

# CHECK LIST

DATE OF WEDDING	TIME
Things To do	Done? Dates?
Speak to the Priest (about six months before) to make initial date for wedding.	
Make appointment to see Local Registrar - fee payable.	
Deliver Certificate for Marriage to the Priest.	
Interview with the Priest to fill in 'Information for Marriage Form'	
New copies of Baptism Certificates given to Priest. Must not be issued more than 6 months before the date of wedding.	
Letters of Freedom handed in.	
Readings chosen and approved by Priest.	
Hymns and/or music chosen and approved by Priest.	
Arrange to attend a 'Marriage Preparation Course'	
Order of Service approved by priest.	
Organist arranged.	
Flowers arranged.	
Speak to photographer re: church rules	
Speak to videographer re: church rules and licence	
Licence purchased (if required)	
Wedding Rehearsal.	
Authorised Person's Fee paid.	
Organist's Fee paid	
Flower Arrangers paid	
Church Fee paid	
Priest's Offering.	

## Sacrament of Marriage



## Wedding Preparations

# Sacrament of Marriage

(... without love I am nothing at all ... St Paul to the Corinthians)  
(1 Cor. 13:2)

You have decided to get married. Congratulations. It is a happy and exciting time for you. Naturally, you want to make plans and you want everything to be perfect on your wedding day.

Marriage is a Sacrament. Choosing to be married in a Catholic Church implies that you have a real spiritual dimension to your life; that you understand the profound nature and commitment of the vows you make before God, asking Jesus to be part of your married life together and the blessing of the Church in your marriage.

## GETTING MARRIED AT HOLY FAMILY OR ST THOMAS MORE CHURCH

We follow the Brentwood Diocesan directions and require at least six months notice for a wedding.

Your *home* parish is the best setting for your wedding. Generally speaking, we would ask, therefore, if you wish to be married at Holy Family or St. Thomas More:-

- You, or your partner have your home within our parish;
- You are going to live in the parish after you are married;
- You or your partner are members of the worshipping community of Holy Family or St. Thomas More, if living outside the boundaries of the parish;
- You or your partner have strong family links with Holy Family or St. Thomas More Church.

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There are many fine secular songs and pieces of music which are excellent for the reception but not suited for use in church.

We have a "pool" of organists who are willing to play at weddings. The fee should be confirmed with the organist. Contact the Church Office on 01268 799649 in the first instance.

## AUTHORISED PERSON'S ATTENDANCE FEE

On your wedding day, the Authorised Person for the parish will be in attendance to record your marriage in the civil register and issue your marriage certificate. The civil fee for the service is £50.00 payable at the time of the wedding rehearsal. One marriage certificate is issued on the day of the marriage. Extra copies are available at a charge of £7.50 each. These can be obtained at any time after the wedding. The Authorised Person will need to speak to the couple for a short time prior to the wedding.

**CHURCH FEE** - It is customary to make an offering to the Church to cover expenses, the use of the church and the time given by the Priest to prepare you for your wedding, the rehearsal and conduct the ceremony. An offering of £100 is suggested for the use of the church. If this is not possible, please speak to the Parish Priest.

Any offering to the Priest is your personal decision.

All fees (church, authorised person, organ) can be given to the Priest at the rehearsal.

**CONFETTI** - Only biodegradable confetti is allowed and then only outside the church - no confetti is to be thrown inside the church.



Holy Family Parish, 661 High Road, Benfleet, SS7 5SF  
01268 792082 and 01268 799649  
[www/holyfamily-church.org](http://www/holyfamily-church.org)

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Please note that there are laws on copyright. A video licence is required by civil law to record a wedding ceremony. Most companies who specialise in weddings will already have an appropriate licence - however, please check that they do. If a family member or friend is videoing the ceremony during the times music is being played, either live or recorded, and intends to edit the video or even add music later or is planning to also video the reception where live or recorded music is being played, we would advise you that you may also need a licence. For more details contact [www.wvrl.co.uk](http://www.wvrl.co.uk) for full information. Please let us have a copy of the licence. Note also, that if you intend to use pre-recorded music, a licence is required. (We are licensed for playing of recorded music but not for the video recording of them in the background). Please give a copy of the recorded music to the priest in good time so that it can be checked for suitability.

**FLOWERS** - Where the wedding takes place on a Saturday, the main floral arrangements are expected to remain in place for the weekend Masses that follow on Saturday and Sunday. Please will you deal directly with the Flower Arrangers concerning choices of colour and payment. In the event of more than one wedding occurring on the same day, couples are expected to share the planning of and payments for flowers. You may, of course, use your own florist but they will need to contact the church regarding delivery etc.

Contact: Julie Herridge on 01268 799649

**MUSIC** - Every marriage is a two-fold celebration, the church ceremony and the reception that follows. One is religious the other is secular, so the music in each should conform to the occasion. The Catholic Church requires that music during the church ceremony both expresses the faith of the church and be appropriate to the celebration.

**MARRIAGE COURSE** - The Church cares about you and your future life together. All couples are required to take part in a marriage preparation course. The dates of the courses can be obtained from the Parish Priest.

**MEETING WITH THE PRIEST** - As with most things these days there is quite some paperwork involved in getting married. At the initial meeting with the priest you will be asked to help him fill in a Pre-Nuptial Inquiry form. This is information about both of you, where you live, where you were baptised, etc. After this meeting he will advise you on obtaining the following documents.....

### **CATHOLIC PARTNER.**

[1]. A copy of your baptismal certificate, to be issued **ONLY SIX MONTHS** prior to the wedding. [If you have one from the day you were baptised as a child this is **NOT** acceptable.] This can be easily obtained from the parish priest where you were baptised. We suggest, if you cannot visit the priest conveniently, that you write to him enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. Your Baptismal Certificate should refer to your Confirmation. If you were confirmed in a different parish, you may need to get a separate Confirmation Certificate.

If you have not been Confirmed you should talk to your priest about this at your first meeting.

[2]. If you are not resident in Holy Family parish a **LETTER OF FREEDOM** from the Parish priest within whose boundary you live will have to be obtained and you will need his permission to get married at either of our parish churches.

## NON-CATHOLIC PARTNER -

[1]. You will need proof that you have been baptised in a Christian Church. If you are not a Christian the priest will explain the procedure.

[2]. You will also need a letter from your parents indicating that you are free to marry and that you have never been married before.

**Once these documents have been received you will be asked to sign the form in the presence of the priest.**

**MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE** - In order to be married in any Catholic church, civil law requires that both parties must produce a 'Certificate for Marriage' from the Registrar for Marriages. It is against the law for a marriage to be solemnised unless these certificates have been given to the Priest in advance of the wedding.

You must give notice of your marriage at the Register Office where you live. If one of you lives in another registration district, you must inform that Register Office also.

You can give notice and apply for a "Certificate" up to twelve months in advance of your wedding but you must give at least 16 days notice.

To give notice to the Registrar you will need to have a form of identity such as a birth certificate or passport.

You should take your Certificate(s) to your priest as soon as you obtain it. Full details on civil requirements can be found on

[www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/marriages/](http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/marriages/)

**CATHOLIC PARTNERS DECLARATION** - A Catholic partner, marrying a non-catholic Christian or non-baptised person will be required to make the following declaration:

"I declare that I am ready to uphold my Catholic faith and to avoid all dangers of falling away from it. Moreover, I sincerely undertake, that I will

do all I can within the unity of our partnership, to have all the children of our marriage baptised and brought up in the Catholic Church."

**PREPARING THE CEREMONY** - "Will we have a Nuptial Mass or a Wedding Service? The priest will talk this through with you and help you to come to the best decision. He will also help you to choose the Scripture readings which will be used at the service. Take time and effort over the readings, don't just leave it up to the priest. Also he will help you with choices of music which must be Christian based.

Note: If you are providing your own service sheets, you should be aware that we have licenses regarding copyright for re-printing of words, and the numbers should be printed in the small print at the end of the order of service. The Order of Service must be approved by the Priest.

**WEDDING REHEARSAL** - This will be arranged to take place during the week prior to the Wedding. Required at the rehearsal will be the bride, groom, best man, bridesmaids, father of the bride (or whoever is giving her away), and the readers. Other members of the family are also very welcome to attend if they wish. The Authorised person for the parish may also be present.

## USEFUL INFORMATION

**PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS** - The ceremony of marriage is a religious service. This must be kept in mind when planning photographs or a video of the occasion. It is not fitting for the photographer or videographer to be based in the Sanctuary. Please speak to the priest about this and ensure your photographer/videographer is aware of the limitations. **It is against the law to take photos of the actual signing of the Register** but a 'pretend' photo can be taken immediately afterwards.