

## MARRIAGE POLICY ST. ANTHONY'S CHURCH

### A. GENERAL INFORMATION:

- 1. Congratulations:** You have just discussed a date for your wedding celebration here at our parish. Hopefully you have set a date far enough in advance so that you can do the preparations necessary in a calm manner. Remember, through it all, the ceremony will last under an hour, but marriage is a lifetime. During this time of discernment and preparation you should be able to deepen your commitment to each other and share aspects of your commitment that are unique to engaged couples. We hope and pray that your engagement time will be filled with joy. You are in the prayers of the faith family of St. Anthony's. We hope the information that follows will help you prepare well for your wedding
- 2. A Sacrament:** The celebration of a wedding in the Catholic Church is a sacrament. It is a very special sign that you will be the witness for the world of the love that God has for His people by the way you live out your love for one another. Consequently, couples wishing to marry at St. Anthony's should regularly participate in the Eucharist and be actively involved in the life of the parish. Asking for your special day to be in the church is more than simply a lovely setting for your commitment; it is a **STATEMENT OF YOUR BELIEF!** For this reason we cannot celebrate the sacrament in the place of your reception or a garden or a park or a home. (Special consideration is given to those Catholics who are marrying someone from the Jewish faith. The Priest or Deacon preparing such couples will explain this to you.)
- 3. Common Policy:** The Diocese of Paterson in conjunction with all other dioceses on New Jersey requires, among other things, a year of engagement preparation. St. Anthony's follows these guidelines. Their purpose is for one reason only: to help you take the time to reflect on your decision to marry in a serious, mature fashion. This takes time and effort as well as prayer and preparation. Your cooperation in this process is not only necessary, but expected. In order to celebrate your wedding in St. Anthony's Church either the Bride or the Groom must be a registered member of the Parish. If neither party lives within the parish boundaries, there is a possibility of a wedding taking place at St. Anthony's for sufficient reason if the couple receives permission in writing from the Pastor of the Church from where they presently live. In order to marry in the Catholic Church one must be free to marry. If there are any previous marriages involved please tell the priest at the outset so that if possible an annulment may be sought before proceeding any further.

**Note:** Now that you are adults you should not think of yourself as registered in a parish just because as children you were registered through your parents. It is time to accept the fact that you are adults and stand independently of them as members in your own right with all that membership implies.