

MULLINGAR PARISH

5 STEPS TO ORGANISE YOUR WEDDING

Congratulations on your engagement. We are looking forward to help you with your wedding plans.

Step 1 *When you decide to get married*

First of all, book the church where you would like your wedding to take place. A booking form is available online at www.mullingarparish.ie or through the parish office (044) 9348338.

When booking the church and seeking a preferred date, you must furnish details of the priest who has agreed to celebrate your wedding Mass.

As bride and groom, you both complete the booking form. Then arrange to meet the priest of your area to hand in the form and officially book your wedding. This priest fills in the dates in the parish diary.

A sacristy fee of €150 is paid. This payment covers the use of the church, goes towards the church costs (lighting, heating, insurance, grounds) and towards the sacristan who will be attending to your needs on the days prior to and on day of the wedding. The parish secretary will note this payment and acknowledge it.

It is your responsibility to contact the Registrar of Marriages (see details in paperwork section) and begin the process to get permission from the State for your wedding to take place. It is important that the priest you ask to celebrate your wedding is registered as a solemniser.



Step 2 *Year before the wedding*

A Pre-Marriage Course should be booked. Details of courses locally are available on www.accord.ie or phone Accord (Mullingar) 044 9348707.

Step 3 *Six months before the wedding*

After you have completed the Pre-Marriage Course start to do your paperwork. Ensure the Pre-Nuptial Enquiry meeting with the priest has taken place and that all the paperwork is in order. Start to organise your ceremony.

Step 4 *Three months before the wedding*

Finalise the Ceremony. Choose Readings, Mass text, vows, readers. Finalise your booklet (if taking this option). Please give a copy of your booklet to the priest.

Step 5 *Three weeks before the wedding*

Return the 'Ceremony Planner Sheet' you received the day you booked your wedding. This should be returned to the secretary in the parish office no later than 3 weeks before your big day.

Paperwork

Church

Church Papers are completed in the parish where the bride and groom reside. The paperwork should be completed at least 3 months prior to your wedding.

You must both obtain the following certificates as soon as possible so that you can meet with the priest in the parish that you currently reside in to complete the **Pre -Nuptial Enquiry form.**

Baptismal Certificate:

If you were baptised in one of the churches in Mullingar you will not need to get this certificate. Otherwise you should contact the parish of your baptism seeking a new baptismal certificate. When contacting the priest or parish office please inform them of your date of birth and parents names.

Confirmation Certificate:

If you received your confirmation in Mullingar parish you will not require this certificate. Otherwise you should contact the parish from which you were confirmed seeking a confirmation certificate. You will need to indicate the primary school you attended and the year of your confirmation. In cases where parish/place of baptism and confirmation are the same these may be recorded on the one form.

Declaration of Freedom

A letter from a family member (parent or sibling) should be addressed to the priest stating that you are over 18, your religion and that you have not been married before in either a religious or civil ceremony. Please note letters of freedom are no longer required from individual parishes that you have resided in down the years.

Pre Marriage Course Certificate:

When you have completed a Pre-Marriage Course you will receive a certificate. This should be given to the priest when finalising the church paperwork.



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Permissions and Dispensations where applicable need to be applied for. If you or your fiancé has been previously married or are non - Catholic, it is essential that freedom to marry be established before any marriage arrangements can be confirmed.

All of the above forms should be brought with you when filling in the **Pre -Nuptial Enquiry Form** (with the priest of the parish you live) and will be included with the papers being forwarded or filed.

State

You must receive permission from the Registrar of Marriages for your wedding to take place. You should as soon as possible contact the registrar's office and arrange a one-to-one meeting. If this is not done within the timeframe and requirements, the priest will not be allowed by the state to perform the ceremony. If the priest celebrating the wedding lives outside Ireland, he will have to be registered as a 'temporary solemniser'. For details see www.groireland.ie or contact the registrar's office in Mullingar at (044) 9395098 or any registrar's office in any county.

Mullingar Parish Marriage Guidelines

The church ceremony is one of the main parts of your day and we hope that it will be full of meaning and one that expresses beautifully the vows you make at the altar.

There are five churches in our parish ; Cathedral of Christ the King, St.Paul's, Gainstown, Walshestown and Brotenstown. Some of which may be more suitable depending on the size of your wedding.

General:

1. Wedding ceremonies are at 2pm. Weddings cannot take place earlier as the churches may be in use before this time for a funeral or other service.
2. Under diocesan regulations weddings are not permitted on Sundays.
3. For details on the various wedding Mass texts, including all the Scripture readings and options on the vows, you should check out www.gettingmarried.ie. Resources are also available from the Cathedral shop.

Taking Part in the Wedding Mass

1. There are two readings from the Old and New Testament. Two family members usually read these scripture texts.
2. Couples usually ask family members and friends to read 'Prayers of the faithful'. Normally there are 4 -6 prayers included in the ceremony.
3. The gifts of bread and wine are often brought to the altar by family members.
4. It can be helpful, but not necessary, to have a Mass booklet for the ceremony.
5. Sometimes couples may choose to celebrate a wedding ceremony rather than a wedding Mass. The priest will explain this option to you.

Music:

Good music can play an important part in the ceremony. There is now a wide range of new church music which is suitable to the wedding Mass. There are a number of good church musicians in the parish and they will help you to ensure that the ceremony is beautiful and prayerful.

1. The parish organist is Gerard Lillis. He can be contacted through the parish office (044 9348338).
2. All musicians are obliged to follow diocesan regulations regarding music. Only church music/hymns are appropriate. Gerard is more than willing to meet with you and discuss the range of suitable music.
3. Couples are discouraged from using CD or recorded music during the ceremony.



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Flowers:

Guidelines have been issued to all florists in Mullingar. If you have another florist from outside this area, please provide them with a copy of our guidelines from the parish office.

1. A Volunteer Flower Group in the parish is available to arrange your flowers for your weddings free of charge if given a few weeks notice. For details contact (044) 9348338.
2. Flowers should never obscure the visibility of the altar or lectern. Flower arrangements and wedding candles are no longer placed on the altar but on a table in the sanctuary.
3. For safety reasons, candles are not permitted in the aisles or attached to seats and no additional candles are permitted on the sanctuary.
4. Flowers in the sanctuary are considered to be donations to the Church.
5. Florists are responsible for safety issues arising from their activity. Florists should supply their own equipment and ensure that it meets proper safety standards. Any spillages or leaks onto floors should be attended to.
6. The florist's details should be recorded on the 'Ceremony Planner' sheet and returned to office (3 weeks prior to the wedding).

Photographers:

1. Ask the photographer to meet the priest before the ceremony begins. Each photographer should discuss beforehand his/her expectations with the priest.
2. Photographers may use the sanctuary.
3. Group photographs may be taken outside the church.
4. Photographers should not delay the start of the ceremony.
5. 'Posing' or 'repeats' during the ceremony are deemed inappropriate.

Guidelines continued...

Video Personnel:

1. Ask the video personnel to meet the priest before the ceremony begins.
2. A discreet presence should be kept during the ceremony, but are expected to act with respectful discretion, in keeping with the sacredness of the occasion and place.
3. Video recorders should be battery powered (ie. no electric leads). For insurance reasons, no auxiliary lighting or scaffolding is permitted.
4. Tripod should be located in one spot and remain there for the ceremony.
5. Access to the balcony in the Cathedral is not permitted.

Further Points:

1. Please do not interfere with any of the church furnishings (including seats, notice boards, candelabras).
2. For safety reasons the addition of a red carpet on the Cathedral steps or on the aisle of the Cathedral is not permitted.
3. Confetti should not be used in church grounds.
4. It is normal for the groom and groomsman to occupy the front seat at least fifteen minutes beforehand. This enables them to deal with any last minute details, as well as having a final word with the priest.
5. It is courteous for the bride to arrive on time. This allows the maximum time afterwards as other liturgies may be arranged for the church.
6. It is customary for the couple to give an offering to the priest who celebrated the wedding. The stipend is an offering given by the couple to the priest to express thanks for the work done in preparation for the wedding and the priest's care and attention on the day itself. If you want guidance on this, please feel free to ask the priest.

We trust the above will help you and facilitate us in providing a beautiful occasion for your wedding.



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Getting Married Abroad

Couples intending to get married abroad should note that they need to take extra care and time with their paperwork to make sure that the State and Church requirements for their marriage are met. You may be aware that some dioceses in Italy, Croatia and elsewhere no longer allow foreign weddings.

Both of you need to complete the form 'Additional Information for Marriages arranged outside the Diocese of Meath'. This form is available at www.mullingarparish.ie and from the parish office. In particular, it is necessary to provide us with a letter from the parish abroad, indicating it's agreement for the wedding to take place. You then need to obtain the paperwork outlined above.

The Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form needs to be completed in the presence of the priest of your parish at least 4 months before your wedding. As the wedding is abroad, these papers have to be sent to the local diocesan office which forwards them to the diocesan office abroad and on to the parish where the wedding is due to take place. The local diocesan office applies a €100 fee for this process.

The paperwork takes time to gather and process so please allow yourself adequate time to get all this done.

Alongside satisfying Church requirements you need to find out the State requirements in the country of your proposed wedding. You should do this by contacting the Department of Foreign Affairs (01) 4780822.