



ST MARY'S METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL ♦ EDINBURGH

Marrying in St Mary's Cathedral

Congratulations on your forthcoming wedding! We are delighted that you are getting married, and happy that you have chosen to be married here in the Cathedral. It will be our pleasure to help you prepare for marriage and for the wedding ceremony itself.

In this booklet you will find all of the relevant information concerning marriage preparation and also preparing for the wedding day.

Frequently asked questions

Who can get married in the Cathedral?

- Anyone can be married in the Cathedral as long as both parties are free to marry and one of the parties is a Catholic.

What if I don't live in the Cathedral parish?

- If you do not live within the boundaries of the Cathedral parish, your parish priest is responsible for the completion of your pre-marriage paperwork and the necessary pre-marriage catechesis. He is also responsible for ensuring that the relevant paperwork arrives at the Cathedral in good time.

How much notice must I give?

- The Cathedral parish requires six months' notice of your marriage.

What preparations will we be required to undertake?

- The Cathedral parish runs its own marriage preparation course, which covers the fundamentals of the Church's vision of marriage and family life. Parishioners of the Cathedral are required to attend this course, whilst those who live outside of the Cathedral parish boundaries should attend a course organised by their own parish priest. With the written permission of the parish priest, those who do

not live within the boundaries of the Cathedral parish may attend the course offered at the Cathedral.

Are there any costs?

- There is no charge to receive the Sacraments of the Church. However, for those who are not parishioners of the Cathedral, we ask that to offset the running costs of the Cathedral, borne by its parishioners, a donation of £200 is made before the wedding. If you are a UK tax payer, you may consider gift-aiding this donation. Further, it is customary to make a donation to the celebrant, although this is entirely optional.
- The Marriage Preparation Course run by the Cathedral costs £50 to cover the costs of speakers and materials.
- Fees for the organist and flowers are additional (see below).

What documentation is required?

- The Catholic party/parties must produce a certificate of baptism, issued within six months of the wedding. To obtain this, you should be in touch with the parish in which you were baptised no earlier than six months before the wedding to request this document.
- The non-Catholic party must produce proof of baptism (Christening), which can take the form of their original certificate, an annotated birth certificate or a testimonial letter from a parent or other close relative.
- Both parties must produce a letter of freedom, usually from a parent, stating that they have not been married before and are free to marry, or that they have been married before, have received the necessary writ of divorce/nullity and are free to marry.

What civil documentation is required?

- Both parties to a proposed marriage are required to submit a Notice of Marriage form (Form M10) to the registrar of the district in which the marriage is to take place. Forms can be obtained from any Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Scotland. Notice must be given in the three month period before the wedding, and not later than fifteen days before the wedding.

The Registrar will prepare a Marriage Schedule which one of the parties must collect in person. The Wedding Schedule **must** be brought to the celebrant before the wedding, usually at the wedding rehearsal. **N.B. Without the Marriage Schedule, the celebrant will not be able to marry you.**

For full civil requirements be in contact with:

Registrar's Office

59-63 George IV Bridge,

Edinburgh,

EH1 1RN

Tel.: +44 131 529 2600

Email: registrars.lothianchambers@edinburgh.gov.uk

Guidelines for Marrying in the Cathedral

Preparing the liturgy for the celebration of marriage is an exciting and important part of your marriage preparation. By the time you come to prepare the liturgy, much of the other important work has been completed and there is a sense of satisfaction as you prepare for the wedding day itself.

The Rite of Marriage offers great flexibility for couples to 'personalise' the celebration in the context of the Church's universal worship. The choices that the couple can and should be involved in relate to the Lectionary (the Scripture readings) and the choice of music. Of course, to ensure that Catholic teaching is brought out in the celebration of the Rite, it is for the priest or deacon who will lead the couple through the Rite itself, to ensure that each couple has made wise and suitable choices. The notes which follow offer some suggestions which will help you as a couple in the preparation of the liturgy of marriage.

The wedding liturgy is an act of worship of the gathered community: it is a celebration of the parish community. The choice of prayers, readings and sacred music should be an expression of the worship of the parish community and the gathered Christian assembly. Well-chosen selections of Scripture and music can draw people into the celebration with the heart, mind and spirit in a way that nothing else can. You as a couple will want

those who come to the wedding liturgy to enter into the celebration by participating fully in the liturgy.

It should be noted that the wedding liturgy is not a stage for singers and musicians. Their role is not to entertain but to raise the hearts and minds of the people gathered to God, whose blessing we ask on the couple as they make their life-long vows before Him.

In order to prepare well, couple should take time to reflect on appropriate Scripture readings for the Rite of Marriage, as directed by the celebrant. When suitable readings have been chosen, hymns and music which should bring out the sentiments of the chosen readings should be chosen.

Given below is a guide to each part of the wedding ceremony which requires choices to be made by the bride and groom.

Introductory Rites and Entrance Song

The Entrance Song should be a joyful song of praise and thanksgiving to God. This song may be sung during the procession or after it has been completed.

The Liturgy of the Word comes always from the Lectionary (i.e. from the Bible). The readings should reinforce some aspect of the meaning of Christian marriage, and, through the homily, be related to the couple's future life together. Normally, the first reading comes from the Old Testament, followed by a responsorial psalm. The second reading comes from the New Testament. The Gospel comes after the second reading and is always read by the celebrant. The celebrant can provide you with standard sets of prayers of the faithful. These readings (first and second reading, psalm and prayers of the faithful) should be read by members of your family or friends.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist (for Nuptial Masses only). During the distribution of Holy Communion a suitable hymn should be sung.

Signing of the Register. During the signing of the register, suitable music may be played.

Recessional Music should, again, be joyful and uplifting. The organist is happy to suggest pieces.

General Guidelines

- Pop songs and other non-religious music are not appropriate for the wedding ceremony as it is primarily an act of worship.
- There may be songs, especially love songs, which are very significant to you. These may not be used in the liturgy, but would be more appropriate at some other point during the wedding day, e.g., during the wedding reception.
- Instrumental music has a place within the liturgy, e.g. the processions at the beginning and end of the ceremony, and at the signing of the register.
- Recorded music is not acceptable for the liturgy. The liturgy is the action of the people there to worship, and music which is not live contradicts this principle.
- Poetry and other non-Scriptural readings are similarly unacceptable for the liturgy. This may be appropriate at another stage in the wedding day.
- We are happy for you to throw confetti at the end of the ceremony as it leaves behind a witness to passers-by that the joyful celebration of a marriage has taken place.

Organising the Wedding Ceremony

- Weddings may take place any day of the week, except Sundays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day and Holy Week. Weddings take place at 2pm.
- Couples should make an appointment with the Cathedral Organist, Simon Nieminski to discuss music and prices. He can be contacted at organist@stmaryscathedral.co.uk
- Couples should contact the Cathedral florist team if they wish to have flowers arranged by them. Valerie Ball, who leads the team, can be contacted on 07747896038.

It is traditional in Catholic churches that the flowers are always left in the church after the wedding as a reminder to the parishioners that a wedding has taken place and as a reminder to them to pray for the couple just married.

If you wish to arrange flowers through an external florist, you should consult the celebrant to make sure these are appropriate and be in touch with the parish office in order to arrange access to the Cathedral at a mutually convenient time.

- Photographers and videographers are welcome to the ceremony as long as they are discreet and are not a distraction. If you wish to film the ceremony, you must inform the organist of this as this incurs an additional cost.

Contact Details

St Mary's Cathedral

Cathedral House

61 York Place

Edinburgh

EH1 3JD

Tel.: 0131 556 1798

Email: cathedralhouse@stmaryscathedral.co.uk

Marriage Preparation Checklist
Couple resident in Cathedral parish marrying in another parish

To be completed in St Mary's Cathedral parish:

- Made enquiry six months before the wedding
- Met with priest to complete initial paperwork
- Inscribed on marriage preparation course (Date: _____)
- Obtained baptism certificate(s)
- Obtained letters of freedom
- Completed marriage preparation course
- Met with priest to complete paperwork

To be completed in parish in which wedding will take place:

- Made enquiry six months before the wedding
- Made enquiries regarding local preparation of the ceremony (readings, music, rehearsal etc.)
- Registered the wedding in the local district

Marriage Preparation Checklist
Couple resident in another parish marrying in Cathedral parish

To be completed in parish in which couple is resident:

- Made enquiry six months before the wedding
- Met with priest to complete initial paperwork
- Inscribed on marriage preparation course (Date: _____)
- Obtained baptism certificate(s)
- Obtained letters of freedom
- Completed marriage preparation course
- Met with priest to complete paperwork

To be completed in St Mary's Cathedral parish:

- Made enquiry six months before the wedding
- Made contact with organist
- Made contact with Cathedral florist (if desired)
- Made contact with the celebrant to discuss readings and book rehearsal date and time (Date: _____)
- Made payment to Cathedral for use of the Church
- Registered the wedding in the local district
- Obtained Marriage Schedule

Marriage Preparation Checklist
Couple resident in Cathedral parish and marrying in the Cathedral

To be completed in parish in which couple is resident:

- Made enquiry six months before the wedding
- Met with priest to complete initial paperwork
- Inscribed on marriage preparation course (Date: _____)
- Obtained baptism certificate(s)
- Obtained letters of freedom
- Completed marriage preparation course
- Met with priest to complete paperwork
- Made contact with organist
- Made contact with Cathedral florist (if desired)
- Made contact with the celebrant to discuss readings and book rehearsal date and time (Date: _____)
- Registered the wedding in the local district
- Obtained Marriage Schedule