

In virtue of the sacrament of marriage, married Christians signify and share in the mystery of the unity and fruitful love that exists between Christ and his Church; they thus help each other to attain holiness in their married life and in welcoming and rearing children; and they have their own special place and gift among the people of God.

A marriage is established by the marriage covenant the irrevocable consent that the spouses freely give to and receive from each other. This unique union of man and woman and the good of the children impose total fidelity on each of them and the unbreakable unity of their bond. To make the indissoluble marriage a clearer sign of this full meaning and a surer help in its fulfillment, Christ the Lord raised it to the dignity of a sacrament, modeled in his own nuptial bond with the Church.

Christian couples, therefore, are to nourish and develop their marriage by undivided love; in a merging of human and divine, they remain faithful in body and in mind, in good times and in bad.



St. Gertrude's Parish Smithfield

Cnr. Justin & Neville Street
Phone: 9604 1199



Information for those who wish to celebrate their wedding at:

***St. Benedict's Church
Smithfield
Or
St Therese's Church
Fairfield West***

Preparation for Marriage

Couples planning to be married in St. Benedict's Church or St Therese's Church are kindly requested to follow these requirements.

1. Book the church well in advance, at least six months. Send Wedding Booking Form together with the \$55 for the Administration & Booking Fee.
2. Meet the priest who will celebrate your wedding, (six months before your wedding date) and discuss all the necessary requirements with him.
3. Attend a Pre marriage course for the Engaged Couples, sponsored by the Catholic Church. You should attend at least one of these courses several months before the wedding and preferably before you meet with the celebrant.
4. Present the required documents when you meet with your Celebrant:
 - BIRTH CERTIFICATE
The law requires Australian born persons to present a Birth Certificate original. If not born in Australia, then you need to bring your overseas passport or overseas birth certificate and a Statutory Declaration regarding birth.
 - BAPTISM CERTIFICATE
A recently issued certificate is required in the case of all Baptised persons (6 months). This can be obtained by contacting the church where the baptism took place. If you were baptised overseas please ensure the name and address of parish is legible.
 - CONFIRMATION CERTIFICATE
Date and place of Confirmation
 - Others (if necessary)
5. Fill in the prescribed forms. These forms must be completed before the officiating celebrant **from 6 months to 31 days before the marriage is celebrated according to the "Marriage Act"**. The ideal time would be between four and five months before the actual Wedding day.
6. **Mixed Marriages**
At least one party has to be a baptized Catholic for the church to be used for a wedding. When one partner is not a Catholic, the Catholic party will be asked to sign and answer the question, *"Do you sincerely promise to do all in you power to share your faith with your children by having them baptised and brought up in the Catholic Church?"* The marriage ceremony is the same in all cases.
7. **Previous Marriages**
If either party has been through any form of marriage before, no matter where or when, **it is very important to discuss this with the priest before making a firm booking.** In these cases the death certificate of the

previous spouse; a **certificate of annulment** of the previous marriage; and divorce papers should be supplied.

8. Those who will sign the Marriage Certificate must be over 18 years of age.
9. A copy of the Marriage Certificate may be applied for from the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages as soon as you wish and usually is available within 7 working days after which the Registry will send to you.
10. Plan the marriage ceremony with the Priest who will celebrate your wedding. The couples usually prepare their own wedding booklet.
11. Attend the wedding practice in the church together with the celebrant and the wedding party. Ideally this should be done just a few days before the wedding.
12. **Sacrament of Reconciliation:** It is strongly recommended that Catholic parties receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation/Confession prior to their wedding.
13. The usual organist/singers approved for our church are:
 - Anna Kleibert (singer/organist)
 - Albino Cotellazzi (organist)
 - Lycia Manche (organist)
 - Tania Rashidi (organist))
14. **Recommended offerings: (to be paid one month before Wedding) Church - from \$300 - \$500 Celebrant - \$300**
15. Please be aware that if you have booked your wedding during special liturgical times e.g. Easter or Christmas Seasons etc. the church will be decorated accordingly.
16. Flowers and ribbons along the aisle are to be organised by the couple. *(Please organise to have a friend remove these decorations after the ceremony.)*
17. Videographers and photographers are allowed, but they should be at all times aware of the sacredness of the place and the solemnity of the ceremony, especially while the Eucharist is celebrated.
18. **No rice or confetti of any kind are allowed in the church premises**
19. **The Bride together with the Bridal party must make sure to arrive in time at the Church. Failure to arrive on time could incur a fee!**
20. Mobile phones are to be switched off within the proximity of the Church during the ceremony and ask that you inform your guests of this requirement.
21. No revving of motor cars or bikes around the church or neighbourhood!