

## WEDDINGS IN ST MICHAEL'S PARISH- FAQ s

Question 1: How do I book a wedding in St Michael's Enniskillen or St Mary's Lisbellaw?

Phone the Parish Office (Mon-Fri 10.30am -2.30pm) to check if the date you want is available.

Telephone (028) 66322075 (except Bank Holidays & Church Holidays)

If the date that you want is available, that date will be kept for you for 30 days.

Within that time, download & complete the 'Wedding Booking Form' (*click here*).

Return the Wedding Booking Form (signed by both parties) within the 30 days to the Parish Office in an envelope marked 'Wedding Booking'.

Printed copies of the Wedding Booking Form are also available from St Michael's Parish Office for you (or someone else for you) to pick up in person.

When your form is received, you will be contacted by a parish representative.

If the booking form, duly signed by both parties, is not received after thirty (30) days, please note that the church will no longer be specially reserved for you.

The church-law minimum notice for a wedding is three months. In practice, people usually give much more notice.

Please note that St Michael's Crypt Church has capacity for about forty guests and is available for small weddings.

The capacity of St Mary's Church, Lisbellaw, is approximately 200 guests.

If one of you is not a currently-resident parishioner (or the daughter/son of a currently-resident parishioner) of St Michael's Parish, please note question 17 below.

If you intend to marry in St Michael's Church or St Mary's Church, please check all the questions from question 6 onwards below.

Please pay special attention to Question 10.

Question 2: What time can we have our wedding?

In St Michael's Church, Enniskillen, the standard times for weddings at St Michael's Church are 12.30pm or 2.30pm. These times are fixed for two reasons: to allow for an 11am funeral and to allow for a second wedding on any day. Couples who book a wedding for St Michael's Church must be clear about these times when making their booking. The time for a wedding can only be changed within two months of the actual wedding day and then under the following strict conditions: that the couple must confirm with the parish wedding administrator by email to [weddings@st-michaels.net](mailto:weddings@st-michaels.net) that there is no other wedding in St Michael's Church on that chosen date.

Please be aware that Parish Baptisms take place on the last Saturday of each month at 4pm. (For this reason, it is essential that the 2.30pm wedding on that Saturday begins on time.)

In St Mary's Church, the time for a wedding is by arrangement with the Parish Office.

Question 3: I am currently a resident parishioner of St Michael's Parish and I'm getting married *somewhere other than St Michael's or St Mary's*: what do I need to do?

Six months before your wedding, you need to get your church marriage paperwork from the parish.

Download the 'Request for Marriage Papers' Form ([click here](#)) and complete it. Return it to the Parish Office in an envelope marked 'Marriage Papers Request'. When your request is received, you will be contacted by a parish representative. You also need to check questions 10, 11, 12 and 13 below.

Question 4: I used to be a member of Enniskillen Parish and I have to get some certificates for my marriage paperwork: how do I go about this?

Download the 'Request for Marriage Papers' Form ([click here](#)) and complete it. Return it to the Parish Office in an envelope marked 'Marriage Papers Request'. You will be contacted by a parish representative

Question 5: We have no connection with Enniskillen Parish: could we avail of one of the parish churches for our wedding?

Please see Question 19 on the FAQ in relation to having a priest for the day. This is a significant issue for our parish. We already have a high number of weddings from within our parish in relation to the number of clergy in our parish. So we strongly encourage you to bring your own priest.

In relation to Church Paperwork, please see Question 13 if you already live on the island of Ireland. If you live abroad, then please see Question 14 also. It is essential and it is your responsibility to ensure that your marriage paperwork is compiled by the priest of the place where you are currently a parishioner.

In relation to Civil Paperwork, please see Question 11. We strongly advise you to phone the local office of the Registrar for Marriages to ascertain what is required from you for your weddings.

In relation to making an actual booking with the parish, please see Question 1. Both parties must sign the form that can be downloaded there before sending the form to the parish office here. The postal address is given at the end of the form.

In relation to the time of your wedding: please see Question 2.

In relation to the essential Pre-Marriage Course, please see Question 12 if you live locally. If you live outside of the island of Ireland, you should enquire about this from your local priest.

Question 6: Can we get married without there being a Mass?

Yes. Talk to the priest and you might be advised also to talk to some friends and family before you make this decision. The decision you come to may depend on various factors: such as your marriage being an inter-faith marriage (and the likelihood or otherwise of the Mass being seen as emphasising division rather than unity), or such as one of the partners to your marriage having chosen to cease Church practice, or such as the majority of your guests being unlikely to be persons of faith.

Question 7: I am a Catholic and my partner is from another faith tradition. Will her/his Minister be welcome to join in our marriage service?

Yes. Ministers from other Christian traditions are welcome to participate in a Wedding Service and to read some of the prayers for the Service. Talk to the priest about this.

Question 8: Can you help me with putting together the content for our Wedding MASS Booklet in Enniskillen?

Download the 'Instructions in regard to your Wedding Mass Booklet' ([click here](#)). Then download the 'Wedding Mass Booklet' both as a Word document ([click here](#)) and also as a PDF ([click here](#)). Edit the Word document in line with the instructions and use the PDF to judge the formatting.

You are advised to make the selection of prayers for your booklet over a period of time because doing so will help you reflect on the prayers for your wedding and help you to prepare well for the day. Be sure to show your draft of the Wedding Mass Booklet to your priest before getting it printed.

Question 9: Can you help me with putting together the content for our Wedding SERVICE Booklet in Enniskillen? (We are not having a Mass at our wedding.)

Download the 'Instructions in regard to your Wedding Service Booklet' ([click here](#)). Then download the 'Wedding Service Booklet' both as a Word document ([click here](#)) and also as a PDF ([click here](#)). Edit the Word document in line with the instructions and use the PDF to judge the formatting.

You are advised to make the selection of prayers for your booklet over a period of time because doing so will help you reflect on the prayers for your wedding and help you to prepare well for the day. Be sure to show your draft of the Wedding Service Booklet to your priest before getting it printed.

Question 10: What paperwork do we need to do in order to get married?

You need to do two types of paperwork: both civil paperwork (with the Civil Registrar for Marriages) and also church paperwork (with your parish priest). If one of you is from a parish other than St Michael's Parish, you must contact your Parish Priest around the time of booking your marriage to ensure that he is willing to do your marriage paperwork for you. This is essential. (Please see Question 13 below for further essential information.)

Question 11: What civil paperwork do we need so as to get married in Enniskillen parish (or elsewhere in Northern Ireland)?

In Northern Ireland, notice for all marriages must be given to the Civil Registrar in the twelve-month period prior to the date of the marriage. The notices must be submitted early enough to enable the Registrar to be satisfied that both parties are free to marry one another. You need to contact the Registrar's Office at the Townhall, Enniskillen. Tel (028) 6632 5050 (ask for the registrar's office). The staff there will talk to you about what you need to do. The Registrar will give you a blue-&-white form for you to complete and for the priest to sign. The Marriage Schedule (which is signed after the actual Church wedding) is collected from the Registrar two weeks before the wedding. This Schedule is to

be brought with you to the wedding practice or given to the Sacristan in the days before the wedding. This form must be returned within three working days of the wedding having taken place. For those reading this who intend to get married in the Republic of Ireland, they should know that there are also special civil law regulations that apply there.

Question 12: Do we need to do a Pre-Marriage Course? (If you are currently resident abroad, please skip to Question 14.)

Yes. This is required. Do it as soon as you decide you're getting married. Enniskillen Parish recommends that you book a pre-marriage course with Accord (the Catholic marriage advisory service). *Click here* for the Accord website. Alternatively, the local Accord telephone number is (028) 66325696.

Question 13: What church paperwork do we need to get married? (If you are currently resident *abroad*, please skip to the next question.)

Brides and Grooms who are Catholic need to get the following:

- (a) Certificate of your Baptism (dated to within six months of the wedding) - Contact the parish where you were baptised. If you were baptised in St Michael's Parish, this will be supplied automatically.
- (b) Confirmation Certificate - Contact the parish where you were confirmed. If you were confirmed in St Michael's Parish, this will be supplied automatically. .
- (c) Letter of Freedom to Marry - from each place to which you moved permanently & completely and in which you lived for more than 6 months [being a student or temporary work don't count]. If you have lived in St Michael's Parish, a Letter of Freedom to cover that time (only) will be supplied automatically.
- (d) Certificate of Attendance at a Pre-Marriage Course.
- (e) The Pre-Nuptial Enquiry - Six months before the wedding, you must contact your local priest who will do this with you.

This paperwork is assembled and completed together with your local priest. If you are currently a parishioner in St Michael's Parish, you will be contacted about this.

If you are from a different parish, all this paperwork must be assembled and completed with your local priest. This is essential. It is your responsibility to contact your parish priest in good time. If you fail to do this, you could be faced with the need to postpone your wedding.

When either bride or groom is from another religious tradition, she or he needs to get the following:

- (e) Evidence of having been baptised. This may be a certificate or written statement from the Minister in the place where the baptism took place. Alternative, the non-Catholic party can ask one or both parents to sign a written statement as evidence of baptism. You are welcome to download and use the form provided by the parish (*click here*).
- (f) Evidence of being free to marry. The non-Catholic party can ask one or both parents to sign a written statement of freedom to marry. You might like to download and use the form provided by the parish (*click here*)

Printed copies of each of these forms referred to in (e) and (f) above are available on request from St Michael's Parish Office.

Question 14: We are resident abroad (in England or in the US): what marriage paperwork do we need to do for our wedding to take place in St Michael's Parish?

Some seven or eight months before your wedding, you must make contact with your local priest or parish office in order to make an appointment to do your marriage paperwork.

Basically, your paperwork will be quite similar to the answer given in Question 11 above.

When this paperwork is complete, your priest must forward it to the Diocesan Office of the place where you reside. It will be transmitted from there to our own Diocesan Office. The address is: Diocesan Office, Tigh an Easpaig, Monaghan, Ireland.

Question 15: I am a currently-resident parishioner from St Michael's Parish and I would like to marry abroad? What do I need to do to have a Church Wedding?

First of all, you need to check whether what is being offered to you abroad by way of a service is actually Catholic.

If this is the case and it is a Catholic service, complete the form as in Question 1 above and return it to the Parish Office. A parish representative will contact you to progress the matter further.

In this case, it is recommended that you contact St Michael's Parish at least nine months before your intended wedding date.

Secondly, you need to check with the Registrar's Office at the Town Hall whether what is being offered to you is legally recognised in Northern Ireland. See Question 11 for contact details.

If you discover that what is offered to you by way of a service abroad is not a Catholic service and/or is not legally recognised in Northern Ireland, you might still wish to consider having a Church wedding before you travel away. In this case, please refer to the information provided in answer to Question 1 above.

Question 16: What advice do you give to Brides and Grooms about their time to arrive at Church?

Grooms are advised to be at the church 45 minutes before the wedding. This enables them to greet their guests as they arrive.

Brides are advised to be at the church 15 minutes before the wedding to enable photographs to be taken and to enable the wedding to begin on time.

Question 17: If there are two weddings on the same day in St Michael's, can we share the flowers?

This is a matter to be discussed by the two wedding parties.

Question 18: We are getting married near to Christmas or Easter: what should we do about flowers?

St Michael's Church is always decorated with flowers at Christmas and Easter. We ask wedding parties to strongly consider using the flowers that will be already in the church at such times.

Bridal parties whose marriages are in the days around Christmas or Easter are asked to contact the parish office to discuss this matter.

Question 19: What priest will do our wedding?

Resident parishioners and the children of resident parishioners of St Michael's Parish may request any of the local priests to officiate at their wedding, subject to being available.

All others who wish to marry in St Michael's Parish are required to bring their own priest, who must provide evidence that he is a priest in good standing with his diocesan bishop or religious congregation.

Question 20: What should we do about a wedding practice?

Contact the priest who is officiating at your wedding to arrange a practice. It is advisable to avoid having it on the day before the wedding. If you are marrying in St Michael's Church, it is best to arrange the practice for 5pm to avoid clashing with other events (such as choir practices or funeral removals).

Question 21: Who should be at the wedding practice?

It is essential that the Bride and Groom are both present at the practice. Other members of the bridal party and the person who walks the bride into the church are also welcome.

Question 22: What roles do I need to ask others to take at our wedding celebration in the church?

You will need to ask

- (a) readers for the Scripture Readings: be sure to ask people who can read God's Word well.
- (b) a Eucharistic Minister, if there are more than fifty guests.
- (c) readers for the Prayer of the Faithful: these can read one or more prayers depending on how many different readers you wish to include
- (d) two people to bring forward the Bread and Wine at the Offertory of the Mass: this might be the mother of the bride and the mother of the groom
- (e) two ushers to distribute booklets if they are used: ushers should stand up the aisle of the church so as to encourage guests to move nearer the front

Question 23: Is there anything in particular that we should say to the person who arranges the flowers in the church for our wedding?

Please avoid placing any flower arrangement on the altar itself. The only exception to this is if you wish to set your individual candles and your wedding candle in a very small arrangement. Flowers must never block the congregation's view of the altar.

Question 24: We have a favourite song that we would like to use at our wedding. Can we use it at the Church?

So as to highlight the religious dimension of the wedding, church regulations recommend the use of proper church music. Music that is written to be sung in church is the most appropriate kind of music for the church. (Music that is written to be sung elsewhere is best sung elsewhere.) There is a lot of wonderful and worthy church music written for weddings that will be known to your singer(s) and/or musicians. If you have a favourite song that is not a piece of church music, why not considering having it at your reception, e.g., to be played as you walk in at the reception in the hotel, or alternatively for the first dance.

Question 25: What is the custom about using coins at a wedding?

A groom may give his bride a silver and/or gold coin after the exchange of rings at the wedding liturgy. This is optional. Alternatively, a bride and groom may exchange small symbolic gifts at that point of the liturgy.

Question 26: Who is the proper person to walk the bride into the church?

While it has become customary for the bride to be walked into the church by her father or another member of the family, the actual Rite of Marriage as set forth in the official book envisages that Bride and Groom enter the church together.

Question 27: Our musicians have never played in St Michael's Church before: is there anything we should say to them?

Musicians who are new to St Michael's Church should check well in advance with the church manager (sacristan) about the sound system arrangements. He is in the church after practically every Mass.

Question 28: What directions should we give to our guests on getting to St Michael's Church, Enniskillen, or St Mary's Church, Lisbellaw?

Click *here* for directions to St Michael's Church, Enniskillen

Click *here* for directions to St Mary's Church, Lisbellaw

Question 29: Where can we get the traditional Papal Blessing Parchment for our Wedding?

This is a lovely Wedding Gift. For more information contact St Michael's Parish Bookshop telephone (028) 66324771 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 10.30am – 5.00pm and Saturday 10.30am – 1.00pm.