

CELEBRATING YOUR WEDDING IN THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF FORSTER TUNCURRY



Congratulations on your engagement and thank you for considering a Catholic marriage ceremony as you commit to love and honour each other as husband and wife for the rest of your lives in a permanent, exclusive and mutual love relationship. In marriage couples devote themselves to God through commitment to each other and then in turn to their family life.

A Catholic marriage ceremony may be either a 'Nuptial Mass' or a 'Wedding Ceremony', and must be witnessed by a Priest or a Deacon. The sacrament of Marriage is important for the wider community because it reminds us of the faithful, never-ending love that God has for humanity and highlights the giving-until-death love that was so much a part of Jesus' living and dying.

Marriages may be conducted in either of our two churches and every effort will be made to try to accommodate requests for times, locations and a particular celebrant. It is, however, advisable to start enquiring sooner rather than later. A period of at least six months is usually beneficial to the process of preparing for the marriage ceremony.

The First Step

The first step towards making a booking for the celebration of your marriage ceremony is for one or both of the persons to be married to contact the Parish Priest, Fr Greg Barker, or the Parish Office. A Catholic wedding normally takes place in your own Parish Church, but if for some reason you would like to celebrate the wedding in another church, it is wise to discuss it openly with your parish priest first.

When you contact the Parish, simply explain your wish to be married in a Catholic Church, your preference for a date, venue and time and whether or not you have a particular celebrant you would like to request.

If you would like to request permission for a Catholic marriage to take place outside a church an 'Application for Permission for Marriage Outside a Sacred Place' will need to be completed before a booking can be finalised. Your celebrant can assist you with this process and provide further information about this requirement.

If you're feeling a bit nervous about how the process works, there's no need to be. The Priest or Deacon who celebrates your wedding with you will help you prepare for your marriage, complete the necessary documentation, advise and encourage you and your partner to take part in a pre-marriage course and prepare the wedding ceremony. A day or two prior to the wedding ceremony, it is also possible to arrange with the celebrant to have a rehearsal in the church.

The Church Is Booked – What's Next?

Your wedding celebrant has the responsibility to not only assist you in preparing for the sacrament of Marriage, but also for the life-long commitment which you are entering into through Marriage.

After you have contacted the Parish to book the church, the next step is to meet with your celebrant.

At this first meeting the celebrant will assist you in beginning to complete the necessary documentation required by both the Government and the Church and begin discussing the arrangements for your wedding ceremony itself.

To assist in the completion of the necessary documentation, you will be asked to bring the following with you to the first meeting with your celebrant:

1. FOR BOTH PERSONS: Full Birth Certificates issued less than 12 months prior to marriage date.
2. FOR THE CATHOLIC PERSON(S): Baptism Certificate issued less than 6 months prior to marriage date (this can be requested from the Parish where you were baptised).
3. FOR THE NON-CATHOLIC PERSON: Evidence of your Baptism.
4. IF APPLICABLE: Evidence of Death or Annulment.
5. The completed form found on pages 3 and 4 of this information sheet.

Marriage Education

Before getting married in a Catholic church, all couples will be asked to reflect on their commitment to each other and are strongly urged to undertake marriage education to prepare for married life.

Marriage education is a vital, yet often overlooked, part of preparing for your life partnership with your loved one. The marriage education courses offered by the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, are run by their welfare arm, CatholicCare, who offer a selection of courses for married and soon-to-be married couples which assist them in preparing for, and maintaining, their commitment to one another.

Couples who are getting married are advised to attend a course which falls around four months prior to their wedding ceremony but be sure to book early as some courses are very popular.

Visit CatholicCare's page on [marriage education](http://www.catholiccare.org.au/social-services/child-family-services/marriage-education) (www.catholiccare.org.au/social-services/child-family-services/marriage-education) to view the courses which are offered.

What are the "costs" associated with getting married in a Catholic Church?

The Catholic custom is for couples to offer a donation at the time of their wedding; this helps to support the clergy and is greatly appreciated as the Parish relies significantly on donations.

While the amount of the donation is entirely at the discretion of the couple, people generally donate upwards from \$250.00.

True financial hardship will never prevent a Catholic wedding from taking place and anyone experiencing financial difficulties is asked to speak to the Parish Priest, who will treat your conversation or enquiry as confidential.

Can a Catholic marrying a person who is not a Catholic get married in a Catholic Church?

It is not uncommon for many Catholics who are marrying a Christian from another Church or a non-Christian, to request to have their marriage take place in a Catholic Church. When this is the case, the Priest or Deacon will complete an 'Application for Permission for Mixed Marriage'. Catholic partners are asked to reaffirm their faith in Jesus Christ and their intention to live that faith in the Catholic Church. They must promise to share their faith with their children to the best of their ability, by having them baptised and brought up in the Catholic Church. The Catholic partner must inform their partner of this promise and sign the declaration. No promise is required from the other partner.

A final thought...

If you're planning a wedding and reception, it's very easy to get caught up in the planning; from balancing multiple requests from family members to invite people you hadn't planned to, to ensuring food will be arriving in time for the reception. However don't forget to take the time to reflect on what the sacrament of Marriage is all about. While your wedding day should be a very special one, it is the beginning of a lifelong commitment to share the rest of your life with the one you love and it's important not to lose sight of that.

May you enjoy getting married in the Catholic Parish of Forster Tuncurry and have a blessed and happy life together with the person you love.

WEDDING ENQUIRY & INFORMATION FORM

OUR WEDDING: *(please print clearly)*

Proposed Place: _____

Proposed Date: _____ Proposed Time: _____

Type of Wedding: Nuptial Mass Liturgy of the Word

OURSELVES:	BRIDEGROOM	BRIDE
Surname		
Christian Names		
Occupation		
Marital Status		
Address		
Time At This Address		
Telephone		
Religion		
Father's Full Name		
Mother's Full Maiden Name		
Parent's Address		

PREPARATION:

Have you completed pre-marital preparation? Yes No

If 'Yes', please provide details: _____

If 'No', are you planning on doing so? Yes No

CLERGY USE ONLY:

Date Received: _____ Documents in Order? Yes No

Marriage Forms Signed: _____

Entered into LikeLink: _____

CLERGY USE ONLY:

Church Permissions Required:

- Disparity of Worship/Mixed Marriage
- Marriage Outside a Sacred Place
- Marriage Outside Parish of Residence
- _____
- _____

After Wedding:

Form 15 No: _____ Marriage Registration No: _____

Parish Register No: _____

Notifications Required: Yes No Notifications Sent: _____