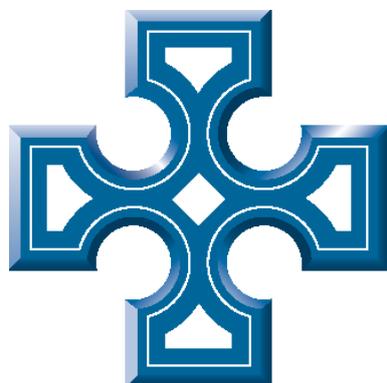


**CHURCH OF IRELAND MARRIAGE COUNCIL**



# **TOWARDS MARRIAGE**

**CLERGY RESOURCE PACK**

**FOR**

**COUPLES PREPARING TO MARRY**



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# *Preface*

## *The Theological and Spiritual Bases of Marriage*

Marriage is a human ordinance going back to the dawn of human society. The Bible understands marriage as based on God's creation of the human race. 'God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.' (Gen.1:27). 'Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner" .... Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.' (Gen.2:18,24). The marriage services in the Book of Common Prayer (2004) refer to this basic foundation. The service states that marriage was 'instituted of God in the time of man's innocency' and 'commended in holy Scripture to be a holy mystery in which man and woman become one flesh'.

In every age up to the present it was taken for granted that marriage was not simply a matter for the couple themselves but concerned their families and society. Husband and wife begin a new family, a unit of society which both supports and is supported by the community as a whole. Marriage in the Old Testament clearly shows the major role of the bride and groom's families in the marriage arrangements (see Gen. 24: 50-67, Judges 14: 10-18, Tobit chs. 7,8). Its essential part is a solemn contract between two people and their families, sealed by exchange of presents and joining of hands. The wedding ceremonies took place at the homes of the bride and groom and no priest or religious official seems to have been involved. In the days of arranged marriages the interest of the individual man and woman were subordinated to those of society, tribe and the two families which were united. Nowadays, when the rights of the two people getting married are quite properly uppermost, it is important to remember the links with the community which is the setting for their married life. The 2nd service makes this explicit when it states, 'In marriage husband and wife begin a new life together in the community'. One of the functions of marriage is to provide a stable family unit, within the wider community, in which children can be born and nurtured. The young of the human species require a longer period of parental care before they can survive on their own than any other living creature. Therefore marriage is part of God's providence for the well-being of humanity. The word 'procreate' for the role of man and woman in the conception and birth of children show their responsibility in this respect to God their creator. Yet the comfort and help which husband and wife give each other is at least equally important as Gen. 2:18, quoted above shows.

Christ deepened and strengthened the understanding of marriage current among the Jews by going back to God's purpose in the creation of male and female who in marriage become 'one flesh' (Mark 10: 6-9, quoting Gen. 1:27 & 2:24). The early Christians understood the union of married people as signifying 'the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church' (BCP rite, referring to Eph. 5:25-30). Thus 'Christian marriage' is not totally different from human marriage in general since it is based on God's purpose in creation for all humanity. The marriage ceremonies of the early Christians were probably very similar to those of Jews, i.e. home based. Gradually over the centuries the Church became more fully involved. A priest blessed the couple and presided at the ceremony, which usually took place in a church building and included the eucharist. Yet in the western Church it was always understood that the couple married themselves, the function of the priest being that of principal witness. This emphasised the universal human basis of marriage.

Christians believe that God's good purpose for creation is hindered because we are a fallen human race. Christ's saving work recreated humanity. He is the new man through whom we sinners can be renewed and restored after the image of God. This truth has an important bearing on the Christian understanding of marriage. Through Christ our human nature is not only created but also redeemed and marriage for Christians takes on this new dimension that it reflects the union between Christ and the Church. God's good creation and ideal for human marriage which sin has damaged has been restored and renewed in Christ. Therefore Christians understand marriage to be the life-long union of one man with one woman, a social unit as part of the community, according to God's original creation and intention. Human sin is still part of our experience and therefore this ideal of marriage cannot always be realised. Christians differ about what to do in the tragic cases of serious marital breakdown, and our Church now allows the remarriage of divorced persons in church after careful consideration in each case, but that does obscure the basic truth of the nature of marriage as a life-long union. The Church of Ireland marriage rites keep this principal firmly in view. Bride and groom are both asked if 'forsaking all others' they will be faithful to their spouse 'as long as you both shall live'. They each take the other 'till death us do part'. The officiating priest joins their hands and says, 'What God has joined together let no one put asunder.'

*Rev Canon W J Marshall*

# ***ARRANGEMENTS AND CLERGY GUIDELINES***

## ***ARRANGING THE SERVICE***

**The following provisions are required for a valid marriage in the Church of Ireland in the Republic of Ireland:-**

1.
  - (a) At least one of the parties shall have been baptised and is a member of the Church of Ireland or of a Church in full communion therewith, unless in exceptional circumstances, the bishop shall determine otherwise.
  - (b) Both parties must be above the minimum age [see 3 (ii) below] and not related within the “Table of Kindred and Affinity” as set out in the Marriage Provisions of the Civil Registration Act, 2004.
  - (c) Status should be shown as Bachelor/Spinster or Widower/Widow or divorcee.
  
2. **New Marriage Regulations came into effect in the Republic of Ireland in November 2007, replacing the former system of banns and licences. [Clergy should refer to Marriage Provisions of the Civil Registration Act 2004 (notes for Religious Solemnisers) and Marriage Regulations (RoI) 2007 approved by the Standing Committee]**
  - i) An appointment system operates. It is essential that you check the availability of the Church and Solemniser prior to giving notification.
  - ii) All couples must now present in person to a registrar at any of the offices listed.
  - iii) It is intended that in the majority of cases only one visit will be required, by ensuring that you bring all the necessary documents with you.
    - (a) Photo ID (preferably a passport or driving licence)
    - (b) If one party is widowed, the death certificate of your previous spouse
    - (c) Name and address of the solemniser.
    - (d) Names and dates of birth of your witnesses
    - (e) Your PPS numbers (where either has one)
    - (f) Additional documentation may be needed in the case of a divorce or annulment granted at least 3 months prior to the intended marriage.

When all the preliminaries have been completed the registrar will issue you with a Marriage Registration Form, which you will present to the Solemniser in advance of the ceremony. **Without this document a marriage cannot take place.**

At the time of the marriage the Marriage Registration Form is signed by the Solemniser, the couple and their witnesses and it is the responsibility of the couple to return this form to the office of the Civil Registrar within 30 days.

The new Law puts more responsibility on the couple, so they should begin their preparations early and keep in touch with their rector/solemniser.

3. The Family Law Act 1995 introduced two changes:-
  - i) A mandatory requirement to give three months notification to the Registrar of Civil Marriages; and
  - ii) The raising of the minimum age of marriage from 16 to 18 years. (Parental consent for those under 21 is no longer required.) (Exemption to these requirements may be sought from the Circuit Family Court of the High Court.)

In the case of one or both parties having been previously married and divorced we would draw clergy's attention to the Diocesan regulations issued by each Bishop. Each clergyperson should receive an opinion from their Diocesan Bishop as to whether or not the marriage should take place in church, and take that opinion into account when making their own decision. Subject to the clergyperson being willing to perform the marriage the couple are required to produce a letter from the Civil Registrar to the effect that the previous marriage and divorce are recognised in Irish Law and thus that the couple are free to marry.

## **The following provisions are required for a valid marriage in the Church of Ireland in Northern Ireland:-**

1.
  - a) At least one of the parties shall have been baptised and is a member of the Church of Ireland or of a Church in full communion therewith, unless in exceptional circumstances, the bishop shall determine otherwise.
  - b) Both parties must be above the minimum age and not related within the “Table of Kindred and Affinity” as set out in the Book of Common Prayer. In Northern Ireland the minimum age is 16 and those between 16 and 18 years of age must receive parental consent.
  - c) Status should be shown as Bachelor/Spinster or Widower/Widow or divorced.

### **2. New Marriage regulations came into effect in Northern Ireland in January 2004 replacing the former system of banns and licences with a new system of marriage by Schedule.**

The preliminaries for marriage in the Church of Ireland and its certification are now as follows:

The marriage must be taken by a state-authorized officiant, i.e. by a cleric whose name is on the Church of Ireland list of approved officiants.

One of the parties must be a member of the Church of Ireland or of a church in full communion with it. They no longer need to be resident, but the cleric is only authorised to conduct the marriage in a Church of Ireland church, and, if it is to be in some other parish, only with the consent of its rector.

The couple must go to the office of the local District Registrar and obtain a Notice of Marriage form.

This form, after the date and place of the marriage have been entered, must be approved and signed by the cleric.

It is then returned to the District Registrar who issues the couple with the Schedule for the marriage.

The officiant **MUST** receive the Schedule from the couple before conducting the marriage. At the time of the marriage the Schedule is signed by the officiant, the couple and their witnesses, and given to the couple.

The couple must ensure that it is returned to the District Registrar within three days. The District Registrar then issues the marriage certificate. [A marriage record is also kept in the church, but this is not a legal certificate.]

The new law puts more responsibility on the couple, so they should come to the cleric involved well in advance and discuss the matter with him/her.

To be married legally a couple must now do the following:-

1. Obtain a Notice of Marriage form from the local District Registrar as soon as possible.
2. Take it to the Officiant (normally the local rector) who is to perform the marriage. He/she must sign the form indicating that they are willing to perform the ceremony and at an agreed place and time.
3. Take the completed Notice of Marriage form back to the District Registrar together with any other documents, e.g. birth certificate, passport, etc. (It is recommended that this be done at least six weeks before the wedding).
4. The Registrar should have the Marriage Schedule ready for collection 14 days before the wedding date. The couple should bring it to the Officiant as soon as possible.

***N.B. Be warned that the marriage cannot take place unless the Marriage Schedule is presented to the Officiant by the day of the wedding.***

5. After the wedding, obtain the completed Marriage Schedule from the Officiant, and ensure that it is returned to the Registrar within 3 days.
6. On receipt of the Marriage Schedule the Registrar will legally register the marriage, and will on request provide a certified copy.

In the case of one or both parties having been previously married and divorced we would draw clergy's attention to the Diocesan regulations issued by each Bishop. Each clergyperson should receive an opinion from their Diocesan Bishop as to whether or not the marriage should take place in church, and take that opinion into account when making their own decision. Subject to the clergyperson being willing to perform the marriage they must be satisfied that the couple are free to marry. The duty of ascertaining whether they are free to marry devolves upon the parties themselves and they should obtain legal advice if they are in any doubt.

## ***THE CHURCH OF IRELAND'S VIEW OF MARRIAGE:***

The Church of Ireland's understanding about marriage is to be found in the Introduction to the Marriage Service (Marriage Service 1987)

- (1) *Marriage is a relationship in which "husband and wife comfort and help each other, living faithfully together in plenty and in need, in sorrow and in joy."*

It is a **relationship of equals**. Each partner makes the same promises in the Marriage Service. It is a **shared relationship** in which there is mutual love, respect and support one for the other. Such a relationship envisages growth, development and change. It is through the sharing of good and difficult times that a couple's love can grow and deepen. The closeness of the relationship is compared to the relationship between Christ and His Church.

- (2) *Marriage is a relationship in which "with delight and tenderness the couple may know each other in love and through the joy of their bodily union they may strengthen the union of their hearts and lives."*

Each partner in a marriage plays a complementary role. Sex for a married couple expresses that complementarity - it is both an expression of love and a means of deepening that love.

- (3) *In marriage it is intended that "a couple may be blessed in the children they may have in caring for them and in bringing them up in accordance with God's will to his praise and glory."*

Children will best learn the meaning of love if they are born and nurtured within a loving relationship between two people and they will respond to the security of a permanent relationship.

- (4) *In marriage a couple begin "a new life together in the community."*

Marriage is essentially about the relationship of two people. There is, however, a wider aspect to marriage as the couple live within a community. A couple who find marriage fulfilling and happy is a couple who use their experiences and gifts, to help build up a caring and compassionate society.

- (5) *"Marriage is a permanent commitment that all should honour."*

Marriage is a permanent and exclusive commitment between two people and this is made clear throughout the Marriage Service. This must be respected by the couple and by everyone else with whom the partners of a marriage come in contact.

- (6) *"Marriage must not be undertaken carelessly, lightly or selfishly, but reverently, responsibly, and with the help of God."*

Everybody needs to think carefully beforehand about marriage. A useful exercise is to attend a Marriage Preparation Course. These courses place an emphasis on helping the couple to communicate more effectively with each other.

While marriage is not one of the two major sacraments of the Church, the Catechism talks of marriage as a "sacramental sign" - in other words there are sacramental aspects to the Marriage Service.

***This viewpoint has been prepared by CECIL HYLAND and a sub-committee of the Dublin Diocesan Council for Mission.***

## ***CLERGY GUIDELINES***

It is envisaged that the Rector/Curate will meet with the couple at least 3 times:

- the preliminary meeting
- explanation of the service
- the Rehearsal.

**Where time is limited couples should be encouraged to complete the Questionnaire entitled 'Pre-Marital Expectations' (Appendix A) and to bring it with them when they meet with the clergy.**

### **1. The Preliminary Meeting**

- (a) "All legal applications (both in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland) to be married are now made through the civil authorities, who also issue Marriage Certificates following marriage. You should discuss this procedure at the first meeting with the rector and make sure that you understand the timescales for such applications".
- (b) Booking the organist.
- (c) A Preliminary chat about the Service:  
  
BCP/Revised Service - options re readings/hymns/whether to have Holy Communion - see sheet with outline, hymns and readings.
- (d) Give details about availability of marriage preparation courses.
- (e) Booklets: "Foreword to Marriage". Publishers: Lion.  
"A Church Wedding". Publishers: CEO.

### **2. Second Meeting**

This would involve a detailed planning of the wedding service. The service outlines in Appendices C and D may prove helpful in planning the service sheet. Finalise choice of readings and hymns. Discuss who will read lessons.

Mention Fees (if any) for organist, sexton, etc.

If necessary, discuss flowers for the Church and any local "do's or don'ts".

A draft copy of the wedding service should be shown to you before printing.

If they have attended a marriage preparation course, what did they learn and do they have any further questions?

This could lead into an explanation of the marriage service (you may prefer to do this at another separate meeting).

**What is marriage?** The couple marry each other. The minister is there as a representative of the State, so that the wedding is legal. He/she is there as God's representative so that the wedding has a religious perspective and that God's blessing may be given. The congregation are there to witness the marriage and their public declaration to each other and to support the couple with their prayer and to join in their joy.

**Explanation of the Preface.** Marriage is part of God's purpose for humankind. It is primarily understood today in terms of a relationship rather than of a contract. The higher the expectations, the more work marriage requires.

Marriage is intended to be life-long and exclusive.

The couple make promises not only on their own behalf, but commit themselves to bring up any children they may have in accordance with God's will.

Marriage has to be based and founded on real love which is more than physical attraction - a love that will cope with all the ups and downs of life and anything that the future may bring - illness, unemployment, poverty, bereavement, etc.

Marriage is set within the context of the communities in which the couple live, work and worship.

This could lead on to a consideration of:

The Consent and The Promises

- Mutual love and responsibility
- Faithfulness to and respect for each other
- Marriage is "for better, for worse".

The Giving and Receiving of Rings

- a reminder of their unending relationship.

God's Blessing

- not to forget the religious/spiritual element of their relationship and the availability of God's grace at all times.

This could lead on to filling in the leaflet 'Why get married in Church' (Appendix F) and a discussion of its findings.

The couple could take home 'A look at our spiritual values' (Appendix G) to fill in and discuss with each other.

3. **Third Meeting**

The Rehearsal. Don't forget to see their MARRIAGE REGISTRATION FORM MRF (IRL), SCHEDULE (NI). Fill up register.

# ***RELATIONSHIPS, COMMUNICATION AND RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT***

This section looks at the positive and negative elements in communication in a loving relationship.

Marriage is a learning process involving sharing, showing consideration and commitment and expressing true feelings in the safety of a caring relationship. This involves talking, listening and understanding. It is through these skills that areas of friction and causes of conflict can be addressed, creating a better possibility for the resolution of a problem. Developing good communication skills helps a couple's love to grow and deepen.

## **1. Relationships**

- (a) Relationships in marriage involve:-
  - (i) the couple
  - (ii) parents
  - (iii) in-laws
  - (iv) friends
  - (v) God
  
- (b) Relationships in marriage need:-
  - (i) communication
  - (ii) consideration
  - (iii) commitment
  
- (c) Building blocks of love:-
  - (i) consideration
  - (ii) openness
  - (iii) understanding
  - (iv) affection - verbal and physical expressions
  - (v) adaption to partner
  - (vi) time-management
  - (vii) appearance
  - (viii) respect
  - (ix) encouragement
  - (x) trust
  - (xi) apology for wrong
  - (xii) forgiveness
  - (xiii) determination
  - (xiv) seeking God's help

- (d) Stumbling blocks to love:-
- (i) unrealistic expectations - e.g. of romance, harmony, sex, etc.
  - (ii) ignorance of relationships
  - (iii) selfishness
  - (iv) resentment
  - (v) irritating habits
  - (vi) eroding your partner's self-worth by criticism or complaint
  - (vii) debt
  - (viii) deceit in debt, sexual relations, etc.
  - (ix) tiredness affecting communication, temper, sexual relationships
  - (x) neglect of partner, self or extended family
  - (xi) poor communication
  - (xii) lack of real faith

## 2. Communication

- (a) Communication requires:-
- (i) talking
  - (ii) listening
  - (iii) understanding
- (b) Blocks to communication:-
- (i) formative years
  - (ii) fear and insecurity
  - (iii) "peace at any price"
  - (iv) put-downs
  - (v) television
  - (vi) different bed-times
  - (vii) busyness
  - (viii) huffing
  - (ix) criticism
  - (x) wrong message received
- (c) Positive elements in talking:-
- (i) right words
  - (ii) tone of voice
  - (iii) physical actions
  - (iv) right opening words
  - (v) speaking for yourself
  - (vi) getting the balance right between too little and too much
  - (vii) the truth in love
- (d) Positive elements in listening:-
- (i) awareness of partner
  - (ii) not always thinking what you will say next
  - (iii) focusing on feelings behind words
  - (iv) reflecting back to the speaker the content of the message
  - (v) non-judgemental acceptance of what the other says
  - (vi) not interrupting
  - (vii) matching facial expressions
- (e) Positive elements in understanding:-
- (i) acceptance of partner as he/she is
  - (ii) awareness of things that cause partner to act negatively
  - (iii) understanding priorities with partner, children, in-laws and own parents, self, religious motivations, work and other interest.

### 3. Resolution of Conflict

- (a) Conflict is normal, and to be expected. People differ and are not perfect.
- (b) Common causes:-
  - (i) parents and in-laws
  - (ii) unrealistic expectations
  - (iii) money
  - (iv) sex
  - (v) discipline of children
  - (vi) work
  - (vii) decision-making
  - (viii) irritating habits
  - (ix) outside interests - friends, sport, hobbies, church
- (c) Underlying causes:-
  - (i) early experiences
  - (ii) outside pressures
  - (iii) physical problems
  - (iv) personal loss - isolation, financial dependence, etc.
  - (v) poor communication
- (d) How not to handle conflict:-
  - (i) ignore problem
  - (ii) demand immediate answers
  - (iii) sulking or huffing
  - (iv) blaming one's partner entirely
  - (v) blaming one's self entirely
- (e) How to handle conflict:-
  - (i) with self - look honestly at the problem and get it in perspective  
- don't make the partner the problem
  - (ii) with partner - talk openly, privately, lovingly, sensibly
  - (iii) be able to apologise and forgive
  - (iv) be good-humoured
- (f) Possible outcomes:-
  - (i) capitulation
  - (ii) compromise
  - (iii) co-existence
  - (iv) create a new possibility

- Resources:**
- Marriage takes more than Love* by Jack and Carole Mayhall.  
Publisher: NAV Press ISBN. 0.498.188 022.
  - Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* by John Gray.  
Publisher: Thorsons ISBN. 0.7225.2840 X.
  - The Relate Guide to Better Relationships* by Sarah Litvinoff.  
Publisher: Vermilion
  - Equal Partners - Good Friends* by Claire Rabin  
Publisher: Routledge
  - Baby Proof Your Marriage* by Cockrell, O'Neill & Stone, :Publisher: Collins 2007
  - Being Married: Your Guide to a Happy Modern Marriage* by Sharon Aris,  
Publisher: Allen & Unwin 2005
  - The Highway Code for Marriage* by Michael & Hilary Perrott, Publisher: Crw 2005
  - Intimate Partners* by Maggie Scarf,  
Publisher: Ballantine Books, N.Y.
  - The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, by Stephen Covey,  
Publisher: Simon & Schuster 2004
  - The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman,  
Publisher: Moody 2010.
  - The Dance of Intimacy: A Guide to Courageous Acts of Change in Key Relationships*  
by Harriet Lerner,  
Publisher: Harper - Perennial

## ***SEXUALITY IN MARRIAGE***

This section in the Church of Ireland Marriage Resource Pack is brief in its outline. It is felt unlikely that any person other than a trained professional would be experienced enough to work with a couple on issues relating to sexuality. We would therefore advise that, unless the input from a professionally trained person is available, this section be omitted. The couple could be advised of where to get help should they need it.

1. Discussion on couple's understanding of the difference between sexuality and sensuality.
2. Development of Sexual Attitudes  
Separating myth from reality
3. Influences on Sexual Behaviour at different stages throughout marriage.
  - a) Courtship
  - b) Early Marriage
  - c) Settling Down
  - d) Middle years
  - e) Later years
4. Sexual Desires: Importance of Communication
5. Information on Human Sexual Responses
6. Sexual Dysfunctions: Information and how to ask for help when there is a problem.

**Resources:** *The Act of Marriage* by Tim and Beverly LaHaye.  
 Publisher: Marshall Pickering ISBN 0551-01226-9.  
*Men and Sex* by Bernie Zilbergele  
 Publisher: Fontana  
*Women's Experience of Sex* by Sheila Kitzinger.  
 Publisher: Penguin  
*Relate Guide to Sex in Loving Relationships* by Sarah Litvinoff.  
 Publisher: Vermilion ISBN 0-09-175294-9  
*Sex - How to make it better for the both of you*  
 by Martin Cole and Windy Dryden.  
 Publisher: Optima

# ***ASPECTS OF PARENTING***

Children bring great joy and many rewards. To be responsible for the creation and upbringing of a new human being is an awesome task and requires much commitment from both parents. Parenthood makes big demands and brings changes in the life of every couple.

The following guidelines may be helpful to the couple to initiate thought and discussion:

1. **Planning**
  - Do both partners want children? How soon?
  - Contraception
  - Unplanned pregnancy
  - Fertility issues
  - Fostering/Adoption
  
2. **Expectations of Parenthood**
  - Joys
  - Compensations, rewards
  - Mental and physical effects on both parties
  - Changes in lifestyle
  - Curtailment of freedom
  - Adjustment to becoming three
  
  - Miscarriage
  - Disability
  - Cot Death
  - Death of a child
  
3. **Upbringing**
  - Beliefs on child rearing
  - Training
  - Discipline
  - Religious education
  - Rural/Urban situations
  
4. **Finance**
  - Will both partners continue to work?
  - Cost of child minding, pre-school/primary education
  - Provision for secondary education?
  
5. **Children from a previous marriage/relationship**
  - Relationship with new spouse
  - Discipline
  - Maintenance
  - Education

Homes are built on wisdom and understanding (*Proverbs 24.3*)

Parents, do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead bring them up with Christian discipline and instruction (*Ephesians 6.4*)

**Sources of Help:**

1. Family Caring Trust (Parenting Courses)  
44 Rathfriland Road, Newry, BT34 1LD.
2. Barnardos (Parenting)  
Woodchester Building, Christchurch Place, Dublin 1.
3. Board for Social Responsibility (NI) (Adoption and Fostering)  
Church of Ireland House, 61-67 Donegall Street, Belfast BT1 2QH.
4. Board for Social Responsibility (RI)  
Hon Secretary: Mr PDG Read, The Old Castle House, Roscrea, Co Tipperary.
5. PACT (Counselling and Support for Unplanned Pregnancy, Adoption and Short-Term Fostering)  
15 Belgrave Road, Rathmines, Dublin 6.

**Resources:** *The Family - Love it or Leave it* by Tony Humphries  
Publishers: Gill & Macmillan.

*Raising Children - a Parent's Privilege* by David and Liz Holden  
Publishers: Kingsway

*Step-Families* by Merrilyn Williams  
Publishers: Lion ISBN 0-7459-3383-1

## ***FINANCE AND BUDGETING***

Money is often a recurring cause of friction in a marriage, so it is important to get things sorted out as efficiently as possible. Even if the one who is "good with money" does the handling of "family finance" both spouses should be involved in the setting of the budget and trying to stay within it.

Money matters are much less of a problem when a couple know their financial position. Setting up a budgeting system that suits them both for the main expenses for each month can be helpful.

### ***SHARING DECISIONS ABOUT MONEY***

Problems may arise because of differences in priorities. Below are some topics which may need to be discussed by the couple and about which they should be encouraged to make joint decisions.

- **Spend or Save**
- **Joint bank accounts**
- **Credit/Store Cards**
- **Savings Plan/Emergency Funds**
- **Managing the housekeeping money**
- **Will they remain a two income family after marriage, or until they have children, or until one of them decides to stay at home to take care of home and family, or until one partner is made redundant, or until one partner becomes a carer?**
- **Planning to buy a house - depending on one income or two. Planning a mortgage.**

Couples are advised to seek independent financial advice.

- Resources:**
- Your Money* by Bill Tyson  
Publisher: Glassillaun Books ISBN 09527 642-2-9
  - Family Finance* by Colm Rapple  
Publisher: Squirrel Press ISBN 09530042-1-X
  - Money - Marriage* by Michael and Helen Baws  
ISBN 085351-059-8
  - Better Money Management* by Keith Tondeur  
Publisher: Credit Action
  - Financial Tips for the Family* by Keith Tondeur  
Publisher: Credit Action ISBN 0-340-68673-1

## *Appendices*

- Appendix A : Questionnaire - Pre-Marital Expectations  
(3 sheets)
- Where time is limited couples should be encouraged to complete this Questionnaire and bring it with them when they meet with the clergy.**
- Appendix B: Possible Order of Service “Marriage One”  
*The Book of Common Prayer* (2004)  
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- Appendix G: Details of intended Marriage
- Appendix H: Referral Form
- Appendix I: Inter-Church Marriage (Church of Ireland/Roman Catholic)

# Appendix A

## CHURCH OF IRELAND CLIENT QUESTIONNAIRE

### PRE-MARITAL EXPECTATIONS

Names of Couple: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by (name): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_

First Marriage

Second Marriage

Course location: \_\_\_\_\_ Course Date \_\_\_\_\_

EACH PARTNER TO FILL FORM OUT INDIVIDUALLY, WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH THE OTHER.

---

#### 1. EXPECTATIONS OF LOVE IN MARRIAGE

a. To me, being loved by my partner is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Recall some instances of how your partner showed love for you during the past month.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. Recall some instances or situations in which you were hurt by your partner in recent weeks or months. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

d. Recall some instances or situations in which you hurt your partner in recent weeks or months.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e. List three ways you think you can help your love deepen for each other.

i. \_\_\_\_\_

ii. \_\_\_\_\_

iii. \_\_\_\_\_

**2. PERSONAL STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS**

a. List your personal strengths and limitations, circling your greatest strength and greatest limitation.

Strengths \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations \_\_\_\_\_

b. List what you consider to be your partner's strengths and limitations and circle the greatest of each.

Strengths \_\_\_\_\_

Limitations \_\_\_\_\_

c. How might you help each other overcome your limitations?

i. By \_\_\_\_\_

ii. By \_\_\_\_\_

iii. By \_\_\_\_\_

**3. FAMILY AND IN-LAWS**

a. Using three or four words, describe your own family.

\_\_\_\_\_

b. What family characteristics / values would you like to bring into your marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c. What family characteristics / values would you like to leave behind?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

d. How do you think your partner's parents view you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

e. How do you think your parents view your partner? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

f. What do you like about your partner's parents? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

g. What do you not like about your partner's parents? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- h. If problems arise with parents or in-laws, how will you as a couple handle this?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- i. How do you feel about living with parents or in-laws, or their living with you?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**4. FINANCES IN MARRIAGE**

- a. How do you think money matters should be handled in your marriage?  
1. By husband                      2. By wife                      3. By mutual agreement
- b. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements
- |    |  |                |
|----|--|----------------|
| 1. | Family finances should be in a joint account   | Agree/Disagree |
| 2. | Husband and wife should have separate accounts   | Agree/Disagree |
| 3. | Husband and wife may plan the budget together  | Agree/Disagree |
| 4. | Neither husband nor wife may not purchase any item more than a mutually agreed amount, without consulting each other | Agree/Disagree |
- c. How crucial do you regard the matter of money in relation to your happiness together?  
1. Very important              2. Moderately important              3. Unimportant
- d. If a problem were to arise in relation to finances, what would it be likely to be?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP**

- a. Intimacy is an important part of marriage how is it expressed in your relationship?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. How important do you think sex is in marriage? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. Circle the number(s) of statements with which you agree:  
i. Sex is important for promoting happiness in marriage.  
ii. Sex is for having children.  
iii. Sex is for pleasure  
iv. Sex should always be initiated by the husband.
- d. i. What is your understanding of your own sexual needs and expectations? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ii. What is your understanding of your partner's needs and expectations? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

e. What is your understanding of faithfulness in your relationship?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**6. CHILDREN AND FAMILY PLANNING**

a. Do you plan to have children and if so what is your ideal number? \_\_\_\_\_

b. How would you feel if you could not conceive? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. What are your views on i Fertility treatment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ii Adoption \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. Are there children from this relationship? \_\_\_\_\_

e. Are there children from a previous relationship? \_\_\_\_\_

f. What changes, if any, do you plan to make to your own parents' methods of child rearing?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

g. In your view, whose responsibility is it to discipline children? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

h. Do you agree with the statement "Children are best brought up in a home where there is strict discipline"? If you disagree why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

i. Indicate any area of concern you have about having children  
\_\_\_\_\_

j. Do you have any issues on religious practice / non-practice? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. COMMUNICATION**

a. Communication in marriage, to me, means \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- b. List things that up to now you have found difficult to share with your partner.
- i. \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. \_\_\_\_\_
  - iii. \_\_\_\_\_

- c. Circle the numbers of statements with which you agree:
- i. Disagreements should be avoided at all costs.
  - ii. If my partner offends me then he/she is not entitled to be forgiven until an apology is made.
  - iii. Conflicts are inevitable in marriage.

d. Following a disagreement in the past how have you as a couple resolved this? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

e. What impact does the use of alcohol, drugs and technology have on your relationship?  
\_\_\_\_\_

f. How do you feel about a daily time for communication? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**8. ROLE EXPECTATIONS IN MARRIAGE**

a. What do you believe your role will be in the marriage?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. What are your expectations of your partner as husband/wife?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Have you discussed roles with regard to how you share your daily routines?  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. How might these roles and responsibilities change in the future? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**9. EMOTIONAL EXPECTATIONS IN MARRIAGE**

a. We all have emotional needs that have to be met if we are to function successfully as people. Three of the most basic of these needs are listed below. Circle the one you regard as most important.

- i. The need for security. (The word ‘security’ here does not mean financial security but the security that comes through knowing one is unconditionally loved).
- ii. The need for self worth. (Each one of us needs to feel that we are of great value to at least one other person).
- iii. The need for significance. (We all need to know we can do at least one thing well).

b. Please consider the statements below for discussion at your course.

- i. I am hoping that my partner will be able to fully meet my emotional needs.
- ii. It is my responsibility to try to fully meet the emotional needs of my partner.
- iii. If my partner is not able to meet my emotional needs then our marriage will not work.

c. Which one (or more) of the options below would you go for if you found that your partner was not meeting your needs. Indicate by circling numbers(s).

- i. Attempt to ignore the fact.
- ii. Get involved in extra activities.
- iii. Withdraw my love and affection.
- iv. Communicate to my partner that my needs are not being met.
- v. Apply pressure to my partner to change.
- vi. Spend some time examining myself and my expectations.

d. What do you understand commitment to mean? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

e. Please list below any other issues / topics you would like to discuss on this course  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B (page 1)

# ***POSSIBLE ORDER OF SERVICE***

## ***“MARRIAGE ONE”*** *The Book of Common Prayer (2004)*

Processional Music  
(Opening Hymn)

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY**

Psalm

#### **THE PRAYERS**

Minister: Lord, have mercy

**Answer: Christ have mercy**

Minister: Lord have mercy

Our father which art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
in earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive them who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom the power and the glory  
for ever and ever. Amen.

Minister: O Lord, save thy servant and thy handmaid;

**Answer: Who put their trust in thee.**

Minister: O Lord, send them help from thy holy place;

**Answer: And evermore defend them.**

Minister: Be unto them a tower of strength;

**Answer: From the face of their enemy.**

Minister: O Lord hear our prayer;

**Answer: And let our cry come unto thee.**

Hymn

#### **THE SIGNING OF THE REGISTER**

#### **RECESSIONAL MUSIC**

***MARRIAGE SERVICE OUTLINE***  
***“MARRIAGE TWO”*** *The Book of Common Prayer (2004)*

Processional Music

Greeting

Opening Hymn

Introduction

The Collect

Readings – one or two

Address

Hymn

THE MARRIAGE

Affirmation by the people

Priest: Will you the family and friends of ... and ... support and encourage them in their marriage

***All: We will***

THE ACCLAMATIONS

Priest: Blessed are you, heavenly Father:

***All: You give joy to the bridegroom and the bride.***

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord Jesus Christ:

***All: You have brought new life to all your people.***

Priest: Blessed are you, Holy Spirit of God:

***All: You bring us together in love.***

Priest: Blessed be the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit:

***All: One God, to be praised for ever.***

Hymn

The Prayers

***Our Father who art in heaven;  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.***

or

*Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven,  
Give us to-day our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.*

Hymn

The Blessing

The Signing of the Register

Recessional Music

## ***SOME SUITABLE HYMNS***

Amazing Grace	Make me a channel
Be thou my vision	May the grace
Come down O love divine	Morning has broken
God is love - his the care	Now thank we all
Gracious Spirit, Holy Ghost	O Christ who once has deigned
Guide me O thou great Jehovah	O perfect love
Help us to help each other, Lord	Praise my soul
Jesus, whose presence blessed the home	The King of love
Lead us heavenly Father	The Lord's my shepherd
Let there be love shared among us	Through all the changing scenes
Lord of all hopefulness	

## ***CHOOSING A READING(S) FOR YOUR WEDDING***

Select one or two of the readings below, then ask the following questions

**or**

Look at these readings, ask questions, then select readings.

Questions: Which of these readings make most sense to us?  
Are there words or phrases in some of the readings we particularly like?  
Which of the readings reflects best what we hope for in marriage?  
Which do we find most difficult to understand?

Readings:	Genesis 1:26-28,31	How God created men and women and instituted marriage.
	Genesis 2:18-24	Our human need for companionship
	Ephesians 3:14-21	Paul prays that we may know the love of God at the very foundation of our lives
	Ephesians 5:21-33	Paul compares the marriage bond to the bond between Jesus and the church
	Romans 12:1,2,9-13	We should love God and show that love to others
	1 Corinthians 13	Paul great hymn of Love
	Colossians 3:12-17	Paul talks about love, forgiveness and peace as the foundation of all relationships
	1 John 4:7-12	God is love. Because of God's love for us we too should love one another.
	Matthew 7:21,24-37	Choosing the proper foundation
	Matthew 19:3-6	Marriage is for life
	Mark 10:6-12	Marriage is for life
	John 2:1-11	Jesus attends the wedding at Cana
	John 15:9-12	Jesus loves us and we should love one another

# WHY GET MARRIED IN CHURCH?

Tick as many as you like.

What are you looking forward to about the wedding day?

- A beautiful day.....
- Lots of presents.....
- A beautiful dress.....
- A good wedding reception.....
- The honeymoon.....
- An inspiring service.....
- A great crowd of friends and relatives.....
- Other.....

What are you looking forward to about your marriage?

- Companionship.....
- Building a home.....
- Children.....
- Long life together.....
- Other.....

Why are you getting married in church?

- It's the right place, it's the done thing.....
- It's the custom.....
- It's the church my family goes to.....
- It's what my parents want me to do.....
- It's better than a registry office.....
- The photographs will look good.....
- I want people to pray for us.....
- It's the church where my parents were married.....
- It's our regular place of worship.....
- I want God's blessing from the start.....
- Other.....

How do you think God might help you in your marriage?

- By keeping an eye on me.....
- By keeping trouble at bay.....
- By helping me get on in life.....
- By getting my partner to agree with me.....
- By keeping us faithful to each other.....
- Other ways.....

## Appendix E

# A LOOK AT OUR SPIRITUAL VALUES

For each of these questions tick as many answers as you like.

❶ Do we talk about God and religion?

- yes       no       sometimes

❷ When I'm married I intend to go to church:

- once a year     once a month  
 every week     when we have children  
 family occasions e.g. weddings, baptisms.

❸ Do I do anything on a Sunday that might stop me going to church?

- yes, if yes,                       no  
what it is?

❹ My experience of the church has been through:

- my parents  
 baptisms (Christenings)  
 school  
 weddings or funerals  
 Sunday School  
 Cubs/Brownies etc.  
 confirmation  
 TV, radio  
 going to church regularly  
 books, magazines, newspapers

❺ My experience of Christianity and God has been through:

- my parents  
 my school  
 going to church  
 Sunday school  
 prayer  
 reading the Bible  
 experiences I cannot explain  
 Christian friends/relatives  
 a sense of direction I feel at times  
 TV, radio  
 books, magazines, newspapers.

❻ I think God is:

- something people made up to explain things  
 some sort of force out there for emergencies or when you need help  
 someone who loves me  
 dangerous  
 spooky

❼ What I think about death and heaven.

- I never do.  
 Death is the end.  
 I don't like to think about this.  
 I think there must be something but I don't know what  
 I find it very painful that I must be separated from those I love by death.  
 I hope to get to heaven because I am not a bad sort of person.  
 I am confident that I will go to heaven because (fill in).....

❽ Have I ever known times when God felt really close to me?

- Yes - if yes, what were they?  
 no

❾ How strong is my belief in God? (Circle where you think you are on this scale.)

Weak    1    2    3    4    5    Very Strong

❿ I feel that going to church is:

- a nice idea but I can take it or leave it  
 an empty ritual  
 a way of meeting God  
 not for me at this stage of my life  
 something I need to think about doing  
 an opportunity to meet other Christians.

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# MONEY

How similar are your attitudes to money? Try this quiz and discuss your answers.

## Your earnings

Which comes closest to the way you handle your earnings?

- a. You know your outgoings and your budget, using what is left over for treats.....
- b. Much of your earnings go to pay off debts incurred since the last wage.....
- c. You pay bills on time but don't know what you usually spend and don't budget....
- d. You always save something - you would rather give up treats to do this.....

## A Windfall

If you suddenly acquire £25,000 what are you most likely to do with it ?

- a. Put it all on deposit.....
- b. Buy some shares.....
- c. Use it all for something wildly extravagant or presents for loved ones.....
- d. Save most and have fun with the rest.....
- e. Put it as a deposit on a house.....
- f. Give to a Charity/Church.....

## Money is -

Pick three that you agree with:

- a. For security and using sensibly.....
- b. For enabling you to do as you want.....
- c. The root of all evil - people are too materialistic.....
- d. Essential - you can't have too much.....
- e. All right in it's place - better to be 'comfortable' than rich.....
- f. Only a problem if you have too little.....
- g. The way to gain respect - people only take notice of you if you have it.....
- h. For spending while you are young enough to enjoy it.....
- i. For using for the common good.....

**Appendix F (Page 2)**

## ***Money Matters : Attitudes and Practices***

**Answer the following questions, on your own, before comparing them with your partner, with a "yes" or "no" giving your opinion for yourself and your partner**

	<b>SELF</b>	<b>PARTNER</b>
Has difficulty handling cash		
A good manager of money		
Can't resist a charity collector		
Buys on impulse with no planning		
Can't pass up "a bargain"		
Easily influenced by advertisements		
Always carefully checks relative price of items		
A "spend now, pay later" attitude		

**Give your opinion by agreeing or disagreeing with the following statements and then compare with your partner.**

	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>
In marriage, joint bank accounts are best		
Credit buying is to be avoided		
A saving plan is essential		
Strict budgeting is essential		
Taking out loans is a bad idea		
Managing the housekeeping money is a women's job		
Regularly checking the money you have to spend is essential (e.g. balancing your current account)		

## *Planning for the Future*

The following items may need to be discussed with an independent financial advisor.

- Home
  - Rent
  - Lease
  - Purchase
  - Type of Mortgage
  - Joint / Single Names
  - Endowment
  - Capital and Interest Repayments
  - Term (length of repayments)
- Life Assurance & Insurance
  - Mortgage Protection
  - House Insurance (contents/ buildings)
  - Car Insurance
  - Life Assurance
  - Health Insurance
- Pension Planning
  - Employers Pension
  - Personal Pension (both or main breadwinner)
  - State Pension
- Taxation
  - Separately Taxed
  - Allowance Division
  - Mortgage Allowance
  - Personal Pension Relief
  - Health Insurance Allowances
  - Tax Bands (how assessed and at what rates)
  - Business Expenses Allowance
- Unemployed
  - Social Welfare Allowance
  - Family Income Supplement
  - Sickness Benefit
  - Disability Benefit
  - Medical Card entitlement
- Making a Will
  - Both Partners
  - Guardianship for Children
- Children's Education
  - Schools to be attended

**Appendix F (Page 4)**

***Budget***

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Annually</b>	<b>Quarterly</b>	<b>Monthly</b>
Giving (Church/Charity) Proportionally			
Electricity/other Fuel bills			
Telephone			
Home - Mortgage/Rent/Rates			
Insurance			
Repairs/Maintenance			
Life Assurance			
Medical Expenses/Insurance			
Motor Expenses - Tax			
Insurance			
Servicing			
Fuel			
Train/Bus Fares			
Hire Purchase/Credit Cards/Loans			
Rentals (TV, Video, etc.)			
Television - Licence and Cable			
Membership Fees (Clubs, etc.)			
Food/Housekeeping			
Clothes			
Personal Spending - Husband			
Wife			
Children			
<b>Total Expenditure</b>			
Income - Husband			
Wife			
<b>Total Income</b>			
Surplus/Shortage			
Other Expenses			
Furniture			
Holidays			
Children (planning for future)			
Unexpected Expenses			
Entertainment			

## Appendix G

1. Date of Marriage \_\_\_\_\_

2. Place of Marriage \_\_\_\_\_

		<b>BRIDEGROOM</b>	<b>BRIDE</b>
3.	Christian forename(s)		
	Surname		
4.	Occupation		
5.	Marital Status		
6.	Date of Birth		
7.	Country of Origin		
8.	Usual Address		
9.	Father's full name		
	Occupation		
10.	Mother's full name		
	Maiden Surname		
	Occupation		

11. Witnesses names

Addresses

12. Officiant/Solemniser

## **DETAILS REGARDING THE MARRIAGE**

If a choice is permitted, which service would you prefer from the Book of Common Prayer?

Other clergy expected to take part?

Is an organist required? \_\_\_\_\_ If other than parish organist, name

Have you contacted him/her

Suggested hymns?

(All music, hymns, voluntary, anthem, solo, etc. must be arranged with rector and organist.)

Psalm \_\_\_\_\_ Choice of lessons

Will service sheet be printed?

Any arrangements regarding flowers?

Name of witnesses (if different from best man and bridesmaid)

**APPENDIX H**

***REFERRAL OF PARISHIONERS***

From: \_\_\_\_\_ Parish of: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Parish of: \_\_\_\_\_

The marriage took place on \_\_\_\_\_ between

\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

and

\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Their new address is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

# ***INTER-CHURCH MARRIAGE***

## ***CHURCH OF IRELAND/ ROMAN CATHOLIC***

The last few decades have seen dramatic changes in interchurch relations, and one of the most visible effects has been the attitude of both Churches to “mixed marriages”. The harshness of the former decree *Ne Temere* has been replaced by the much more liberal *Matrimonia Mixta*. Once mixed marriages were hidden and ignored: today they are visible and being accepted by most congregations of both churches. People are discovering that for a member of the Church of Ireland to marry a Roman Catholic may become an enriching experience, though sometimes difficulties can be encountered along the way.

As a couple you may already have had considerable discussion about your religious traditions. Here is some information and some comments which may assist you as you come to make your marriage plans.

### **Planning the wedding**

It is recommended that both clergy should be consulted at an early stage. The wedding can take place in either church. Once the church has been chosen the actual ceremony and the administration of the vows can, for legal reasons, only be performed by the clergy of that church according to the rites and ceremonies of that church. If it is desired and agreed, the clergy of the other denomination can be invited to assist with prayers and readings.

If the wedding is to be in a Roman Catholic church it need not be a nuptial mass - in fact many couples prefer that it should not be, because then the Church of Ireland clergy are free to take a fuller part in the ceremony, and the Church of Ireland relatives are free from any eucharistic restrictions. Discuss your plans with both clergy.

### **Relations with the Other Church**

Interchurch couples often find that one or both are taking an active and meaningful part in the activities of the other church. With the arrival of your own family you may wish to attend both denominations as a family unit, so that your children will have a knowledge and awareness of both traditions.

Both churches are trying to provide joint pastoral care for interchurch couples, and the Irish Council of Churches has produced a booklet *Ministering to Interchurch Couples* which you will find helpful.

In your marriage you as a couple can often find a unity in your primary church, the home, a unity which the churches themselves are still striving to achieve.

### **Sharing Communion**

While the Church of Ireland welcomes at Holy Communion communicants of another denomination whose conscience allows them to receive, the Roman Catholic Church only permits “Eucharistic sharing” in exceptional circumstances (*Directory on Ecumenism 1999* para 209).

## Appendix I (page 2)

### *Baptism*

Baptism is into the Church of Christ and not into any one denomination. A baptism can take place in either church and be recognised by the other. There is a specially designed certificate for Christian Baptism which is recognised by all the churches.

### **The Religious Upbringing of the Children**

As the Roman Catholic *Directory on Mixed Marriages (1983)* states: this is *the joint responsibility of both parents* and this will depend very much upon your own religious practice.

Each parent should be able to share something of their own tradition with their children.

### *Church of Ireland requirements*

Ask your Rector about the section “**Arrangements and Clergy Guidelines**” page 3 of “**Towards Marriage**” Resource Pack. (September 1999)

### **Roman Catholic Canon Law requirements**

When a Roman Catholic marries a Protestant certain formal documents are required by the Roman Catholic Church. They are:

(a) **Permission to marry a baptised member of another Christian Church.**

This is obtained from the bishop through the local parish priest. The priest will want to see the couple beforehand. Roman Catholic Canon Law (Canon 1125) requires him to ensure:

- that the Roman Catholic partner makes the declaration required of all Roman Catholics about the baptism and upbringing of their children (see ‘The Promise’ below);
- that the Church of Ireland partner is truly aware of the promise and of the obligation of the Roman Catholic partner;
- that the couple know about the purposes and the essential properties of marriage.

When he is assured that this has been done the priest will apply to the bishop for a *Permission*. The Church of Ireland partner is **not** required to sign or agree to anything - except to indicate that he/she understands what the Roman Catholic partner has declared.

(b) **Dispensation from Canonical Form**

This is required when the marriage takes place in a Protestant church, and is obtained from the Roman Catholic bishop. It is not automatically granted, but will be given “for serious pastoral reasons”. It has become a common practice in recent years for a *Dispensation from Form* to be granted to enable a couple to follow the normal custom of marrying in the bride’s church.

(Although the *Permission* and *Dispensation from Form* are not required for the legality of the marriage in a Church of Ireland church, they are necessary to enable the Roman Catholic partner to remain in good standing with his/her church.)

## The Promise

ALL Roman Catholics, even those marrying another Roman Catholic, are asked the following: *Do you promise to do what you can within the unity of your partnership to have all the children of your marriage baptised and brought up in the Catholic faith?*

In explaining this declaration, the Irish Roman Catholic Bishops' Directory on Mixed Marriages (1983) states *how he or she succeeds in practice in the particular marriage depends not only on the Catholic's efforts, but also on the agreement and co-operation of the other partner (7.4) and the religious upbringing of the children is the joint responsibility of both parents. The obligations of the Catholic party do not, and cannot, cancel out, or in any way call into question, the conscientious duty of the other party. (8. 1)*

At section 8.5 it adds: *The actual circumstances of the marriage form the context in which this obligation must be carried out, and these circumstances are bound to vary considerably. The possibility exists that, despite his or her best efforts, the Catholic will be in a situation where some or all of the children are brought up in the denomination of the other party.*

Thus there are three possible outcomes for the upbringing of the children: - that all are brought up as Roman Catholics; - that some are brought up as Roman Catholics; - that none are brought up as Roman Catholics. Any decision on this matter is the natural responsibility of the parents and should be made **jointly** from **within** the marriage. However, as a couple you should discuss this fully before you marry, resisting undue pressure - from whatever quarter.

## Getting Married

- a) **In whichever church** is chosen - the Roman Catholic partner needs to apply for *Permission* to marry a member of another Church.
- b) In a **Church of Ireland church** - The Roman Catholic Church requires the Roman Catholic partner to apply also for a *Dispensation from Canonical Form* and the couple need to obtain a *licence*. (Speak to your rector about this).

In all cases attention must be paid to state laws regarding age, affinity, time etc.

In the Republic of Ireland all marriages require a minimum of **three months notice**.

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**Talk to each other about this leaflet, and then talk to both clergy.**

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## Appendix I (page 4)

### *RESOURCES*

#### **Mixed Marriage Association**

NIMMA (Northern Ireland Mixed Marriage Association)

28, Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7FE. Tel. (028) 90235444, Fax (028) 90434544, E.Mail [nimma@nireland.com](mailto:nimma@nireland.com), Website [www.nimma.nireland.com](http://www.nimma.nireland.com) .

Offer advice and information and produce a booklet entitled “Mixed Marriage in Ireland”.

**AIF Ireland**, (Association of Interchurch Families)

C/o Irish School of Ecumenics, Milltown Park, Dublin 6. E.mail [aif@connect.ie](mailto:aif@connect.ie), Website [www.connect.ie/users/aif](http://www.connect.ie/users/aif) .

Produce a leaflet of contact names throughout the Republic of Ireland.

There are similar organisations in England and Wales, Scotland, France, Australia, New Zealand and the U.S.A. Website [www.aifw.org/aif.htm](http://www.aifw.org/aif.htm) .

#### **Ecumenical Officers**

Most Roman Catholic and some Church of Ireland Dioceses have appointed officers to deal with mixed marriage enquiries.

#### **Interchurch Pre-Marriage Courses**

EMBRACE (Interchurch Marriage Preparation Group), 39, Harcourt Street, Dublin 2. Tel. (01) 4784400.

They offer a joint marriage preparation course approved by the four main Churches.

#### **Marriage Preparation Courses**

Many Church of Ireland dioceses organise Marriage Preparation Courses – your Rector will know of these.

**ACCORD** (Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland)

Accord have specific Courses for Interchurch Marriage and have many branches in Roman Catholic dioceses. Headquarters: All Hallows, Gracepark Road, Drumcondra, Dublin 9. Tel. (01) 8371151 or Cana House, 56, Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 6AF. Tel. (028) 90233002, Fax (028) 90328113, E.mail [accordni@btinternet.com](mailto:accordni@btinternet.com) .

### *Materials Available*

“*Mixed Marriage in Ireland*” - available from NIMMA and AIF.

A booklet dealing with Getting Married, Going to Church, Baptism, Bringing up Children etc.

“*Ministering to Interchurch Couples*” - by the Irish Council of Churches. Available from the Interchurch Centre, 48, Elmwood Avenue, Belfast BT9 6AZ Tel. (028) 90664424.

A booklet offering guidelines for shared services of marriage and baptism.

“*Directory on Marriages*” - Irish Episcopal Conference (1983). The official Roman Catholic Statements on Mixed Marriages. Published by Veritas and available from their Resource Centres and some bookshops.

“*One Bread One Body*” - published by Catholic Truth Society and Veritas.

A teaching document on the Eucharist and sacramental sharing - by the Roman Catholic bishops of England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

“*Till Faith Do Us part - Couples who fall in love across the religious divide*” Jonathan A Romain. Published by Fount and available from APCK.

A perceptive, honest, and sometimes humorous, survey of inter-racial and inter-faith marriages.