



CHRIST CATHEDRAL PARISH
ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE of ORANGE

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Instructions for Matrimony

Revised on Feb. 1, 2023

Dear Future Brides and Grooms:

First and foremost, we join in thanking the Almighty God for shining His love upon you through the blessing and sanctity of married life. We are delighted that you have chosen to make a lifelong commitment to each other, in the eyes of God. It is our privilege to walk you through the steps of preparing for marriage at Christ Cathedral.

Following are primary considerations which have been designed to answer most of your questions and to assist you on how wedding ceremonies conducted at the Cathedral:

DATE, TIME & LOCATION:

1. Confirm with the Cathedral's calendaring desk to ensure that the date, time and location you desire will be available.
2. Confirm the date and time with the priest/deacon who will officiate your wedding ceremony.
3. Confirm the location of your choice as the Cathedral has several options (e.g., the Cathedral, the Arboretum, the Chapel in the Sky, etc.).
4. It is not advisable to schedule the reception without knowing the availability of the Cathedral.
5. It is not advisable to book the wedding date, time & location without knowing your previous marriage(s) annulled and granted according to the Canon Law of the Catholic Church prior to the wedding ceremony at the Cathedral.

DOCUMENTS YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED TO PRESENT:

Preparing for your wedding ceremony at the Cathedral entails the following documents, that need to be presented at the Wedding Preparation Information meeting:

1. **Baptismal Certificate:** Newly issued baptismal certificate from the church where you were baptized. Non-Catholic Baptized individuals will also need to submit a valid baptismal certificate. This serves to verify that you are either Catholic or Non-Catholic. *Please turn them in to the priest/deacon at the Wedding Preparation Information meeting.*

2. **First Communion and Confirmation Certificates:** If they were issued at the time the sacraments were received, they will be acceptable. *Please turn in the photocopies of your certificates to the priest/deacon at the Wedding Preparation Information meeting.*
3. **Testimony to Prove Free State to Marry:** Four (4) copies of the “Testimony to Prove Free State to Marry” are to be completed, signed and witnessed before a priest/deacon or notary public by two family members, relatives or friends of each the bride and groom to state that both are free to marry in the Catholic Church. *Please turn them in to the priest/deacon at the Wedding Preparation Information meeting.* To download the form at <https://www.christcathedralcalifornia.org/sacrament/weddings/>.
4. **Previous Marriages:** If either the bride or groom has ever been part of a previous marriage, under any circumstance, it must be annulled and granted according to the Canon Law of the Catholic Church prior to the wedding ceremony at the Cathedral. It is not advisable to book the wedding date, time & location without knowing the previous marriages annulled and granted. You are required to provide copies of previous marriage licenses and/or certificates, final divorce decree(s), and/or granted annulments, if applicable. *Please turn them in to the priest/deacon at the Wedding Preparation Information meeting.*
5. **Pre-nuptial Questionnaire:** As part of your wedding ceremony requirement at the Cathedral, two copies of the Pre-nuptial Questionnaire are to be completed and signed by the bride/groom *at the Wedding Preparation Information meeting.* The form serves to verify your current marital status and your marriage intentions.
 - a) Widow, Widower, Separated, or Divorced
 - b) Still single, never married before, wish to marry your Fiancé at the Cathedral
 - c) Wish to validate your civil marriage with your current spouse at the Cathedral
 - d) Wish to re-marry another spouse at Christ Cathedral
 - e) Freely and without reservation to give yourselves to each other in marriage
 - f) Love and honor each other as husband and wife for the rest of your lives
 - g) Accept children lovingly from God and bring them up according to the law of Christ and his Church
6. **Marriage License:** Newly issued and blank Marriage License may be obtained from the County Courthouse and must be valid for 90 days from the date of issuance. The Orange County Courthouse is located at 211 West Santa Ana, Room 201. Business hours are Monday – Friday | 8:00 am – 4:30 pm. *Please turn it in to the priest/deacon no later than two (2) months prior to the wedding date.*
7. **Civil Marriage License:** If you are currently civilly married and your marriage has never been blessed in the Catholic Church, and you wish to have it blessed by a priest/deacon at the Cathedral, *please turn in your marriage license/certificate to the priest/deacon at the Wedding Preparation Information meeting.*

VISITING PRIESTS & RESPONSIBILITIES:

If you would like to have a priest/deacon from outside the Cathedral officiate your wedding ceremony, he will need to do the following:

1. Handle and execute all necessary paperwork required of a visiting priest.
2. Ensure that you are prepared and have taken the proper steps for marriage in the style of the Roman Catholic Church, including but not limited to, matrimonial classes, documentation, consultations, advisements, etc. Please turn in the file to the Rector of Christ Cathedral no later than two (2) months prior to the wedding date.
3. If the priest/deacon is not a member of the Diocese of Orange, he will need to submit to the Rector a current letter of good standing signed by his superior/(arch) bishop. Please turn it in to the Rector no later than two (2) months prior to the wedding date.
4. Obtain delegation from the Rector no later than two (2) months prior to the wedding date.

WEDDING CEREMONIES OF VARYING FAITHS:

A wedding ceremony between individuals of varying religious faiths may take place through one of the following guidelines:

1. Between two baptized Catholics should be celebrated within a Catholic Mass;
2. Between a baptized Catholic and a baptized Christian may be celebrated within Mass;
3. Between a baptized Catholic and non-baptized person is celebrated outside Mass. (However, a request to celebrate within Mass is nearly always granted.)

MANDATORY MARRIAGE PREPARATION CLASSES:

The following marital classes are mandatory and must be taken by both the bride and groom in preparation for marriage and wedding ceremony at the Cathedral:

1. Attend, in-person, one (1) Wedding Preparation Information meeting. For details, please see the Cathedral's webpage at <https://www.christcathedralcalifornia.org/sacrament/weddings/>.
2. Attend a Marriage Preparation Class. After completion of the Class of your choice, you will receive a certificate. *Please turn it in to the priest/deacon no later than two (2) months prior to the wedding ceremony date.* Class may be taken in person or online at <https://orangecounty.engagedencounter.com/reservations/>.

WEDDING COORDINATION:

- 1. The Wedding Coordinator** will contact you regarding the rehearsal schedule, readings & prayers, altar servers & sacristan, decorations, and photography & videography. She is responsible for assisting the bride and groom, the wedding party, and the priest/deacon.
- 2. The Music Contact Person** will contact you as your wedding ceremony nears.
- 3. The Liturgical Administrator, Mrs. Ana Guardado-Chavez** (714-620-7862, Monday – Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, aguardado@christcathedralparish.org), will contact you approximately *three (3) weeks after the Wedding Preparation Information meeting* to confirm your wedding date, time & location, wedding coordinator, music contact person, paperwork contact person (normally a deacon), and church offering.
- 4. Church Offering:** It is customary to make a suggested donation to the Church for her utilities. \$1,100: for parishioners being registered as the Cathedral's members for at least nine (9) months. \$1,600: for non-parishioners within Diocese. \$2,100: for non-parishioners outside Diocese.

In addition, we collect \$790 from each wedding: music (\$450), wedding coordinator (\$230), altar servers (\$40), powerpoint (\$40) and sacristan (\$30). We are happy to assist you if you have any financial hardships.

We pray that the Lord continues to enrich and strengthen you through the special rite of marriage. We hope that your experience with us will be pleasant, and an encouragement to further your involvement in the life of the Church. We will make every effort and consideration to accommodate your wishes while adhering to the laws of the Roman Catholic Church. We look forward to being part of your special day.

Through the intercessions of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, may God bless you abundantly and bring to completion your respect and love for each other!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Very Rev. Bao Thai
Rector of Christ Cathedral