

# The Irish Catholic

February 27, 2014 (On-line edition)

## ‘Anti-austerity’ weddings a big hit

By Paul Keenan



*Couples opt to tie knot by candlelight*

A Dublin parish offering ‘anti-austerity’ weddings has seen a massive surge in young couples inquiring about having their marriage in its church.

There has been a flood in pre-nuptial inquiries from young couples seeking alternatives to the expense of the traditional wedding season.

Recognising the financial pressures existing now for young couples intending to marry, the Church of the Most Holy Sacrament in Cherry Orchard extended its own services over the winter to what parish priest Fr Seán Duggan has called “a more flexible approach to weddings”.

The fresh style, he told The Irish Catholic, sees the parish offer “weddings by candlelight”, mainly in the evening across the marriage ‘off season’ winter months in addition to its services during the in-demand summer months.

The result, Redemptorist Fr Duggan said, has been “to take the pressure off couples to stage a full day’s event, and therefore from guests who might have to arrange time off work”.

The ability to host a more low-key, simpler celebration after the wedding, Fr Duggan

added, has a beneficial impact on costs for the newlyweds too.

“The different approach has been very popular,” he said, adding that the substantial increase in couples coming is a welcome development for the parish team. Based on pre-nuptial inquiries to date, Fr Duggan added he is very hopeful for “a good year for marriage” in Cherry Orchard.

On a pastoral level, Fr Duggan pointed out that when couples choose to marry in a church, they also gain from the supportive role offered by the parish church. “And that’s all through life and not just on the day of the wedding,” he said.

Referencing the range of choices available to intending couples today made possible by legal changes to marriage formats and venues, Fr Duggan said “in the past people felt they didn’t have a choice. Now that they do, the fact that people still make a conscious choice to get married in a church has to be acknowledged and they have to be affirmed in that choice.”

Web link:

<http://www.irishcatholic.ie/article/%E2%80%98anti-austerity%E2%80%99-weddings-big-hit#sthash.wBcoEvme.dpuf>