

# *Getting Married*

Getting married involves a lot of organisation and a surprising amount of paperwork. It is the parish's role to help you plan your wedding ceremony together and more importantly to ensure that you are as fully prepared as possible for a happy life as husband and wife.

## Pre-Nuptial Enquiry

Before any dates can be agreed, the parish priest or one of the clergy team needs to talk to you both and complete with you something called a Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form. This will help him ascertain what the next step in the process will be.

## Booking a date

Once the Pre-Nuptial Form has been completed, the parish priest may be willing to agree a provisional date for the wedding. Any date agreed is provisional upon:

- a. satisfactory completion of all necessary paperwork;
- b. legal notifications of marriage are undertaken with local Registry Office;
- c. attendance at a Marriage Preparation course.

This process needs to be followed even if you are getting married in another country or another church.

To give yourselves time to organise and prepare adequately for your married life together, at least six months notice needs to be given.

If you live in another parish and are hoping to get married at St Edmund's, or at Hengrave Hall, then the above still applies but should be done through your local parish priest. You can provisionally book a date with us and you need to let us know whether you require a minister to officiate or are bringing your own priest or deacon.

## Registry Office

Once a provisional date has been agreed with the parish priest you can think about booking the reception and so on. A crucial step is to register your intention to marry with your local Registry Offices and obtain a Marriage Schedule.

You can locate your local Registry Office for Suffolk at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/births-deaths-and-ceremonies/ceremonies/marriages-and-civil-partnerships> Other counties will have their own Registry Offices which you will be able to look up online.

The Marriage Schedule should be handed to the parish as soon as possible if the Registry Office has not indicated that they will be sending it to us directly.

### Marriage Preparation

To help you prepare as fully as possible for your married life together, the parish priest or member of his team will arrange for you to attend a number of sessions of marriage preparation. These will involve thinking about relationship issues as well as look at the Church's teaching on marriage.

If you are living in a different parish from St Edmund's, this must be organised by your own parish priest.

### **The Preparation Sessions for 2024 at St Edmund's are as follows:**

Session 1: Sunday 14 January 2.00pm - 4.00pm in St Edmund's Crypt  
(accessed from the car park)

Session 2: Sunday 28 January 2.00pm - 4.00pm in St Edmund's Crypt  
(accessed from the car park)

You must attend **both** of these sessions.

Session 3 is run by Diocese and is on a Saturday from 10.00am until 4.15pm with lunch included. It is held at Our Lady Immaculate & St Etheldreda Catholic Church, 14 Exeter Road, Newmarket CB8 8LT.

The available dates for 2024 are:

Saturday 10 February

Saturday 16 March

Saturday 27 April

Saturday 23 November

You only have to attend **one** of these Saturday sessions and you can book your place at [www.rcdea.org.uk/marriage-preparation/](http://www.rcdea.org.uk/marriage-preparation/)

The cost for this Saturday preparation day is £95.00 per couple. Details of how to pay are on the booking form.

## Blessing of Engaged Couples

We also invite you to attend a 10.30am Sunday Mass at St Edmund's where we will pray for and bless all our engaged couples who are getting married in the year. Prosecco and other refreshments follow in the crypt to celebrate with you.

The Engaged Couple's Blessing will be on Sunday 11th February at the 10.30am Mass. This is optional but please do let the parish office know whether or not you are attending.

## Planning the Big Day

The priest or deacon who will be officiating at your wedding will help you plan your ceremony. You may choose to celebrate with a Nuptial Mass or a Wedding Service. The priest or deacon will explain the difference and advise you as to which is most appropriate.

You will be asked to choose readings from the Bible, hymns and prayers. The priest or deacon will guide you through this process as painlessly as possible

## Wedding Rehearsal

A few days prior to your wedding day the priest or deacon who is officiating will arrange a practice in church. It is helpful to have as many of the key people at this as possible (e.g, best man, bridesmaids, parents, ushers, readers and so on).

## Costs

People often ask us about the cost of a church wedding. There are some fixed costs and some suggested donations.

### **Fixed Costs:**

Organist:	usually around £100.00 (usually paid direct to the organist on the day)
Notification of Marriage	£35.00 (payable to Registry Office)
Marriage Certificate:	£11 (Payable to Registry Office after the wedding)
Authorised Person's Fee:	£80.00 (usually paid on the day)
Marriage Preparation Course	£95.00 (payable to RCDEA usually when you book the Saturday day-long course)

## **Suggested Donations:**

Administration fees: Suggested around £250.00 payable to the parish. A lot of work will have gone in to supporting you towards the big day and the parish depends entirely upon donations and Sunday collections to finance itself.

Minister's stole fee: It is customary to make a personal gift to the priest or deacon who performs the wedding. (Suggested: £100.00)

### Flowers, Photography, Video

Flowers, photographers, etc are to be arranged privately.

Flower arrangers should liaise with parish office for a convenient time to access the church. We ask that you leave at least one flower bouquet for the Church.

Photographers and/or videographers should arrive at church half an hour before the wedding ceremony begins and liaise directly with the priest or deacon who is officiating at the wedding.

# Check List

Based on your Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form, the following paperwork is required:

	Bride	Groom
<p><b>Catholic baptismal certificate.</b>  <i>This needs to be issued within six months of the date of the proposed wedding. We will keep this certificate with your paperwork.</i></p>		
<p><b>A non-Catholic baptismal certificate.</b>  <i>This can be the original certificate or a recent copy. We will photocopy this for our records and return it to you.</i></p>		
<p><b>Statutory Declarations of Freedom to Marry.</b>  <i>These are forms we will give you and ask you to complete in the presence of a solicitor. They should then be returned to us. There is one for each partner. The solicitor should charge about £5 to £10 for this service.</i></p>		
<p><b>Marriage Preparation Course Certificate.</b>  <i>We will issue this to you once you have completed the course.</i></p>		
<p><b>Marriage Schedule issued by the Registry Office for where you live.</b>  <i>The Registry Office may give this directly to you, in which case it should be handed to us as soon as possible. Often, the Registry Office will send it directly to the parish.</i></p>		
<p><b>Death certificate of your previous spouse.</b>  <i>Only applicable if you have been married previously and your spouse has died.</i></p>		
<p><b>Civil marriage certificate.</b>  <i>Only required when you have already celebrated a civil wedding and are seeking a convalidation.</i></p>		
<p><b>Decree of Nullity for a previous attempted marriage, issued by a Roman Catholic Tribunal.</b>  <i>Required if you have been married previously and your spouse is still alive. We will explain this process to you.</i></p>		