

POLICY 2.7.1 Marriage Guide Supplement

For Priests, Deacons and Pastoral Agents of the Archdiocese of Grouard-McLennan

The primary contents of what used to be the Sacramental section of our archdiocesan Binder or Handbook are now to be found in the user-friendly *Canonical and Pastoral Guide for Parishes* (the *Guide*), Canadian Edition, 2006, one copy of which has been supplied to each parish where there is a resident priest or pastoral agent.

Where archdiocesan policies have been promulgated to supplement this *Guide*, they may be found on our website (<http://archgm.ca>) under “Policies”.

In the case of Marriages, all of the canonical forms specific to our archdiocese can now be downloaded from our website under “Forms”. As well, everything about Marriage found in the *Guide* in Chapter VI applies to us, supplemented by the following notations in the order in which their subjects appear in the *Guide*.

2.1. Preparation for Marriage Program

The Archdiocese requires all couples preparing for the Sacrament of Marriage to take a comprehensive pre-marital course, such as Engaged Encounter, the Liguori series, “A Decision to Love”, or some other Church-recognized curriculum. This may be done within a group or one couple at a time, with a trained couple serving as animators. When necessary, the responsible priest, deacon or pastoral agent may serve as animator. Normally, a certificate will be issued to the couple confirming that they have completed the course satisfactorily.

3. The Canonical File

The material found in the *Guide* is very helpful for completing the Marriage Forms accurately. **It is well worth the time to work through this Section with the *Guide* in one hand and our Forms in the other hand.**

3.2.4. Sacrament of Confirmation

It is the practice of the Archdiocese to urge Catholics to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation prior to receiving the Sacrament of Marriage if it has not yet been received, and whenever possible to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, in accordance with Canon Law (c. 1065). Couples who have been cohabiting must be made aware that they are required to remain chaste between the time they go to confession and the time of the wedding.

4.2.3. Previous Bond

This is one of the most frequently misunderstood principles. Pages VI-18 and VI-19 are invaluable guides in answering such questions as: “What makes a marriage valid?” and “What kinds of marriages are regarded as valid in the eyes of the Church?” In our pluralistic society, it is important to get this straight. The correct answers come as a surprise to many people.

6.3.2. Place and Time

Normally, the Sacrament of Marriage in our Archdiocese will be celebrated in a Catholic Church. All exceptions to this must be authorized by the Ordinary and will be granted only for reasons of health or when there is no reasonable alternative.

Valid marriages performed by other Christian bodies may be celebrated in Catholic churches in this Archdiocese provided:

- a) the priest (deacon/pastoral agent) is present at the rehearsal and throughout the wedding ceremony in the function of host;
- b) the Blessed Sacrament is removed from the Tabernacle, if it is located in or near the Sanctuary, to a secure place; and,
- c) the marriage being planned will be recognized by the Catholic Church as a valid marriage.

(ref. Policy 2.1.4)

Amended by the College of Consultors on 16 February 2011