

Family & Pressure

The wedding is yours. The reaction to it is not. For some Catholic parents and grandparents, a wedding outside the Church is real grief, not stubbornness, and it will arrive at your table.

Predictable pressure is manageable pressure. Most guilt comes through the same few doors: the phone call after the announcement, the holiday table, the “what would your grandmother say.” You cannot script your families. You can script yourselves.

Two principles do most of the work here. First, a prepared answer beats an improvised one, every time; a couple that has agreed on three calm sentences cannot be pulled into two different corners. Second, boundaries protect the couple rather than punish the family, and they land far better when each of you handles your own side. Your mother should hear the hard sentence from you, not from your partner.

WHAT TENDS TO GO WRONG WHEN THIS IS SKIPPED

- Each partner defends their own family instead of the couple, and the argument moves indoors.
- Answers are improvised in hallways, differ from each other, and get compared later.
- A boundary is announced in anger at the Christmas table instead of calmly in October.

How to work this sheet: together, one page, two pens. Draft the three-sentence answer, then actually say it out loud to each other.

One couple, one voice

TOGETHER · ONE PAGE, TWO PENS

1. Who needs to hear about our plans from us directly, and in what order:

2. The hardest person to tell, and why:

PARTNER A

PARTNER B

3. Our three-sentence answer to pressure or guilt, word for word:

4. Their business / not their business:

WE WILL GLADLY DISCUSS

WE WILL NOT DEBATE

5. Family religious events (baptisms, first communions, funerals, Christmas Mass): which we attend, and how we behave there:

6. When a boundary is crossed, who speaks?

☐ each of us handles our own family ☐ we respond together ☐ other:

Where this leaves us: ☐ Aligned ☐ Close enough ☐ Revisit by _____