

**The Catholic Parish of
St John the Evangelist,
Horsham**

Getting married?



*This is love: not that we loved God, but that God loved us
(1 John 4: 10)*

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Getting married?

Many congratulations on your decision to be married. This leaflet will help you with the plans and arrangements that you need to make concerning the ceremony at the church.

Generally speaking, you may marry in the Catholic Church if:

- at least one of you is a Roman Catholic;
- neither of you has been married before;
- you are 18 years old or over.

To marry in the Roman Catholic parish of Horsham, at least one of you will normally reside in the parish. The Civil Law states that the church in which you plan to get married must normally be within the registration district where you or your partner resides. The Church's Canon Law states that your marriage is to be celebrated in the parish in which either of you is residing. It is not enough that you like the church, or that the church happens to be near your Reception venue, or that you have a soft spot for Horsham - or even that you are an old friend of the parish priest. Of course, attending Mass regularly in the parish is your best excuse for getting married here!

You need to give us at least six months notice of your intention to marry.

The process of planning your marriage with us will take the following pattern:

- 1 A meeting with the priest or deacon with whom you have been in contact, to ascertain that you are free to marry in the Catholic Church. A date for your proposed wedding will be discussed at this meeting, and not before.
- 2 At this meeting, essential paperwork will be completed. The priest/deacon will need to see:
if you are a Catholic, a new copy of your **baptismal certificate** (issued in the last six months) from the parish in which you were baptised;
if you are a Christian of another church, a copy of your original baptismal certificate.
If you are unable to bring these documents with you to the initial meeting, don't worry, but we will need to see them in due course, and certainly in good time before the proposed wedding date.
- 3 You need to ensure that you fulfil the legal requirements to get married by approaching your local Register Office and making an appointment to see them. It is your responsibility to provide the necessary legal documentation to the priest/deacon at the wedding rehearsal. The local register Office is in Horsham:

Horsham Register Office

Park House

North Stret

Horsham

West Sussex RH12 9SB

Tel: 01403 213580 (+44 1403 213580)

Fax: 01403 267567 (+44 1403 267567)

<http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ccm/content/births-deaths-and-marriages/weddings-in-west-sussex.en?page=2>

If you live in separate registration districts, you will need to contact each Registrar concerned. You will find the address of any Registrar by looking in a telephone or Thompson's directory.

If the Catholic lives outside the Catholic Parish of Horsham, you also need a **Letter of Freedom** from the priest of the Catholic parish in which you reside. Both of you need, please, to be prepared to supply a letter from your parent(s), stating simply that to the best of their knowledge you have never been married before.

- 4 After the initial meeting with the priest/deacon you will be asked to attend the parish Marriage Preparation Programme (Contacts: Philip & Amanda Molloy – 01403 251810). The present Marriage Preparation programme is made up of one weekend, including attendance at Mass. The priest or deacon will give you details of the forthcoming dates when he meets with you.

Please kindly wait to be referred by the priest or deacon before booking-in for your marriage preparation with Amanda & Philip Molloy on the contact number above. The weekend session is important for us and for you, and is a key part of our helping you think carefully about your marriage. Please make this a priority. Owing to the cost of materials, booklets etc. we need to ask you, I'm afraid, for a donation of £50 per couple. Please bring this to the Parish Office prior to the weekend (cheques made payable to 'St John's Church'). Do speak to Fr Terry or Deacon Tom if this is a problem.

- 5 Once you have completed the Preparation Programme, please contact the priest or deacon for a further meeting with him.
- 6 At some stage after a date for your proposed wedding has been agreed, a wedding rehearsal date will be added to the diary. For the rehearsal it's helpful to have the following personnel available if at all possible: bride, groom, best man, principal bridesmaid, bride's father. Any others who wish to come to the rehearsal are more than welcome.
- 7 In the Catholic Church no official fee is charged. It is customary to make a personal offering to the priest/deacon. You must decide how much you'd like to give. About £200 is usually considered an appropriate figure. A further fee of £73

is required for the Civil Registration of the marriage. Please bring the offering and the Civil Registration fee to the rehearsal.

The following details, names and numbers may help you with your arrangements:

Music

You may have organists/musicians of your own which, of course, you are free to employ. However, if you do not, these excellent organists are customarily used in the parish:

John Baker – 01403 262582 johnbakermbe@inbox.com

Bernard Smith – 01403 270341 bernard.smith@talk21.com

Tracey Stanbridge – 01403 248177

Liz Fidling – 01403 241578 fidlings@tiscali.co.uk

Gerald Ryalls – 01403 262088

Stephen Buckman – 01403 783263

Susan Parsons – 01403 258863

Gerald Taylor – 01403 250712

All of these can also advise and provide details regarding the booking of a soloist, a small choir, a string quartet, a harpist and so on. All the arrangements for music at your wedding are made directly with the musicians concerned. However, it is very important that you discuss with the priest who will be celebrating your wedding all of your proposals and plans before going to print in any booklet that you may be preparing.

All fees concerning the use of musicians are discussed directly with them.

Please note that it is considered inappropriate to use either ‘secular’ (i.e. non-religious) or pre-recorded (i.e. CDs) music at a wedding celebrated in the parish.

Flowers

You may wish to use professional florists for your wedding which, of course, you are free to do. However, we have a number of talented flower-arrangers in the parish that can help you too.

All costs concerning flowers are discussed directly with them. In the first instance, please contact:

Mrs Sue Haynes – 01403 267472 sue.haynes@btinternet.com

Readings

You must have at least one reading from the Bible at your marriage ceremony, but more are possible (though not necessary). Usually, only Bible readings are acceptable. Texts from other sources, or poems, are best reserved for use at the Reception.

Photography and video

Your photographer is allowed to take photographs in the church as long as he/she does not get in the way or distract attention from the service, and similarly with video recordings.

However with sound or vision recordings you may be breaking copyright laws by recording marriage texts, hymns and music. If the copyright holder chose to do so, everyone taking part in the service, including best man and bridesmaids could be prosecuted!

So if you want to record the service the onus is on you to obtain a license from:

Mechanical Copyright Protection Society Ltd

Elgar House
41 Streatham High Road
London SW16 1ER
Tel. 0208-769-4400

And finally

We are delighted that you want to get married with us and will do everything we can to make your day a happy and memorable one. Most importantly, we promise to pray for you and to keep praying for you between now and the wedding. Please do not hesitate to contact us, using the details listed below:

Parish

Fr Richard Biggerstaff - parochus@stjohnshorsham.com
Fr Aaron Spinelli - frspinelli@stjohnshorsham.com
Deacon Tom Murray - admin@stjohnshorsham.com

The Presbytery, 3 Springfield Road, HORSHAM, RH12 2PJ
01403 253667