

PROTOCOLS FOR CATHOLIC WEDDINGS

Actually, we don't "do weddings" at our church. We are not in the wedding business. However, we still use the word wedding so that we can begin a spiritual conversation with people about the importance of the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony in the Catholic Church.

What is the difference between a wedding and the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony? The difference can be summed up in one word: faith! As faith-filled adult Catholic Christians, we know that Holy Matrimony is one of the seven sacraments instituted by Christ for his Church. Please go to ForYourMarriage.org to learn more about the sacramental covenant of Marriage in the Lord.

The rest of this document answers many of the questions that we hear most often about weddings in the Catholic Church.

Where can we celebrate our wedding? At the parish where you attend Mass each Sunday! This is the faith community that you have chosen as your parish church and spiritual home. Invite your family and friends to your sacramental wedding at your church! Share your Catholic faith with them as well.

What if we do not go to church? Please start! Fulfill the promises of your own Baptism and Confirmation by coming back to church and attending Sunday Mass each week. Please check out CatholicsComeHome.org for information about rejoining the Church as a practicing Catholic. Welcome back!

What if we don't belong to any parish? Please join one! If you go to MassTimes.org, you will be able to find the nearest Catholic Church, with its Mass schedule, and even directions as to how to get there. Please check it out! Not a good fit? Then try another one. Your ideal parish is waiting for you!

Are there requirements for weddings? Yes, each parish has their own marriage preparation program for their parishioners. It is best to start a year in advance. But please confirm your wedding date at your church before you finalize a contract with your wedding reception venue!

What if we live far away from our family? Most parishes have some kind of a parent rule for weddings. It works like this: start your parish's requirements for marriage, and ask your parish to send a letter to the parish of your parents. We honor these kinds of requests for weddings all the time.