



SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY

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The Catholic Church believes and teaches that marriage is a sacrament, a symbol of the love that Jesus Christ has for his people, the church. As a sacrament, marriage is also a covenant by which a man and woman establish a partnership of love in Christ for the whole of their lives. Marriage is ordered towards the good of the spouse and the procreation and education of children.

WHO CAN MARRY AT ST. JOSEPH CHURCH?

1. **Parishioners:** Registered and active members of St. Joseph Church, who are free to marry in the Catholic Church, are welcome to celebrate their wedding at the Church. They must contact the Pastor or a priest of their own choosing at least six months prior to the planned wedding day. This is true even if one party is neither a member nor a Catholic, as long as the party is also free to marry in the Catholic Church.
2. **Non-Parishioners:** Couples request to be married at St. Joseph Church for a variety of reasons. We welcome such weddings (in accordance with Archdiocesan policies and those of St. Joseph Church). You are encouraged to invite your Pastor or a priest or deacon (relative, family friend, etc.), who is in good standing, to preside and officiate at your wedding. Note that at least one party must be Catholic in order for a wedding to be celebrated in a Catholic church.

It is important that you make the following arrangements:

- ◆ A visit to the pastor of the bride (or the groom) must be made a minimum of six (6) months prior to the wedding date. In a mixed marriage, visit the pastor of the Catholic party. Ask for written permission to marry outside your own parish.
- ◆ Ask your pastor, assistant, deacon, or other priest to officiate at your wedding. The one who agrees to officiate at the ceremony will be responsible for taking you through the marriage preparation program and fulfilling all Archdiocesan regulations regarding obtaining dispensation for a mixed marriage, freedom of both parties to marry in a Catholic Church, etc.

DOCUMENTS YOU WILL NEED.

- ◆ Civil Requirements: (1) Birth Certificates (required for marriage license), and (2) valid Marriage License (as required by law)
- ◆ Church Requirements: (1) Copy of Baptismal Certificates dated within six months of the wedding date, (2) certificate of attendance at one of the five qualified marriage preparation programs offered in the Archdiocese.
- ◆ Initial interview with the priest or deacon at least six months prior to the planned marriage date.
- ◆ Completion of the Pre-marital inventory.
- ◆ Pre-marital Affidavits (in some cases).