

The Sacrament of Marriage

When a couple marry in the Catholic Church, the ceremony speaks of love, permanent commitment, fidelity, openness to children, and perseverance in good times and bad. In fact marriage is more than a relationship; it is a union, a communion, between husband and wife. Their life together is now very different from their lives as two separate individuals. Once married, they do not lose their individual identity, but their individual identity is enriched by sharing life with the other partner.

Who can Marry?

Can a divorced non-Catholic person marry in the Catholic Church?

The non-catholic would have to have an annulment or dissolution of their marriage. If they married a Catholic in a civil ceremony, the annulment process will be straight forward. Whatever the situation, the couple would be advised to speak with either their Parish priest, or the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal, as it can be complicated, involving laws of the church etc.

Can 1st Cousins marry in the church?

The law of the Catholic Church determined that marriage between first cousins is invalid.

Can I marry a non-Catholic (Other Religion) in the church?

Provided that both persons are free to marry, it is permissible to marry in the Catholic Church. All that is expected that both parties will undertake what is possible to bring children up as Catholics. The priest who is going to do the wedding will range the necessary paperwork for permissions etc.

Can a Catholic marry a non-Baptised (No Religion) in the Catholic Church?

Provided that both persons are free to marry, it is possible for a Catholic to marry a non- Baptised (No Religion) person in the Catholic Church. The priest who is going to do the wedding will range the necessary paperwork for permissions etc.

Place of Marriage

The church is the most fitting place. The celebration of Marriage in a Catholic Church is a reminder that this is a celebration of a sacrament, that your life as husband and wife is blessed and sustained throughout the marriage by the presence and love of God.

Can I have my wedding in a Garden?

The practice in most of Australia is that Catholic weddings take place in the church and not secular surroundings, the reason is to minimise the devaluation of the religious dimension of marriage. In some circumstances, (eg, to meet the sensitivities of non-Christians) the Bishop may give permission for the wedding to take place in suitable settings.

Celebration of Marriage

The Rite of Marriage comprises of four parts:

1. *The Introduction and Welcome*- The couple declares their intention to marry and the assembly pray an opening prayer
2. *Liturgy of the Word*-Consists of readings from scripture, and a homily by the Priest
3. *Liturgy of Marriage*-Includes the exchange and reception of consent, the nuptial blessing, the blessing and exchange of rings, prayers of the faithful, and the Lord's Prayer
4. *Concluding Rite*-The official documents are signed. This is followed by the final blessing.

What is the difference between a Marriage with a Nuptial Mass and a normal service?

With a Nuptial Mass you celebrate Mass and receive the Eucharist. If both the bride and groom are Catholic and most of the guests are Catholic, a nuptial Mass would be customary. If a person is not a Catholic, and a large number of the guests are not Catholics, then the couple may choose to have a normal service.

Marriage Breakdown or Divorce?

There are two different processes for the declaration of nullity of a marriage

The simpler process is used when a marriage is invalid because the marriage took place contrary to the laws of the church. For example, a Catholic may have married in a civil ceremony or in another church without permission. A Catholic may have married a non-Christian without a dispensation. In both cases the marriage would be considered invalid.

The second process is more detailed and lengthy. It is used when at the time of the marriage there were issues that affected the consent of either or both spouses. If the spouses did not consent to marriage, as the church understands it, then it is possible that the marriage could be judged to be invalid.

For Further information read the page on Divorce, "Myths about Catholic Marriage and Divorce" by Fr Hugh Thomas CSSR.

The Parish Office requires a firm 6 months notice for Marriage. You will also have to undergo some Sacrament Preparation. Please contact the Office on 95812061

