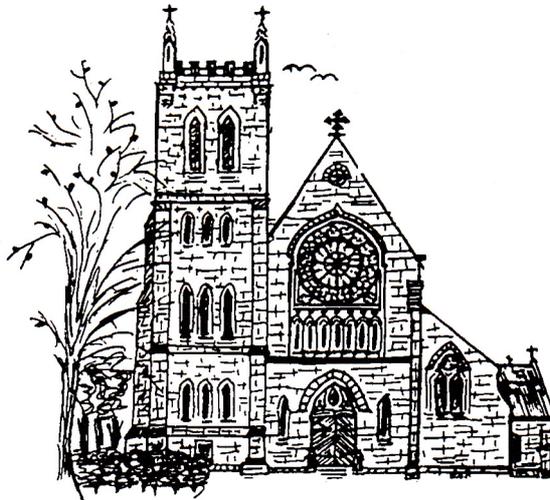


**Celebrating
The Sacrament of Marriage
In Donnybrook Parish**



CHURCH OF THE SACRED HEART
Donnybrook

Guidelines For Couples from Other Parishes

Congratulations

Congratulations on your decision to be married. You have enquired about the possibility of celebrating your marriage at Sacred Heart Church, Donnybrook. Our parish church is the spiritual home of the Catholic community of Donnybrook. We will be more than happy to welcome you for a celebration of your marriage which is in keeping with the Catholic ethos of our parish.

Christian marriage is a Sacrament. In other words, it is one of the ways in which Jesus Christ continues to be present and active among his people. By choosing to celebrate your marriage as Christians, you commit yourselves to making your own love a sign of Christ's love, for each other, for your children, and for the community in which you live.

What You Need To Do First

Reserving the Church

As soon as you have chosen a date for your marriage, please consult our parish secretary, Mrs. Oonagh O'Toole (contact details on back page) to ensure that the date is available in the Church. Then complete the enclosed "form A" and return it to the parish secretary. Until this form is received the booking of the Church cannot be confirmed.

We wish to advise you that we expect to have some renovations carried out in the Sacred Heart Church during 2016/2017. The timing of this work will be determined by various factors, some of which are outside of our control. Your booking is accepted on the understanding that we will facilitate you in making alternative arrangements in the unlikely event that the Church will not be available or in a suitable condition for your celebration on the date in question. We will update you as soon as we receive further details.

Please note: The reservation of the Church is made on the understanding that you are free to marry both in civil law and in the law of the Church. If either of you has ever been married previously (either in a Church or in a civil ceremony), or if you are in any doubt about your freedom to marry, please mention this at the time of making your request. This will help to avoid any unforeseen complications.

Contribution to the Upkeep of the Church

The fee requested for the use of the Church is € 300. As well as the periodic refurbishment of the Church, and the provision of heat and light, this includes the preparation of the Church by the sacristan, and the services of parish secretary. A deposit of € 100 should be returned with the booking form. If you request altar servers, it is normal to make a small offering to them. Other fees (e.g.; organist, singer, florist, photographer etc.) are arranged directly by you.

The Celebrant

Couples coming from outside the parish are asked to arrange for their own celebrant. The priests of the parish, taking account of their various other pastoral responsibilities, cannot commit to be available. Please ask your celebrant to complete the attached “Form B,” and return to the parish secretary at least one month in advance of the ceremony.

Three Months Notice to your Parish of Residence

The experience of the Church would suggest that marriages which take place at short notice, or at a very young age, may not be based on a mature decision, and may therefore be more at risk. For this reason, it is required that each person being married should notify his / her local priest (i.e., in the parish where you are currently resident) at least three months before the marriage. If either person is under eighteen years of age, the period of notice is six months.

Your Responsibilities in Civil Law

The State recognises Marriages celebrated according the Rites of the Catholic Church, provided these marriages are celebrated in accordance with civil law. Current legislation on the Civil Registration of Marriages requires that couples who wish to marry in the Catholic Church will be required under civil law to do the following:

- Give notice in person to the civil registrar no less than three months before the date of your intended marriage. This can be done in any office of the civil registration service throughout the state, but it will require the making of an appointment, and the three months begins from the date of your interview. During the interview couples will be asked to make a written declaration that there is no civil law impediment to their marriage. Couples are strongly recommended to do this well in advance of the three months, as there may be some difficulty in obtaining an appointment.
- In exceptional circumstances (e.g. where a couple will be coming from overseas) permission may be obtained from the registrar to give the three months notice in writing. In such circumstances, they will still be required to attend for interview within five days of the marriage, to make the written declaration of no impediment. Contact details for the offices of the civil registration service are given at: www.hse.ie/en/FindaService/.
- Establish that the priest whom you have invited to celebrate your marriage is registered on the State’s approved list of solemnisers. If he is not on the list (if, for example, he is coming from outside the Republic of Ireland) then an application will have to be made to have him temporarily included. You can

discuss this with the Parish Priest, but this should normally be done before you make your notification to the civil registrar.

- Obtain from the Civil Registrar a *Marriage Registration Form*, which you must bring with you on the day of your marriage. Without this document, your marriage will not be valid in civil law.
- Make a verbal declaration within two days prior to your marriage, in the presence of the priest and your two witnesses, that there is no impediment in civil law to your marriage. In practice this will normally take place just after you have arrived at the Church, and before the Sacramental celebration begins.
- Sign the Marriage Registration Form immediately after the ceremony, and take it with you to be registered by you at the office of the civil registrar within one month. This is now your responsibility, whereas previously it tended to be done by the parish.

Note

All of the above requirements relate to civil law, and are distinct from the procedures and paper-work required under Church law, for couples celebrating marriage in the Catholic Church.

The above information is provided in good faith, but couples are advised to check the detail of what is required with the Civil Registration Service. The Sacred Heart Parish cannot accept any responsibility for the consequences of failure on the part of a couple to fulfill their responsibilities in civil law.

Pre-Marriage Preparation

Only you can prepare yourself for your marriage, but various people, including family members, friends, and the priest of your parish can offer valuable support. It is strongly recommended that couples participate in a Church approved marriage preparation course. Not all courses are approved. Most courses provide a certain amount of input on questions such as finance, home-making, fertility, parenthood, and preparing the marriage celebration. The real value of the courses is probably in that they help to focus your own discussion, and provide the opportunity of talking with other couples in a “safe environment.”

Accord runs courses at various centres throughout Ireland. In Dublin Diocese, courses must be booked centrally at the Accord office, 39 Harcourt St., Tel. 4784400. Other agencies providing courses include NAOMI, and the

Association of Inter Church Families. Courses tend to be heavily booked, so it is advisable to make enquiries soon after becoming engaged.

Church Documentation

The documentation required for the marriage of two Catholics is as follows:

- *Pre-Nuptial Enquiry*: Each person completes this form with the priest in his / her present parish of residence. It is a gathering of personal details for the register, a way of establishing your freedom to marry, and a statement of your intent to marry in accordance with the Christian vision of marriage. The form is provided by the priest.
- *Baptismal Certificate*: Each of you will need a Baptismal Certificate which has been issued and dated not more than six months prior to the date of your marriage. This can be obtained by contacting the Church where you were Baptised. It should be given to the priest preparing your pre-nuptial enquiry. It is desirable that you also obtain a certificate of Confirmation.
- *Letters of Freedom*: These are required in respect of any other parish in which you have lived for more than six months since the age of sixteen. (If this presents a practical difficulty there are alternative procedures).

For the marriage of a Catholic to a Christian of another denomination, or to an unbaptised person, the requirements are somewhat different, and your local priest will be able to advise you.

All documentation should be sent to the parish office to arrive not less than one month in advance of the ceremony.

The Ceremony

The ceremony, including the music, must take a form which is in keeping with the liturgy of the Catholic Church. Please consult the celebrant well in advance, in relation to your choice of readings, the form of your exchange of consent, and your choice of music.

The Signing of the Register

After the celebration of your marriage, you will be invited to sign the *Marriage Registration Form* which you have brought with you, and which you will later use to register your marriage with the civil authorities. This is a civil act, and there are some important differences between how marriage is understood in civil law and in the law of the Church. For this reason, the signing is kept distinct from the religious ceremony. It may take place on a table placed in the sanctuary, but not on the altar table itself.

Confetti and Rice

Please ask your guests to refrain from using confetti or rice in the Church grounds. It tends to stick, and creates quite a mess if it gets wet.

Flowers

Please keep us informed of your plans in relation to flowers, so that we can facilitate whoever is making these arrangements for you. We ask you particularly to ensure that floral arrangements are not fixed to the seats using adhesive substances, pins or nails.

Wedding Rehearsal

It is usual to have a short rehearsal near the day of your wedding. This is something you should discuss with the celebrant. The rehearsal, as well as finalising details of the ceremony, allows the priest the opportunity of meeting the other members of the bridal party etc. Please consult the parish secretary about the time of the rehearsal to ensure that the Church is available and open.

Timing

Photographs of the bride are often taken on arrival at the Church. This can take longer than you might imagine. We ask you to arrange with your photographer to allow time for this, so that the ceremony may start as near as possible to the appointed time.

Red Carpets

Donnybrook Parish does not supply a red carpet. Should one be required, the parish secretary may be able to provide you with the names of some suppliers. We ask you to be particularly careful to instruct whoever supplies your carpet that, while appropriate arrangements must be made to ensure the safety of your guests, no adhesive tape of any-kind may be used to fix it the carpet to the floor. Our experience is that such tape invariably leaves a residue that can take hours to remove.

Afterwards

Wherever you live, your life as a Christian married couple is important to the community of the parish, and to the future of the Church. Remember that the love you bring to each other, and to those around you, needs to be nourished through your own closeness to Christ. Each time you participate in the Mass, you will not only celebrate the self-giving love of Christ, but you will be reminded of your own gift to each other, and you will hear His Word, calling you always to new ways of living that love.

Contact Details

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