

DIOCESE OF DALLAS

Location for Celebration of Marriages



Location for Celebration of Marriages

(Revised March 10, 2016)

Please note the following:

- Catholic clergy (priest or deacon) may celebrate marriage only in a Catholic Church building, never in another church or some other facility.
- Catholic clergy (priest or deacon) may not celebrate marriage, or any sacrament for that matter, in any facility other than a Roman Catholic church.
- Catholic clergy (priest or deacon) may never celebrate the Catholic Rite of Matrimony following or preceding a civil marriage ceremony or a ceremony in another faith expression.
- Whenever a baptized Catholic asks to celebrate marriage in a non-Catholic church or any other facility, the request for such permission must be addressed to the Tribunal by the priest, deacon, or lay minister preparing the couple for marriage. The specific location must be resolved before any further marriage plans are made.
- A priest or deacon may not celebrate marriage in only his civil capacity. Any marriage celebrated in the Diocese of Dallas, or involving clergy of the Diocese of Dallas, **MUST** be under the auspices of the Catholic Church and not merely a civil action.

Marriages involving **two baptized Catholics** always are to be celebrated in a Catholic Church with a Catholic priest or deacon officiating.

Marriages involving **a baptized Catholic with another baptized Christian** normally are celebrated in a Catholic Church. However, if the couple wants the marriage to be celebrated in another church, a dispensation from canonical form will be required so that the minister of that church can officiate. For liceity, permission for mixed marriage must be granted for a baptized Catholic to marry another baptized Christian. For validity, a dispensation from canonical form must be granted for a minister of another faith expression to receive the marriage vows. Then the Catholic priest or deacon can be present only to offer a prayer for unity.

Marriages involving **a baptized Catholic with a non-baptized person, “not observant”** in any established religious faith, normally are celebrated in a Catholic Church. However, if the couple wants the marriage to be celebrated in another church, a dispensation from canonical form will be required so that the minister of that church can officiate. For validity, a dispensation from the impediment of disparity of worship must be granted for a baptized Catholic to marry a non-baptized

person. For validity, a dispensation from canonical form also must be granted for a minister of another faith expression to receive the marriage vows. Then the Catholic priest or deacon can be present only to offer a prayer for unity.

Marriages involving a **baptized Catholic with a non-baptized person, “observant”** in another established religious faith (a Buddhist, Hindu, Jew, Muslim, etc.) or with an avowed Atheist normally are celebrated in a Catholic Church. However, if the couple wants the marriage to be celebrated in another church, a dispensation from canonical form will be required so that the minister of that church can officiate. For validity, a dispensation from the impediment of disparity of worship must be granted for a baptized Catholic to marry a non-baptized person. For validity, a dispensation from canonical form also must be granted for a minister of another faith expression to receive the marriage vows. Then the Catholic priest or deacon can be present only to offer a prayer for unity. Also, with permission from the Tribunal, the marriage of a baptized Catholic with a non-baptized person observant in another established religious faith may be celebrated in some suitable location other than a church. The request to celebrate the marriage in another suitable place is to come to the Tribunal from the cleric or lay minister preparing the couple for marriage, not from one of the parties themselves. The specific location must be resolved before any further plans are made.

Therefore, in regard to locations for marriages:

1. Two Catholics are to marry in a Catholic Church.
2. A Catholic and another baptized Christian are to marry in a Catholic Church or, with a dispensation from canonical form, in another sacred location, a place in which religious services normally are held.
3. A Catholic and a non-baptized person “not observant” in any established religious faith are to marry in a Catholic Church or, with a dispensation from canonical form, in another sacred location, a place in which religious services normally are held.
4. A Catholic and a non-baptized person “observant” in another established religious faith (a Buddhist, Hindu, Jew, Muslim, etc.) or an avowed Atheist are to marry in a Catholic Church or, with a dispensation from canonical form, in another sacred location, a place in which religious services normally are held, or, with permission from the Tribunal, requested by the priest, deacon, or lay minister, in some other suitable place.
5. Remember: a Catholic clergy can celebrate marriages only in a Catholic Church building, never in another church or some other facility.

Should there be any questions concerning the above, please contact the Tribunal (214) 379-2840; mgillett@cathdal.org.