

When the Celebrant is a Visiting Priest

If a priest other than one of those assigned to the parish where your wedding will take place is to witness the exchange of vows, he must receive permission from the pastor of the parish in order to officiate at the ceremony. In addition, a priest from outside of Saskatchewan needs a temporary license from the provincial government. You should discuss this with your priest at the beginning of your preparation.

Required Documents

Your priest will complete forms with you to make a permanent parish record of your marriage. In addition, if one of you is not a Catholic, the documentation is part of the priest's request to the Archbishop on your behalf for permission for a marriage of mixed religion.

- **Baptismal Certificate(s):** If you are a Catholic, you must have a baptismal certificate issued within the last six months. If you have been baptized in another Christian denomination, you must supply either your original certificate or a copy.
- **Saskatchewan Marriage License:** A marriage license is mandatory for your wedding to take place. The license must be issued within 90 days prior to your wedding. The priest will include this document with the registration of your marriage which he will submit to the government.

Celebration of the Sacraments

The Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist should be a vital part of every Catholic's growth as a disciple of Christ. These Sacraments will prepare you for a more meaningful experience of your wedding liturgy and deepen your relationship with Jesus as the foundation of your married life.

Every Catholic should complete his or her initiation into the Faith by receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you have not been confirmed, the time of your preparation for marriage can be an opportunity to prepare for Confirmation also. Your priest will be able to assist you if necessary.

Planning the Wedding Liturgy

Your priest will help you plan your wedding liturgy which may be celebrated with/without the Mass according to particular circumstances. The care you put into the choice of Scripture readings and music will help make your liturgy a meaningful expression of you as a couple. Your parish priest will inform you of any additional requirements that are particular to your parish.

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Guidelines for Couples Wishing to be Married in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina

A man and a woman make a serious and sacred commitment when they decide to marry in the Catholic Church. Marriage is a permanent commitment to a way of Christian life; it requires serious discernment, prayer, and preparation.

The Sacrament of Marriage

“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, n. 1601)

In the Latin Rite the celebration of marriage between two Catholics normally takes place during Mass because of the connection of all the sacraments with the death and resurrection of Christ. The parties to a marriage covenant are a baptized man and woman who are free to contract marriage, and who freely express their consent. The Church holds “the exchange of consent between the spouses to be the indispensable element that ‘makes the marriage’” (Catechism, n. 1626). If there is no true consent, there is no marriage.

Initial Contact

A couple wishing to marry should contact their parish priest **at least six months prior** to the anticipated date of the wedding. Couples are required to engage in a marriage preparation process provided or arranged by the parish. Such preparation allows the couple to come to a deeper knowledge of each other and of the sacrament they will receive, including the reasons for its indissolubility. For these reasons, it is even advisable to contact one’s pastor at the beginning of the engagement.

Marriage Preparation

You will normally be required to attend an approved marriage preparation program. ***This should be completed well in advance of your wedding date.*** The priest assisting your preparation will help you choose either an Engaged Encounter or one of the approved Archdiocesan programs, as he believes may best benefit you.

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Process

Your marriage is an important part of your life and growth as a follower of Jesus. Your priest will help you reflect on your understanding of Christian marriage, so that you can enter into this commitment to God and to each other well prepared. The process begins with an initial interview with your priest, and addresses your faith experience, your relationship as a couple, and your understanding of Christian marriage. There are documents to be assembled and some pre-nuptial papers to be completed.

Special Circumstances

Some couples have special circumstances and will need further assistance in planning a marriage in the Church. ***Please discuss with your priest if:***

- Either or both of you have been married before
- Either of you are in, or have been in, a common-law union
- Are now civilly married (to each other) and wish to have your marriage blessed (Convalidated) in the Catholic Church
- You are presently living together
- Either you or your fiancé is a teenager
- A pregnancy is involved
- One of you practise another faith or does not follow any particular faith.

Place of the Wedding

- The wedding of two Catholics is a Sacrament and takes place in the parish church of either the bride or groom.
- To be married in another parish, it is required that permission be received from the parish in which you wish to be married, as well as from either of the parishes where you reside.
- A wedding in which only one of you is Catholic takes place in the parish of the Catholic party.
- The celebration of marriage is an act of worship and a Sacrament for two baptized Christians. Hence, the church building, the house of God and home of His people, is the proper place for weddings. Gardens, secular “wedding chapels”, or other settings outside a church are not appropriate.

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