

Getting Married in the Catholic Church – What you need?

As soon as a couple fix a date for their wedding.

You should establish that you are free to marry in church.

You should contact the parish in which you hope to marry and follow whatever procedures are necessary to book the church for your wedding. **You must contact the priest whom you would like to officiate at your wedding ceremony to ensure his availability.**

Book a place on a Marriage Preparation Course at an Accord Centre.

Six Months before the Wedding.

You are **both required** (unless you both live in the same parish) to give **at least three months' notice of your marriage to a priest of the parish in which you live** – not the parish in which you were born and grew up in, unless you are still living in that parish. **The priest of the parish in which the bride lives is the priest who ensures that the paperwork for the wedding ceremony is in order, irrespective of which parish the wedding papers have been completed in.**

A Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form must be completed for each of you by a priest of the parish in which you live. Ideally, the first part is completed before the Marriage Preparation Course and the second part afterwards.

A Baptism Certificate (longer form), issued **within six months** of the date of the wedding must be presented.

Proof of Confirmation, if not recorded on the Baptism Certificate, requires a separate Confirmation Certificate from the parish of confirmation.

Proof of Freedom to Marry. This can be established in a number of ways; letters of freedom; a letter from a parent(s) or lifelong acquaintance, stating their relationship to the party to the marriage, and that, to the best of their knowledge, this person is free to marry or an affidavit from a solicitor or Commissioner of Oaths. The priest completing your wedding papers will tell you what he requires.

Marriage Preparation Certificate from Accord. This states that an Accord Marriage Preparation Course has been successfully completed. **Only Accord Courses are recognized in this Diocese of Waterford and Lismore.**

Mixed Marriages. Permission from the bishop must be sought in the following situations: where one party to the marriage is non-Catholic; one party non-Christian; where a previous marriage of one or both parties has been annulled by the Church.

Parishes of St. Mary's, Dungarvan, An Rinn and Sean Phobal , Kilgobinet, Colligan and Kilbrien February 2026

Sunday 1st February: St. Brigid, Abbess, Secondary Patron of Ireland

Blessed are they who live the Beatitudes. They are blessed and know what makes true happiness. Blessed are they who are poor in spirit, leaving space and time for God in their lives, blessed are they who are gentle and kind, merciful and pure in heart. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for justice, who work for peace. And blessed are they who suffer for Christ.

Brigid lived the Beatitudes. Born around the year 454 at Faughart, she followed her calling to consecrate her life to God. Tutored by Mel in Ardagh, she fostered that calling in many others. With Conleth, she founded the double monastery of Kildare. The interior spiritual life was given countless expression in a life marked by welcome of the stranger and hospitality to all, in her care for the sick and the poor, and in her concern for animals, nature and the Earth.

Brigid died on 1 February 524 and is buried in Downpatrick, with the other two patrons of Ireland, Patrick and Columba (Colum Cille).

The first day of February is also the date of the Celtic festival of Imbolc, the beginning of a new season of hope and growth.

Brigid's reputation spread throughout Ireland and in many parts of Europe. The legend of her cloak expanding to meet the needs of her monastery, highlights the power of this fourth/fifth-century woman. The Brigid's Cross, woven from rushes, expressed her Christian faith and God's concern and protection given to us through the prayers and intercession of Brigid.

A Naomh Bríd a Mhuire na nGael, scar orainn do bhrat.

A Naomh Bríd, a chroí na féile, stiúir sinn ar an mbóthar ceart. A Naomh Bríd gheanúil ghrástúil, ar ár namhaid cosain sinn.

A Naomh Bríd, a bhean rialta álainn, ar uair ár mbáis glaoigh orainn.

Canon Donal O'Connor's 100th Birthday



Canon Donal O'Connor, retired Parish Priest of Ardmore and Grange, recently celebrated his 100th Birthday. Fr. Donal was born in the Parish of Modeligo and Affane on 11th January 1926. Educated locally and at the CBS North Mon, Cork City.

He entered St Patricks College, Maynooth in 1944, together with Fr. Bob Arthure and Fr. Greg Power as seminarians for the Diocese of Waterford and

Lismore. He obtained his primary degree in 1947 and went on that year to the Irish College, Rome to continue his studies for the priesthood. He was ordained to the priesthood on 24th March 1951 in the Church of the Apostles, Rome. He continued his post-graduate studies in Rome for 3 years until 1954.

On completing his studies, he returned to the diocese and served as a curate in St Patrick's Parish, Waterford City (now joined to the Cathedral Parish) from 1954 - 1957 when he was appointed to the staff of St. John's College, Waterford where he lectured in Sacred Scripture until his appointment to the staff of St. Patricks College, Maynooth as lecturer in Sacred Scripture until 1985 when he was appointed Parish Priest of Ardmore and Grange. On reaching 75, he stepped down as Parish Priest and moved to Dungarvan, where he served as assistant priest until 2012. Throughout his life, Canon Donal has contributed many fine articles to periodicals and academic journals, including the Decies Journal of the Waterford Archaeological and Historical Society.

He wrote a scholarly book on Job in 1995 as part of the Bicentenary Series of Maynooth 1795 - 1995. In retirement he continued to be active academically - researching and producing articles and booklets in art and diocesan history, particularly, Ardmore and Bishop Malchus, the first bishop of Waterford in 1096.

Canon Donal continues to enjoy the daily newspaper, and reading on a wide variety of topics.

On Sunday, 11th January 2026, Bishop Cullinan, priests of the diocese, family and friends, celebrated his birthday in Dungarvan Community Hospital. A short video of the celebrations was aired on RTE 1 Nuacht and TG4 that evening. Canon Donal gave a 10-minute interview in Irish to TG4 before the celebrations began.

It was a great day, which Canon Donal enjoyed very much. Good wishes continue to arrive. We rejoice with Canon Donal that God has blessed him in so many ways during his long life.

Tuesday, 17th February: Shrove Tuesday

The name Shrove Tuesday has nothing to do with pancakes. The word 'shrove' is from the word 'shrive' which means to have one's sins forgiven or shriven. Shrive comes from the same root as the word 'scrape' - we are, as it were, having our sins scraped away when we confess them and receive absolution from the priest. Shrove Tuesday is Pancake Day, the day before the beginning of the weeks of Lent. It is linked to the whole tradition of Carnival - of enjoying ourselves before a time of fasting and penance begins.

The word Carnival come from the Latin word *carni*, meaning meat, and *vale*, meaning goodbye. It's goodbye to meat for the whole of Lent. Or at least it used to be. Pancakes are made with eggs - which along with meat and dairy products were given up for Lent. Shrove Tuesday is followed by Ash Wednesday which is a day of fast and abstinence. A cheerful feast of Shrove Tuesday, and then the ashes of Ash Wednesday, sets the tone for Lent. It's 40 days long, commemorating Christ's time of fasting in the desert.

Wednesday, 18th February: Ash Wednesday.

The ashes which we receive on our foreheads on Wednesday, 18th February is our way of saying that life over the next six weeks is going to be different. The ashes on our foreheads are a sign for all to see that we are making a good beginning to Lent. The mark of the ashes which will soon fade, should point to the mark Lent will leave on our lives by whatever we decide to do for Lent. The ashes remind us too that life is short, and that we need to turn away from sin and turn towards Jesus and his good news. *Ash Wednesday is a day of fast and abstinence.* The whole of Lent should be marked by praying, fasting and giving.



Lent

The weeks of Lent are our annual journey towards Easter. The word Lent itself comes from an Old English word 'lencen' which means lengthening. We celebrate Lent in spring when the daylight increases and the days get longer. Lent is another word for spring. It is springtime in nature and the Church's springtime too.

Traditionally, Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. What we do in these three areas of our lives affect our relationship with God in prayer, ourselves in fasting and denying ourselves, and helping others in giving. So that, turning to God in prayer, denying ourselves and helping others are the traditional ways to keep Lent.

The real test of Lent may be what God will do for others through our efforts during the weeks of Lent. LIVE LENT WELL.