



OUR LADY OF VICTORIES PARISH



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GUIDELINES FOR MARRIAGE PREPARATION

(Please read these guidelines and contract carefully and retain for future reference)

WEDDINGS AT OUR LADY OF VICTORIES CHURCH

Welcome to Our Lady of Victories Catholic Parish Horsley Park. Thank you for considering celebrating your wedding at our church. You are very welcome; however, we do ask that you please respect our prayer space as this is the place where the Catholic community of Horsley Park worships. In accepting your booking, our expectation is that you will respect the usual procedures and practices of the Church and Parish life. Seasonal Parish decorations in the church relating to the time or celebration of the liturgical year (including Sacraments) must not be changed or removed for weddings.

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

In the course of our life of faith there are moments that are celebrated with special emphasis and care. These moments are called sacraments and are celebrated with the faith community. In baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, we are born through water and the Holy Spirit into God's household. When our relationship within and outside the household of faith are tangled or even severed, these ties are restored through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Some are called to minister to the community and are ordained for service as deacons, priests or bishops. When one of us falls ill, we gather around the sick with prayer and anointing. And when a man and a woman fall in love and make their commitment before God and the church, we gather with them in moments of joyful promise as they become ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage to one another.

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION: Sunday Eucharist before marriage

All sacraments point towards the Eucharist. Here is the very life-blood of our Christian life. Our whole tradition has upheld the weekly community celebration together as church as the minimum necessary to maintain and to nourish the life of the Spirit within us. If we have been somewhat neglectful in this regard until now, the marriage engagement period is an excellent time to have a change of heart and to begin afresh our weekly participation in the Sunday Eucharist. By your participation in the Sunday Eucharist you show that you are part of the Catholic community and desire to celebrate a Catholic wedding and form a Catholic family.

You are strongly encouraged to participate in the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** and receive the healing touch of Christ in your life while preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage. Reconciliation times in our church are Monday and Wednesday to Friday between 8.30am and 9.00am and Saturday between 5.00pm and 5.45pm.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE

Marriage is a Sacrament, a serious life-long commitment. It is not merely a matter of arranging for the reception, filling in the necessary papers and getting to the church on time. As part of the preparation for marriage it is necessary that the bridal couple receive instruction for married life. This is done by attending a marriage preparation course. We insist on your participation in this course because we feel it is important for you to spend time reflecting on your future life together. No matter how well you know each other, being married is very different from being single. As we are all aware, some marriages do break down, so we feel that it is important for you to explore ways of communicating with each other and know how to handle finances, stress and conflict, which are a part of everyday life. The Catholic Church recommends that all couples attend an approved Marriage preparation course. We advise that you discuss the various options available with your celebrant before booking into a course. Enclosed are brochures detailing courses run by **CatholicCare** and **Engaged Encounters**. Additional information is available from the respective websites: www.catholiccare.org or www.engagedencounter.org.au.

CONFIRMATION OF TENTATIVE BOOKINGS

Within a month of booking the church, you are required to send the duly completed and signed Booking Form together with the full payment of \$1,400.00 (which includes a \$500.00 bond). Your booking is AUTOMATICALLY CANCELLED if your form and full payment are not returned within the required time. The bond will be refunded after the ceremony if all the conditions in these guidelines have been respected. All or part of the bond money will be withheld if any part of these guidelines is not respected or in the case of any disrespectful behaviour. Details on the procedure for return of bond money is outlined on page 4.

CHURCH BELLS

Bell ringing is not included in the basic wedding donation. The church bells can be rung before and after your ceremony for a further donation of \$100.00.

CHURCH OFFERING

In accordance with legislation and ATO rulings, there is no GST payable for a religious service. We do, however, ask for a contribution of \$900.00, payable upon confirmation of booking, together with the \$500.00 bond. The church offering covers the cost of church flowers for the sanctuary and general running and maintenance costs. Payments can be made as follows:

- in cash at the Parish office during office hours only
- by cheque - all cheques are to be made payable to *Our Lady of Victories Parish*
- by credit card by completing and returning the enclosed form with your booking form
- online via the homepage of our website by clicking on the 'Make a payment or donation' button at the foot of the page and following the links
- a further donation of \$100.00 is payable if you wish to have bells rung at your wedding ceremony

PUNCTUALITY

The times for Saturday weddings are 11.30am, 1.30pm and 3.30pm. Sunday weddings may be celebrated at 1.30pm and 3.30pm. The bride must be on time on the wedding day. Arriving late inconveniences many people. Punctuality is of utmost importance. ***The tradition of the bride being late is not allowed. If the bride is more than 10 minutes late or if the wedding party and guests do not leave the church premises at least 20 minutes before the next wedding is due, the couple will lose all or part of their bond money.***

The time printed on your wedding invitation should reflect the actual time you have booked for your wedding. Advising guests of an earlier time is strictly **not** permitted as this interferes with other weddings and events scheduled in our church on the day.

Please inform your celebrant, guests and photographers that you have to abide by the following schedule:

FOR WEDDINGS BOOKED AT	11.30am	1.30pm	3.30pm
Groom arrives at	11.15am	1.15pm	3.15pm
Bride arrives at	11.30am	1.30pm	3.30pm
Mass/Service starts no later than	11.40am	1.40pm	3.40pm
Mass/Service ends no later than	12.40pm	2.40pm	4.40pm
Church grounds cleared by	1.10pm	3.10pm	5.10pm

THE CELEBRANT AT THE WEDDING:

It is the responsibility of the couple to book the celebrant (Roman Catholic Priest or Deacon) and to organise a meeting with him six months before the wedding. Any Catholic priest or deacon can celebrate weddings at Horsley Park church. With the celebrant the couple will decide whether they are to have a nuptial Mass or a wedding service. If you do not have your own celebrant you may wish to contact one of the following celebrants.

Fr Dominik Karnas 9620 1242, Fr Mark Okarma 9620 1242, Fr Stan Kluk 9888 2569
For a Wedding Service: Deacon Paul Naggar 0419 203 713

The donation to the celebrant for the wedding ceremony is to be discussed with him. This donation is payable direct to your celebrant one month before the wedding.

WEDDING REHEARSALS

If you require the use of the church for a rehearsal prior to your wedding you can arrange this by ringing the parish secretary during office hours: Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 2.30pm. Due to other church commitments rehearsals may be scheduled for **Wednesday** evenings only and will be strictly limited to **thirty minutes** only.

PRE-NUPTIAL INQUIRY AND NOTICE OF INTENDED MARRIAGE

Please organise a meeting with your celebrant to fill in these papers **at least** six months before the wedding. You will need to produce the following documents when you meet your celebrant:

- BIRTH CERTIFICATE (or foreign passport)
The law requires Australian born persons to present an original birth certificate.
- BAPTISM CERTIFICATE
A recently issued certificate, **not older than six months**, is required in the case of all baptised persons. This can be obtained by contacting the church where the Baptism took place. It is normal procedure to ask for a recently issued Baptism certificate for marriage purposes.
- CONFIRMATION
You need to know the date and place of your Confirmation.
- MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATE
This certificate will be issued to you on completion of your Marriage preparation course.

THE FOLLOWING NEED TO BE DISCUSSED WITH YOUR CELEBRANT:

PREVIOUS MARRIAGES / DIVORCES

If either party has been through any form of prior marriage, no matter where or when, it is very important to discuss this with your celebrant before making a firm booking. In these cases a Certificate of Annulment of the previous marriage and divorce papers or death certificate of the previous spouse have to be supplied.

MIXED MARRIAGES

At least one party has to be Catholic for the church to be used for a wedding. When one partner is not a Catholic, the Catholic party will be asked to sign and answer the question: *“Do you sincerely promise to do all in your power to share your faith with your children by having them baptised and brought up in the Catholic Church?”* The marriage ceremony is the same in all cases.

TEXT FOR THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

The texts of the Marriage Rite are available from the celebrant. They can also be obtained from the Parish website under ‘Sacraments’. The couple is invited to choose their scripture readings and other options to personalise their wedding celebration.

NUPTIAL MASS / WEDDING SERVICE

If a Nuptial Mass is to be celebrated, the celebrant decides whether the bridal couple should receive both the Body and the Blood of Christ. On the occasion of a marriage of mixed religion or non-practicing Catholics, a wedding service is usually preferred. The decision however, is to be made in consultation with the celebrant. Due consideration is to be given to the feelings of the non-Catholic party.

READERS

The couples are encouraged to ask adults to proclaim the scripture readings. The readers need to be able to proclaim the readings clearly and intelligibly.

CHOOSING YOUR WEDDING MUSIC: Music in a Christian Wedding Service

Music is a servant in worship. It is never to be done for its own sake within a celebration of Christian worship. Music chosen for your wedding should be chosen to suit the different parts of the whole celebration. The text of sung pieces should always respect the particular emphasis of the action and gesture being celebrated. “Performance” type music must be carefully avoided. There is room for solo pieces and/or choir pieces for folk type music, as well as for more classical music. Good taste and dignity will determine what is to be sung, by whom, when and how. This should be discussed with the celebrant.

These guidelines are suggestions based upon an understanding of the reality being celebrated. **Popular music from Broadway musicals or from pop movies is not allowed during the celebration.** Should you particularly wish to play a secular / modern song, the most appropriate time would be at the signing of the register. As a matter of courtesy, please discuss your choice with your celebrant. It is the bridal couple's responsibility to organise the musicians. You can find a list of musicians in the accompanying literature. Costs and payment arrangements are to be discussed directly with the musicians chosen.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs may be taken before the celebration. Professional photographers are permitted to take pictures during the celebration provided they do not become a distraction, in order to preserve the true reverence for the celebration. Videos are permitted. Please request that the photographer and videographer introduce themselves to the celebrant prior to the celebration. If the above times are not **strictly** adhered to, **NO PHOTOS** will be permitted after the Wedding Ceremony.

DECORATION OF THE CHURCH

Our parish church is freshly decorated with flowers every weekend. The **ONLY OTHER** decorations permitted in our church are **PEW DECORATIONS**. If required, they are to be provided by the wedding couple. Pew decorations are understood as being a length of material secured to the pew end. The material must be kept clear from the floor and not limit access in and out of the seats. If a spray of flowers is used, this must not be higher than 15cm from the pew end and must be secured to the pew. Free standing pots, arrangements, candelabras etc., are not permitted.

PLEASE NOTE:

NO THUMB TACKS, BLUE TAC OR STICKY TAPE IS TO BE USED ON PEWS, CHAIRS OR CHURCH FURNITURE. NO DECORATIONS PERMITTED ON CANDLE-STANDS, ALTAR OR AMBO. YOU NEED TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARRANGE FOR SOMEONE TO REMOVE PEW DECORATIONS AND BOOKLETS FROM THE PEWS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE WEDDING.

CONFETTI, BUBBLES AND CANDLES

The church and the grounds are cleaned in preparation for weekend services and weddings. You are therefore advised that **FLOWER PETALS, CONFETTI OR RICE ARE NOT PERMITTED** either inside or outside the church. **USE OF CANDLES AS DECORATIONS IS PROHIBITED**. Soap water used for bubbles causes damage to the carpet and pews and sandstone paving. **USE OF BUBBLE BOTTLES IS TO BE KEPT OUTSIDE THE CHURCH ON THE CONCRETE AREA ONLY.**

VEHICLES

Under no circumstances are vehicles permitted to drive on the paved areas. Also note that there is a 5-tonne load limit in the church grounds. Buses or other vehicles exceeding this load limit are not permitted in the church grounds. Burnouts are strictly not tolerated.

CANCELLATIONS OF WEDDINGS

If you decide to cancel your booking, please notify the celebrant, the church and musicians, **in writing**, as soon as possible.

RETURN OF BOND MONEY

After the wedding please apply **in writing** to the Parish secretary for the return of your bond, giving all relevant bank account details necessary for electronic transfer of refund. Bond money will be withheld if any part of these guidelines are not respected or in the case of any disrespectful behaviour. In these cases the decision of the Parish Priest is final.

BAPTISM OF CHILDREN

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY: Celebrating a wedding in our church does not give you the right to baptise your children in this church. Children should be baptised in the parish to which the family belongs. Normally this is the parish where the family lives, or the parish where the family participates regularly.