

Couples' Checklist for Church Marriage in the Archdiocese of Newark

- Meet with your parish priest/deacon at least one year in advance of the desired date, prior to making any other wedding arrangements.
- Obtain permission of the pastor if: (1) you wish a priest/deacon outside the parish to officiate or
- (2) you request the presence of any non-Catholic clergy.
- Choose witnesses. The best man and maid/matron of honor may be Catholic or non-Catholic.
- Check with your parish priest/deacon concerning:
 - flowers and decorations
 - music
 - rehearsal
 - photographer
 - offering

Pre-Marital Formational Sessions

- Pre-Nuptial Investigation**
This is a short questionnaire to be filled out with both of you prior to marriage to assure the Church there is no impediment to the marriage.
- FOCCUS Inventory**
This tool is used to identify areas of strength or concern and helps the priest/deacon better direct your preparation sessions.
- Sacrament of Reconciliation**
All are encouraged to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the rehearsal; however, the Sacrament can be received on the evening of the rehearsal.
- Wedding Liturgy**
The available liturgies are: (1) the Nuptial Mass Liturgy and (2) the Wedding Ceremony Liturgy. The couple, along with the witnessing priest/deacon, should plan the liturgy in church. A booklet called, "Together for Life" can be obtained from the witnessing priest/deacon. It provides guidance in selecting appropriate scripture readings and prayers for the liturgy. Because of problems concerning Eucharist sharing which may arise from the presence of non-Catholic witnesses and guests, a mixed marriage celebrated according to the Catholic form ordinarily takes place outside the Eucharistic liturgy.

Pre-Marital Instructional Sessions

- Pre-Cana (or) Engaged Encounter (or) Parish Marriage Preparation Team**
Sessions include talks or discussions followed by the couple's reflection and dialogue. A certificate of attendance is given at the conclusion. This should be presented to your witnessing priest/deacon to demonstrate partial fulfillment of this requirement.
- Instructions are given by the priest or person designated by the priest to those unable to attend the above options.**

Church Documents Needed

- For the Catholic Party**
- Recent Baptismal Certificate**
- Confirmation Certificate (if not confirmed, see Canon 1065)**
- Under 21**
If parents object to the marriage, this should be disclosed to the priest/deacon.
- Previous Valid Marriage**
Proof of the dissolution of the bond is required, i.e., a death certificate, annulment decree.
- Previous Invalid Marriage**
A Decree of Nullity from a competent ecclesiastical tribunal must be submitted.
- Certificate of Instructional Session Attendance**
- Testimony the Party is Free to Marry**
Obtained from recent baptismal certificate or two witnesses

- For the Non-Catholic Party**
- Baptismal Certificate**
When documentary proof is not available, affidavits of parents or trustworthy persons are acceptable.
- Under 21**
If parents object to the marriage, this fact should be disclosed to the priest/deacon.
- Previous Valid Marriage**
Proof of the dissolution of the bond is required, i.e., a death certificate, annulment decree.
- Previous Invalid Marriage**
A Decree of Nullity from a competent ecclesiastical tribunal must be submitted.
- A certificate of Instructional Session Attendance**
- Testimony the Party is Free to Marry**
Obtained from two witnesses

Civil Documents Needed

- Marriage License**
The license is obtained in the municipality in which the woman resides. If she is a non-resident of the state, it should be obtained in the municipality of the man. If both parties are non-residents, it must be obtained in the municipality in which the marriage is to take place.

The license, once granted, is valid for (30) thirty days. It cannot, however, be issued sooner than (72) seventy-two hours after application is made.

A marriage license shall not be issued to a minor person under the age of (18) eighteen unless his/her parents or legal guardians consent. This must be done in the presence of two reputable witnesses.
- For convalidation, the paper work indicated above must be done (see Church documents needed)*
- A Remarriage License must be obtained from the state.*