

Necessary Paperwork for Marriage in the Diocese of Raleigh

The following documents are needed to complete your marriage file. The Chancery for the Diocese of Raleigh requests that marriage files be submitted by St. Mary Magdalene Church (StMM) at least eight (8) weeks prior to the scheduled wedding; therefore, we must receive all of your paperwork at least 8 weeks prior to your ceremony.

If you are preparing for marriage in the Diocese of Raleigh, but are getting married at a Catholic church in a different Diocese, your completed paperwork must be submitted 10 weeks in advance of your wedding. After your marriage paperwork is reviewed and approved the Chancery for the Diocese of Raleigh, the Chancery will forward your paperwork to the Diocese where you are to be married for that Diocese's review and approval. Once it is approved by the Diocese where you are to be married, your file will be sent to the church where your ceremony is planned.

- 1) **Form A (Prenuptial Investigation):** This form must be completed by a StMM priest or deacon at a meeting where both the bride and groom are present. Sarah Sansone will help you schedule your PNI with a StMM priest or Deacon.
- 2) **Form B's:** Two (2) Form B's (Declaration of Freedom to Marry) are to be completed by separate witnesses on behalf of each engaged person (two Form B's for the bride, and two Form B's for the groom.) The preferred witnesses for Form B's are the bride and groom's parents. (In that situation, the groom's father would complete a Form B for the groom; the groom's mother would complete a Form B for the groom; the bride's father would complete a Form B for the bride; and the bride's mother would complete a Form B for the bride.)

Following is a Form B which can be printed by your witnesses:

[Form B \(Declaration of Freedom to Marry\)](#)

Below are the Diocese of Raleigh's instructions for completing the Form B:

- **There should be a two witness for the bride and two witnesses for the groom.**
- **Parental testimony is preferred.**
- **The next option would be from a close family member.**
- **An additional option would be from a close friend who has known the person since the age of 18.**
- **Future in-laws are discouraged from being the witnesses regarding freedom to Marry.**
- **Bride and Groom cannot witness for one another regarding freedom to Marry.**
- **Form B must be dated, signed, and sealed by either a public notary or Catholic clergy.**

StMM must receive the Form B's with the original witnesses' signatures; electronic or photocopies cannot be accepted. The original Form B's can be mailed to us (St. Mary Magdalene, Attn: Sarah Sansone, 625 Magdala Place, Apex, NC 27502) or dropped off at the parish office.

- 3) **Certificates of Baptism for baptized Catholics:** For both the bride and groom, the Chancery requests a newly issued Baptismal Certificate dated within 6 months of the wedding date. (Baptismal Certificates issued at the time of baptism are not accepted because they do not include notations of the reception of the sacraments of First Communion, Confirmation, or prior Catholic marriages, if applicable.) The bride and groom should contact the Catholic churches where they were baptized to request updated Baptismal Certificates. The newly issued Baptismal Certificates can be mailed either directly to the bride and groom or to StMM (St. Mary Magdalene, Attn: Sarah Sansone, 625 Magdala Place, Apex, NC 27502). If the original certificates are mailed to the bride or groom, the original newly issued Baptismal Certificates must be received by StMM; electronic or photocopies cannot be accepted. The certificate can be mailed to me (Sarah Sansone) or dropped off at the parish office.
- **If either the bride or groom was baptized in a non-Catholic faith,** we will need proof of his or her baptism. We can accept either a copy of the baptismal certificate given to the bride or groom's parents at the time of baptism, or a letter from the church of baptism confirming the date of baptism. If a copy of the baptismal certificate or a letter cannot be obtained from the church of baptism, please let me (Sarah Sansone) know.
 - **If either the bride or groom was baptized in a non-Catholic faith, but was later received into the Catholic Church by making a Profession of Faith (usually done through a RCIA/OCIA program),** we will need a certificate of Profession of Faith from the church where the Profession of Faith was made. This certificate should be dated within 6 months of the wedding date. The original, newly issued Certificate of Profession of Faith must be received by StMM; electronic or photocopies cannot be accepted. In this case, we do not need proof of baptism from the non-Catholic church where you were baptized.
 - **If either the bride or groom is unbaptized,** this will be noted accordingly by the priest/deacon on the paperwork completed at the time of the couple's PNI meeting.

Regarding previous marriages:

If either the bride or groom has previously been married (whether civilly, in a non-Catholic church, or in the Catholic Church), and the ex-spouse is still living, we must receive a Decree of Nullity for that marriage issued by the appropriate Catholic Tribunal. An electronic or photocopy of the Decree can be accepted. If the process for obtaining a Decree of Nullity has not been started, please let Sarah Sansone know immediately so that StMM can help you begin the process. A wedding date cannot be set for couple where either the bride or groom needs a Decree of Nullity and that Decree has not been finalized.

If the bride or groom's prior spouse is deceased, we will need a copy of the decedent's death certificate. An electronic or photocopy of the state issued certificate of death can be accepted.