



HOLY MATRIMONY

Congratulations! You have decided to get married. That is good. Already your relationship means much to both of you. And now you will have a whole life together, helping and enjoying one another. Of course you appreciate that it won't be all 'roses' – no doubt you have been through a few 'tiffs' already. Still the thought of having a partner for life is good and of having hopefully very many years to grow together. There will be 101 arrangements to make for the marriage, but never forget through it all that you will marry each other – you will give yourself totally to each other for life. That total giving will mean that you will receive so much from the relationship.

You have also decided to get married in Church. More than likely you never considered the Registry Office – it would not have seemed quite right. It is good that you want to come to Church and hopefully you can realise what you are saying by this decision. You are saying that you want God's blessing on your marriage. You are saying that God is important for you and you want Him to have an important place in your married life. In all of this we in the Church family are here to encourage you.

Maybe you have always been an active Church member and take your responsibilities under God seriously. Maybe through your teens or later you have had other things on your mind and so your relationship with God has slipped. It would be quite natural if all that's in your mind now is your budding relationship, your marriage preparations and plans for a home. But marriage is a big decision – you feel mature enough to make that decision. You should also be mature enough to consider what place God is going to have in your life. That is something you should be able to talk about together.

The marriage service in Church is very much about your relationship with each other. It assumes also a relationship with God. The secret lies in working at both of these relationships. God's blessing, which indeed you want, comes not just from appearing together in Church on the big day, but from continuing together under God all your life. All eyes will be on you as you kneel together in Church – bride and groom, wife and husband. Please God you will continue to kneel together within a Church family.

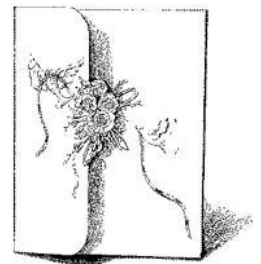
You will probably be seeing a lot of each other in the coming days. You will think a lot of each other. Amidst all the fuss and preparation would you set aside a few minutes each day to pray for each other.

Rector

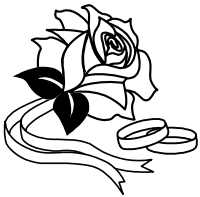


Arrangements

- ❖ You will have various **meetings** with the Rector. At the first we will talk through your decision to be married in Church. At the last two we will look at the marriage service and also have a practical rehearsal. There will probably be other occasions in between when we will meet.
- ❖ The only legal requirement for a wedding to take place is a marriage schedule. It is your responsibility to obtain this and you do this through the local Registrar of Marriage at the Council Offices at 'Ardeevin' on the Galgorm Road. First each partner needs to obtain a marriage notice application form from Ardeevin. These are filled in, including a section by the minister who is to officiate at the wedding, and returned with the appropriate fee. The Registrar will then draw up a schedule and inform you when this can be collected from the office. While anyone can obtain and return for you the application forms only one of the partners to the marriage can collect the schedule. When obtained this is passed on to the minister. It is this schedule of marriage that is signed by the parties and witnesses at the wedding. It is then the responsibility of the newly married couple to make sure that this schedule is returned to Ardeevin within 3 days for registration. This can be done by a family member while the couple are enjoying the honeymoon.
- ❖ You will be given a booklet 'Preparing for Marriage' containing 2 forms of service – traditional and modern. You decide which you want and there is also choice concerning psalms, scripture readings and prayers. The rector will give guidance if required.
- ❖ If you are going to have an '**Order of Service**' printed – most people do though it is not necessary – please do not proceed without consulting the Rector. He will tell you what to include and give you a sample form.
- ❖ If there is to be **music** it is your responsibility to see the organist at St Patrick's. You will inform him of the details of the marriage and what music you might like to have, including if there is to be a soloist. Usually there are two hymns. A copy of possible hymns is available. Don't worry if you are not sure about music the organist will advise you. The best time to see the organist is after Church any Sunday.



- ❖ You are welcome to have your **marriage videoed** - provided the person involved remains static in an allotted position and uses no lights. The person should speak to the minister beforehand. There is an issue concerning videos and copyright. Please ensure that copyright is covered either personally or through your video person.
- ❖ The **official photographer** should also speak to the minister beforehand.
- ❖ **Photography** is **not** allowed during the service.
- ❖ It is also appreciated if confetti is not used.
- ❖ You may wish to have the **church bells** rung as you enter and leave the church. This can usually be arranged. If so, please contact **Mrs Loraine Watt, tel. no. 2564 2774**. There is a fee for bells – presently £120.



- ❖ If you are placing **flowers** in the church for your wedding you will need to make an arrangement with the sexton, so that the Church will be open.

Marriage Fee

There is a marriage fee of £700 which covers church, clergy, organist, sexton and marriage preparation course. This fee is paid at the rehearsal before the wedding.



The Rector usually sees couples in connection with marriage on Thursday nights. Please make an appointment. While initially it is the Rector who will see you, it may be either the Rector or a curate who will take the marriage service.