



Marriage

Marriage solemnizes a relationship of committed love, blessed by Christ and recognized by His Church. Catholics may celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony when they have been properly prepared by the Church and its ministers.

Who May Celebrate Catholic Marriage?

A baptized Catholic person, who is free to marry and is of legal age of consent, may celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony in the Catholic Church. All Catholics are expected to celebrate Matrimony according to the form of the Catholic Church, whether marrying another Catholic or a non-Catholic person. Catholics wishing to celebrate Holy Matrimony are expected to be practicing their faith, including regular participation at Mass.

What Makes this Sacrament so Special and What is Required?

"The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is, by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1601)

The Church believes that marriage is a public, spiritual, and legal declaration of committed love, celebrated by the couple before God, in the presence of Christ and His Church, and sanctified by grace of the Holy Spirit. When properly prepared and celebrated, the Church believes all marriages to be permanent through the entire lives of one or both spouses. This sacred commitment requires careful preparation.

Preparation: Please begin by contacting the pastor at least six months before the requested marriage date. No plans can be made for celebration of Marriage until this conversation takes place.

In order for us to attend to your interest in celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony, and in order that all necessary requirements of Canon and Civil Law are in compliance, we will observe the following guidelines:

- ❖ Schedule an initial interview with Fr. Matthew
- ❖ Complete initial documentation and verification of freedom to marry
- ❖ Complete a Pre-Marriage Inventory (PMI) or a similar instrument
- ❖ Arrange for Marriage Preparation Sessions (or an Engaged Encounter Weekend)
- ❖ Complete all forms required by Canon Law and Civil Law
- ❖ Plan the Marriage Rite celebration with the Pastor or Pastoral Assistant

Required Documents:

- ❖ Baptismal Certificate: Catholics and Christians from other traditions are asked to present a recently issued copy of your Baptismal Certificate. ("Recently Issued" means no longer than six months prior to the date of the wedding.)
- ❖ First Communion and Confirmation Certificates: If the Pastor deems it necessary to review these documents. A photocopy from the original certificates is acceptable.
- ❖ If already civilly (by Court) married: Applicants will need a copy of their Marriage License.



- ❖ If Civilly Divorced and Marriage has been Annulled: If there have been previous marriages, a copy of the Dissolution of Marriage by the Court (divorce papers) and a copy of Annulment Papers from a Diocesan Tribunal are required.
- ❖ Names and Addresses of Two Witnesses: Please provide names and contact information for two people who can vouch for each parties' freedom to marry. It will be necessary for the Parish Staff to contact and interview these witnesses.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE:

The date of the wedding ceremony can be scheduled only after the Pre-Nuptial interviews are completed. Please **DO NOT MAKE ANY COMMITMENTS** with a hotel or banquet hall for the wedding reception or print invitations **UNTIL** the Prenuptial interview is held and the Pastor indicates that the process of marriage preparation is in order.

The pastor must verify proper preparation prior to all Celebrations of Marriage at Holy Disciples.

Contact: For any questions, please contact the Parish Office at 253-875-6630.