

Greek Orthodox Church of Zoodohos Peghe

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SACRAMENT of MARRIAGE ECCLESIASTICAL REQUIREMENTS



THE SACRAMENT

For the union of a man and a woman to be valid by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese, the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony must be authorized by the Metropolitan and celebrated according to the liturgical tradition of the Church by a priest of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. A marriage celebrated by a priest of another Orthodox jurisdiction in communion with a Greek Orthodox priest is also valid by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. A request by the other Orthodox jurisdiction priest must be made to the Dean of Saint Sophia Cathedral requesting permission to celebrate the sacrament.

Marriages can be celebrated between Orthodox Christians, and between Orthodox Christians and other Christians, who have been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity within a denomination accepted by the Greek Orthodox Church. Marriages cannot be celebrated between Orthodox Christians and non-Christians, between relatives by blood or marriage, and on certain dates. For a list of dates, please contact our office secretary.

In general, the Greek Orthodox Church only marries individuals who have been baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity and belong to a mainstream Christian Church. A marriage cannot be blessed and recognized by the Orthodox Church if it is between an orthodox Christian and someone not of the Christian faith.

Religious groups which are not of the Christian tradition, include: Adherence of Judaism and Islam; Buddhism, Hinduism and other far Eastern religions; Cults of new-Age movement; the Mormons(Latter Day Saints); Christian Scientists; Seventh-Day Adventists; Jehovah's Witnesses; Assembly of God; Pentecostal.

The Koumbaro/Koumbara (Sponsor), who is an active participant in the sacrament, must be an Orthodox Christian, and if married, must have been married in the Orthodox Church. Bridesmaids and ushers, who are not active participants in the sacrament, are not required to be Orthodox Christians.

PLANNING FOR THE SACRAMENTS

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING - SEMINARS - ECCLESIASTICAL MARRIAGE LICENSE

At least 90 days prior to the sacrament, the Bride and Groom must schedule a pre-marital counseling meeting with a priest to discuss personal details, plan pre-marital seminars and submit the required documents to apply for an Ecclesiastical Marriage License. This license is issued by the Metropolis Department of Registry authorizing the priest to perform the sacrament.

THE BRIDE AND GROOM MUST SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS, AS APPLICABLE:

- **Baptismal Orthodox Certificates**
- **Baptismal Confirmation Letter**, if she/he is from a non Orthodox Christian Church, confirming her/his baptism in the Holy Trinity and attesting to eligibility for marriage
- **Parishioner in Good Standing Letter**, if she/he is from another Greek Orthodox parish, attesting to eligibility for marriage
- **Certificate of Eligibility for Marriage** from the Metropolitan of the town or province, if she/he came from Greece or another country after her/his 18th birthday
- **Letter of Consent from parents**, if Bride is under 18 years of age and Groom is under 21
- **Civil Decree of Divorce**, if she/he was formerly married
- **Ecclesiastical Decree of Divorce**, if she/he was formerly married in the Orthodox Church
- **Death Certificate of Deceased Spouse**, if she/he is widowed

THE KOUMBARO/KOUMBARA (SPONSOR) MUST SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS, AS APPLICABLE:

- **Baptismal Orthodox Certificate**
- **Ecclesiastical Decree of Divorce**, if she/he was formerly married in the Orthodox Church

CIVIL MARRIAGE LICENSE

Less than 90 days prior to the sacrament, the Bride and Groom must submit an application for a Civil Marriage License to the Registrar Recorder clerk of the county in which either she or he resides. The license is to be submitted to the Sacrament Coordinator at the wedding rehearsal. As dictated by state law, the sacrament cannot be performed without a license.

Weddings are not allowed on the following days:

All major Feast days of The Lord: Dec. 24 and 25(Christmas); January 5th and 6th (Epiphany); February 1st and 2nd (The Presentation of Christ to the Temple) ; August 29th(The beheading of St. John the Baptist); and September 14th (The Exaltation of the Holy Cross).

On the movable Feasts of Easter, Ascension and Pentecost.

The forty days of Great Lent, Holy Week,

August 1 through the 15th, and Advent (Dec. 13 thru 25).