

Preparing for Catholic Marriage

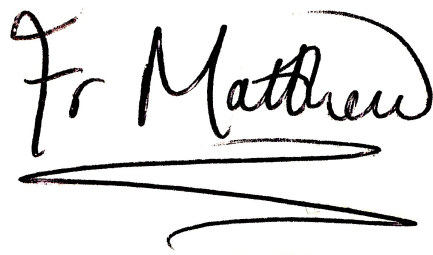


at Corpus Christi
Catholic Church,
Brixton Hill

“Congratulations!”

“Your decision to get married is a good one. Our parish supports you in prayer as you begin the journey towards committing yourselves to each other in the sight of God. We have prepared this booklet to help you understand the civil, religious, spiritual and practical requirements which need to be fulfilled before your wedding day.

Do not hesitate to get in touch with us if you need any further assistance. With prayers for your future life together in Christ,”

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr Matthew". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish underneath the name.

Rev. Matthew O’Gorman
Parish Priest

BEFORE YOU START THIS PROCESS...

Please be aware of the following:

To get married in the Catholic Church:

- At least one of you **must be a baptised Catholic**.
- Both of you must be “free to marry” which means; **neither of you has been married before in either a civil or religious ceremony** unless your former spouse is now deceased or that marriage has been declared “null” by the Catholic Church.
- **Both of you are willing to accept children lovingly from God** and to baptise them and raise them in the Catholic faith.
- If you are intending that your wedding ceremony takes place in a building which is not a Catholic Church a dispensation must be applied for from the Archbishop: **you should not make firm arrangements for your wedding prior to receiving this dispensation**.

If this raises concerns please speak to the priest.



FOREWORD

Those wishing to be married are to be prepared within the parish where they are currently resident. If neither of you worship nor are resident within this parish boundary then please approach the Catholic parish closest to you.

PREPARING FOR CATHOLIC MARRIAGE

In order to get married in the Roman Catholic Church one of the parties (bride or groom) has to be a baptised Roman Catholic. There are four aspects of preparation that need to be completed by the couple before the day itself.

- 1) Civil
- 2) Religious
- 3) Practical
- 4) Spiritual

1) CIVIL

You will need to obtain a document giving permission for you to marry from your local Registrar's Office: our Church is located within the London Borough of Lambeth.

By clicking above (or using the link printed in "More Information" at the end of this booklet) you can begin the process of applying for this permission. At the time of writing the Council requires at least **28 full days notice** of a marriage to grant a permission. They will issue a document to you and you should hand this to the priest or send it to the Parish Office as soon as possible.

2) RELIGIOUS

The Archdiocese of Southwark requires that each couple attends **one evening and one full day as a marriage preparation course**. The dates of forthcoming courses can be obtained from the Parish Office or directly from the course coordinators; details of diocesan courses and courses provided by Marriage Care are available at the back of this booklet. The certificates distributed at the end of the course will form part of the documentation required for marriage. It is also required that you arrange **to meet with the priest** initially to understand the nature of marriage and latterly to confirm readiness and plan the ceremony. The priest is obliged to confirm in writing that you understand what you are committing yourselves to and that you have both freely decided to enter into marriage.

3) PRACTICAL

There are several documents which have to be included within the necessary paperwork permitting you to be married in Church:

- a. **New Copies of your Baptismal Certificate(s)** (issued within 6 months of your wedding day). We only accept the original Baptismal certificates of non-Catholics. You should contact the Catholic Church in which you were Baptised and request this.
- b. **Confirmation Certificate(s)** (if the Sacrament of Confirmation is not recorded on your Baptism Certificate(s)). If you have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation you should inform the priest preparing you for marriage.
- c. **A Declaration of Freedom To Marry for both parties**: this must be witnessed by a solicitor. It usually involves a small fee and copies of the document can be obtained by clicking here.
- d. **Certificates from the Pre-Marriage Course Attended**.

The Ceremony

Catholic Marriage can be celebrated within or without Mass and you should talk with the priest about which is the most appropriate. Within both celebrations you are invited to choose:

- i. Readings
- ii. Hymns
- iii. Organ Music

For Readings see our 'Order Of Service' section below. See within "Useful Information" below the link for suggested hymns and wedding marches. All music should be confirmed as suitable by the priest before the order of service is finalised. It is also advisable to speak with the Organist beforehand about what he is able to play and with singers about what they are able to sing.

Organist

If you are intending to sing hymns on the day then it is highly likely you will need to book an organist. One local suggestion would be Duncan Faulkner (07817319456).

Photography

Photography (without flash) and video (without lights) is permitted although all employed to take pictures or record video should consult the priest before the ceremony begins.

Confetti

Only biodegradable confetti is permitted.

Marriage Offering

This can be made via cheque to “RCAS Brixton Hill” before the day of the wedding rehearsal or by clicking [here](#) (select “Marriage Offering”). In the case of marriages taking place outside of the parish the offering is to be made when the initial form is submitted.

Minister's Offering	£200.00
Registrar's Offering	£100.00
Total	<u>£300.00</u>
Marriage preparation for a wedding outside the parish	£100.00

Payments for the Organist, Florist(s) and Photographer(s) should be made directly to the individuals concerned.

Rehearsal

This should be organised by the couple with the priest so that a suitable day and time can be agreed in advance.

Order of Service

The contents will depend upon whether you will celebrate Marriage *within Mass* or *without Mass*: you should discuss these alternatives with the priest preparing you for marriage. In putting together your Order of Service for the day there are very helpful resources available from the Liturgy Office website of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. These include skeletal structures of the two different celebrations, the texts from the marriage rite itself and the prayers of the Mass.

All couples will need to choose readings which together comprise the Liturgy of the Word: a reading from the Old Testament, a Psalm, a reading from a New Testament Epistle (optional) and a Gospel passage. Various options can be downloaded from the Liturgy Office website in the Jerusalem Bible translation. This is the translation which must be used for the wedding.

Choosing readings and music

There is a good briefing available on what forms of music are appropriate for the Catholic rite of Marriage in Church. A separate document with all the options for readings and music is available from our website. You will need to consult the priest on your choices before any booklet is produced to ensure that the details are correct. This will happen when you meet with him for the second time in person.

Hall Hire

If you are interested in hiring our Parish Hall please make your enquiry via conor@lowcosthalls.co.uk or 01372457651.

4) SPIRITUAL

Pray for one another!

Reflect together upon the truth contained in the readings and hymns you have chosen for the ceremony itself: they (and we) invite you to trust that the Lord Jesus will strengthen with His grace the good decision you have made!

*** INITIAL APPLICATION FOR MARRIAGE ***

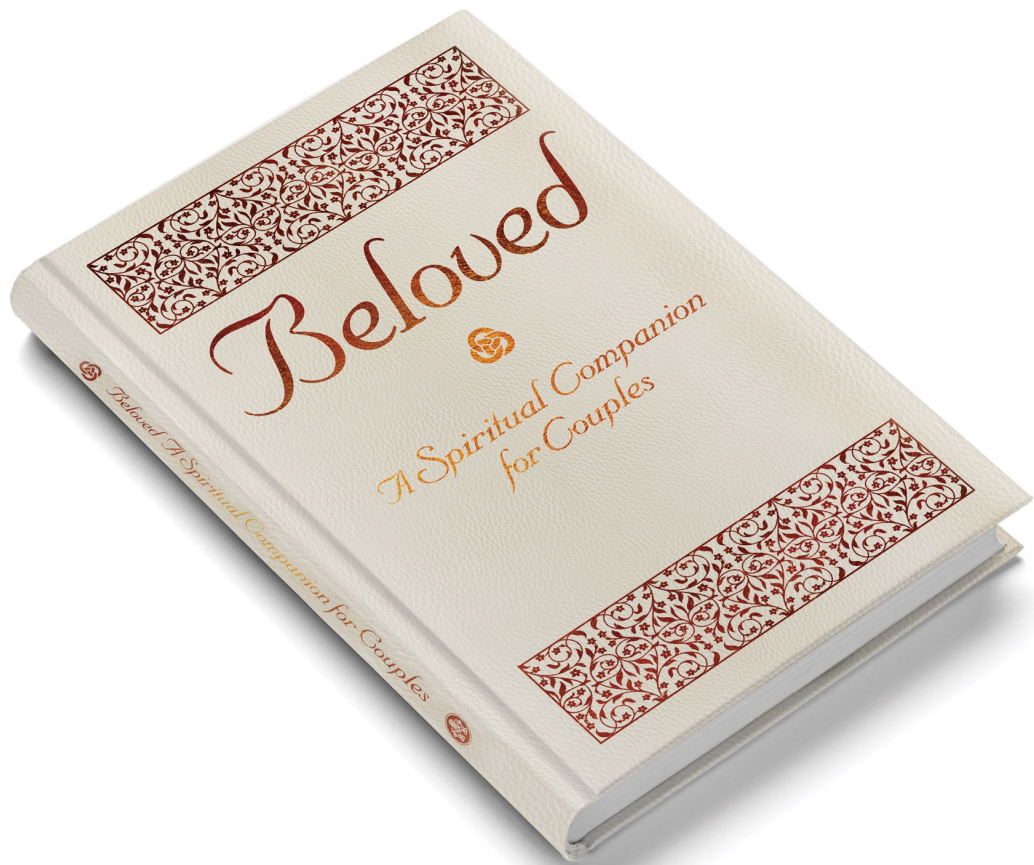
Having understood the information above and - if you feel you are ready to be prepared for Catholic Marriage in this parish - please complete our [online application form](#) (click link).

A priest will be in touch with you to begin the process after receiving your submission.

Useful Information

- The London Borough of Lambeth Registrar's Office: <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/forms/contact-the-registrar-service> (enquiry form) / <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/choose-love/marriages/notice-of-marriage> (information)
- Catholic Marriage Courses: Diocesan Catholic Marriage Courses (our area is the South-East): <https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/mission/marriage-and-family-life/marriage-preparation-courses/> & courses run by Marriage Care: <https://www.marriagecare.org.uk/find-a-course/?location=SW2+5BJ>.
- Bishops' Conference of England and Wales Liturgy Office Texts for the Marriage Rite (including Scripture Readings): <http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Marriage/MarriageTexts.shtml>.
- Music for the wedding: <https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Marriage/Preparation/Prep-Music4.shtml>. For suggested wedding marches to be played and hymns to be sung: https://www.portsmouthcatholiccathedral.org.uk/docs/Wedding_Music_Liturgy.pdf.

- Organist: Duncan Faulkner (07817319456)
- Corpus Christi Catholic Church Hall Hire: <https://lowcosthalls.co.uk/location/corpus-christi-church-hall-brixton/>



Beloved: A Spiritual Companion for Couples

A great resource to help you prepare for marriage!

Available from www.ctsbooks.org