



St Mary's  
Cathedral

Diocese  
of  
Ossory

Wedding  
Preparation

2021

*Wherever you go, I will go,  
Wherever you live, I will live,  
Your people shall be my people,  
And your God will be my God too.*

*Book of Ruth*



Thank you for choosing St Mary's Cathedral for your wedding. To assist you the following guidelines will be of help as you plan to celebrate the sacrament.

## Weddings Bookings

St Mary's Cathedral welcome couples to the parish for the celebration of their marriage. In general only one wedding per day is booked.

### *Wedding Booking Form*

Each couple will be forwarded the **Wedding Booking Form**. When this form is completed with the booking deposit the wedding date will be confirmed (details on contribution to the Cathedral and deposit are detailed further down).

## Church Documents – Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form

The Bride and Groom must complete a **Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form**. This form is completed by the priest of the parish where you reside and will then be forward to the Cathedral Parish Office.

To complete the Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form you will need the following certificates:

- Certificate of Baptism
- Certificate of Confirmation
- Letter(s) of Freedom

The Certificate of Baptism must have been issued within the last six months – original documents from the time of the sacraments will not suffice.



To establish that you are free to get married you will be asked to obtain a **Letter of Freedom** from each parish where you have lived for six months or more since your eighteenth birthday. Your parents or others may be asked to sign a document to establish that you are free to marry.

In the case of couples living abroad, you will need to obtain the certificates as outlined above. The priest in the parish of your residence will then complete your *Pre-nuptial Enquiry Form* and will forward it to the local bishop who in turn will send it to the bishop's office in Kilkenny (*Most Rev Dr Nulty, Apostolic Administrator of Ossory, Diocesan Office, James Street, Kilkenny*). Bishop Nulty will forward them to the Cathedral Parish Office.

## Pre Marriage Course



The Diocese of Ossory asks that all couples attend a pre marriage course. These courses are facilitated by Accord. The website [www.accord.ie](http://www.accord.ie) gives details of venues and dates. The local office for Accord is: Accord, Seville Lodge, Clonmel Road, Kilkenny:

accord@ossory.ie or 056 772 2674. Upon completion of the course Accord will issue a certificate of attendance and you will be required to give this to the priest who is completing your Pre Nuptial Enquiry Form.

## Church Ceremony



When you are planning the Marriage Service the following option is possible:

1. The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage within the celebration of Mass.
2. The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage without Mass.

The choice of service should be made in the light of the personal faith circumstances of bride and groom. Most Catholics will choose to have their marriage within a Nuptial Mass. However, where one of the parties is not Roman Catholic or a non-believer the marriage ceremony outside the context of the celebration of Mass may be more appropriate.

It is important to talk this decision over with your families and with the priest who will officiate. During the days before the marriage, it is recommended that couples prepare spiritually by celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## Church Ceremony - Celebrant

Couples are asked to provide details of who the celebrant of the mass will be when they book the church. It is not always possible for the local priest to be available and therefore it should not be assumed that in booking the church the local priest is also committing himself to be available.

## Church Booklet

Many couples prepare a booklet to assist the congregation who are attending the ceremony. This is optional. A number of websites are available and helpful in this work; please consult with the celebrant before final draft is given to printers. Please ensure you use texts which have been approved for use. The parish office can provide you with a Word Document of the Rite of Marriage and Readings for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage.



## Flowers – Candles – Confetti



Flowers should be tastefully arranged and not obscure the Altar or the Ambo. In general, flowers should only be arranged on the morning of the wedding, after the morning mass. Please check and make arrangements with the sacristan. Flowers may not be placed on the carpets – they will be ‘carefully’ removed if they are!

Flowers or ribbons may be attached to the seats as ‘pew-ends’; please do not use thumb tacks, staples, cellotape or bluetack. Pew-end decorations should be removed and taken away immediately after the ceremony. Seats should not be moved without first consulting the Sacristan or Priest.

Some flowers are usually left in place as a gift to the church.

The use of candles or lanterns in the main body of the church is not allowed – they pose a problem for the congregation as they move through the church.

The use of confetti, flower petals etc in the church or in the church grounds is not allowed: confetti is not biodegradable, not good for the birds and impossible to remove! Please check at your hotel if you can use it there.

*(Please give a photocopy of this section to your florist)*

## Music



You have asked to celebrate your marriage in church and there are implications by this very fact. The music you choose for your wedding ceremony should be in keeping with the sacred character of the occasion. Non-Sacred songs (e.g. your favourite love songs) are inappropriate and should not be used during the religious ceremony. Such favourite songs could be used during the signing of the *Marriage Registration Form* after the wedding, or at the reception. “In recent years certain types of love songs have been creeping into weddings which, though perfectly suitable for the reception afterwards, are not suitable in the Church”. (***Christian Marriage – Preparation and Celebration***. The Irish Episcopal Conference).

## Photography and Videography

In order to maintain a sense of the sacred, and yet facilitate the work of a photographer or videographer, we ask that you advise them to take the following guidelines into consideration:

The taking of photographs and video recording should be unobtrusive; it should not be distracting to you, the congregation or to the priest.

Photographers/videographers should not move church furnishings, such as *Sacred Spaces*, *Pews*, *Paschal Candle*, etc. To know this beforehand gives them the opportunity to make the necessary alternate arrangements (e.g., for the lighting of the marriage candle).



The only area that photographers/videographers are asked to refrain from using is the Sanctuary area. The photographer /videographer should not cross behind the altar during the ceremony.

As well as using the church grounds, photographers/videographers are welcome to use the centre and side aisles, and the organ loft for their work.

Keep these guidelines in mind when arranging the format of your ceremony.

*(Please give a photocopy of this section to your photographer and videographer.)*

## Signing The Marriage Registration Form

The register to be signed is the civil register and is signed after the church ceremony has ended. Please remember that the signed *Marriage Registration Form* (MRF) will be handed to you after the ceremony and it is your responsibility to forward this to the *Registrar of Marriages* within one month of the wedding day.

## Drinks Reception At Church

Some Hotels, Wedding Planners and Courtesy-Car companies promote the practice of providing champagne or cocktails for the wedding party as they exit the church after the ceremony. Such hospitality is more suited and appropriate to the hotel of the reception and is not permitted in our church grounds. All relevant agencies should be informed of this guideline.

## Offerings and Gratuities



Every effort is made to have our church in perfect condition for all Sacraments. Recent renovations have put a heavy financial burden on the parish and we are delighted that you benefit from this work on your special day. Upkeep of our church buildings, heating and lighting, insurance cover for all parishioners, visitors and guests and general maintenance of the buildings and grounds are an ongoing cost to our parish.

It is customary to make an offering to the parish in appreciation of and to defray the cost of the facilities provided.

If you are living in the parish and are not a regular contributor to the parish collections you are encouraged to make a generous donation.

If you are a visitor to our parish you are requested to contribute €500 (€100 deposit at time of booking and the remainder before the wedding) for the use of the church – this money is for the upkeep of the church. If one of the parties is from the parish we suggest a contribution of €500 (€100 deposit at time of booking and the remainder before the wedding) towards the parish and its upkeep. We also ask that the couple complete a CHY2 tax rebate form for the parish: this allows the parish to maximize your contribution to the parish.

It is also customary to give a donation to those who helped during the whole process:

**Priest :** It is customary to give a voluntary offering to the priest who helps you with the marriage arrangements, deals with the paperwork etc.

**The Sacristan** For attendance at the wedding rehearsal, and for the set-up and take-down on the wedding day, the Sacristan should be suitably remunerated with an appropriate offering.

**Priest Celebrant (Solemniser):** It is also customary to give an offering to the priest (*solemniser*) conducting the ceremony.

## Concluding Comments

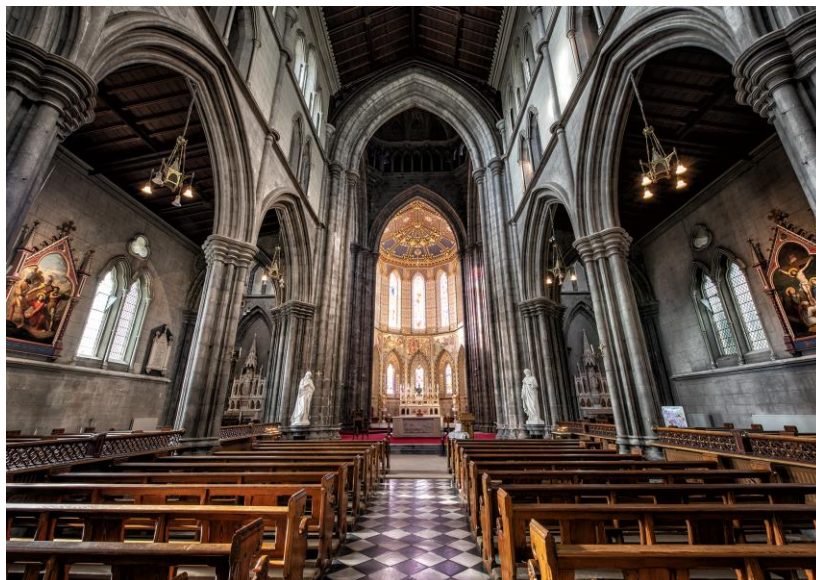
We wish you well as you plan your Wedding Day. Be assured of our prayers and support in the weeks ahead. Please contact the parish if you have any questions or you feel we might be of help to you.



## Questions often asked

Can the altar and other furniture be moved?

*The Altar and the Ambo are not just pieces of furniture: they are the tables from where the bread of the Word*



*and the Eucharist is shared and broken. At the Altar the sacred mysteries are celebrated and from here the faithful are nourished with the Bread of Life. The Ambo is the 'table of the Word' from where the scriptures are proclaimed and where Christ speaks to his people who are gathered. Because of its significance care should be taken to respect the dignity of the Altar and Ambo. They cannot be moved and should not be used as 'flower stands'!*

Can we open the back door of the church?

Yes.

Can our favourite song be sung at communion?

*You have asked to celebrate your marriage in a church. Your marriage is a church ceremony and the choice of music, prayers and readings should reflect that you have decided to get married in church and the sacredness of the ceremony. Consequently, it is not appropriate that music and songs from popular genre be used. Please discuss the choice of music with the celebrant before finalising it with musicians and singers.*

Can the bridal car enter the church grounds?

*There is limited parking space at the Cathedral and generally should only be used for the bridal party's cars.*

Can we use confetti?

*Please do not use confetti – it is impossible to remove, not good for the birds and doesn't go away! Likewise, the use of flower petals on the aisle is not permitted: they leave a stain that is practically impossible to remove.*

Are there toilets for public use on the day of the wedding?

Yes.

# Appendix One

## Check List

1. **Have you completed the WEDDING BOOKING FORM?**  
Only when this form is completed and returned to the office with the booking deposit will the wedding date be confirmed in the Diary of St Mary's Cathedral.
  
2. **Have you both completed a Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form?**  
This is a four-page document which your priest must complete with you, sign and stamp from the parish. You will require Baptismal and Confirmation Certificates to complete this form. Simply acquiring Baptismal, Confirmation and Freedom to Marry certificates is not sufficient.
  
3. **Have you given notice to the State Register?** As stated on the next page notice must be given to the State Register who will issue the necessary State Forms.
  
4. **Have you provided the Musician with the information on page 4?**
  
5. **Have you provided the Florist with the information in Appendix Three?**
  
6. **Have you provided the Photographer and Videographer with the information in Appendix Four?**



## Appendix Two

### State Registration

You must give notice to the State that you intend to get married. This notification must be given at least THREE MONTHS prior to the wedding at the office of *Registration of Births, Death and Marriages*. This office will issue you with the Marriage Registration Form (MRF). You must bring this form to the ceremony: it will be signed by you, the witnesses and the celebrant at the Church ceremony and must be returned to the registrar by you within one month of the wedding ceremony.

Further information on State requirements can be received from the HSE:  
[www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find\\_a\\_Service/bdm/Getting\\_Married\\_in\\_Ireland/](http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find_a_Service/bdm/Getting_Married_in_Ireland/)

Before the ceremony the bride and groom are required to make the following declaration. This must be witnessed by the Best man and Bridesmaid. The declaration can be made within 48 hours of the wedding ceremony – generally it will be declared at the rehearsal.

### Declaration of No Civil Impediment

Priest:

Do you  declare that you do not know of any civil impediment to the marriage that you are about to enter with Y?

Bridegroom:        I do

Y, Do you declare that you do not know of any civil impediment to the marriage that you are about to enter with X?

Bride:    I do.

## Appendix Three

**Please give a copy of this page to your Florist**

### **Flowers – Candles – Confetti**



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## Appendix Four

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