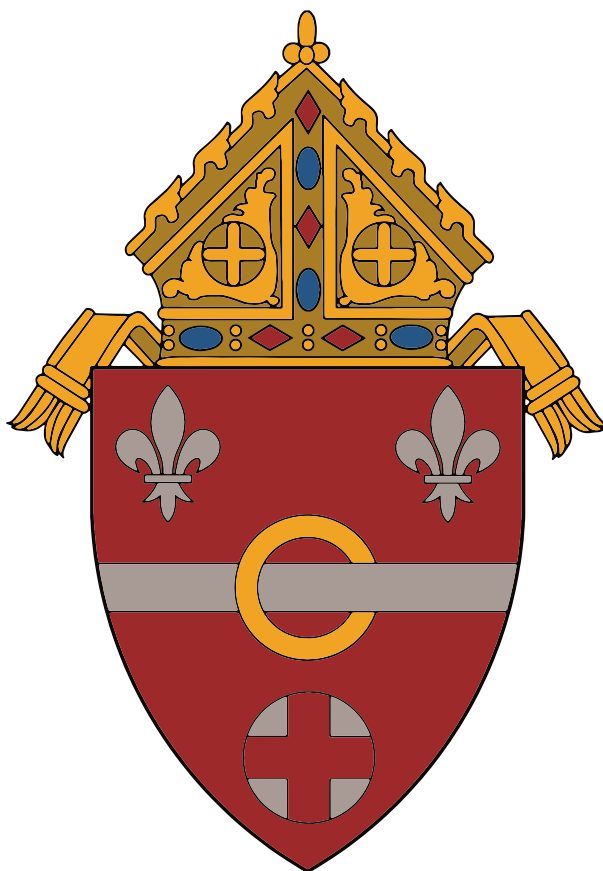


DIOCESE OF ALLENTOWN



PRENUPTIAL INQUIRY

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CLERGY

The Prenuptial Inquiry is one of the pastoral tools available to the clergy to help couples grow in holiness and prepare for the duties of their new state in life (cf. Canon 1063, n.2). The use of this Prenuptial Inquiry fulfills the requirements of Canons 1066 and 1067. This instrument should be used in conjunction with the policies found in *The Priest's Handbook for Pastoral Marriage Preparation* and the *Complimentary Legislation* promulgated for the Latin Rite Dioceses of the United States of America on 1 December 2000.

To assist the clergy in fruitfully using this Prenuptial Inquiry, the following observations are made to clarify certain aspects of the document:

1. Baptismal Certificates are to be dated within six months of their presentation and must possess the parish seal. It is most important that any Baptismal Register notations be listed on the reverse side of the Certificate. If there are no notations in the Register, the priest is to write "no notations" on the back with his initials.
2. Any person previously married must present an ecclesiastical Decree of Nullity or a Death Certificate.
3. Any required dispensations/permissions should be obtained in due time from the proper Chancery.
4. In the Case of a previous marriage dissolved by death, the priest/deacon should prudently investigate the circumstances of the spouse's death with due regard for Canon 1090.
5. The term, *practicing Catholic*, is to be understood as a member of the faithful who lives in accord with the Precepts of the Church (cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* §2042.)
6. The term, *notoriously rejected the Catholic faith*, is to be applied to anyone who professes that he or she is no longer a Catholic, refuses obedience to the Church and its laws, and is openly hostile to it. This term is not to be applied to those who passively do not practice their faith nor to those who have abandoned their faith without positively rejecting it. In the latter case, for pastoral reasons, the priest/deacon should nonetheless examine the person's suitability to marry for pastoral reasons.
7. The term, *Common Law Marriage*, is used to define a stable union between a man and a woman. It occurs when a man and a woman are publicly known as husband and wife and/or share legal rights and responsibilities under civil law. Civil law criteria varies from state to state. This union may give rise to the impediment of public propriety (cf. Canon 1093). By statute in Pennsylvania, no Common Law Marriage contracted after 1 January 2005 will be deemed valid under civil law. However, any Common Law Marriage entered into prior to that date will continue to be recognized as valid under Pennsylvania law.

(Clergy Instructions revised 15 October 2007)

DIOCESE OF ALLENTOWN

PRENUPTIAL INQUIRY

PARISH _____

*The parties are to be questioned separately and privately
and their answers are to be recorded by a priest or deacon.*

GROOM

1. (Touching the Holy Bible) Do you solemnly swear before Almighty God to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth in answering all the following questions? _____
2. Name _____
3. Address _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)
4. Telephone *(Home)* _____ *(Work)* _____
5. Date of Birth _____ Place _____
6. What is your religion? _____ If Catholic, what Rite? _____
7. Were you baptized? _____ Date, Church and City: _____
(Attach Baptismal Certificate)
8. Father: Name _____ Religion _____ If Catholic, Rite: _____
9. Mother: Maiden Name _____ Religion _____ If Catholic, Rite: _____
10. Occupation: _____
11. Highest education level completed: _____

For those baptized CATHOLICS: (omit for others)

12. Have you received the Sacrament of Confirmation? _____
13. Have you received First Holy Communion? _____
14. Name of your parish _____ City _____
(Military personnel should give name of parish at time of entrance into service.)
How long have you been a member of this parish? _____
15. Are you at present a PRACTICING Catholic? _____
If you are no longer practicing the Catholic Faith, have you FORMALLY joined any other church/sect/religion? _____
If so, what church/sect/religion? _____ When? _____

Was this done in a formal way? _____

Were you ever reconciled with the Catholic Church after formally leaving it? _____

If so, when _____

(The permission of the Ordinary is required to assist at the marriage of a person who has notoriously rejected the Catholic faith.)

16. Have you ever made religious profession, a vow or a promise which would preclude your marriage? _____

(If so, priest should contact the Chancery for further direction.)

Have you ever been ordained? _____

(If so, priest should contact the Chancery for further direction.)

17. Have you ever been married or attempted marriage, even a Common Law Marriage? _____

If so, how many times? _____

Spouse 1. _____ Religion _____ Date of Marriage _____

Place _____ Before priest, minister or civil official _____

Dissolved by death *(Attach certificate)* _____ Ecclesiastical decree *(Attach original decree)* _____

(The priest should determine if the decree contains any canonical prohibition or recommendation with regard to future marriage.)

Spouse 2. _____ Religion _____ Date of Marriage _____

Place _____ Before priest, minister or civil official _____

Dissolved by death *(Attach certificate)* _____ Ecclesiastical decree *(Attach original decree)* _____

(The priest should determine if the decree contains any canonical prohibition or recommendation with regard to future marriage.)

18. Do you have any children? _____ *(If "no," proceed to #20)*

19. Are you faithful in all your obligations toward the children? _____

20. Are you related to your intended bride by blood, marriage or legal adoption? _____

(If the impediment of consanguinity, affinity or public propriety is revealed, a genealogical diagram must be attached.)

21. How long have you both been seriously contemplating marriage? _____

22. Are you entering this marriage freely? _____ *(If not, attach explanatory statement.)*

Are you being forced or influenced to marry by any person or circumstances? _____

(If so, attach explanatory statement.)

23. Have you ever been treated in a hospital or by a doctor for a mental or nervous illness? _____

(If so, attach a doctor's statement concerning the illness and current prognosis.)

24. Do you have a habit or history of drug, alcohol, or pornography use? _____

25. Are you or someone who knows you concerned about your usage of drugs, alcohol, or pornography? _____

26. Are you aware of any physical defect that would prevent you from having sexual intercourse which is open to conception? _____ *(If a case of doubtful impotence is present contact the Chancery.)*

27. Do you understand and intend to fulfill all the obligations which marriage entails? _____

(If it appears that the parties intend to practice birth control, special stress must be placed on the following two questions.)

28. Do both of you have the intention of granting each other the unrestricted right to sexual intercourse in a manner that is open to conception? _____

29. Is it your intention to have children by this marriage? _____

Is it the intention of your intended bride to have children by this marriage? _____

30. Do both of you intend to enter a permanent marriage that can only be dissolved by death? _____

Do you intend to be faithful to your wife always? _____

31. Are you or your intended spouse attaching any condition or reservation to your marital consent? _____

32. Have you made or do you intend to make a pre-nuptial agreement? _____

(If "yes," ask:) *For what reason?* _____

(If so, priest should contact the Chancery for further direction)

33. (If groom is under 21, ask:) **Are your parents/guardians in favor of this marriage?** _____

(If under 21, written parental permission is necessary)

Is anyone opposed to your marriage? _____

(Priest should speak with parents before they give their statement.)

34. Do you know of any other information which might cause your intended spouse to reconsider this marriage?
_____ (If "yes", the Chancery must be contacted before proceeding with this marriage.)

35. Do you know of any other information which might cause the Church to decline witnessing this marriage?
_____ (If "yes", the Chancery must be contacted before proceeding with this marriage.)

36. Where will you reside after marriage? _____
(Instruct the couple to register in the proper parish.)

Signature of Groom

I, the undersigned priest/deacon, hereby attest that the person who signed the foregoing statements under oath, was interviewed by me personally; that I proposed all the questions to him privately and wrote in his answers; that I am satisfied as to his identity and have no reasons to doubt his truthfulness and sincerity; that he has been instructed according to the prescripts of Canon Law and the regulations of this Diocese.

Signature of Priest/Deacon

Parish Seal

Church

Date

Place

BRIDE

1. (Touching the Holy Bible) Do you solemnly swear before Almighty God to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth in answering all the following questions? _____
2. Name _____
3. Address _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)
4. Telephone (Home) _____ (Work) _____
5. Date of Birth _____ Place _____
6. What is your religion? _____ If Catholic, what Rite? _____
7. Were you baptized? _____ Date, Church and City: _____
(Attach Baptismal Certificate)
8. Father: Name _____ Religion _____ If Catholic, Rite: _____
9. Mother: Maiden Name _____ Religion _____ If Catholic, Rite: _____
10. Occupation: _____
11. Highest education level completed: _____

For those baptized CATHOLICS: (omit for others)

12. Have you received the Sacrament of Confirmation? _____
13. Have you received First Holy Communion? _____
14. Name of your parish _____ City _____
(Military personnel should give name of parish at time of entrance into service.)
How long have you been a member of this parish? _____
15. Are you at present a PRACTICING Catholic? _____
If you are no longer practicing the Catholic Faith, have you FORMALLY joined any other church/sect/religion? _____
If so, what church/sect/religion? _____ When? _____
Was this done in a formal way? _____
Were you ever reconciled with the Catholic Church after formally leaving it? _____
If so, when _____
(The permission of the Ordinary is required to assist at the marriage of a person who has notoriously rejected the Catholic faith.)
16. Have you ever made religious profession, a vow or a promise which would preclude your marriage?

(If so, priest should contact the Chancery for further direction.)

17. Have you ever been married or attempted marriage, even a Common Law Marriage? _____

_____ If so, how many times? _____

Spouse 1. _____ Religion _____ Date of Marriage _____

Place _____ Before priest, minister or civil official _____

Dissolved by death (Attach certificate) _____ Ecclesiastical decree (Attach original decree) _____
(The priest should determine if the decree contains any canonical prohibition or recommendation with regard to future marriage.)

Spouse 2. _____ Religion _____ Date of Marriage _____

Place _____ Before priest, minister or civil official _____

Dissolved by death (Attach certificate) _____ Ecclesiastical decree (Attach original decree) _____
(The priest should determine if the decree contains any canonical prohibition or recommendation with regard to future marriage.)

18. Do you have any children? _____ (If "no," proceed to #20)

19. Are you faithful in all your obligations toward the children? _____

20. Are you related to your intended groom by blood, marriage, or legal adoption? _____
(If the impediment of consanguinity, affinity or public propriety is revealed, a genealogical diagram must be attached.)

21. How long have you both been seriously contemplating marriage? _____

22. Are you entering this marriage freely? _____ (If not, attach explanatory statement.)

Are you being forced or influenced to marry by any person or circumstances? _____
(If so, attach explanatory statement.)

23. Have you ever been treated in a hospital or by a doctor for a mental or nervous illness? _____
(If so, attach a doctor's statement concerning the illness and current prognosis.)

24. Do you have a habit or history of drug, alcohol, or pornography use? _____

25. Are you or someone who knows you concerned about your usage of drugs, alcohol, or pornography? _____

26. Are you aware of any physical defect that would prevent you from having sexual intercourse which is open to conception? _____ (If a case of doubtful impotence is present contact the Chancery.)

27. Do you understand and intend to fulfill all the obligations which marriage entails? _____
(If it appears that the parties intend to practice birth control, special stress must be placed on the following two questions.)

28. Do both of you have the intention of granting each other the unrestricted right to sexual intercourse in a manner that is open to conception? _____

29. Is it your intention to have children by this marriage? _____

Is it the intention of your intended groom to have children by this marriage? _____

30. Do both of you intend to enter a permanent marriage that can only be dissolved by death? _____

Do you intend to be faithful to your husband always? _____

31. Are you or your intended spouse attaching any condition or reservation to your marital consent? _____

32. Have you made or do you intend to make a pre-nuptial agreement? _____

(If "yes," ask:) For what reason? _____
(If so, priest should contact the Chancery for further direction)

33. (If bride is under 21, ask:) **Are your parents/guardians in favor of this marriage?** _____
(If under 21, written parental permission is necessary)

Is anyone opposed to your marriage? _____
(Priest should speak with parents before they give their statement.)

34. **Do you know of any other information which might cause your intended spouse to reconsider this marriage?**
_____ (If "yes", the Chancery must be contacted before proceeding with this marriage.)

35. **Do you know of any other information which might cause the Church to decline witnessing this marriage?**
_____ (If "yes", the Chancery must be contacted before proceeding with this marriage.)

36. **Where will you reside after marriage?** _____
(Instruct the couple to register in the proper parish.)

Signature of Bride

I, the undersigned priest/deacon, hereby attest that the person who signed the foregoing statements under oath, was interviewed by me personally; that I proposed all the questions to him privately and wrote in his answers; that I am satisfied as to his identity and have no reasons to doubt his truthfulness and sincerity; that he has been instructed according to the prescripts of Canon Law and the regulations of this Diocese.

Signature of Priest/Deacon

Parish Seal

Church

Date

Place

DATA FOR THE MARRIAGE REGISTER

Date of Marriage _____ **Place** _____

Civil License Number _____ **Dispensations granted** _____

Clergy/official witness _____ **Delegation or permission** _____

Date of Notice sent to parish of baptism _____ **Date of Receipt from pastor of baptism** _____

Witnesses for the marriage:

1. _____
(Name and address)

2. _____
(Name and address)

Note: In the celebration of marriage within the Catholic Church, non-Catholics may be admitted as witnesses.

This PRENUPTIAL INQUIRY must be kept permanently on file in the parish where the marriage takes place or, in the case of a dispensation from canonical form having been granted, in the parish of the Catholic party. On request, it is to be sent to the competent Ecclesiastical Court whenever the validity of the marriage is called into question.