

## *Special Notes for Couples*

### *When the Bride & Groom are of Different Faiths*

1. The *Order for Celebrating Matrimony* of the Catholic Church prescribes that when a marriage is celebrated between a baptized Catholic and a person who is baptized in another Christian denomination, the sacrament of marriage is to be celebrated outside of Mass. This is done so that all those present can fully participate in the entire liturgy. It is not necessary to celebrate Mass as part of the wedding liturgy and the Rite of Matrimony Outside of Mass is a beautiful ritual.

The *Order for Celebrating Matrimony* goes on to say that “if a situation warrants it, the rite for celebrating matrimony within Mass may be used, with the consent of the local ordinary (bishop).” The priest or deacon who is presiding at your wedding will determine whether a special circumstance is present and warrants this exception.

2. The *Order for Celebrating Matrimony* clearly states that when a marriage is between a baptized Catholic and non-baptized person, the wedding ceremony takes place outside of Mass. There are no exceptions to this directive.
3. A marriage between a baptized Catholic and a Christian of another Christian denomination, or a person who is not baptized, is a special opportunity for unity among Christians and for growth in mutual respect between the couple and their families. An interfaith marriage also raises many questions about how the couple and family will share and practice their faith. The couple is urged to discuss these issues beforehand and especially during the preparation process. In an interfaith marriage, the Catholic party is expected to take the responsibility for passing on the Catholic Faith to all children born in the marriage. Specifically, the Catholic person will be asked to sign the following promises:
  - I reaffirm my faith in Jesus Christ and, with God’s help, intend to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church.
  - I promise to do all in my power to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and reared as Catholics.

The couple is urged to discuss this with each other and with the priest or deacon who is preparing them for marriage.

4. If the marriage is to take place in another Christian Church, a dispensation from the Archbishop is required. Please discuss this with the parish priest or deacon.