

*St. Michael Catholic Church*

*Marriage Preparation Outside the Diocese of Colorado Springs and  
Celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony within the Diocese of Colorado Springs*

The Roman Catholic Church requires sacramental preparation for the celebration and reception of the Sacrament of Matrimony. While the laws of the Church establish general subject matter to be included in this sacrament preparation process, it leaves the final composition and implementation of the sacramental preparation program for marriage to the discretion of the individual diocese bishops.

In this regard, in that some elements of the marriage preparation process may vary slightly from diocese-to-diocese, a couple who is preparing for the Sacrament of Matrimony must satisfactorily complete all of the sacramental preparation program requirements of the diocese in which they currently reside; exceptions are granted only by their respective diocesan bishop.

When the couple's actual desired location for the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony is outside of their parish boundaries and diocese of the sacrament preparation process (governed by where they reside), then there is a legal process within the Church that must be followed.

After the entire marriage preparation process is completed within their respective diocese, their pastor must forward their entire marriage file (containing marriage preparation/interview forms, proofs of various preparation class completions (e.g., Natural Family Planning; Marriage Preparation; etc.); baptismal certificates; etc.) to the Chancellor or Bishop of their diocese for review and certification of readiness (also known, Latin, as a Visum).

Once the Visum is placed on the file, it must then be forwarded from the couple's diocesan Chancellor or Bishop directly to the Chancellor or Bishop of the diocese where the couple desires to be married. Once it arrives, the file is reviewed by the receiving Chancellor or Bishop, endorsed by them, and the file is then forwarded to the pastor of the respective parish where the couple intend to be wed.

As you may have gathered by the above details, this process of obtaining a Visum (required by the canon laws of the Roman Catholic Church) does take time and may be complicated, if/when a Chancellor or Bishop is out of the office/area on official business outside of the diocese or state.

Therefore, all couples who intend to be married at the St. Michael Catholic Church are asked to please ensure that their marriage preparation is completed far enough in advance of their desired wedding date, so that their marriage file may be forwarded to their diocese for a Visum, a minimum of one month before their intended wedding date.

The bottom line is: If the couple's marriage file, with required Visum, is not received by the pastor of the St. Michael Catholic Church before the day of the wedding, unfortunately no celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony can occur.

(July 7, 2015)