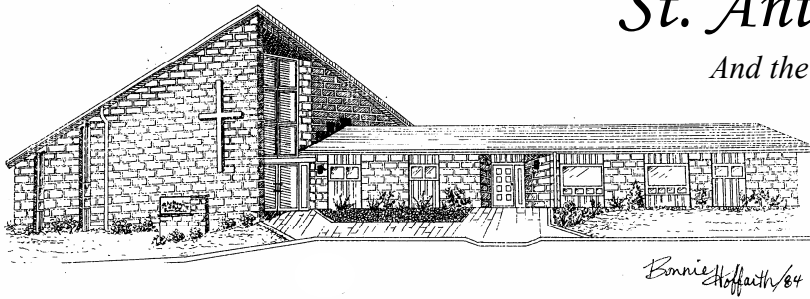


St. Anthony of Padua Church

And the mission Churches of Sacred Heart, Teeswater
and St. Ann, Riversdale



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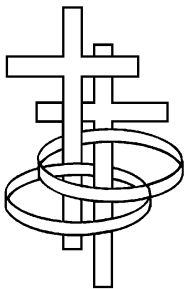
Marriage Preparation Information and Guide Booklet

Dear Prospective Bride and Groom:

Our first words are congratulations! The very fact that you have picked up this booklet means that you are on your way to a new beginning of a new life together. We want you to know that we are at your service in helping you to prepare for your wedding day and life together in marriage. We rejoice with you and hope to be able to walk the journey with you.

Though your wedding day may seem to be far into the future the time will go quickly. To help you prepare for a lifetime of communion with one another in the Lord, we have prepared this booklet outlining the Church's teachings and requirements for marriage in the Catholic Church. Please read this booklet carefully. If you have any questions not already dealt within this booklet, please feel free to call the parish. The staff will do their best to answer questions or concerns you may have.

May the blessings of God be your hope, your joy and your fulfillment.



Marriage is one of the seven Sacraments instituted by Christ.

It is between one man and one woman and is for life.

In the Gospel of Matthew we hear:

And some Pharisees came to Him, testing Him, and saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause at all?"

And He answered and said, "Have you not read, that He who created them from the beginning *made them male and female*, and said, '*for this cause a man shall leave his Father and Mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh?*'

"Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no one separate."

New American Standard Bible - Matthew 19:3-6

How do we begin?

The first step, if you have not already done so, is to contact the parish office to make an appointment with of the parish priest. The phone number can be found on the front cover of this booklet. Father will only see you as a couple, and so it is important that you make the appointment time when, as a couple, you will be able to see him. There is no need or desire for parents to come with you. They will not be part of the interview with the parish priest. The Marriage Act of Ontario and Church Law requires that those licensed to officiate at weddings establish freedom (from previous bonds, and force/fear) and capability to marry. The questions asked during this initial interview will centre around this. When the interview is complete a wedding date and time will be arranged **or** you will receive further instructions based on the interview.

Please note that we do not officiate at weddings between two non-Catholics and that all weddings take place in the church.

What times are weddings celebrated?

Weddings at St. Anthony of Padua and Sacred Heart are usually celebrated on Saturdays at 12:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. - based on availability of the church and priest. Arrangements can be made for other times, but please note that weddings are **not celebrated on Sundays, Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Christmas or New Years Day.** During Lent and Advent you are asked to refrain from the use of flowers. These are penitential seasons and flowers in the church are not appropriate for these liturgical seasons.

One of us is Catholic, the other is not - is this a problem?

The answer - not usually. The same requirements must be met according to the laws of the Church and Civil law, as they are with two Catholics. The only difference is that when one party is not Catholic it is considered an ecumenical celebration and you are discouraged from having the Eucharist with your wedding. If this poses a problem, you should talk about it during the initial interview. Of course, when an ecumenical marriage takes place in our church any non-Catholic minister is welcome to come and participate in the liturgy. If the non-Catholic party is practicing in his/her church, and marriage in the Catholic Church is a problem for them or their family, permission can be obtained for you to be married in his/her church. The Marriage Preparation course and paperwork must be completed and notification of the marriage sent from the officiating minister, but a dispensation is possible. Please feel free to talk about this at the initial interview.

What are the requirements for Marriage in a Catholic Church?

The requirements for marriage are:

1. That you are free to marry according to the teachings of the Catholic Church;
2. That at least one party is Roman Catholic;
3. A desire to practice and live the teachings of the Catholic Church;
4. Spiritual Preparation;
5. Formal Preparation (Marriage Preparation Course, FOCUS)
6. Paperwork

Spiritual Preparation - Marriage preparation is a time for a deepening of faith. Catholics are urged to participate fully in the Church's life including the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession), Sunday Mass, and living lives in tune with Christ and His teachings. Non-Catholic Christians should also strive to live their lives in tune with Christ and His teachings, attend church and fulfill the requirements of their faith. Non-Catholics will receive instructions on Catholicism so that they may better understand what and why we believe and teach what we do. Those who seek to enter into the Catholic Church will be discouraged from doing so if the wedding day is close to the time of application. We prepare for important events one at a time - and should never be rushed. If you are not registered to the parish you may be required to provide proof that one or both parties are Roman Catholic before the marriage is booked. If you do not live in the parish you will be directed to your own parish for your wedding ceremony or, at the very least, permission will be sought from your parish priest.

Formal Preparation - the Church requires that all couples be prepared for marriage. Our parish has MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSES, and other courses are offered throughout the region. These courses are mandatory.

We also offer FOCUS, a self-evaluation on the readiness and expectations of marriage. Father will talk to you about these aids that will help you to prepare yourselves for marriage. It is your responsibility to be prepared for marriage, but we are willing to help as best as we can.

Paperwork - a necessity. Father will complete all the necessary documents for your wedding. If a marriage licence is required, he will request that you obtain it **not more than three (3) months** before the wedding. If banns are to be called (**conditions set by the Government of Ontario must be satisfied** or a licence will be required) then he will provide the forms himself. These documents are filled out by our parish secretary - simply bring them to the rectory when you get them. Father will also require baptism certificates (for Catholics a new certificate must be provided and can be obtained from the church of baptism; for non-Catholics an original will do). Sometimes other documents *might* be required, especially in establishing freedom to marry. If they are needed, you will be requested to obtain them.

What are the costs?

The following are the overall costs and you are requested to have each in a separate envelope and ready at or before the rehearsal.

- 1) the offering to the priest is left to your generosity
- 2) \$50.00 for the church
- 3) three envelopes (one per server) with \$10.00 in each
- 4) Stipends for musicians, arranged when you contact them.

Music is important in the celebration of sacred liturgy and divine worship. Music in the church **must be liturgical music**. You are responsible for the music at your wedding. The organist/musician/soloist should be familiar with Catholic liturgy and traditions as well as with music appropriate for your wedding. Music played from an electronic device (such as a tape machine, CD player...) is unacceptable and will not be permitted. If you wish, the names of the parish organists and soloists can be obtained from the parish office. The phone number for St. Anthony Parish can be found on the front cover of this booklet.

What about the rehearsal?

The rehearsal is usually conducted by the celebrant on the Friday evening prior to the wedding. The exact time will be scheduled with you at one of the preparation sessions. Punctuality is necessary since there may be more than one rehearsal scheduled. Rehearsals usually last 30 minutes. Only those directly involved should be present - immediate wedding party plus bridesmaids, ushers, parents, readers, (gift-bearers if there is mass with the wedding). Priests are not always present for rehearsals and so please do not expect Reconciliation (Confession) that night - but please feel free to use the regularly scheduled time.

Ushers and bridesmaids are strictly ceremonial roles and therefore walk into the church behind the servers and celebrant. It is nice when both parents are with the bride/groom. Though it is not preferred, it is acceptable for the groom and/or best man to be at the front to greet the bride. In this case it is nice if the parents of the groom stand with him. Talk it over with your celebrant.

What about pictures?

Professional photographers usually handle themselves respectfully when in the church. There are some cases where the photographer/videographer is not very professional in behavior. We do have rules that must be obeyed by all regarding picture taking and the dignity of the celebration. Section 176 (subsections 2 and 3) of the **Criminal Code** (1993) makes it illegal for anyone to willfully disturb or interrupt the solemnity of religious worship. Most professionals are very good at what they do and this is not usually a concern, but for the sake of the few times it is we ask that you provide a business card and/or information regarding your photographer/videographer prior to your wedding. Any photographer/videographer who tries to stop the ceremony, willfully disrupt the service or draw undue attention to him/herself with a blatant disregard for the dignity of the celebration, will be banned from taking future pictures in our church, or charged under the law, or both. Family members are discouraged from taking pictures during the celebration with due regard to the professionals.

What about Flowers?

Flowers are optional and your own responsibility. During Advent and Lent they are not to be used since these are penitential seasons of the Church. Outside of these liturgical seasons it is assumed that once they are brought to the church they will remain there for the Lord. Simplicity please! We use flowers to decorate.

What about arches, carpets, candelabra?

The cry of John the Baptist when asked if he was the Messiah - **NO!** Anything that could impede the safe exit of people in the event of an emergency, or could cause an emergency, is unacceptable in a public building. Safety and well being of the guests always comes first!

Anything Else?

Yes . . . Please remind your guests that candy, confetti, rice or any equivalent objects are not to be used on church property.

Alcohol of any kind ***is not permitted*** on church property. It does not matter if it is provided by family members, friends or the limousine company.

Remember to be on time for your wedding. It is not considered acceptable to be “fashionably late” for your wedding - in fact it is considered rude. Please know that if you are late and Father has an emergency call he will answer the emergency. Father cannot help it if you think little of your wedding guests and wedding time, but he can help and serve others who are just as important to him. Please, **if for a serious** reason you cannot be on time, call the rectory and let them know. Otherwise we deal with needs on a first come - first serve basis.

If you have any questions not mentioned here, or concerns regarding something talked about in this booklet - Please feel free to call the rectory and speak to Father. We would prefer you get the facts from us rather than fiction from a friend of a friend.



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