

Marriage Matters

Church of Divine Mercy

What is marriage?

Marriage is a loving, life-giving and faithful relationship between a man and a woman. It is a natural institution found in many cultures and religions.

What does the Catholic Church teach about marriage?

In the broadest sense, the heart of the Church's definition of marriage is the same as what has always existed across all cultures and faiths: the union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others.

Marriage, between *two baptized* is called a sacrament, a sign of God's love for humanity and Christ's love for the Church. The grace of the sacrament of marriage strengthens and supports married couples. It is not a magic wand that takes away all difficulties, but a free gift from God that perfects the love of husbands and wives for each other so that it might more and more reflect the love Christ has for his Church.

Mixed Marriage i.e. between a baptized and a non-baptized is non-sacramental but equally accepted and blessed by God.

What is the purpose of marriage?

The basic purposes of marriage are the good of the couple, and the procreation and education of children. In turn, the fulfillment of these purposes contributes to the good of society. For this reason, society has always affirmed the fundamental purposes of marriage: the personal commitment of the couple, which is publicly declared, and the procreation of children, upon whom the future of society depends.

1. DOCUMENTS NEEDED FOR THE CELEBRATION

Both of you will need the following documents:

1. If either of you are baptized, please provide an **updated baptismal extract** from your church of baptism. This is not limited to catholic baptisms.
2. If you have already solemnized your marriage with the Registry of Marriage, please provide a photocopy of your marriage certificate.
3. A photocopy of the Marriage Preparation Course (MPC) or Engaged Encounter (EE) Certificate
4. Names, addresses and IC numbers of your two witnesses.

Please hand the above documents and photocopies to your priest when you come for the pre-nuptial.

2. FILLING THE PRE-NUPTIAL FORM

Each of you will need to complete this form in the presence of the priest at least one month before your wedding day. This form is kept in the records of the parish where the marriage will take place.

3. OBTAINING A LICENSE (R.O.M)

If you have already solemnized a civil marriage at the Registry of Marriage, you can skip this step. Yours will be considered a convalidation.

You need to file the notice of your marriage at the ROM between 3 months and 22 days before your wedding day. This can be done either through the internet or personally. When you are doing this personally, do inform the attending officer that you wish to apply only for a license so that the solemnize your marriage will take place in a Catholic Church.

For your reference, the url of R.O.M. is:
www.rom.gov.sg

When you receive the Notification of Marriage please hand this over to the priest or parish secretary.

4. MARRIAGE PREPARATION

The Catholic Church requires all couples to attend either a Marriage Preparation Course (MPC) or an Engaged Encounter Weekend (EE) and NFP.

The Marriage Preparation Course (MPC) is a six-week programme for engaged couples. For more details and the next available date for MPC, check out their web site at <http://www.catholic.org.sg/MPC>

The Engaged Encounter (EE) is a stay-in weekend programme held every second weekend of the month.

Application forms for these two programmes are available at their websites, the parish office and the Family Life Society Office (No 2 Highland Road, #LG-01, Singapore 549102).

5. CATHOLIC NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

NFP - The Catholic Church has been promoting NFP as a way of life since the early 70's because NFP is the best way of Family Planning. Besides promoting self-awareness and self-reliance, NFP is also couple orientated and promotes sharing and joint responsibility in family planning.

As part of your preparation we ask couples to attend the NFP sessions conducted in our parish on Thursdays.

Natural Family Planning (NFP) is an activity of the Catholic Medical Guild. More information can be found at <http://www.familylife.org.sg/about/NFP/Natural%20Family%20Planning.htm>

6. MIXED MARRIAGES

If one of you belongs to a different Christian Church or religious faith, you are still welcome to have your wedding in the church. The priest will be able to advise you on this area.

7. BOOK THE DATE & VENUE

You have the choice of either the main church or chapel. The main church has a capacity for 900 persons and the chapel should easily hold 160. You need to book date/time with the parish secretariat. A contribution to defray the expenses for the use of the facilities is to be paid to the parish office.

Church Chapel Function Hall (*canteen*)

8. WITNESSES

You need 2 witnesses who are over 21 years old. Catholics or Christians are preferred but not necessary. They will witness the actual exchanging of wedding vows and sign the marriage register at the end of the ceremony. Please provide their names, addresses and IC numbers to the priest/parish secretary as soon as possible.

9. WEDDING LITURGY

For the wedding rite you may either wish to print the liturgy in a booklet form or use the powerpoint or both. Please review your wedding liturgy with your WP.

Please note that your priest will need to review and approve your the text of the liturgy before the final print.

9.1 SELECT THE SCRIPTURAL TEXTS

You will need to select from a wide range of scriptural readings for:

1. First Reading
2. Responsorial Psalm
3. Second Reading (*Optional*)
4. Gospel Reading

Your Wedding Partner will provide you a soft copy of the texts.

9.2 ANIMATOR

This should be someone who is very familiar with the flow of the Mass and hence facilitate the ceremony. Or you may wish to get someone from the choir to animate

9.3 LECTORS (READERS)

Again, arrange for someone, preferable a Catholic or a Christian to read the 1st and/or 2nd reading/s and the psalms. Or, either one of you or both may wish to read the scripture texts. Make sure that the reader is able to proclaim God's word in the most audible and effective way. You could also arrange with the choir or a cantor to sing the responsorial psalm. The Priest will always proclaim the Gospel but you make the choice of the text.

9.4 CHOIR/SINGERS

You may wish to approach any one of our choirs to sing at your wedding mass. Your WP couple will provide you with the contact list of the choirs. Please contact the choir leader at least 2 months before your wedding day to book their services.

10. WEDDING HYMNS AND MUSIC

The hymns chosen must be liturgically correct. Secular songs are not allowed during the celebration.

1. Processional
2. Opening Hymn
3. Responsorial Psalm (if sung)
4. Offertory (*If there is a Mass*)
5. Communion (*If there is Communion*)
6. Thanksgiving
7. Signing of the Marriage Register
8. Recessional

Please consult the choir leader to help you select the hymns and music which are familiar to the choir and the organist. If you are not using the choir from our church, please do still review your music selection with your WP couple.

11. VIDEO & PHOTO TAKING IN CHURCH

You are welcome to have someone capture your ceremony with camera and/or video. We do request that they respect the solemnity of the ceremony when they go about their task. It would be helpful for the person/s to attend the rehearsal.

11.1. CONFETTI

The use of confetti, flower petals or rice is **not allowed** in the church/chapel or the foyer (the gathering space).

11.2. FLOWERS

Please arrange your own florist to decorate the church. The parish secretary will be able to help you in this.

11.3 WEDDING STIPEND (LOVE OFFERING)

Love offering or "ang pow" to the celebrant, altar servers up to your own discretion.

11.4 RECEPTION/BOOKING THE HALL

You are welcome to use the parish canteen after the ceremony.

You will need to book the Parish Canteen Hall (B1) with the Secretariat. The church asks for a donation or contribution to defray the expenses for the use of the facilities.

11.5 CATERING & AFTER THE RECEPTION

You are free to use your own caterer. But please guarantee that the caterer will ensure that the hall is swept clean, tables and chairs placed in order, and all cabbage bags disposed. The caterer needs to clear all their buffet wares and utensils soon after the event.

Our suggestion is that you appoint a reliable friend or relative to be responsible for the set up and to liaise with the caterer and parish secretary. Ensure the ceremony and reception run smoothly. Let him or her coordinate the programme.

12. THE CEREMONY IN CHURCH/CHAPEL

12.1 THE USHERS

It is best to appoint friends who will help out as ushers to greet and seat guests. The relatives and guests of the bride usually sit on the bride's side (left when facing the altar). The groom's relatives and friends will sit on the right. The parents, witnesses, readers, bridesmaids, best man, flower girls and page boys/ring bearer would be seated in the reserved front pews on either sides.

12.2 THE GROOM AND BEST MAN

The standard practice is for the groom to arrive 30 mins early and wait in the front seat of the church to receive the bride who is traditionally escorted down the aisle by her father or a male member of her family.

12.3 THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

We advise Catholic to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before the wedding so as to seek forgiveness and be in a state of grace to begin their new life together.

13. THE REHEARSAL

This is best done about one week before the wedding day. Please arrange the date and time for your rehearsal with your WP couple and then contact the Secretariat to book the church. The rehearsal should not last more than 1 hour.

Please request your bridal party to be punctual and explain to those coming, including non-Christian relatives and friends, the sanctity of the church. There should be no eating, phone conversations, chatting and children running/playing during the rehearsal in church or chapel.

13.1 THOSE WHO NEED TO ATTEND THE REHEARSAL

Essentially, this rehearsal will be conducted by the WP for all persons who will play key roles during the wedding ceremony in church/chapel.

1. The parents of the wedding couple
2. Readers
3. Both witnesses (*optional*)
4. Bridesmaid(s)
5. Best man
6. Flower girl
7. Page boy/ring bearer
8. Photographer (*optional*)
9. Videographer (*optional*)
10. Offertory Couple, if there is Mass (*optional*)

11. CDs of the processional and recessional songs and copies of the Wedding Liturgy (Booklet);

CHECKLIST

This check list is to help you keep track of your preparation and for quick reference.

Date of Wedding:..... Time:

Tasks to be done

1. Baptismal Extract of Bride
2. Baptismal Extract of Groom
3. Written Parental Consent for Minors
4. Photocopy of ROM Certificate
5. Photocopy of MPC/EE/NFP certificate
6. Names & I/C of 2 Witnesses
7. Fill in Pre-Nuptial Form with the priest
8. Prepare Wedding Liturgy
9. Confirm Choir & Music
10. Review Wedding Liturgy with WP couple
11. Priest approval of Wedding Liturgy
12. Book Parish Hall for church reception
13. Confirm Caterer
14. Video/Photographer
15. Confirm date/time for rehearsal with WP
16. Book church for rehearsal
17. Prepare final Wedding Liturgy (PPT/booklet)
18. Bring CDs/Music for rehearsal

Names

- 1 Celebrant Priest
- 2 WP Couple
- 3 Witness 1
- 4 Witness 2
- 5 Best Man
- 6 Maid of Honor
- 7 Lead Bridesmaid
- 8 Bridesmaid 1
- 9 Bridesmaid 2
- 10 Page boy/ring bearer
- 11 Animator
- 12 PowerPoint operator
- 13 Floor Manager
- 14 Lead Usher
- 15 Reception table Lead
- 16 Church main door Lead
- 17 Choir Master
- 18 Organist
- 19 Photographer
- 20 Videographer
- 21 Offertory Couple
- 22 Car park Wardens
- 24 Church Secretariat - Richard Teo: 6583-3378
email: secretariat@divinemeracy.sg

Application for Wedding Mass or Service to be held at Church of Divine Mercy

Please confirm the date and time of the wedding with the parish secretary and the consent of the priest - celebrant before you fill in all 3 parts of this form. Hand this to secretary.

CHURCH COPY 1

Date of Wedding _____ Time _____ *Chapel / Main Church
Name of Priest-Celebrant: _____
Bridegroom's Full Name _____
Address: _____
Tel: _____ (mobile/residence/office) Email: _____
Religion: _____ *and* _____
Bride's Full Name _____
Address: _____
Tel: _____ (mobile/residence/office) Email: _____
Religion: _____

PRIEST'S COPY 2

Date of Wedding _____ Time _____ *Chapel / Main Church
Name of Priest-Celebrant: _____
Bridegroom's Full Name _____
Address: _____
Tel: _____ (mobile/residence/office) Email: _____
Religion: _____ *and* _____
Bride's Full Name _____
Address: _____
Tel: _____ (mobile/residence/office) Email: _____
Religion: _____

WEDDING PARTNER'S COPY 3

Date of Wedding _____ Time _____ *Chapel / Main Church
Name of Priest-Celebrant: _____
Bridegroom's Full Name _____
Address: _____
Tel: _____ (mobile/residence/office) Email: _____
Religion: _____ *and* _____
Bride's Full Name _____
Address: _____
Tel: _____ (mobile/residence/office) Email: _____
Religion: _____