



DIOCESE OF MEMPHIS IN TENNESSEE

PRENUPTIAL INVESTIGATION

(including validations and sanations)

MARRIAGE CEREMONY INFORMATION

Groom: _____ Bride: _____
Full Legal Name Full Legal Name

Place of Marriage: _____
Name of Church City & State

Date of Wedding: _____ (Include a copy of signed civil marriage certificate in the file.)

Witnesses: _____ and _____

Priest/Deacon Officiating at Marriage: _____

If validating a civil union or seeking a sanation, date of the civil ceremony: _____

* If the parties have attempted marriage civilly and now wish to marry each other in the Catholic Church, then at the Catholic ceremony they must have the intention of giving marital consent as if they were not already married. There is no "blessing" of an already existing union.

RECORD OF PERMISSIONS & DISPENSATIONS

Delegation: For a Catholic marriage to be contracted validly, the priest or deacon receiving the vows must be the pastor of the territory where the marriage takes place, the local ordinary, or someone delegated by one of them. Priests and deacons who have received faculties from the Bishop of Memphis have already received delegation for assisting at marriage within the territory of the parish to which they are assigned.

Delegation granted (if needed) by: _____ Date: _____

Mixed Marriage: If a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic intend to marry, permission must be obtained from the local ordinary. Priests who have received faculties from the Bishop of Memphis may give this permission without consulting the local ordinary.

Delegation granted (if needed) by: _____ Date: _____

Disparity of Cult: If either the bride or the groom is not baptized, the marriage cannot be contracted validly without a dispensation from the impediment of disparity of cult by the local ordinary. If there is doubt about the fact of a party's baptism or the validity of a party's baptism, a dispensation from the impediment of disparity of cult *ad cautelam* (as a precaution) should be obtained. (See *Petition for Dispensations*.)

Delegation granted (if needed) by: _____ Date: _____

Dispensation from Impediments: If there are other impediments to marriage, a dispensation must be obtained for any dispensable impediment from the local ordinary. (For information about impediments to marriage, see page 2.)

Delegation granted (if needed) by: _____ Date: _____



IMPORTANT INFORMATION REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- Baptismal Certificates** (and Profession of Faith Certificates) for bride and groom (issued within the last six months)
- Two Witness Affidavits** for bride and two Witness Affidavits for groom attesting to freedom to marry*
- Declaration of Nullity Decree(s)** (if applicable)
- Death Certificate(s)** (if applicable)*
- For a baptized non-Catholic, a **Baptismal Certificate** OR **two Witness Affidavits** attesting to baptism
- Certificate of Completion** of Diocesan Marriage Preparation Program**
- Certificate of Completion** of Natural Family Planning Class**
- Certificate of Completion** of FOCCUS Inventory**
- If a dispensation or permission is needed, complete the *Petition for Dispensation* and forward all of the above to the Office of the Chancellor.
- If the wedding will be celebrated outside the Diocese of Memphis, attach the *Testimonial Letters or Nihil Obstat* form and mail all of the above documents to: Office of the Chancellor, 5825 Shelby Oaks Drive, Memphis, TN 38134. The form can be found at www.cdom.org/chancellor .
 - * If the priest/deacon preparing the couple knows with certainty that both parties have not been married previously or that a previous spouse is deceased, these documents are not necessary. If, however, the wedding will take place outside of the Diocese of Memphis, they are required.
 - ** If preparing for a validation or sanation of a civil marriage that has lasted more than five years, the completion of these premarital requirements is at the discretion of the Pastor.

REFERENCE GUIDE FOR MARRIAGE IMPEDIMENTS

If you have any questions, please contact the chancery.

1. Impediments of Divine Natural Law that cannot be dispensed by anyone:

- A) **Impotence:** Antecedent and perpetual incapacity of groom/bride to perform a complete conjugal act, i.e., marital sexual intercourse. Sterility or the inability to impregnate or to conceive is not an impediment.
- B) **Prior Bond (*Ligamen*):** A person with a prior marriage bond cannot marry again as long as the first spouse is living since the marriage is presumed valid. If a decree of declaration of nullity or a dissolution is granted by a Catholic Chancery/Tribunal, then the person could be free to marry.
- C) **Consanguinity:** Blood relationships in the direct line, any ancestor and descendant, i.e. parent, grandparent, etc., or in the second degree of the collateral line, i.e. brother and sister, legitimate, natural, or adoptive.

2. Impediments of Ecclesiastical Law that a diocesan bishop or local Ordinary may dispense:

- A) **Disparity of Cult:** Is required for a marriage between a Catholic and a non-baptized person.
- B) **Perpetual Vow of Chastity:** If the person is a member of a religious institute of *diocesan* right, not pontifical.
- C) **Abduction:** A marriage between a man and a woman whom he abducts or detains in order to marry.
- D) **Consanguinity:** Blood relationships in the collateral line, e.g. first cousin.
- E) **Affinity:** Marrying someone who became a relative of the person through a valid marriage to some family member and is now free to marry, never in the direct line, in any degree.
- F) **Public Propriety:** A man/woman cannot marry a woman/man related by consanguinity in the first degree of the direct line to the woman/man he/she lived with together in an invalid marriage or in a notorious or public concubinage.

3. Impediments of Ecclesiastical Law that only the Holy See may dispense:

- A) **Sacred Orders:** Ordained Deacon or Priest without Laicization.
- B) **Perpetual Vow of Chastity:** In a religious institute of pontifical right.
- C) **Crime:** Murdering one's spouse or someone else's in view of marriage, or any mutual physical or moral action that causes the death of either's spouse to marry the surviving spouse.

GROOM

Full Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____
Number/Street (include Apartment/Unit #) City/State/Zip Code

Phone: _____ Email: _____
Home/Work/Cellular: (Area Code) Number

Father's Name: _____ Religion: _____
Rite (If Eastern Catholic)

Mother's Name: _____ Religion: _____
(Include mother's maiden name) Rite (If Eastern Catholic)

Groom's Religion: _____ Did it ever change? _____
*If not baptized, obtain a dispensation from Disparity of Cult. If yes: When/What Religion(s)

Place of Baptism: _____
(Obtain recently issued baptismal certificate) Name of Church City/State Date

If Eastern Catholic, indicate which Rite: _____

Within what parish do you live? _____
Name of Parish City/State

Profession of Faith (if applicable): _____
(Obtain recently issued certificate, if not already noted on baptismal certificate) Name of Parish City/State

Have you received First Penance and Holy Communion? Yes No _____
(If not, arrange for preparation and reception of sacraments) If yes: Name of Church City/State Date

Have you received Confirmation? Yes No _____
(If not, arrange for preparation and reception of sacrament) If yes: Name of Church City/State Date

Respond to the following and explain any responses marked with an asterisk (*). For #8, #10a-f, and #11, an asterisked response may prevent a couple from marrying. For #4-6, see impediments on page 2. Contact the Chancery if you have any questions.

1) How long have you known the bride? _____ Length of courtship? _____ Length of engagement? _____

2) Are you contracting marriage: A) for the purpose of truly seeking marriage itself B) for another purpose? A B*

3) Do you regularly participate in the practice of your faith? Yes No*

4) Have you ever been married before (any church, civil, etc.)? (If yes, go to page 7) Yes* No

5) Are you related to your fiancée by blood or legal adoption, or has she married previously into your family? Yes* No

6) Are you or your fiancée bound by the impediments of age, sacred orders, public perpetual vow of chastity in a religious institute, abduction, crime, or public propriety? (See page 2) Yes* No

7) Have you ever experienced/been treated for any psychological/emotional/addiction-related difficulty? Yes* No
If yes, is it resolved? Yes No*

- 8) Have you undergone surgery in order to attempt a sex-change or in any other manner taken measures in an attempt to change your gender? Yes* No
- 9) Have you signed or do you intend to sign a prenuptial agreement? (If yes, attach a copy of the agreement) Yes* No
- 10) Do you understand and agree without reservation to the nature and obligations of marriage, namely:
- a. To give oneself to the other to form a common partnership of love and life? Yes No*
 - b. To share in marital intercourse? Yes No* Have you ever been diagnosed with impotence? Yes* No
 - c. To give your spouse the right to sexual relations open to the procreation of children and to see to the fulfillment of obligations related to the Catholic religious/moral upbringing of children? Yes No*
 - d. To make a permanent commitment until the death of your spouse? Yes No*
 - e. To be faithful to your spouse throughout the entire marriage? Yes No*
 - f. To give your consent freely and willingly, without being forced or pressured by anyone/any circumstance? *If there is suspicion of pressure being exerted, an explanation is needed.* Yes No*
- (Ex. Is your fiancée pregnant? etc.)
- 11) Are you placing any conditions on/or do you have any serious reservations about this marriage? Yes* No
- 12) Would your fiancée agree with your answers to these questions if she knew them? Yes No*
- 13) Is there any important fact about you which you have not shared with your fiancée? (e.g., abortions, addictions, illness, trouble with the law, indebtedness, sterility, sexuality, child(ren) from a prior relationship, etc.) Yes* No
- 14) If groom or bride is age 17 or younger please ask: Do both parents consent to this marriage? Yes No*
- 15) Do you have any children from any previous relationship? If yes, are the moral and civil responsibilities to any former spouse(s) and any child(ren) being fulfilled? Yes* No
 Yes No*

Explain here any response given above which included an asterisk ():*

I swear that all the information I have given above is the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Signature of Groom

Date Signed

Signature of Priest or Deacon

Type/Print Name

Place Signed

[Parish Seal]

BRIDE

Full Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____
Number/Street (include Apartment/Unit #) City/State/Zip Code

Phone: _____ Email: _____
Home/Work/Cellular: (Area Code) Number

Father's Name: _____ Religion: _____
Rite (If Eastern Catholic)

Mother's Name: _____ Religion: _____
(Include mother's maiden name) Rite (If Eastern Catholic)

Bride's Religion: _____ Did it ever change? _____
*If not baptized, obtain a dispensation from Disparity of Cult. If yes: When/What Religion(s)

Place of Baptism: _____
(Obtain recently issued baptismal certificate) Name of Church City/State Date

If Eastern Catholic, indicate which Rite: _____

Within what parish do you live? _____
Name of Parish City/State

Profession of Faith (if applicable): _____
(Obtain recently issued certificate, if not already noted on baptismal certificate) Name of Parish City/State

Have you received First Penance and Holy Communion? Yes No _____
(If not, arrange for preparation and reception of sacraments) If yes: Name of Church City/State Date

Have you received Confirmation? Yes No _____
(If not, arrange for preparation and reception of sacrament) If yes: Name of Church City/State Date

Respond to the following and explain any responses marked with an asterisk (*). For #8, #10a-f, and #11, an asterisked response may prevent a couple from marrying. For #4-6, see impediments on page 2. Contact the Chancery if you have any questions.

- 1) How long have you known the groom? _____ Length of courtship? _____ Length of engagement? _____
- 2) Are you contracting marriage: A) for the purpose of truly seeking marriage itself B) for another purpose? A B*
- 3) Do you regularly participate in the practice of your faith? Yes No*
- 4) Have you ever been married before (any church, civil, etc.)? (If yes, go to page 7) Yes* No
- 5) Are you related to your fiancé by blood or legal adoption, or has he married previously into your family? Yes* No
- 6) Are you or your fiancé bound by the impediments of age, sacred orders, public perpetual vow of chastity in a religious institute, abduction, crime, or public propriety? (See page 2) Yes* No
- 7) Have you ever experienced/been treated for any psychological/emotional/addiction-related difficulty? Yes* No
If yes, is it resolved? Yes No*

- 8) Have you undergone surgery in order to attempt a sex-change or in any other manner taken measures in an attempt to change your gender? Yes* No
- 9) Have you signed or do you intend to sign a prenuptial agreement? (If yes, attach a copy of the agreement) Yes* No
- 10) Do you understand and agree without reservation to the nature and obligations of marriage, namely:
- a. To give oneself to the other to form a common partnership of love and life? Yes No*
 - b. To share in marital intercourse? Yes No* Have you ever been diagnosed with impotence? Yes* No
 - c. To give your spouse the right to sexual relations open to the procreation of children and to see to the fulfillment of obligations related to the Catholic religious/moral upbringing of children? Yes No*
 - d. To make a permanent commitment until the death of your spouse? Yes No*
 - e. To be faithful to your spouse throughout the entire marriage? Yes No*
 - f. To give your consent freely and willingly, without being forced or pressured by anyone/any circumstance? *If there is suspicion of pressure being exerted, an explanation is needed.* Yes No*
(Ex. Are you pregnant? etc.)
- 11) Are you placing any conditions on/or do you have any serious reservations about this marriage? Yes* No
- 12) Would your fiancé agree with your answers to these questions if he knew them? Yes No*
- 13) Is there any important fact about you which you have not shared with your fiancé? (e.g., abortions, addictions, illness, trouble with the law, indebtedness, sterility, sexuality, child(ren) from a prior relationship, etc.) Yes* No
- 14) If groom or bride is age 17 or younger please ask: Do both parents consent to this marriage? Yes No*
- 15) Do you have any children from any previous relationship? Yes* No
- If yes, are the moral and civil responsibilities to any former spouse(s) and any child(ren) being fulfilled? Yes No*

Explain here any response given above which included an asterisk ():*

I swear that all the information I have given above is the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.

Signature of Bride

Date Signed

Signature of Priest or Deacon

Type/Print Name

Place Signed

[Parish Seal]

PRIOR MARRIAGE(S) OF GROOM

How many times were you married in **any type of ceremony**? _____

NOTE: When there is a prior marriage NO wedding ceremony can be scheduled until a) the final Decree(s) of Nullity/Dissolution is granted by the Catholic Church; or b) the certificate of death of the spouse is presented. If the priest/deacon is certain of the death of the prior spouse, a certificate of death is not required.

Spouse #1: _____ Date of Marriage Ceremony: _____

Place of Ceremony (Name & City): _____ Title of Officiant: _____

How did this marriage end? Death of Spouse Divorce Declaration of Nullity

Spouse #2: _____ Date of Marriage Ceremony: _____

Place of Ceremony (Name & City): _____ Title of Officiant: _____

How did this marriage end? Death of Spouse Divorce Declaration of Nullity

Attach a copy of the death certificate, civil divorce/annulment, the decree of nullity, or the decree of dissolution.

PRIOR MARRIAGE(S) of BRIDE

How many times were you married in **any type of ceremony**? _____

NOTE: When there is a prior marriage NO wedding ceremony can be scheduled until a) the final Decree(s) of Nullity/Dissolution is granted by the Catholic Church; or b) the certificate of death of the spouse is presented. If the priest/deacon is certain of the death of the prior spouse, a certificate of death is not required.

Spouse #1: _____ Date of Marriage Ceremony: _____

Place of Ceremony (Name & City): _____ Title of Officiant: _____

How did this marriage end? Death of Spouse Divorce Declaration of Nullity

Spouse #2: _____ Date of Marriage Ceremony: _____

Place of Ceremony (Name & City): _____ Title of Officiant: _____

How did this marriage end? Death of Spouse Divorce Declaration of Nullity

Attach a copy of the death certificate, civil divorce/annulment, the decree of nullity, or the decree of dissolution.

DECLARATION FOR MIXED MARRIAGES AND DISPARITY OF CULT

Note: If one of the parties is not Catholic, this section must be completed.

CATHOLIC PARTY:

I hereby state that I am prepared to remove dangers of falling away from the Catholic faith. I sincerely promise to do all in my power to have all the children baptized and brought up in the Catholic Church.

Signature of the Catholic Party

NON-CATHOLIC PARTY:

I am clearly aware of the obligation of my Catholic spouse to preserve and profess his/her faith and to do all that is possible to baptize and to educate the children of our marriage in the Catholic Church.

Signature of Non-Catholic Party

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

RITE: If the groom and/or bride are Eastern Catholic or Eastern Orthodox, only a priest may assist at the wedding, not a deacon. If you have any questions, please call the Chancery.

CANONICAL FORM: Catholics are to be married before a properly delegated Catholic priest or deacon and two witness, in a church. Dispensations to marry outside the church when only one is Catholic may be granted. See insert.

NUPTIAL MASS: A marriage between two Catholics is usually celebrated during Mass, though Mass is not strictly required. A marriage between a Catholic and a baptized Christian is usually celebrated outside of Mass. A marriage between a Catholic and a non-baptized person may never be celebrated during Mass.

DISPENSATION/PERMISSION/DELEGATION: Obtain any permission/dispensation from the Catholic bishop in whose diocese the Catholic groom/bride lives, regardless of where the marriage ceremony will occur. Please keep the record in the file.

- If a Catholic is marrying a non-baptized person, obtain a dispensation from Disparity of Cult.
- If a Catholic is marrying a (validly) baptized non-Catholic, obtain permission for a Mixed Marriage. (Priests who have faculties from the Bishop of Memphis can give this permission.)
- If a Catholic will be married by a non-Catholic officiant, obtain a dispensation from canonical form. (This is possible only when one of the parties is *not* Catholic.)
- If officiating at a marriage of two Catholics and neither is your parishioner, obtain permission from the Catholic's proper pastor.
- If officiating at a marriage outside your assigned parish, obtain delegation from that pastor or a local ordinary.
- See the Petition for Dispensations Permissions (insert) for a complete list of required dispensations and permissions.

INTERFAITH/ECUMENICAL WEDDINGS: It is forbidden for the Catholic minister in a religious celebration of marriage and the non-Catholic minister, each performing his own rite, to ask together for the consent of the parties.

MARRIAGE FILE: The marriage file is stored in the parish where the marriage with canonical form occurred. If the marriage takes place at a university chapel, hospital, etc., the marriage file is stored at the parish in whose territory the place is located. When the marriage ceremony occurred with a dispensation for lack of canonical form, the marriage file is stored in the parish where the prenuptial investigation and the request for dispensation from canonical form occurred.

WEDDINGS OUTSIDE OF THE DIOCESE: If the marriage ceremony is to occur outside the Diocese, the marriage file is to be sent to the Chancery with the Testimonial Letters or Nihil Obstat form attached. (See Chancellor's website.) Keep a copy.