



PARISH OF
SS. PETER & PAUL
Athlone, Drum & Clonown

Ss. Peter & Paul's Parish **Athlone**

Preparing for Your Marriage

CHURCH NOTIFICATION OF YOUR MARRIAGE

You are required to give at least **THREE MONTHS NOTICE** to the Priests in the Church where you intend to celebrate your marriage. This three months' notice is obligatory in all dioceses in Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland.

No one is exempt from this rule.

MARRIAGE IN ROME OF ANOTHER COUNTRY

Ask the Priest for the explanatory sheet.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED BY THE CHURCH FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

❖ **BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE**

Issued no earlier than the date of notification of the date of marriage.

❖ **CONFIRMATION CERTIFICATE**

Issued no earlier than the date of notification of the date of marriage. This indicates a growing spiritual maturity for marriage as a Sacrament

❖ **LETTER OF FREEDOM**

Issued by your Parish Priest stating that you are "free" to marry. This is required to establish your freedom to marry,

❖ **PRENUPTIAL ENQUIRY FORM**

Completed at a meeting with you and the Priest in the parish in which you currently reside. *This document contains 4 pages. It details information about you and your partner. It is signed by you as a testimony to the course of preparation you have taken for marriage. It is a reliable indication to the Priest of your suitability and readiness for marriage.*

❖ **PERMISSION TO MARRY OUTSIDE YOUR PARISH**

This is a letter from the Bride's Parish Priest to marry outside her parish. *It is a matter of courtesy to inform your Parish Priest of your decision.*

❖ **CERTIFICATE OF PRE- MARRIAGE COURSE**

Attending a pre-marriage course is compulsory for **ALL** couples wishing to marry in the Catholic Church.. *You will be issued with a certificate after completion of the course, this will form part of the paperwork for your pre-nuptial enquiry.* To arrange your pre-marriage course please Tel. *Accord Office, Athlone at 6475491 between 10 -1 (Mon—Fri).*

Not all groups hosting pre-marriage courses are recognised by the Diocese, please discuss with the priest officiating at your wedding



ALL DOCUMENTS COMPLETED IN PREPARATION FOR YOUR MARRIAGE ARE PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL AND ARE KEPT IN THE CUSTODY OF THE PARISH

MARRIAGE IS A SACRAMENT

It is about people. About two people who journey together and form a community. Christian marriage carries a profound message: God's concern and love for all people was expressed not only in word, but in action and relationships. This truth is best expressed and reflected by people living the call ("vocation") to Christian marriage.

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

It is recommended that every person intending to marry should avail of The Sacrament of Reconciliation (*confessions*) as a new beginning and to equip them with the forgiveness of God for their future. This is a positive step towards "communion" with Christ.

ON THE DAY

- **PHOTOGRAPHY**
 - Photographers should be asked to be as unobtrusive as possible and not to distract the celebrant, couple or congregation, especially at moments of great solemnity in the ceremony and in the Mass. ***The use of arc lights with video cameras is to be discouraged.***

 - **FLOWERS**
 - Couples are responsible for providing their own floral arrangements. Use of floral archways and isle carpets is not permitted

 - **MUSIC**
 - The music chosen should both serve the liturgy and be in keeping with its sacred character. Music or songs which express a purely secular or superficial understanding of marriage and love, or which because of their popular association with the cinema or television or music hall may prove distracting, should be avoided.
 - Examples of music suitable for the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage are available from the priest.

 - **BRIDES**
 - Out of courtesy for all concerned brides are asked to arrive on time
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STIPENDS

It is not obligatory to give money for any of the sacraments, but please consider the following:

- **THE SACRISTAN:**
 - Who is present **on overtime, without pay**
- **THE ALTAR SERVERS:**
 - As a gesture
- **THE CHURCH:** Lighting, heating and preparing the Church incurs costs.
 - *A donation of €200 is requested at the time of booking from couples from outside the Parish towards these costs.*
- **THE PRIEST:**
 - It is customary to offer the Priest a stipend. It is your way of expressing thanks to the community for his time. It clearly shows your respect for the Church and Parish when you acknowledge his service by offering your stipend.

CIVIL MARRIAGE NOTIFICATION AND THE MARRIAGE REGISTRATION FORM (MRF)

All couples must now present in person to a Registrar to give their three months' notice and may do so at any office in the country.

- As a first step, contact a Registration Office to make an appointment
- All couples will be requested to bring with them to the appointment-
 - Photo ID (preferably a passport or driving licence)
 - Birth Certificate (Not a photocopy)
 - Your PPS Numbers.
 - Name of the church and date of marriage
 - Name and address of the person you wish to solemnise the marriage
 - Names and dates of birth of your Best Man & Chief Brides Maid

When the Registrar is satisfied that all required details have been provided and that the couple are free to marry he or she will issue them with a MARRIAGE REGISTRATION FORM (MRF) which should be kept safely and given to the priest prior to the ceremony.

NB: It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure that the MRF is returned to the registrar's office within the prescribed time frame to ensure civil registration of the marriage.