

*Ed. 01.2021*

**Parish of Inistioge**  
**Diocese of Ossory**

**Guidelines for  
Celebrating  
Marriage**

*St Colmcille's Church  
Inistioge*

*St Brendan's Church  
Clodiagh*

*Church of The Assumption  
The Rower*



*Marriage Feast at Cana*

*Wherever you go, I will go,  
Wherever you live, I will live,  
Your people shall be my people,  
And your God will be my God too.*

*Book of Ruth*

# A Very Warm Welcome To You

Thank you for choosing the beautiful, scenic, Parish of Inistioge to celebrate your marriage.

To assist you with the preparations for your wedding ceremony, the following guidelines may be of help.

## Weddings Bookings

Inistioge Parish welcomes couples to the parish for the celebration of their marriage. In general only one wedding per day is booked.



The exception to this is, that if a parishioner seeks to book a wedding on a day that an 'outside' wedding is already booked in, then we will seek to accommodate the request by asking both parties to be a little flexible with the timing of their weddings.

## Church Documents

The Bride and Groom must complete a ***Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form***. This form is completed by the priest of the parish where you reside and it will then be forward to the Parish of Inistioge.

In completing the Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form you will need the following documents:

- Certificate of Baptism
- Certificate of Confirmation
- Letter/s of Freedom (where necessary)

The parish/s in which you received the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation will issue these certificates.

The Certificate of Baptism must have been issued within the previous six months – original documents from the time of the sacraments will not suffice.



To establish that you are free to get married you will be asked to obtain a **Letter of Freedom** from each parish where you have lived for six months or more since your eighteenth birthday.

Your parents or others may be asked to sign a document to establish that you are free to marry.

In the case of couples living abroad, you will need to obtain the certificates as outlined above.

The priest in the parish of your residence abroad will then complete your *Pre-nuptial Enquiry Form* and will forward it to the local bishop, who in turn, will send it to the local Bishop's office here in Ossory: *Diocesan Office, James Street, Kilkenny*. The Bishop will forward them to the Parish Office in Inistioge.

## Pre Marriage Course

It is a requirement in The Diocese of Ossory that all couples attend a pre marriage course.

These courses are facilitated by **Accord**. The website [www.accord.ie](http://www.accord.ie) gives details of venues and dates.

Upon completion of the course Accord will issue a certificate of attendance and you will be required to give this to the priest who is completing your Pre Nuptial Enquiry Form.

## Church Ceremony

When you are planning a Catholic Marriage Ceremony the following two options are worthy of consideration:

- The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage within the celebration of Mass.
- The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage outside of Mass.

The choice of service should be made in the light of the personal circumstances of bride and groom.





Most Catholics will choose to have their marriage within a Nuptial Mass.

However, where one of the parties is not Roman Catholic, for example, the marriage ceremony outside of Mass may be more appropriate.

It is important to make this decision following discussion with your families and with the priest who is to officiate.

- During the days before the marriage, it is recommended that couples prepare spiritually by celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## Wedding Booklet

Many couples prepare a booklet to assist the congregation attending the ceremony. This is completely optional.

A number of websites are available and helpful in booklet preparation. ***However, please consult with the celebrant (Solemniser) before the final draft is given to the printers.***

Our Parish Office can provide you with a Word Document of the Rite of Marriage and a selection of Readings.

## Flowers – Candles – Confetti

- \* Flowers should be tastefully arranged and not obscure the Altar or the Ambo.
- \* In general, flowers should only be arranged on the morning of the wedding, after the morning mass.
- \* Please check and make arrangements with the sacristan.



- \* Flowers may not be placed on the carpets – otherwise, they will be ‘carefully’ removed!
- \* Flowers or ribbons may be attached to the seats as ‘pew-ends’.
- \* **Thumb tacks, staples, cellotape or bluetack must not be used.** Pew-end decorations should be taken away immediately after the ceremony.
- \* **Seats should not be moved without first consulting with the Sacristan or Priest.**
- \* Some flowers are usually left in place as a gift to the church.
- \* **For Health & Safety reasons**, the use of candles or lanterns in the main body of the church is not allowed.
- \* The use of confetti, flower petals, etc., in the church or on the church grounds is not allowed – they create a mess and are impossible to clean up!

*(Please give a photocopy of this section to your florist)*

## Music

You have chosen to celebrate your marriage in church and therefore there are implications by virtue of that choice.

The music you choose for your wedding ceremony should be in keeping with the sacred character of the occasion.



Non-Sacred songs may be inappropriate and should not be used during the religious ceremony.

Favourite songs, perhaps, could be used during the signing of the ***Marriage Registration Form*** after the wedding, or at the reception.

# Photography and Videography

In order to maintain a sense of the sacred, and yet facilitate the work of a photographer or videographer, we ask that you advise them to take note of the following guidelines:

- ◇ The taking of photographs and video recordings should be unobtrusive. It should not be distracting to you, the congregation or the priest.
- ◇ Photographer/videographer should not move church furnishings, such as *Sacred Spaces, Pews, Paschal Candle*, etc. To know this beforehand gives them the opportunity to make the necessary arrangements for their work.
- ◇ The only area that the photographer/videographer is asked to refrain from using is the entire Sanctuary area.
- ◇ The photographer/videographer should not cross in front or behind the altar during the ceremony. The church building is not a photographic studio!
- ◇ As well as using the church grounds, the photographer/videographer is welcome to use the centre and side aisles, as well as the organ loft for their work.

*(Please give a photocopy of this section to your photographer and/or videographer)*

## Signing the Marriage Registration Form

The Civil Register (MRF) is signed after the church ceremony has ended.

***Please remember that the signed Marriage Registration Form (MRF) will be handed over to you after the ceremony and it's your responsibility to forward this to the Registrar of Marriages within one month of the wedding day.***



## Drinks Reception at Church?

Some Hotels, Wedding Planners and Courtesy-Car companies promote the practice of providing champagne or cocktails for the wedding party as they exit the church after the ceremony. Such hospitality is more suited and appropriate to the hotel of the reception and is not permitted on our church grounds.



All relevant agencies should be made aware of this regulation.

## Offerings and Gratuities



The upkeep of our church buildings, as well as heating, lighting, insurance and general maintenance are a major ongoing burden and cost to any parish. So, it's no surprise that the unsavoury matter of Gratuities and Offerings are addressed whenever the occasion seems appropriate.

We therefore let you know that it's customary to make an offering to the parish in appreciation of, and to defray the cost of, the facilities and services that are provided. These are our guidelines which are in keeping with the general norm throughout the country. However, we do emphasise that they are only guidelines and that no couple or family will be unfairly treated.

- ◆ If you are living in the parish, and are not a regular contributor to the parish collections, you are encouraged to make a generous donation.
- ◆ If you are a non-parishioner you are requested to pay €500 for the use of the church, office and secretarial services.
- ◆ It is also customary to make a donation to those who helped during the whole process:

- i) It is customary to give an offering to the priest who conducted the arrangements, the paperwork etc.
- ii) For attendance at the wedding rehearsal, and for the set-up and take-down on the wedding day, the Sacristan should be suitably remunerated with an appropriate offering.
- iii) You should also to give an offering to the priest (*the solemniser*) who conducted the marriage ceremony.



## Concluding Comments

Finally, we wish you all the very best as you plan your Wedding Day, and every happiness & blessing in the years ahead.

Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or if you feel we might be of any help to you.

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## APPENDIX A

### State Registration

Please be aware that, according to Civil Law, couples must give notice to the State that you intend to get married.

This notification must be given at least **THREE MONTHS** prior to the wedding date at the office of *Registration of Births, Death and Marriages*.

That office will issue you with the Marriage Registration Form (**MRF**).

You must bring this form to the ceremony: it will be signed by you, the witnesses and the celebrant at the Church ceremony and must be returned to the registrar by you within one month of the wedding ceremony.

Please note: No **MRF** on the Wedding Day – No Wedding!



By civil law, the marriage may not proceed.

Further information on State requirements can be received from the HSE:

[www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find\\_a\\_Service/bdm/Getting\\_Married\\_in\\_Ireland/](http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Find_a_Service/bdm/Getting_Married_in_Ireland/)

## APPENDIX B

### Declaration of No Civil Impediment

Also, by Civil Law, the bride and groom are required to make the following declaration before the ceremony .

This must be witnessed by the Best man and Bridesmaid and is normally carried out on the evening of the rehearsal or at the beginning of the marriage ceremony.

#### Formula of the 'declaration' used:

**Priest:**

(Name), do you declare that you do not know of any civil impediment to the marriage that you are about to enter with (Name)?

**Bridegroom:** I do

**Priest:**

(Name), do you declare that you do not know of any civil impediment to the marriage that you are about to enter with (Name)?

**Bride:** I do.



