

DECORATION

Some people wish to decorate the church elaborately and others wish to have a simple decoration. It can sometimes happen that the flowers are more prominent than the **COUPLE** - this seems inappropriate. If you are going to take the flowers from the Church after the wedding, please advise the priest. Couples should also make sure that - whatever decorations have taken place - the Church should be left in the same way you have found it before the wedding. **Please ensure you have told the priest the names of those who will be tidying up after the ceremony.** Due to lack of space there can be no flower stands in the main aisle of the Church but floral arrangements on the pews and altar are acceptable.

COST

There is no set charge for the celebration of Marriage in the Church but couples often ask for guidelines - here are some for you to think about. We are sure that every couple who wishes to celebrate their wedding in Church would agree that the Church should be the **most** significant part of their day because it is the place where "The sacrament of Matrimony confers upon you - new states as husband and wife". We therefore suggest a minimum donation of £200.

Any contribution should reflect the importance of this **SACRED** time and event. One way the couples could think about how much to donate to the church is to think about the **OVERALL** cost of their marriage (i.e. dress, flowers, invites, photographer, reception, cars, hairdresser etc.) and think of contributing at least 3% of your overall cost. For example - if the whole event is costing £10,000 then the contribution for the church could be a minimum of £300. If the overall cost is £15,000 then the contribution for the church could be a minimum of £450 etc.

It would seem strange if the other many wedding costs were a lot higher than your contribution to the church. The wedding celebration is for one day, but the Church is there for you as a couple **ALWAYS**.

In addition to your donation there is a £50.00 fee for the Registrar to register your Civil Marriage. Please give this along with your donation to the priest at the rehearsal.

We hope that the information contained in this brochure will help you to arrange your marriage in such a way that it will be the best day of your lives so far, and that you will experience God's blessings throughout your time of preparation, on the actual day and throughout your married life.

THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE IN CHURCH OF **Our Lady of Sorrows and St Bridget of Sweden**



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Content courtesy of Fr Derek of St Michael and St Martin, Hounslow.

Our Lady of Sorrows & St Bridget of Sweden

Thank you for expressing your interest in a Roman Catholic Marriage ceremony here in our parish. This such an important time in your life as a couple, and the fact that you have shown interest in sealing and the bond of your love in church is truly a wonderful and wonder-filled event. As you move forward in your preparations it is important to focus on a number of aspects.

Some useful statements of Christian marriage:

“The sacrament of Matrimony comes about through a promise made by a man and woman before God and the Church, which is accepted and confirmed by God himself. This forms the bond of sacramental marriage, it is binding until the death of one of the partners ... What the Church is on a large scale, the family is on a small scale: an image of God’s love in human fellowship. Indeed every marriage is perfected in openness to others, to the children that God sends, in mutual acceptance, in hospitality and being for others.” (YOUCAT 261 and 271).

A marriage therefore is a **SACRED** event, in a **SACRED** space, at a **SACRED** time. It is important that we remember this when we are looking at how we can fittingly celebrate marriage in Church. These are a few guidelines and if you chose to celebrate your marriage here, you will be required to follow these.

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SIX MONTHS before the actual wedding date is set, the priest will take you through the paperwork that is required. For a marriage to take place in Church at least one of the partners must be a Roman Catholic. The requirements are: **1. Baptism certificate**, issued within 6 months of the wedding. **2. Confirmation certificate**. **3. Statutory Declaration** - a legally binding declaration that you have not been married before. The Church provides the form. **4. Pre- Marriage Course**. **5. Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form** - to be filled out in the presence of the priest. **6. (If marrying in Britain) Registrar’s Certificate** from the Local Borough Council. Our parish registrar is *Mrs Marie Gleeson. Email: isleworth@redow.org.uk*

SCRIPTURE READING

In order to make your wedding ceremony both personal and meaningful, there are a number of scripture readings that you will have to choose from. A full booklet of readings is available for you to look through and choose. The priest will email this to you.

It is normal to have a:

First Reading - from the Old Testament
Psalms - which can either be said or sung
Second Reading - from the New Testament
Gospel reading - from one of the Four Gospels.

If you prefer you may omit the Second Reading, in which case the First Reading can be from either the Old or the New Testaments. This moment is for you, your family and friends to be enriched by God through His Revealed Word in Scripture. Any other texts therefore cannot be substituted.

MUSIC

Music has a special part of the Wedding Ceremony. It is appropriate to have **SACRED** music to accompany this **SACRED** event. Sacred music can either be from traditional music or from modern pieces appropriate for Church use. In recent years there has been a growth in secular music during the Church ceremony. Unfortunately, secular music takes our attention away from the **SACRED** and therefore is not appropriate. It is better to keep all forms of secular music for the time of your reception **AFTER** the church celebration.

Furthermore with regard to **SACRED MUSIC** in church - the choice of instrument plays a strong role in this. It is traditional to have an organ, piano, flute or strings. If you had any further requirements on this - please speak to the Priest who is preparing your paperwork and he can best advise as to what is permissible and what is not.