

# GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGES AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH, BANDRA

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

October 2022

1. The celebration of the Sacrament at St Peter's Church is meant to be a rich **spiritual experience**. Please do not get lost in the 'frills' but concentrate on a good liturgy which will give both of you and your families a deep spiritual experience.
2. All sacraments are **communitarian**. Aim at a full and active **participation** of all those present; avoid making the congregation mere spectators. A Choir is not meant to perform but to lead the singing. All should pray and sing as one Community.
3. In order that your Wedding liturgy is truly special to you, see that you **personalise** it. Choose your own readings, and hymns, write your own prayers (e.g. prayers of the faithful, thanksgiving prayer) and be personal where possible.

**Practical Matters to be attended:** Plan ahead of time; don't leave anything for the last few days.

4. **Parishioners** are required to meet the priest associated with your Parish Zone, at least 3 months before the wedding to have enough time for the necessary papers to be completed.
5. **Non-Parishioner** marriages are allowed at St. Peter's. However, a written NOC from your Parish Priest is essential, before confirming the booking.
6. You are **required to do the marriage preparation course** six months before your marriage. Get in touch with Snehalaya, Family Service Centre, Victoria Church, L.J. Rd. Mahim Tel 2446 8218. Check the Parish Notice board for the Course dates or [www.snehalaya.family.com](http://www.snehalaya.family.com).
7. **Papers that will be required:** 1. Your **recent baptism certificates** (6 months within the date of marriage); 2. We will require that you both fill a **Pre-Nuptial Enquiry form**; 3. If any one of the couple is abroad, s/he will have to fill an **Oath of Free State** in the presence of the parish priest abroad and will require to obtain a **freedom to marry certificate** from the parish abroad. S/he will also have to get permission from the Archbishop of Mumbai.

**For a Disparity of cult marriage**, (Catholic with a person of another Faith) we will also require: 1. **An Affidavit** with some proof of the date of birth, name and parents' names, etc. of the person of the other Faith, stating that he/she is not being forced into this marriage etc; 2. The Catholic will have to take a **Promise** that you will do all in your power to have your children Baptised in the Catholic Church; 3. We will have to apply to the Bishop for **Dispensation from the impediment** of Disparity of Cult. For this, your 'Promise' will have to be included. **Banns** are not published for disparity of cult marriages.

8. **Timings** for weddings at St. Peter's Church: Mondays to Fridays 4:15 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. (But First Thursdays only at 3.45 pm & First Fridays: only at 4:45 p.m.) Saturdays: 3:30 p.m. Sundays: 3:30 p.m. You are **encouraged** to celebrate your Nuptials at any of the scheduled Weekday or Sunday Masses – to ensure a full Congregation to pray for you. See that your Mass has been entered in the **Mass Register** at the parish office as soon as you have finalized the date. (Office Timings 8:00 – 12:00 noon and 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.) Marriages are not allowed to take place on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. Marriages during Lent, especially on Sundays of Lent **are strongly discouraged** and to a lesser degree during the Advent Season.

## PLANNING YOUR WEDDING LITURGY

9. **Printing of a booklet is not at all necessary** but if you do, keep it simple and please do not print the Scripture readings and Prayers as these should be proclaimed from the Lectionary/Missal. Get the booklet approved by the Priest guiding you before printing. Appoint your Readers and ensure that they practice the reading beforehand. Contact the Sacristan for assistance.
10. Fix your own **choir** in advance – to **lead** the Congregation in the singing during the Mass. If it is a

regular Parish Mass, check out with the choir appointed for the Mass. You may make your own arrangements but inform the regular choir in advance – through the Parish Office. A representative of the Choir will have to sign an undertaking and submit it to the Parish Office.

11. All **floral decorations** should be modest. No fresh flowers are to be attached to the pews and no tape. Flowers may be placed in the vases on the marble altar behind and at the two statues of St. Peter and Mother Mary. Any flowers in front of the Altar should not cover the altar. Please inform our Sacristan much in advance.
12. For the **Offertory procession**, Bread and Wine will be provided by the Church. You may choose a **symbol** that you think will represent your marriage and offer that along with the bread and wine.
13. The **Prayers of the Faithful**, while being personal and praying for your own needs, should also be for the larger needs of the Church and the World.
14. Please **practise the Marriage rite** in advance so as to exchange your marriage vows in the most meaningful manner possible. Collect a copy from the priest or the Sacristan.
15. If the Marriage is one of **Disparity of Cult** (a Catholic with a person of another Faith) the nuptials will be held before the Eucharist. In such cases, it will be good if some commentary could be given for the benefit of those of other Faiths. In **Mixed Marriages** (when one party is Catholic and the other of another Christian denomination) the latter party must refrain from receiving Communion.
16. You are requested to make a Love-Offering of Rs. 5000/- to the Church on the occasion of your Wedding and a stipend of Rs 300/- for the Sacristan. These are to be paid at the Office.
17. Don't forget to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before your wedding day.

#### **Persons involved with your liturgy**

18. If you are **getting your own priest** to celebrate the Eucharist, please inform the priest from St. Peter's doing your papers about this. **You need to get a letter in advance from your priest committing himself to being present and requesting delegation to do the nuptials.**
19. Try to get as many of your **friends/relatives to attend** the Nuptial Mass as their presence at the party later is only complete if they pray with you at the Eucharist.
20. If you want **Altar servers**, please arrange for these with the Sacristan.
21. For **video and photography** a charge of Rs 200/- is payable. Please ensure that the videographers/photographers do not prove a disturbance to the Liturgical celebration – with minimum movement around – and maintaining a discreet distance from the event taking place at the altar. Please take advice from the Sacristan.

#### **On the Marriage Day itself:**

22. **Please be on time** or we would have to start the Eucharist without you. A late start may also require us to prevent your choir from singing, to save time, in order to clear the Church for the next programme. Your Wedding Mass must be completed within one hour.
23. We earnestly appeal to you to **respect the environment** and not contribute to sound pollution; hence the bursting of crackers in the church compound or on the road outside is prohibited.
24. Most important: Pray and trust in the Lord and His Blessed Mother that all may be well.

#### **Before the birth of your child:**

25. It is compulsory to undergo the 'Pre-Baptismal Catechesis'. Do it as soon as you know that you are going to have a child.
30. In the days soon after the marriage, ensure that you collect your Marriage Certificate from the Parish Office. Please go through it seeing that all the details are correct.

**We wish you God's plentiful blessings!**

**The Parish Jesuit Team**

**PTO for an undertaking to be given by the Choir.**

## **UNDERTAKING BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHOIR**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, on behalf of the Choir singing for the Wedding Mass and Nuptials of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

undertake the following:

- 1. We understand that a Choir in Church is meant to lead the Congregation in prayerful singing and hence it is not meant to perform a concert for listening pleasure. We will therefore choose hymns that the congregation is likely to join in and we will encourage the congregation to sing along. The Entrance and Recessional Hymn we understand can be new pieces that the congregation may not know and that we can sing prayerfully. However, the parts of the Mass and the Communion Hymns are meant as prayers for people to join in and hence are for congregational singing.**
- 2. We understand that the Keyboard and Sound System of St. Peter's Church are available for our use. We undertake not to use our own additional speakers or amplifiers, nor to connect any other gadgets like Mixers or Monitors etc to the Church Sound System, as our System has already been set in a balance tested for the needs of our Church. We will use as many of the 4 Church Mikes as we need and we are aware that a Guitar can be connected to the system instead of the Keyboard.**

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**Signed and Dated**