

***The Parish of the Sacred Heart and St Aldhelm
Sherborne
Information for Marriage***

A symbol of Christ's love for his Church

Congratulations!

The Christian community rejoices in your love for one another and wishes to pray for you as you plan to celebrate that love in the sacrament of marriage.

Planning to get married in the Catholic Church?

You and your fiancé(e) should go and see your parish priest as soon as you have decided to get married. Make sure that both he and the church are available to you before confirming your venue for the wedding reception, etc. If you intend to invite someone else to officiate at the ceremony (such as a relative or family friend who is a Catholic priest or deacon) then you must obtain permission for this also. Normally at least six months notice is required.

Your parish priest will take down your details and explain to you the documents that you need to obtain.

Your priest will also help you arrange some form of preparation for marriage. Marriage preparation courses will vary depending on the circumstances of the couple. There are also useful resources for marriage preparation on the internet too such as www.catholicmarriagepreonline.com Any Catholic, practising or not, has a right to get married in their parish Church provided they are free to marry and are not obviously too immature to marry or intending marriage in a sense contrary to Catholic teaching, such as denying its permanence or excluding the possibility of having

children if they are of an age to do so. If you wish to marry in a Church other than your parish Church, this will be entirely at the discretion of the parish priest of that Church, and preparation should still normally be undertaken by your own parish priest.

If you wish to marry abroad, you should first obtain the agreement of the priest who will be marrying you and the parish where you will marry, and then proceed as above by contacting the parish priest where you live.

If you are not confirmed, you are strongly encouraged to take this step before marrying, though it is not absolutely essential in England and Wales. As preparing for marriage in the Catholic Church is a life-changing decision, this provides you with a unique opportunity to discern how you feel about your personal relationship with God.

What if my fiancé(e) is not a Catholic / Christian?

You are free to marry a Christian of another denomination, but should bear in mind that you will be asked to undertake to bring your children up as Catholics. Your fiancé(e) would not be put under any obligation to assist with this, but should at least consent to your doing so.

If you are marrying a non-baptised person or someone from another religion, a dispensation is required from the bishop's office, but this is normally granted on the parish priest's recommendation.

Getting married will be the most important decision you make in life - make sure that it is something you pray about. Catholics regard marriage as a sacrament, that means we are sure that God will be with you in your marriage.

*God the Eternal Father keep you in love with each other,
So that the peace of Christ may stay with you and be
always in your home.*

*May your children bless you, your friends console you,
and all people live in peace with you.*