

FOR ALL CATHOLICS WHO ARE SEEKING BAPTISM FOR THEIR CHILDREN OR CONTEMPLATING MARRIAGE.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

On the day of their child's baptism parents promise to bring up their children in the faith. When parents approach the priest for the baptism of their children it is important that they are practising members of the Church. This also applies to the Godparents. How can one bring up a child in the faith if they, as parents, have given up its practice or, to say the least, are half-hearted about it? Secondly, living with a partner or living in an invalid union also inhibits bringing up children in the faith. It is important that parents are married in the Catholic Church when they ask for their child to be baptised. Living together as partners contradicts in a big way the teaching of the church. You can hardly bring up your children in the faith if your way of life (living as partners) seriously contravenes it. Also if you are merely living together or living in an invalid union (i.e. not married in the Catholic Church), you are not allowed go to Holy Communion until you get married in the Catholic Church. A lot of people don't seem to know this. However, no matter what your circumstances, the church is only here to help. She is like a loving mother who always wants the best for her children.

THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE

If you intent marrying in the catholic church it is important that you are practising your Catholic Faith. Otherwise the wedding will lack any depth. I often say: "some people marry at the church while others marry in the church". There is a world of difference between the two. If you marry 'in the church' you are already part of the worshipping community which meets every Sunday. Your marriage is an extension of your Eucharistic faith and commitment. For those contemplating marriage who are not going to Mass or confession, the Church is not that much different from a glorified registry Office. Also for those who live together it is important that they go to private confession before they get married since living as partners seriously contravenes God's law. Also, if a catholic marries in the registry Office or in a non-catholic church without the permission of the bishop, they too are not allowed to receive Holy Communion until their marriage has been 'put right' by the church. Breaking these laws causes scandal. It can also weaken the faith of your fellow Catholics. People getting married should also be confirmed. But, like I said, the church, like a mother is concerned about all the pastoral situations in which her children find themselves.