

CATHOLIC PARISH of BACCHUS MARSH

**St. Bernard's – Bacchus Marsh &
Our Lady Help of Christians - Korobeit
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The Celebration of Marriage at St Bernard's

Congratulations on your decision to consecrate your love for each other in Holy Matrimony! We, the Priests at St Bernard's, want your marriage to be as successful and rewarding as possible and offer these guidelines to help you prepare for these important steps that will lead to your wedding day.

Marriage & Faith

Marriage is a covenant by which one man and one woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, which is directed to the good of the spouses and to the nurturing of children. This union was designed by God, so that a husband and wife can share in the greatest work of creation, namely the continuation and education of the human race. Marriage is a holy institution, requiring of those who enter into it a complete and permanent giving of self. Therefore, being well prepared for your marriage is important, not just for yourselves, but for the benefit of your children, The Church and our society.

How is Marriage in the Catholic Church different?

Marriage between two baptised people takes on an even greater beauty and importance because Christ elevated it to the dignity of a Sacrament. Sacramental marriage is an icon of the bond between Christ and his Bride, the Church. This bond gives married people the grace to imitate Jesus' model of self-sacrificial spousal love. To enter into such a lifelong union, one must be free to do so – psychologically, emotionally and physically. Mutual consent is at the heart of marriage. Both individuals must know themselves and each other well enough to make an exclusive commitment that they can keep in joy and in sorrow, in good times and in bad, until death. Marriage images God's love, which is faithful, fruitful, forgiving and forever. It is within the family, based on the Sacrament of Marriage that we aspire most closely to the life of the Trinity. As a Sacrament, Catholic marriage demands that we accept the challenge to be real.

What are the guidelines for getting married at St Bernard's?

1. Living in the parish

Church law states that the normal place where a marriage should take place is the parish where the bride or groom regularly attends mass. Therefore, St Bernard's gives priority to parishioners who are registered and who worship at Bernard's on a weekly basis, followed by parishioners who live within our boundaries (Post codes 3338, 3340, 3341). Others may be considered if their parish gives permission and they commit travel to the preparation meetings at St Bernard's.

2. Adequate notice

The couple should contact the parish at least **six months before the proposed marriage date**. As you are preparing for a life-long relationship together, the preparation of yourself and the necessary paperwork takes some time. When you contact the parish office, could you please nominate your preferred day and time for the wedding. Once confirmed, this will need to be secured by a \$50 deposit.

3. Baptised

In order to get married in the Catholic Church, **at least one member of the couple needs to be baptised**. We will require a copy of your baptism certificate(s). If you don't have your original, you will need to contact the parish where you were baptised and ask them for a copy.

4. Free to marry

If the bride or groom has been married before either within the Catholic Church or elsewhere, then we are unable to set a date for your wedding at St Bernard's until the status of the previous union has been resolved. The priest will discuss this with you at the first meeting

5. Preparation

Apart from meeting with the priest, you will also be asked to attend a marriage preparation seminar with other engaged couples run by The Archdiocese in East Melbourne. This preparation takes place four times a year on a Saturday and Sunday, and dates can be found on their website

www.cam.org.au/lifemarriagefamily. If it is very difficult for you to get to one of these four weekends, arrangements can be made to complete the same preparation at other times, eg weeknights.

6. Liturgical requirements

There are two settings for celebrating a Marriage within the Catholic Church: Mass, or a Simple Ceremony. For most couples, a simple ceremony is the most appropriate. This involves an entrance hymn, readings from scripture, prayers read by a friend or family member, and the exchange of vows. Another hymn is played while government and church wedding payers are signed, a final hymn is played as the couple leave the church.

Please note: music must be appropriate for the sacred setting and must be approved with the celebrant before the second meeting. Secular music, ie any music that is played on Nova FM, KIIS, The Fox, Gold or Smooth FM etc is usually not suitable for a Catholic wedding ceremony in the Church, but may be very appropriate for the reception.

7. Financial

In order to secure a booking for your chosen date and time, St Bernard's requests

- A) \$50 – Booking Fee
- B) \$200 – Church donation, which is due by the time of the Wedding Rehearsal.
- C) \$200+ An offering for the celebrant, usually given at Rehearsal or the last preparation meeting.

8. On the day

You are welcome to decorate the Church with flowers. You may wish to do this the day before the wedding. Usually the parish office will be open on Friday and will be happy to unlock the church for you or a friend. Bacchus Marsh Florist is familiar with our Church and can provide flowers. Confetti is not to be used on Church property. After the ceremony you will be presented with an official marriage certificate. The priest will retain all other paperwork and forward this to the Registry Office. Usually marriages are processed by Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria within a month of the wedding.

St Bernard's Wedding Checklist	
Selected date and time are available	
Six months notice given to Father	
At least the Bride or Groom is Catholic	
Couple agree to attend preparation meetings	
Couple agree to music policy	
Copies of Baptism certificate and birth certificate sighted	
Deposit paid, either by Cash, Cheque (either at the office or in the secured letterbox at 61 Lerderderg St with name on an envelope), or Direct Debit If paying by Bank Transfer please include name of couple in description, and email the office to let us know you have paid BSB 083 347 ; Account no 413804058	