, there are a few details that need to be explored prior to setting the date of your wedding. Our prayer is that during this preparation period, you grow together as a couple, sharing your faith and love with one another.

Marriage is a serious and sacred commitment which calls a couple to each other in a permanent way. As a married couple, you become a visible sign and reminder of Christ's sacrificial love for all people.



Marriage

Process for Marriage in the Catholic Church

- Couples wanting to get married contact the parish they plan on getting married in at least one year in advance.
- Every couple must meet with the pastor for an **initial interview**; this gives him an opportunity to get to meet the couple , get their basic information, your faith experience, your relationship as a couple, your understanding of marriage in the Church, and establish the freedom to marry.
- Once the initial interview is complete, couples can **book a date** for their wedding with the

pastor. He will reserve the date and time in the parish bookings.

- The pastor will put you in contact with the Marriage Preparation Coordinator to **register for a Marriage Preparation Course**. This course is required of all couples getting married in the Church. There is a fee for this course. There are two weekends for each marriage course, and they are held twice a year, usually in the winter.
- Once Marriage Preparation is complete, the couple is expected to meet with the pastor for **the second interview**. In this interview, the bride and groom are interviewed separately.
- Both parties will be required to **provide the names of two people** (one for both parties) who know the bride/groom well, who will be contacted for an interview.
- At least weeks prior to the wedding, you will need to meet with the pastor to finalize your choice of readings, prayers and music for the wedding. You will also choose a date for the rehearsal.

- To be married in another parish, it is required that permission be received from the parish in which you wish to be married, as well as the parish where you reside.
- The celebration of Marriage is an act of worship and sacrament. The church building, the house of the Lord, is the proper place for a wedding. Any other setting is not appropriate.
- There is usually a fee for the church and other suggested offerings, such a stipend to the clergy celebrating your wedding) included in a wedding. Please check with the parish as to these.



Documents required for Marriage:

- A **Certificate of Baptism** is required for those who have been baptized. This can be obtained from the church where you were baptized and needs to be issued within six months of the wedding date.

- An **interview will be conducted by the pastor** and will be included with the marriage papers. It will also assist us in completing the Government Registration Form which is signed on the day of your marriage and forwarded to the Bureau of Vital Statistics.
- **Interviews conducted by the pastor with two people who know the parties well,** often parents, family members or close friends. These will verify that each person is not presently married and is free to marry at this time.
- **A Marriage License** is required in order to comply with government regulations. This may be obtained from and License and Registry Service within three (3) calendar months prior to your wedding date (the license is valid for three months only). Both parties must be present to obtain a license.
- **Inter Faith:** If the couple is of different faiths, permission will be received from the Bishop's Office for the marriage. The couple should discuss how they will practise their faith.

- **Previous Marriage:** If either party has been previously married, a Declaration of Nullity may be required on the previous marriage. This process can take a long time and require paperwork.

Marriage Preparation:

Some topics that will be covered in your Marriage Preparation:

- Communication and Conflict Resolution
- "Family baggage" (family backgrounds)
- Marriage as a sacrament
- Sin and forgiveness
- Prayer
- Meaning and purpose God has given for sexual love; Natural Family Planning
- Differences between men and women
- Finances/Stewardship

The marriage preparation course is an opportunity to spend time together as a couple, get to know other Catholic couples and share experiences or ask questions about marriage. Your preparation is

facilitated by Catholic couples who have various experiences and are in different stages of their marriages (5 years married or 40 years married).

Our goal is to help you, as a couple, look at the different aspects of a Christian marriage, grow in love and respect for each other and ultimately know that God is ever-present in your relationship.

Marriage preparation is a course of eight sessions that run over two consecutive weekends (Friday evening and Saturday morning). We provide materials, snacks, beverages and a light lunch. The fee for the course is \$200.00 per couple. Fees are due prior to the start of the course (cash or cheque).

