***Getting Married at St Mary's Church***

**If you are planning to get married in Saint Mary's you are required by the church to set aside some time to prepare for the important step you are about to take. To allow for this, a minimum of six months notice before the date proposed for the marriage is required.**

**Who can marry in the Catholic Church?**

**At least one of the parties must have been baptised in the Catholic Church or who, baptised in another church, has become a Catholic. Both parties must be free to marry. A Catholic party must either live in the parish of Holy Family or attend Mass here regularly.**

**Legal requirements**

**You are required by civil law to register your intention to marry at a registrars office. A minimum of 17 days and a maximum of 12 months notice is required by the registrar. We recommend that you give notice to the registrar as soon as possible after you have confirmed the date of your wedding with the priest. You will need to make an appointment with the registrar if you and your partner live in the same registration district you are obliged to visit the registrar together, if you live in different registration regions you must inform the registrar of marriages in both areas, each registrars office will issue a superintendent registrar's certificate which you must give to the priest arranging your wedding.**

**Church requirements**

**A few months before your wedding the parish priest will complete a pre-nuptial enquiry form with you. This will establish that at least one of you is a Catholic, that you are both free to marry in the Catholic Church and that both of you understand the commitment you are making to each other in the marriage ceremony. If you are a member of another church you will be required to obtain a certificate of baptism from the church where you were baptised.**

**Dispensations**

**For a marriage between a Catholic and a person baptised in another Christian church - normally referred to as a 'mixed marriage' to take place in the Catholic Church a dispensation of permission is required from the Bishop. In this instance the Catholic party is also asked to try within the Unity of the marriage to have children born of the marriage brought up in the Catholic faith.**