



St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish

A Guide to Marriage Convalidation

Welcome!

Thank you for being a part of St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish. We are honored to accompany you as you seek to have your marriage recognized and blessed by the Catholic Church. Our parish Wedding Coordinator will assist you throughout this process.

The Catholic Church takes marriage seriously—recognizing it as a sacred and lifelong covenant. The preparation and process for convalidation reflect the Church's commitment to helping couples enter into this bond with faith, clarity, and grace.

What is a Convalidation?

At times, Catholic individuals find themselves in a civil marriage or a marriage celebrated outside the Church—such as before a non-Catholic minister—without the Church's knowledge or required permission. Later, they may seek to have this union formally recognized by the Catholic Church.

The process by which a marriage becomes a valid, sacramental union in the Church is called convalidation. This involves the free and mutual consent of both spouses to enter into a Catholic marriage—a bond that is exclusive, permanent, and open to life, strengthened by God's grace.

As the Code of Canon Law (Canon 1134) reminds us:

“From a valid marriage arises a bond between the spouses which by its nature is perpetual and exclusive; furthermore, in a Christian marriage, the spouses are strengthened and, as it were, consecrated by a special sacrament.”

Steps in the Preparation Process

To begin preparing for your convalidation, please contact our Wedding Coordinator to schedule an initial appointment. During this meeting, you will:

- Submit all required documentation
- Complete the Diocesan Pre-Nuptial Investigation forms
- Pay the applicable church fees
- Schedule your convalidation date
- Arrange a meeting with the priest or deacon who will witness your vows

Marriage Preparation

- Couples married civilly less than six years will be required to complete formal marriage preparation, such as an approved diocesan marriage preparation program.
- For those married six years or more, the extent of preparation will be determined by the pastor.

Required Documents

Please bring the following documents to your first appointment:

- A certified copy of your civil marriage license
- Baptismal certificates for each baptized party (Catholic certificates must be issued within six months and include notations)
- First Communion and Confirmation certificates
- A death certificate, if either party is a widow or widower
- A Declaration of Nullity or a Decree of Freedom to Marry (Due to Lack of Form), if either party was previously married
- Two "Freedom to Marry" forms for any non-Catholic party (provided at the meeting)
- Names and addresses of the two official witnesses for the convalidation ceremony

Fees

The total convalidation fees include:

- \$350 – Basic Music Fee (if music is requested)
- \$200 – Wedding Coordinator Fee
- \$350 – Clergy Preparation Fee

Please note: All fees are non-refundable. In the event of cancellation, fees paid to St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish cannot be returned.

Location, Day, and Time

Convalidations are typically simple and reverent ceremonies with close family and friends in attendance. They are scheduled based on the availability of the church and the priest or deacon officiating. The ceremony will take place at one of our parish churches.

Parish Contact Information


St. John Paul II Scioto Catholic Parish

Office: 514 Market Street, Portsmouth, OH 45662

For questions or to begin the convalidation process, please contact:

Marissa McCormick

Wedding Coordinator

 740-354-4551

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