

FAQ'S – MARRIAGE GUIDELINES

- 1. Who can get married in the Catholic Church?** – A man and woman wishing to marry must be free from all constraint and previous bonds of Marriage, vows, religious profession or sacred ordination; be of age, of sound mind, body and heart; not closely related by blood or marriage, desire Christian Marriage, and accept the Church's teaching on Christian Marriage. We'll be glad to help you.
- 2. How soon can we get a date?** – It's natural to want to "book the church", but a priest can only grant a date after meeting with you to verify your freedom and serious intentions, and your willingness to participate in a period of marriage preparation and personal formation for Christian married life.
- 3. How early do we have to begin?** – Commercial interests compete for your attention early. We'll help you prepare for the Marriage Liturgy and also for your married life and family. Be ready for the rest of your lives; come a year or more in advance. Making a request six to 12 months before may intensify the preparation. You may be able to show you have already accomplished some Marriage Preparation requirements. Granting a date under six months before the wedding date will depend on the couple.
- 4. Why does the Church set these conditions?** – God cares about you, about marriage and family. As a Church, we care that many families have troubled experiences of marriage. It stands to reason that special care be taken to prepare well with sufficient understanding of God's plan for marriage and the family as a life-long journey of learning, faith, and growth with respect for the dignity of each person and for Christian Marriage as a partnership with God for our happiness. We help you explore and discover your maturity of judgement, readiness, and openness to God's guidance in your life.
- 5. Marriage is natural, so what does God have to do with it?** – Yes, marriage is a natural social bond, and every culture has customs and rules to keep order in the way people live marriage and family life. Christians know the Son of God was conceived and born of Mary, becoming a marriage between God and mankind. Jesus loves us, is the model for the love of husbands and wives. Persons may enter into Christian Marriage who have a minimum sense of living with faith in Jesus Christ Son of God and as members of his Church. "Marriage must proceed from and rest upon faith." Canon 836.
- 6. Out of Town Requests** – Out-of-town couples requesting Marriage here must undertake all the necessary preparations in their home diocese in time for permission to be granted by the Archdiocese of Montreal. Make your request a year in advance; unless the preparation work has already been done in the out-of-town parish. Our local process needs at least 3 months to do everything without a rush.
- 7. What Is Marriage Preparation?** – Engaged couples will participate in at least one, preferably two, Marriage Preparation courses. We also recommend the Natural Family Planning (NFP) Seminar: Family Life Office, Archdiocese of Montreal, Office for English Pastoral Services: 514-931-7311.
- 8. What papers do we need?** – (1) For Catholics: Birth, Baptism and Confirmation certificate showing your freedom to marry (dated less than six months when presented). (2) For non-Catholics: Birth and Baptism certificate and two affidavits establishing your freedom to marry. (3) For non-Christians: Birth certificate and two affidavits establishing your freedom to marry. (4) Marriage Preparation certificate. (5) Any other document needed to establish freedom to marry.

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9. **How many meetings are there?** – In addition to the Marriage Preparation courses, the couple attends to their spiritual preparation with the help of a priest or deacon. They learn how to pray as a couple, undergo a Pre-Nuptial Enquiry, discuss certain aspects of Christian Life and Marriage, plan the Marriage Celebration, participate in a rehearsal and experience the great blessing of the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). Forgiveness is one of the greatest arts and skills of Christian families.
10. **What about music?** – The Parish offers professional and amateur musicians and singers who can help you select music suited to the church setting. You make payment arrangements directly. Other musicians may be chosen, but musical selections are subject to the approval of the parish priest.
11. **Can we take photos/videos?** – As Liturgy, the Marriage Celebration is a **Live Event** in the Presence of God, which is why there's no posing or stop action at anytime. **Show your pro these guidelines;** with their expertise they'll capture good candid moments. Out of respect for the REAL PRESENCE, no one goes into the sanctuary steps with equipment. Only regular flash equipment (on the camera) may be used – let those shooting the event come early to verify the light. We ask amateurs to take photos from their seats so as not to disrupt the atmosphere of religious respect we owe to God.
12. **What about Rice, Seeds, Flower Petals, or Confetti?** – None of these are allowed. You may blow bubbles. Some release pigeons after the wedding from the church apron.
13. **Decorations?** – These may be added to the sanctuary and pews, providing **nothing** is moved from the sanctuary. Parish seasonal plant/floral arrangements or hangings will become part of the décor. **No decorations or ropes** that **restrict** movement in or out may be fastened to pews.
14. **How much???** – So much is spent on the wedding day and so little on what helps you prepare for a holy and happy marriage. Your offering covers the Archdiocese fee, interviews with the priest, rehearsal, the wedding ceremony, Parish keyboard musician, and administration. You pay singers and any other musicians directly, and the fees for marriage preparation courses. Why not offer God 5% of your wedding expenses? Minimum: **\$500.00**. Remember that our Father isn't outdone in generosity. Your offering for the services offered by our Parish to help you enter well into a life of Married love and family is a long term investment in your future happiness and that of children God may grant you. A down payment of \$200.00 is made upon receiving a date to reserve the church and the priest's time to meet with the couple. The balance may be given at any time up until the rehearsal.
15. **Christian accountability** – We ask you to help us value the service of our Parish Staff as follows: Down payment to reserve your date: **\$200** – Cancellation: **\$50** – late cancellation **\$30 per session** – Permission to marry elsewhere and meeting with the Pastor: contribution – suggested **\$25**.
16. For preparation services as above at St Luke when the wedding is to be celebrated elsewhere we suggest an offering of \$250.00, and for a wedding prepared elsewhere but celebrated here, \$350.00.
17. **What about???** – Visiting priests or deacons may preside the Marriage Liturgy if they acquire a Quebec license and permission from the Bishop through the Chancery. They must prove they are in good standing in their home diocese. For other questions please feel very free to contact us. If they are to be compensated, this will be given by the couple or family independently of the Parish fee.

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Please visit: <http://fathergilles.net/>

www.marriageinstitute.ca/