

For Successful Intermarriages

- Articulate clearly and respectfully one's religious needs to the partner before marriage.
- Respect the partner's and family's religious needs. When engaged persons are familiar with each other's faith traditions, rules, rituals and rites, and how and why their own faith tradition differs, this will bridge understandings and feelings.
- Talk about how you will worship together or respect each other's places and times of worship.
- Be religiously active in the worship services and parish community events.
- Communicate ways you will celebrate religious holidays, participate in the sacraments, contribute financially to the church, develop the child(ren)'s religious identity, create a religious home environment, invite the priest or minister to the house, and visit in-laws.
- Pray together as a family at home. Use the Bible as a common spiritual aid in reading and praying.

Questions to Consider When Intermarrying

What are the pros and cons of entering into a marriage with diverse religious beliefs and practices?

What are your religious values?

What are the religious customs and traditions?

How will the religious holidays be celebrated?

Will worship in church services be together or apart?

What are the religious financial commitments?

How will the child(ren) be raised in the Catholic faith tradition?

How will the wedding vows be exchanged in the diverse faith traditions?

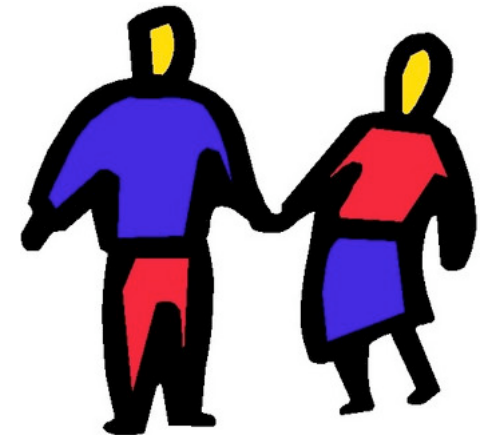
How will the faith tradition of parents be honored and respected?

How will one's individual faith be lived?

How will a life of faith be shared with each other?

What are the common beliefs and values in both faith traditions that can be shared?

When One of You is Not Catholic



Archdiocese of Dubuque
Office of Family Life
1229 Mount Loretta Avenue
563-556-2580
DBQCFL@arch.pvt.k12.ia.us

Catholics Intermarrying

Describing Intermarriage

Intrafaith marriage - when a Catholic marries a person who is from a different Christian faith tradition.

Interfaith marriage - when a Catholic marries a person from a non-Christian faith; i.e. Jewish or Muslim.

Reflections on Intermarrying

- Issues will emerge later in the marriage if couples do not discuss the impact of religious and cultural differences before marrying.
- Research finds that relationships are more satisfying and stable when partners share common spiritual and religious values.
- Relationships with common spiritual and religious values are strengthened in times of crisis.
- Intermarriages comprise over 40% of marriages in the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

Catholic Vision of Intermarriage

Wedding Ceremony

- In the marriage between a Catholic and one who is not baptized, the rite of marriage outside Mass is to be followed.
- In a marriage between a Catholic and a baptized person who is not a Catholic, the rite of marriage outside Mass is to be used. In special situations with the permission of the diocesan bishop, the rite for celebrating within Mass may be used.
- Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life, and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion (canon 844, #4).
- Those not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with Christ Jesus and peace and unity of the human family.
- At the wedding ceremony, a minister from another faith tradition may be present to read from Scripture, offer a greeting, blessing, or prayer.
- The couple may choose persons from each other's faith traditions to serve as witnesses to the marriage.

Living One's Faith

- To be a Catholic is to live the Catholic faith in word and action. The Church asks the Catholic partner to reaffirm their faith in Jesus Christ and promise to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church.
- The Church does not require the partner in the other faith tradition to become Catholic.
- An engaged partner may consider joining the Catholic Church. The person would participate in the process of the RCIA, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, in a Catholic parish.
- Later in married life, the spouse may consider belonging to the Catholic Church through participation in the RCIA.

Raising Children in the Faith

The Church requires the Catholic partner to “promise to do all that I can to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and reared as Catholics.” The responsibility lies with the Catholic partner in a mutual decision as a couple.

Family

Families may have strong feelings about religion. As a married couple, hold the balanced perspective of shared values and beliefs and respecting the family religion. Share openly with family the reasons and ways you will live the faith in marriage.