

**St Mary Help of Christians
Catholic Church
Old Coulsdon**



Marriage

“A covenant by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of their whole life, and which, of its own very nature, is ordered to the well-being of the spouses, and the procreation and upbringing of children. Between the Baptised, Marriage has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a Sacrament”. Catholics are required to be married in a Catholic Church – otherwise they are not married in the eyes of the Catholic Church. (In certain circumstances, a special dispensation might be obtained to marry in another Christian Church). This requirement of being married in the Catholic Church only applies to a Catholic, so, any marriage between 2 people who are not Catholics is regarded as a true and valid marriage, for life, wherever the marriage was contracted. A Catholic who intends to marry someone who is not Catholic, requires a permission or dispensation. 6 months notice of marriage is normally required, and couples are expected to attend a preparation day where they will be helped to understand the importance of their relationship – communication, listening, re-negotiation, forgiveness and conflict management. A full statement of the Diocesan Policy on Marriage can be found in the current Southwark Directory (A copy for reference hangs in the porch).