



## What is the Sacrament of Matrimony in the Catholic Church?

*“The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establishes between themselves a partnership of the whole 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, #1601)

### **As an initial step, we encourage you to reflect on the following questions together:**

- Why do I want to be married in the Catholic Church?
- How committed am I to my (our) relationship with God?
- How committed am I to my (our) relationship with the Catholic Church?
- As a baptized Catholic, do I celebrate the other Sacraments of my faith? Do I join the community in worshipping our God on Sundays? If not, why not?

### **A. To enter into marriage, you must be “free” to marry.**

Any marriage contracted by a Christian is presumed to be permanent and indissoluble whether witnessed by a priest, deacon, minister, a justice of the peace, a judge, or even a lay person who performs the role of officiant, until proven otherwise. If either party has been married before, the preparation process for a second marriage cannot begin unless your previous spouse is deceased, or the marriage is found by the Church to be null. If a former spouse is still living and the previous marriage has not been annulled, contact the deacon at the parish to immediately begin the annulment process.

### **B. The Catholic party(s) should be living his/her Catholic faith.**

It is not necessary that both parties are Catholic, but either the bride or the groom should be a regular participant in the Sacramental life of the Church. In a marriage where only one of the spouses is Catholic, the parish must obtain permission to marry from the Archbishop. Permission is generally granted as long as the Catholic intends to remain Catholic and plans to raise children from this marriage in the Catholic faith. The non-Catholic party should have a basic understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church and agree not to interfere with the practice of the faith of the Catholic party or the children being raised in the Catholic faith.

Cohabitation and sexual relations outside of marriage will be discussed in your marriage preparation meetings. The Church has a rich teaching on marriage, sexuality, and family life.

### **C. Belonging to a Catholic parish.**

For preparation and marriage at Holy Name Catholic Parish, you are encouraged to be registered in the parish. If you are registered in another parish, the pastor of your parish must approve you being married at Holy Name Catholic Parish, and he should guide your marriage preparation process.



## **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Wedding Ceremony:**

The marriage rite is complete in itself; however, most Catholic couples wish to include it within a Nuptial Mass. Mixed religion couples may prefer a Liturgy of the Word Service which includes Scripture readings, a homily, and special prayers, but does not include the Liturgy of the Eucharist. You may invite another priest or deacon in good standing with the Catholic Church to conduct the ceremony. Please discuss this in your initial meeting.

### **Wedding Ceremony Date & Time:**

A tentative date can be added but will not be confirmed until you have met with the pastor or parochial vicar. Saturday weddings may not begin after 2:00 p.m. Weekday weddings are a possibility.

### **Wedding Music:**

The Holy Name music director will assist you with the music and will normally provide the music for your wedding. Please contact Angie at [music@holynamedenver.org](mailto:music@holynamedenver.org) at least three months before your wedding. See more information on the 'Wedding Music' page in this folder.

### **Other Traditions:**

On occasion, couples want to add things to the Mass such as lighting a unity candle or mixing of sand as seen in secular and non-Catholic weddings, however these are not part of a Catholic marriage ceremony. Some Hispanic traditions are permitted, and presenting a bouquet of flowers at the Marian altar is also allowed.

### **Church Fees:**

Fees will be discussed at the initial meeting. Parishioners are not charged for the use of the Church. Others who wish to use the church will be charged a fee to help with its normal care.

### **Saint Agnes Parish Hall:**

Arrangements for renting Saint Agnes Hall for your reception and for a bride's dressing room are handled by the facility coordinator who will review the contract and discuss fees with you. The Hall is only rented to parishioners. Contact Joni at [office@holynamedenver.org](mailto:office@holynamedenver.org) or call her at 303-781-6093 after the initial wedding meeting.