



# *Policy for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage*



God who is love and who created man and woman for love has called them to love. By creating man and woman he called them to an intimate communion of life and of love in marriage: “So that they are no longer two, but one flesh” (*Matthew 19:6*)

*Incorporating the Parishes of  
East Maitland  
Maitland (Campbell's Hill, Largs, Paterson)  
Morpeth  
Lochinvar  
Beresfield  
Rutherford*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Congratulations on your engagement and thank you for taking the first step in considering a Catholic marriage. In marriage couples devote themselves to God through commitment to each other and then in turn to their family life.

A Catholic marriage may either be a "Nuptial Mass" or a "Wedding Ceremony", and must be presided over by a Priest or a Deacon.

The purpose of this brochure is to assist you in the preparation of your marriage according to the Rites of the Catholic Church in the Maitland Catholic Region of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. We ask you to read this document carefully so you will understand what is involved in being married in one of the Mass Centres in this Region.

There are a number of conditions which must be fulfilled before we can go ahead with any booking.

- **At least one of the couple must be a Catholic.**
- **Both parties must be free to marry in the eyes of both the Church and Civil authorities. If there are concerns in this area you will need to discuss this with a priest or deacon of the area to ascertain if you are free to marry in the Catholic Church. If either of you have been married before you will need to contact the Marriage Tribunal at Hamilton on (02) 49791370 in regards to an annulment. You must produce evidence that an annulment has been taken place before the booking can be taken.**

## **WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?**

Book the church, the date and the time of the wedding with the Secretary at the Maitland Catholic Region Office. The booking is tentative at this time.

If after reading this document you wish to proceed with your marriage in the Maitland Catholic Region, you need to complete both sides of the **Confirmation of Marriage Booking Form** and return it together with your marriage fees as outlined on page 4 of this document.

## **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FROM THE COUPLE**

You will need to bring to a meeting with the Presider original copies of the following documents:

- **Full Birth Certificate for both parties (an extract of your birth certificate cannot be used as the registration number is required).**
- **Baptismal Certificate—the certificate must be a recent copy and cannot be dated any more than six months prior to the wedding. This can be obtained from the parish where the baptism occurred. This is essential for the Catholic party and desirable in the case of a non-Catholic party.**
- **Any other papers—naturalisation, change of name, divorce papers, evidence of death or annulment if applicable (where the marriage has been annulled by the Catholic Church).**

## **DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PRESIDERS**

All documents, civil and Church, must be signed by the presider of your marriage. These documents are supplied by the presider. An appointment should be made at least three months prior to your wedding with the presider so that arrangements can be made to have paperwork completed.

- The **Notification of Intended Marriage** must be completed by the Presider at least one month and one day prior to the wedding.
- If you would like to request for permission for a Catholic Marriage outside a church an **"Application for Permission for Marriage Outside a Sacred Place"** must be completed for you by the Presider.
- **Permission for a Mixed Marriage Form.**
- **Pre-Nuptial Inquiry Form.**

## **IF YOU LIVE OUTSIDE THE PARISH**

The priest of your parish of residence is responsible for your pastoral care especially at times when significant events are taking place. We ask that you contact him giving him the opportunity to meet with you and to do the required paperwork and possibly the marriage preparation. If you have any difficulty, please contact one of the priests in the Maitland Catholic Region.

If you are marrying a non-Catholic, and you do not live in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, your local priest must send the dispensation to your Diocesan Bishop for permission. The Bishop will then send the completed form to the Presider.

## **IF YOU BRING YOUR OWN PRIEST**

If you bring your own Presider to officiate at your wedding, and they are not a priest or deacon of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, they must complete the following procedures:

- He needs to contact Fr Paul O'Neill, Parish Priest on (02) 49338918 for permission to conduct the marriage in this area.
- Under State Laws for Child Protection, he must have had a police check before the marriage takes place. It is the celebrant's responsibility to contact the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Chancery on 02 4979 1111 and arrange this check. The authorisation of clearance will be kept with the paperwork of the marriage in the parish where the marriage takes place. This would include the Priest's ACMR number

as well as their WWC number.

### **MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSES**

Each couple **MUST ATTEND** a marriage preparation course. Marriage, like any other life choice, needs to be something that is prepared for. Every other vocational choice in the life of the Church has a period of training and preparation before a final commitment is made. In many ways, society has failed in this area. It is also now a requirement from the government that some form of marriage preparation be provided. On the whole, engaged couples find these courses enjoyable and most helpful. They are designed to provide you with some valuable insights into your relationship, some skills to help you become better spouses for each other, and perhaps to make some new friends in the Maitland area.

Marriage preparation courses are offered through Catholic Care Social Services Hunter-Manning (Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle). If you do not live in the area, please contact the parish office or your local priest for options that are available to you. Evidence of the completion of the course needs to be produced. It is recommended that couples participate in a course at their earliest possible convenience. If you have any further enquiries or to make a booking please contact the Catholic Care Marriage Education Co-Ordinator on (02) 49791370.

### **USE OF MUSIC AND COPYRIGHT OBLIGATIONS**

The choice of music for your wedding ceremony is very important. **It needs to be remembered that this is a religious event and the music that you choose needs to be appropriate for a religious celebration and approved by the celebrant.**

If the words of songs are printed in a service booklet, all copyright information, including licence numbers relevant to the parish/church/chapel where your marriage takes place **must** be included in the booklet. Licence numbers are available from the Maitland Catholic Region Office.

There are a number of musicians who would be prepared to play at your ceremony and help with the selection of music for your wedding. The payment of musicians is the responsibility of the couple. Please contact the Maitland Catholic Region Office if you require further details for the musicians.

### **FLOWERS AND PEW DECORATIONS**

You are welcome to use the silk flowers that are normally on the altar during Mass times. In most churches there is a group of parishioners who will arrange the flowers for your special day. They see this as a means by which the community can share in your joy and support you on this very happy occasion.

You may also wish to have floral arrangements brought to the church by your own florist. If fresh flowers are used payment for these is the responsibility of the couple. Access to the church would need to be organised by contacting the Maitland Catholic Region Office prior to the wedding day. If using fresh flowers we also request that they remain in the church at the conclusion of your ceremony or that they are replaced by the silk flowers before you leave the church.

### **USE OF CONFETTI, RICE AND/OR FLOWER PETALS**

We ask that you refrain from using confetti, rice and/or flower petals inside or outside the church as it is very difficult to clean up.

### **CANDLES**

The use of naked flame candles is strictly prohibited at all times in all of our churches and church buildings except on the Sanctuary at the discretion of the clergy.

### **CHURCH ACCESS**

The Presider who celebrates your wedding will help you prepare for your marriage. A day or two prior to the wedding ceremony it is possible to organise with the Presider and the parish office to gain access to the church for the purpose of conducting a wedding rehearsal.

### **CHURCH STRUCTURE AND FURNISHINGS**

Please note that everything must remain as it is set up in the church, this includes all pews and furniture. Please do not move or remove anything from the church.

### **PHOTOGRAPHERS AND THE USE OF VIDEOS AND COPYRIGHT OBLIGATIONS**

Individual clergy may have their own ideas on where and when photographs can be taken. Please discuss with who will be celebrating your wedding. We also encourage your photographer to make contact with the presider of your marriage for any clarification.

With the use of videos, there are also issues of copyright. If a video recording is made of your wedding and it includes a recording or the recording of musical works, then you will need a single special video licence. This licence allows for the recording of an event, as long as it is only played at a private domestic screening. If you have a professional video person, he/she should have a licence already. This may be something you need to check with him/her.

For those who are not professional video operators, the one-off licences can be obtained from the following agencies:

For recording music: APRA AMCOS—16 Mountain Street Ultimo 2007 Ph (02) 99357900

Website: [www.apraamcos.com.au](http://www.apraamcos.com.au)

For copying sound recording: ARIA—PO Box Q20 Queen Victoria Building Ph (02) 92677996

Website: [www.aria.com.au](http://www.aria.com.au)

### **RESOURCES FOR PLANNING A CATHOLIC WEDDING**

This complete package for preparing a Catholic wedding has been designed for couples who are preparing their wedding liturgy. It includes the new-release electronic program, *The WEDDING by LITURGIA* and its companion book, *THE WEDDING* which provides the prayers and readings in hard copy format. "The Wedding" is available through Liturgy Brisbane. A draft copy of your booklet should be emailed through to the Presider officiating at your ceremony prior to printing.

### **WHAT IT WILL COST**

The marriage fees in the region are set by two bodies. These amounts are a recommended donation. If you feel you would have trouble with the donation, please discuss this with the Presider.

The Diocesan clergy fee is set across the Diocese as a donation to support all the clergy of the diocese. This is not a personal gift to the celebrant – any personal token of appreciation is above and beyond this fee.

We also ask for a donation to the parish. This donation helps with the cost of maintaining the church, as well as the time taken to complete the paperwork necessary for your wedding. It is expected that all fees will be paid at the time of returning your documents to the parish office. In the case of cancellation within two months of the set date, a full refund will occur.

If you choose to marry in either St Mary's Chapel, Maitland or St Joseph's Chapel, Lochinvar, the fees are a little different. The clergy stole fee as well as a donation to the parish which covers the administration / paperwork is still payable to the Maitland Catholic Region Office but there is a Chapel fee which will be advised when booking the chapel.

CHURCH WEDDING: Clergy stole	\$150		
Parish donation		\$500	PAYMENT: \$650
CHAPEL WEDDING: Clergy stole	\$150		
Parish donation		\$300	PAYMENT: \$450
Chapel fee		separate arrangement with Chapel	

### **THE WEDDING CERTIFICATE**

The certificate that you receive on your wedding day is ceremonial. Application and payment for the certificate to enable you to change your name can be made to Births, Deaths and Marriages and is the responsibility of the couple. This process could take up to six weeks.

### **CONTACT NUMBERS**

St Joseph's (Est 1835) East Maitland  
Church of the Immaculate Conception (Est 1871) Morpeth  
St John the Baptist (Est 1841)  
Sacred Heart Church Campbell's Hill (Maitland)  
Holy Family Church Largs (Maitland)  
St Columba's Church Paterson (Maitland)  
Our Lady of Lourdes (Est 1947) Beresfield  
St Patrick's (Est 1905) Lochinvar  
St Paul's (Est 1961) Rutherford

**Maitland Catholic Region Office: (02) 49338918**

\* St Mary's Chapel Maitland - All Saints College, St Mary's Campus

**Mrs Pauline Grzanka: (02) 4933 6177**

\* St Joseph's Convent Chapel Lochinvar—St Joseph's College

**Administration: (02) 4930 7291**

- **St Mary's Chapel, Maitland & St Joseph's Chapel, Lochinvar are not regional churches. Therefore, you will need to book the chapel directly as per the telephone numbers above. Unless you are inviting your own priest to celebrate, you will then need to ring the secretary at the Maitland Catholic Region Office to confirm that a priest is available.**

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