

August 1, 2021

POLICY LETTER

THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY AND ISSUANCE OF A VALID, WEDDING MARRIAGE LICENSE

In accordance with the Canon Law of the Catholic Church and the laws of the State of Colorado, the Sacrament of Matrimony cannot be witnessed by a Catholic clergy member and/or occur within the Church in the United States without a validly issued state marriage license. A marriage license may be issued by any county and used in any county within the State of Colorado. However, the license must be used within 30 days from the date of issue. The license is generally issued the day it is applied for and may be used immediately. You do not have to be a Colorado resident to apply for a marriage license.

Note: A validly issued marriage license means it must include, as a minimum: the identity of the issuing official (normally the County Clerk & Recorder); issuing county name; correct and legible names of the bride and groom; date of license issuance; and the appropriate seal (embossed/raised or printed stamp) affixed to the instrument. It is the sole responsibility of the couple to be married to ensure that the license is validly issued. In short, absent a validly issued marriage license, a marriage by a Catholic clergy member and/or within the Church cannot occur.

Please check with the Office of the Clerk and Recorder of the county where the license is to be issued for identification and documentation requirements; fees; etc.

The practice of the St. Michael Catholic Church is to bring and present the validly issued marriage license to the celebrant (priest or deacon) during the wedding practice (usually the night before). If however, the marriage is to be celebrated on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, it is to be presented to the celebrant at least three days before the scheduled wedding date/time – in the event there is a license processing error or omission, which invalidates the instrument or causes it to otherwise not be a valid/lawful instrument. This will afford the couple time to obtain another license.

Again, it is important to remember: absent a validly issued marriage license, a marriage witnessed by a Catholic clergy member and/or within the Church cannot and will not occur.

Thank you in advance for your understanding, cooperation, and assistance in this important matter.

May God bless you abundantly as you prepare to begin your journey, as husband and wife, in the bond of Holy Matrimony.

Respectfully
Yours in Christ,

Fr. Robert G. Newbury Jr.
Parochial Administrator