

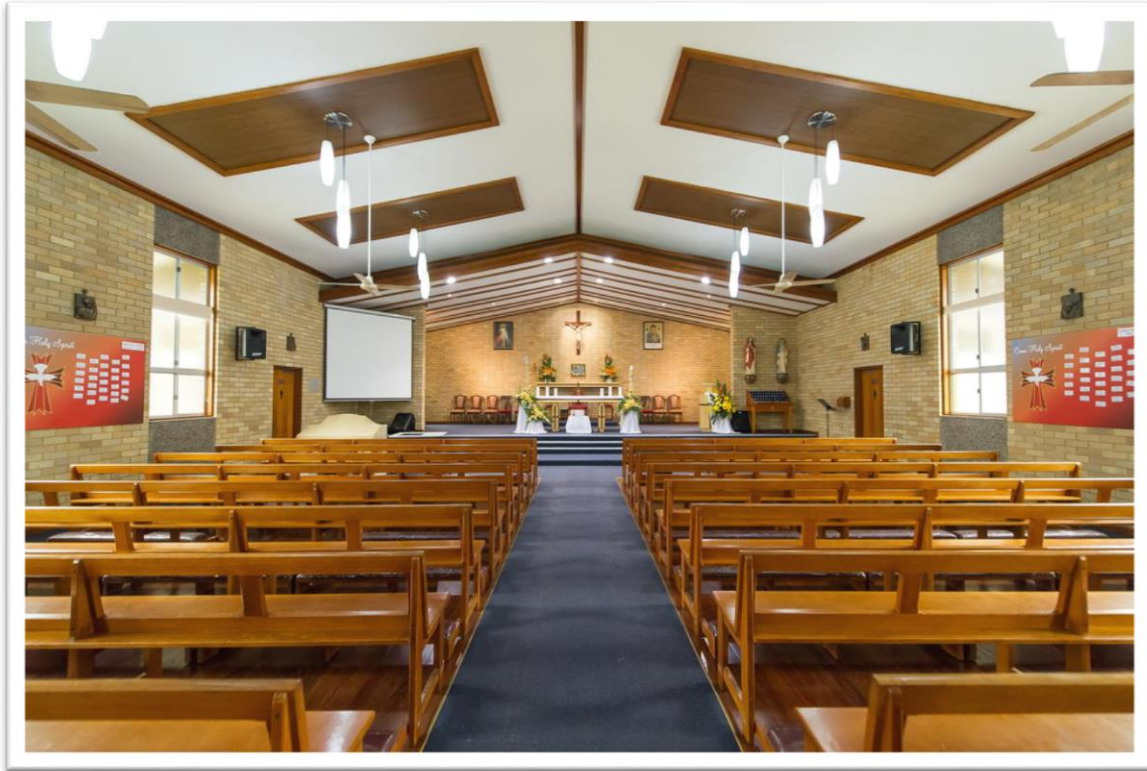
*Celebrating the Sacrament  
of  
Marriage*



*St Christopher's Catholic Church,  
Holsworthy NSW*

195 Heathcote Rd, Holsworthy NSW | Ph: 02 9825 1679

# The Sacrament of Marriage



## Welcome and Congratulations, you are engaged!

We are delighted that you are considering St Christopher's Parish for this important event. We rejoice with you and wish you every grace and blessing as you embark upon your journey as a man and woman becoming one in the union of marriage. This booklet is designed to provide some practical, introductory information about holding your wedding ceremony here at our church. Please feel welcome to enquire if you have further questions in this regard.

### Where do I start?

You must ring the Parish office to make initial inquiries for the availability of our church and our priest. You will also be required to make an appointment with the priest before your church booking can be confirmed.

**Why is meeting with the priest important?** The priest will:

- Check that you are able to marry in the Catholic Church and that you understand the commitment involved;
- Assist you in filling out all the paperwork (both church and civil documents) as this will be his responsibility.
- Talk to you about a suitable pre-marriage course;
- Confirm the church booking; and
- Assist you in preparing the ceremony.



## Matrimony

Sacrament of Christ's Love

## How much notice must we give?

Commonwealth law requires at least one month's notice.

The Catholic Church requests six months. If you are hoping to marry in less than six months, you will need to discuss your particular situation with the priest.

## What documents must we provide to be married?

In order for the priest to complete your required documentations, you must each provide:

- Your full birth certificates (originals please) or your valid passports.
- Another form of photo ID – eg. Driver's licence or even a club membership card can be accepted
- The Catholic partner(s) must provide a copy of his/her baptism certificate – that is issued within the six months prior to your wedding. You will need to contact the Parish where you were baptised and request for this.
- If applicable, you must also provide a letter from the Parish or parishes that you reside in, if you do not reside within our parish boundary.
- If either party have been previously married, you will need to provide your Divorce Certificate and your Annulment Certificate or Death Certificate of your previous spouse if you are a widow/widower. All documents must also be originals.

**NOTE: If your documents are in a foreign language, it is your responsibility to have it translated by an authorised translator NAATI.**



## Can we invite our own priest to celebrate our wedding at St Christopher's?

Yes this is permitted. In this case, the visiting priest takes full responsibility for all the preparation and documentation for your marriage.

You simply need to book the church. However, your church booking cannot be confirmed until the availability of the visiting priest has been established, and the parish has recorded his name and other details as required by the church. Your priest will know what to do and what information he needs to provide in writing to our Parish Priest. It is preferred that your priest attends to this sooner rather than later so that your church booking can be confirmed.

## Can we book your Parish Priest to celebrate our wedding at a church outside of Holsworthy parish?

You will need to discuss this with the priest, but in general, it is unlikely. This is because each priest is responsible for the weddings of their **parishioners** at **their own** church. So who is a 'parishioner'? A parishioner is:

- Someone who lives geographically within the St Christopher's boundary – even though they don't go to church anymore.*** Their inquiry is welcomed and we would love to reacquire with this person with our parish family.
- Someone who does not live within our parish but attend Mass at St Christopher's all the time.*** Their inquiry is welcomed as this person is an active member of our parish family.
- Someone who is not a parishioner, but have a personal history connected with this parish community.*** Their inquiry is welcomed and they will need to speak with the priest about their situation.



## Do we have to do a marriage preparation course?

Yes, in accordance with the Archdiocese Policy, all couples are required to participate in a pre-marital course in preparation for marriage.

The priest celebrating your wedding will be able to recommend a number of marriage preparation courses available in the Sydney region for you to choose from.

Your Certificate of Attendance must be presented to the Presiding Priest upon completion. The Priest reserves the right to withdraw as celebrant if the above requirements are not met.



## Can we marry on a Sunday?

Saturday is the only day offered for weddings on the weekend here at St Christopher's – between 11:00am and 3:00pm. However if you are planning a weekday wedding, please see speak to our priest for availability.

## Is there a fee involved?

Yes. Our booking fee is \$500 and is payable to have your wedding ceremony at St Christopher's church. Payment can be made by cash or cheque. A receipt can be issued, however it is not tax deductible. This fee also applies if a visiting priest celebrates your wedding.

Please note our booking fee **does not** cover the offering for your visiting priest. You will need to attend to this fee separately with your visiting priest.

## Do we have a Wedding Rehearsal?

Yes, the time and date will be organised between you and the priest. It is important that you are punctual for you rehearsal.

## What about decorations, flowers, music, booklets?

The responsibility of these details belongs to the couple and their families.



**Flowers** – generally there are flower arrangements already in the church for our Sunday Masses. Additional floral arrangements are permitted and we ask that they remain in the Church after your ceremony. The flowers can be delivered from 10:30am on the day of your wedding.

**Decorations** – pew decorations are welcome and can be placed in the church from 10:30am on the day of your wedding. Please have a look at our pews to ensure that you know how to make your pew decorations. Pew decorations are to be tied to the pews – please **do not** use sticky tape or any adhesive material to secure them onto the pews.

**THESE MUST BE REMOVED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CEREMONY.**

**IMPORTANT TO NOTE:**  
**WE HAVE A STRICT NO CONFETTI / RICE AND FLOWER PETAL**  
**POLICY**



**Photography and Video** – Photographers are welcome to take photos discreetly and without intrusion in the main body of the church.

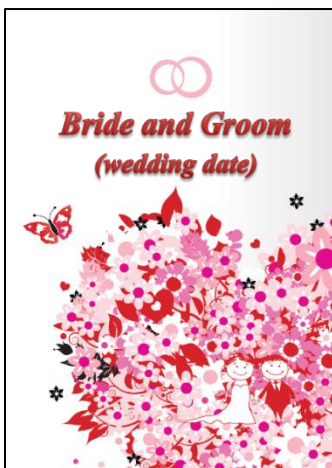
No equipment or cameras are permitted on the sanctuary area.

We do have to remember we are in God's house, so no flash photography as well.

**Music** – We ask that you organise your own music/musicians. Microphones and music stands can be provided with prior notice. Should you wish to bring recorded music, a CD player is available for use in the church.

We have several choirs who sing regularly at our Masses which you can engage. This will have to be a private arrangement between yourselves and the musician/singers and contact should be made directly with the musician to negotiate fees.

Please inquire with the parish office if you would like to engage one of our choirs for your wedding.



**Order of Service/Ceremony booklets** – Booklets are the responsibility of the couple and must be arranged in consultation with YOUR Presiding Priest, which he should also supply you with a template for either a Nuptial Mass or Wedding Rite Service (without Holy Communion).

Please provide your Presiding Priest with a copy of your marriage booklet for final approval before printing.

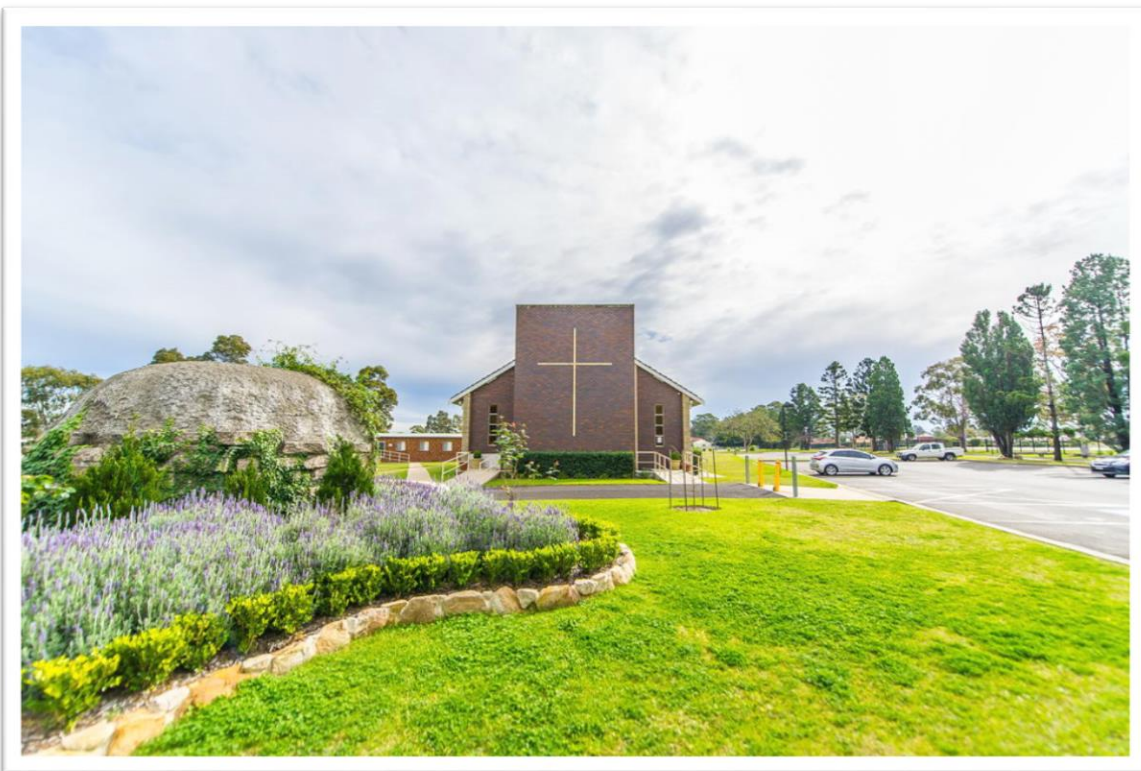
Regrettably, the Parish Office does not provide a printing facility, but you can generally get these printed at Officeworks

**How many people do we need to participate in our wedding ceremony – apart from members of our bridal party?**

When preparing your service, couples will be required to select persons for the following:

- ♥ First Reading
- ♥ Responsorial Psalm
- ♥ Second Reading
- ♥ Prayers of the Faithful
- ♥ Two for Offertory/Procession of Gifts (Nuptial Mass only)





## *Marriage -*

*'the union of a man and a woman to the exclusion of all others  
voluntarily entered into for life'*



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