



Permission for the Celebration of Catholic Weddings in Catholic Chapels, Oratories, and Non-Parish Churches

Permission will be granted to celebrate weddings using the Catholic form in Catholic chapels, oratories, and non- parish churches [hereinafter “chapels”] in accord with the following provisions:

I. Individual Permissions

Pastors are authorized to grant permission on a case by case basis for the celebration of a wedding using the Catholic form in any Catholic chapel within the territorial boundaries of his parish at the request of the ecclesiastical administrator of the chapel.

- A. The pastor is responsible to see to it that any necessary delegation is granted and that all of the documentation and other pastoral, canonical, and liturgical preparations for the marriage are completed. The wedding is recorded in the parish sacramental register.
- B. If a pastor has any questions about whether a particular location qualifies as a Catholic chapel, he should consult with the Chancery Office.

II. Standing Permission for Catholic Colleges and Universities

Standing permission will be granted by the Archbishop or his delegate for the celebration of weddings using the Catholic form in the chapel of a Catholic college or university [hereinafter “school”] when that permission is requested by the school administration and when the pastor of the parish in whose territory the chapel is located [hereinafter “local parish”] agrees, provided the following norms are observed:

- A. **Coordinator.** The school’s priest chaplain or another suitable person designated by the school is to coordinate all weddings in the chapel [hereinafter “coordinator”]. Before approval, the coordinator is to work with the Archdiocesan Office for Worship to ensure that he or she has a sufficient knowledge of the pastoral, liturgical, and canonical requirements for Catholic marriages.
- B. **Parish Permission.** Before a wedding is scheduled in the chapel, either the Catholic bride or the Catholic groom is to obtain a letter from his or her own pastor granting permission.

- C. **Delegation.** The coordinator and couple are responsible for arranging for a priest or deacon to assist at the marriage. For the validity of the marriage, this priest or deacon (when other than a priest or deacon assigned to the local parish) must get delegation. Delegation should be obtained from the pastor of the local parish at least one month prior to the date of the wedding.
- D. **Letter of Good Standing.** If the assisting priest or deacon does not have the faculties of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, he must arrange to have a letter of good standing sent from his religious superior or diocesan bishop to the Archdiocesan Office for Clergy at least one month prior to the wedding.
- E. **Preparation Program.** The coordinator is to see to it that the couple attends a marriage preparation program.
- F. **Liturgy.** The coordinator is to see to it that the marriage celebration is liturgically proper.
- G. **Documentation.** The coordinator is to see to it that all of the required documentation is obtained and/or prepared and that any necessary permissions and/or dispensations are procured. The documentation for the wedding, with the exception of the marriage licence, is to be sent to the local parish at least two months prior to the wedding. Should a wedding be cancelled or rescheduled, the coordinator is to notify the local parish as soon as possible.
- H. **Recording of Marriage.** The marriage is to be recorded in the local parish. The pastor of the local parish should review the documentation for the marriage as soon as possible after receiving it. He must see to it that on the day of the wedding or shortly thereafter, the marriage is recorded in the parish sacramental register and that notifications are sent to the churches of baptism. To help cover administrative costs, the school shall provide the local parish with 10% of any fees and/or donations received in conjunction with the wedding.
- I. **Marriage Licence.** The coordinator is to see to it that the priest or deacon who assists at the marriage executes the marriage licence, provides the original certificate to the couple, mails the duplicate to the issuing county, and sends the remaining portion to the local parish to be filed with the other wedding documentation.

This policy, issued on February 25, 2013, is effective on March 25, 2013.

Most Reverend Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.
Archbishop of Philadelphia