

Wedding Information - Holy Family

The Wedding Service

The wedding service is a joy-filled expression of your love commitment to each other. In the Catholic ceremony there are two basic styles of service - either a Nuptial Mass (ie a Wedding service with Mass) or a Marriage Ceremony (ie a Wedding service without Mass). If you attend Mass regularly, or if the Mass is important to your family, you may prefer a Nuptial Mass. If you don't attend Mass regularly, or if many of your guests are non-Catholics, you may feel more comfortable choosing a Wedding Ceremony. In either case, we are happy to accommodate your preference.

In both styles of service there is a fair degree of flexibility and freedom and the priest will guide you through the selection of readings and prayers in the preparation time leading up to the Wedding Day. Although the Service has a strong Christian focus, there is an opportunity to incorporate reflections and/or symbolic actions from sources other than the Christian tradition.

In both Services, there are opportunities for family members and friends to participate in your Wedding Service. These include:

- Reading from the Scriptures or reflections
- Reading the Prayers of the Faithful
- Bringing up the Gifts (if there is a Nuptial Mass)

Music

Music is an important element in enhancing the celebratory and sacredness of the Marriage Service. The selection of music is your choice.

If you wish to have a musician(s) / singer(s) at your wedding please organise with them directly.

If you wish to use CD's, Holy Family has a CD player. Alternatively, you may wish to bring your own CD player as a back-up.

Please note that Copyright laws are very strict. Therefore if songs whose words are suitable for a Christian marriage are used instead of hymns, the words and music of the songs cannot be included in the booklet without the appropriate permission from the publishers. The responsibility for obtaining that permission is yours.

Booklets

Many couples feel that a personally prepared Marriage Booklet enables guests to participate more fully in the Ceremony, as well as being a special keepsake.

The parish does not have the facility to print Wedding Booklets so you would need to organise the printing of the booklets yourselves.

Flowers

The protocol for the floral arrangement is that you provide the flowers, normally a day before the wedding and a team of ladies will arrange them for you. The contact details will be provided at your initial meeting with the priest. The Church also has artificial flowers and wedding bows for your use.

The Celebrant

The Priest who will officiate at your Wedding is happy to meet with you, preferably soon after you have booked your wedding, to guide you through the Ceremony, paperwork and marriage preparation; to answer your questions and, most importantly, to work with you to make your Wedding Day a memorable and enjoyable one so that you can successfully move forward into married life.

If you wish to have a Priest other than one from the parish of Holy Family to officiate at your Wedding, he would be most welcome. You will need to make the necessary arrangements with him. Likewise, if one of you are a non-Catholic and would like to have your religious minister be part of the Ceremony, again he/she would be most welcome.

The Rehearsal

To familiarise and help you feel more comfortable with the Wedding Service, a Wedding Rehearsal will be organised between one day and one week prior to the wedding.

Confetti

There is no charge for the cleaning and preparation of the Church before your Wedding. We will have the Church looking the best for your Wedding. We ask that you show consideration for others by advising your guests that confetti, or anything similar, may not be thrown in the Church or its immediate surrounds.

Documentation

Your Wedding is both a State and Church affair and you will need to fill in papers for both organisations. But please, don't worry - this task is not as difficult as you might think. When you meet with the Priest he will go through the various questions with you. As part of the documentation, you will need to bring to your preparation meeting your:

Full Birth Certificate if you were born in Australia. For those born in Victoria you can obtain your birth certificate by contacting the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Ground Floor, 595 Collins Street, Melbourne. (GPO Box 4332, Melbourne Vic 3001). Ph 1300 369 367

If you were born overseas, you will need a Birth Certificate from your country of birth or your Passport, preferably an Australian Passport if you have one.

Baptism Certificate

If you were baptised at Ss Peter & Paul's, West Geelong, Holy Spirit, Manifold Heights, or Holy Family, Bell Park, then St Michael's Parish Office would have a record of your Baptism, hence there is no need for you to acquire a Baptism Certificate.

If you were baptised a Catholic but not at one of the three above-mentioned parishes, you will need to contact the parish of your Baptism and they will forward your Baptism Certificate to you.

If you are a baptised non-Catholic, again you would contact the Church of your Baptism and they will forward your Baptism Certificate to you.

Permission to Marry

If the Catholic party/parties is/are not resident in St Michael's Parish (Ss Peter & Paul's Geelong West, Holy Spirit Manifold Heights or Holy Family Bell Park), you will need to acquire a Permission to Marry (if you are the bride or the Catholic party in a mixed marriage), or otherwise a Letter of Freedom to Marry from the Parish Priest where you are resident. This Letter of Freedom to Marry is just a courtesy between parishes and involves no more than ringing the parish in which you reside and asking for it.

Documentation needed in Special Circumstances

Please note: If one of you, whether Catholic or not, has been previously married and divorced, regardless of where the marriage took place, be it in a Catholic Church, a non-Catholic place of worship or gardens, your situation requires special attention. In most cases someone in this position requires a Decree of Nullity (a special Church process) which can take a considerable amount of time, generally over twelve months. If you are in this situation please contact one of the Priests of the parish before proceeding with your Wedding plans at Holy Family Church.

If one of you has been married before and your former spouse has died, State law requires that you produce your Marriage Certificate and the Death Certificate of your former spouse.

If one or both of you are under eighteen years, State Law requires the consent of parents be given as well as permission from the Magistrate Court.

Church Offering

The Holy Family Parish Leadership Team have made a policy that there be an offering for Weddings at the Church to ensure the ongoing maintenance and repair of the Church.

The account is enclosed in this package and it covers the use of the Church and an offering for the Celebrant. The offering is **\$600** and is required at the time of booking.

If the Celebrant is **not** from St Michael's Parish, please pay the \$600 to the Parish and a further donation is then payable by you to the Celebrant.

We require that the full amount be paid before the Church and the Priest are considered booked for your Wedding. If we haven't received the offering a month after this package has been sent, then we will presume you no longer wish to proceed with your Wedding at Holy Family.

Would you kindly make the money order / cheque payable to: St Michael's Parish and post or drop it into the Pastoral Cluster Office, 147 Separation St Bell Park Vic 3215.

If you wish to change the time/date, you can do so provided that the new time/date is available.

Please note:-

The government papers for your marriage must be completed a full calendar month before your wedding. Therefore, as soon as possible book your Marriage Preparation Course and gather the certificates you need.

After completion of your marriage preparation course contact the celebrant of your marriage for an appointment to do all the paperwork required for wedding day.