

FAQ - Marriage

1. We are Catholics and we want to be married in the Catholic Church.

If you want to be married in the Catholic Church, you should first make an appointment with your parish priest. After this meeting, you will be able to undertake the required process with him.

2. I am a Catholic and my future husband (wife) is a non-Catholic. Can we be married in the Church? If so, does my future husband (wife) have to be baptized first?

Yes, you can be married in the Catholic Church **without any obligation** for the other party to be baptized before the wedding ceremony (or after).

3. I am baptized but not confirmed. Can I be married in the Catholic Church?

Yes, but under the condition that when the marriage is celebrated, you have undertaken the process to prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation.

4. Which documents are required for the preparation of the marriage record?

- A recent Baptism certificate (issued at most six months before) with all the marginal notations.
- A copy of your civil birth certificate or a photocopy of your passport.
- A request and rescript filled out (with the information) by the priest who is responsible for your file and signed by your parish priest.

If a party is baptized as a non-Catholic (e.g. Orthodox or Protestant):

- A baptism certificate.
- An affidavit, i.e. an attestation of freedom (Form 2) signed by two witnesses in the presence of a church minister.
- A copy of your civil birth certificate or a photocopy of your passport.

If a party is not baptized:

- A copy of your civil birth certificate or a photocopy of your passport.
- An affidavit, i.e. an attestation of freedom (Form 2) signed by two witnesses in the presence of a church minister.

5. **What is the procedure for the celebration of a wedding in a foreign country?**

- The marriage record must be ready **three months in advance** and filed at the Chancery of the Diocese of Montreal. The Chancery will forward it to the foreign diocese where the wedding will be celebrated.
- In addition to providing all the certificates that are necessary for the record, it is very important to **identify very well the place where the wedding will be celebrated** (name of the diocese and parish in the other country).
- After an analysis of all documents, once the record is complete, the Chancery of the Diocese of Montreal will forward your record to the Chancery of the diocese where the wedding will be celebrated.

6. **What is the procedure if we reside outside Quebec and we want to be married in a church in Montreal?**

If your main residence is outside Quebec, you have to undertake your marriage preparation process (appraisal of the record) with the officials of your local parish. They will tell you the procedure to follow to proceed with your plans.

7. **Are marriage preparation courses mandatory? How do I obtain information on these courses?**

In the Diocese of Montreal, marriage preparation courses are mandatory. To obtain information (and good advice), we invite you to call the *Diocesan Centre for Marriage, Life and Family* at (514) 925-4300, ext. 221.

8. **I am a Catholic, I was married civilly and am now divorced (civilly). Can I be married in the Catholic Church?**

Yes, but you will first need to obtain from the Chancery of the Catholic Archdiocese of Montreal a decree of freedom. Your parish priest, when you first meet him to prepare your marriage, will explain to you why this decree is necessary and how to contact the Chancery.

9. **I am a Catholic who was married in a Catholic church but obtained a civil divorce from this marriage. Can I be married again in the Catholic Church?**

Maybe. When you first meet him, your parish priest will explain to you that you will have to contact the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of the diocese of Montreal to submit a petition for **declaration of the nullity** of your Catholic marriage. The officials of the Tribunal will process your petition, subject to certain costs. You will also have to **expect a period of at least a year** (maybe more, depending on the complexity of the investigation) between the beginning of the process and the receipt of the declaration of nullity, if it is granted to you.

10. **Can we celebrate our religious wedding in the Church before our civil marriage?**

No, it is not permissible to enter a religious marriage if one is not civilly married. However, a couple that is already married civilly can have a (religious) marriage in the Catholic Church.

11. Can a person of another religion be a witness to my marriage?

Yes, a witness can be Catholic or not, man or woman, aged 16 years or more, provided this witness has full use of his/her reason and is present during the celebration so that he/she can serve as a witness and sign one and only one act.

12. Can we celebrate our Catholic wedding somewhere other than in a church, e.g. in a hotel?

The wedding of a Catholic couple is always celebrated in a church or chapel that is recognized as suitable for worship by diocesan authorities. However, if one of the two members of the couple is not a Catholic, it is possible to obtain from the diocese permission to marry in a non-Catholic church or in a temple of another religious tradition.

13. Can we celebrate our wedding on a Sunday?

In the Catholic tradition, all weddings can be celebrated from Monday to Saturday inclusively. Sunday being the day devoted to the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, it being the day of Sunday Mass for Catholic communities around the world, weddings are never celebrated on Sunday.