

CATHOLIC WEDDINGS

Through the largesse of the Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, Georgetown University has permission to hold Catholic wedding ceremonies in the three Catholic Chapels on the Main Campus. The Catholic Chaplaincy of Campus Ministry feels honored to be delegated oversight of the hosting of Catholic marriage celebrations at the spiritual home of so many of our Catholic community.

Please keep in mind that in the life of the Catholic Church, weddings of the baptized have a profound religious foundation. The married have a proper vocation to holiness in and through their married life. Marriages in general are considered sacramental, i.e., religious rituals that make present and effective the love of God and human kind; and Christian marriages are considered a Sacrament, i.e., Christian religious rituals that make present and effective the love of Christ and Church.

Consequently, from the perspective of the Catholic Chaplaincy, our chapels are sacred spaces for religious events. Appropriately, the decision to hold a wedding here ought to answer affirmatively the question: Do the sacred chapels of Georgetown University have genuine religious significance for me and/or my future spouse? If you can say “yes,” please continue reading the guidelines below, and, congratulations! We look forward to making your acquaintance.

General Information

Dahlgren Chapel, Copley Crypt, and St. William’s Chapel are Catholic chapels that are available for the weddings of the following:

- GU degree student
- GU graduate
- GU faculty member
- GU staff member
- child of a GU faculty member
- child of a GU staff member

Planning should start at least six months in advance and must comply with all Archdiocesan regulations for weddings. As the first step to reserving a chapel, contact the Administrative Assistant for Sacraments by calling (202) 687-6880 or by sending an email to sacraments@georgetown.edu. *Note, the Chaplain and Administrative Assistant prefer to speak directly with the engaged couple and/or Clergy. Please help deflect calls from third parties including parents, Wedding Coordinators and Florists.*

The purposes of the initial contact are to determine a wedding date and time to hold and to set up a one hour pastoral visit between the engaged couple and Dr. Ennio Mastroianni, the Senior Roman Catholic Chaplain.

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Dates and Times

The Sacraments office will initially hold a wedding date for a period of two weeks after which time the engaged couple should contact the Administrative Assistant if they wish to extend their hold.

Campus Ministry does not schedule wedding ceremonies on:

- Holy Saturday (day before Easter Sunday)
- Graduation weekend (3rd Weekend in May)
- Memorial Day weekend (May)
- Alumni weekend (1st Weekend of June)
- 4th of July (if on a Saturday)
- Freshman Move-in Day (last Weekend in August)
- Labor Day weekend (September)
- Thanksgiving vacation
- Christmas/New Year vacation

In addition, Campus Ministry reserves the right to restrict other Saturdays as circumstances require.

The First Pastoral Visit

Couples are required to schedule a visit with Dr. Ennio Mastroianni, Senior Roman Catholic Chaplain, when they initially contact the Sacraments office.

Pastoral visits are approximately one-hour long and are held on Thursdays between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. and on Fridays between 12 p.m. and 3 p.m. in Dr. Mastroianni's office in Gervase Hall, room 208. Take to the meeting the chapel usage fee and two completed forms: "the Wedding Chapel Reservation" and "Couple's Agreement."

Upon receipt of both forms and the chapel usage fee, the Office of Sacraments will issue a place, date and time confirmation letter to the engaged couple.

Requests for change in date and/or time are granted per chapel availability. Such requests must be made **in writing** and directed to the Chaplain.

Rehearsals

A one-hour wedding rehearsal is **essential**. Rehearsals are scheduled on Fridays at 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 p.m.

Participants must be on time. Promptness for both the wedding rehearsal and ceremony is very important out of consideration for other services that may be taking place in the chapel that day. To facilitate an orderly process, only those participants vital to the wedding ceremony should be present.

The chaplain reserves the right to adjust rehearsal times in accordance with the needs of the university community.

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The Ceremony

Weddings are scheduled on Saturdays at 11 a.m. or 1, 3, 5 or 7 p.m.

The Office of Sacraments allots each wedding a maximum of two hours beginning a half hour before the actual wedding time (e.g. a wedding scheduled for 3 p.m. may start to set up at 2:30 p.m. and must vacate the chapel at 4:30 p.m.).

At the end of two hours, everyone must cease activities and vacate the chapel. This includes any florists, photographers and/or other wedding professionals.

Marriage Preparation

Preparation for one's wedding involves a series of pastoral meetings with the Senior Roman Catholic Chaplain, the presiding priest or deacon, and the Director of Liturgy and Music to complete all the required documentation and to plan for the ceremony itself. It is wise to arrange these meetings well in advance of the wedding date.

In addition, the Archdiocese of Washington requires engaged couples to complete a marriage preparation program such as at a local parish, an "Engaged Encounter" weekend, or other authorized event.

Campus Ministry has limited information on such programs as it neither sponsors nor hosts marriage preparation. **Information on such programs may be obtained directly by contacting the following:**

Archdiocese of Washington
(800) 820-2701
<http://www.adw.org/family/marriage.asp>

or

Diocese of Arlington
(703) 841-2550
<http://www.arlingtondiocese.org/familylife/marriage.php>

Required Documentation for Catholic Weddings

1. **Record of Baptism:** Both bride and groom are required to submit recently issued official records of baptism with notations and parish seal.

Records of Baptism may be obtained from the church of baptism by contacting its parish office. To facilitate the retrieval of this information, include the parents' names of the baptized and the approximate date of the baptism.

In compliance with GU's general wedding policies, baptized non-Catholics are also required to submit a record of baptism.

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Please examine the baptismal certificate to verify that the full address, including the zip code, is present. If a detail is missing, write it on the certificate.

2. **Pastor's Permission:** If the bride is Roman Catholic, she must request permission from her parish's pastor to have the wedding at Georgetown University. If the bride is not Catholic, the groom should get the letter of consent from his pastor.

3. **Witness Testimonials:** Four Witness Testimonial letters, two each for the prospective bride and groom, are required. These letters attest to the fact that each one is "free to marry." Usually a parent, sibling, or close friend of long-standing can provide this written statement. A notary public must notarize these statements.

4. **Pre-nuptial Questionnaire:** A diocesan pre-nuptial questionnaire is completed during an interview with the officiating priest, deacon, or delegate. This document establishes the couple's freedom and readiness to enter into a marriage.

5. **Marriage Preparation Certificate:** An official certificate or letter is required from an approved Marriage Preparation Program such as PRE-CANA, Engaged Encounter, or Sponsor Couple. The certificate or letter must state that the couple has successfully completed all its requirements. Please be sure to photocopy the certificate for yourselves before mailing the original.

6. **Diocesan Permission:** The Archdiocese of Washington must also grant permission for the wedding to take place in Dahlgren Chapel at Georgetown University. Permission is sought by the Senior Roman Catholic Chaplain, on behalf of the couple.

7. **Dispensation** (if required): Your officiating priest, deacon, or his delegate will handle any required dispensation. A dispensation is required when a Catholic marries a non-Catholic.

Also, if either party has a prior marriage, an original decree of annulment, lack of form, or ligamen must be provided **before reserving the chapel**.

8. **Civil Marriage License:** A wedding on campus requires a civil marriage license issued by the District of Columbia and obtained from:

The Marriage Bureau of The Superior Court of D.C.
500 Indiana Avenue, N.W., Room 4485
Washington, DC 20001-2131
(202) 879-4840
<http://www.dccourts.gov/dccourts/superior/family/marriage.jsp>

Please note that after the wedding, the priest or deacon who officiates at the wedding should leave parts B and C of the civil license with the Sacristan. The Chaplain will disperse parts B and C of the license to the Marriage Bureau and Holy Trinity Church, respectively.

9. **Officiant's License and Visiting Clergy:** Visiting priests or deacons are welcome officiants at GU weddings, however D.C. statute requires that they hold a civil license.

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Since such licenses may take some time to secure, officiants should make arrangements to secure licenses well in advance of the ceremony. Such licenses may be obtained by contacting the Marriage Bureau of The Superior Court of D.C.

Additionally, clergy from outside of the Archdiocese of Washington are required to submit a letter of active status from their respective bishop or delegate. An original letter with seal ought to be sent to:

Msgr. Charles Antonicelli, Vicar for Canonical Services
PO Box 29260
Washington, DC 20017

10. Music & Liturgy: As music is an essential part of the Catholic liturgy, the Director of Music and Liturgy at Georgetown University serves as organist/pianist at all university weddings.

In addition, the Director is available to assist engaged couples in finding a cantor/soloist (which is recommended) and any other instrumentalist the couple wish to include. Music fees are not included in the chapel fee.

Please note that according to Archdiocesan regulations, only music appropriate for church services is allowed during the wedding ceremony. To this effort, a music packet outlining GU's wedding music policies and procedures, as well as information on additional instrumentalists and musical selections, is created for each couple.

It is the couple's responsibility to contact the Director of Music and Liturgy at least three months before the wedding date (or sooner).

In the director's absence, a capable replacement will be determined.

The Director of Music and Liturgy supports the implementation of GU's wedding guidelines. Couples should confer with the director prior to making any plans concerning music.

Presiders

The engaged couple should arrange for clergy before completing their Wedding Chapel Reservation form so as to include clergy's name, mailing address, telephone number and email address directly on the form.

The Senior Roman Catholic Chaplain or his associate will be present at rehearsals to greet officiants, orient them to the chapel, and to assist them in setting up for ceremonies.

In addition to the Chaplain's presence at rehearsals, Sacristans are present at the wedding ceremony. The direct phone number to GU's Sacristy is (202) 687-3562.

Fee Considerations

The nonrefundable fee for the use of the chapels for a wedding is \$1000.00. A check is to be made payable to *Office of Campus Ministry, GU* and is due when submitting the "Wedding Chapel Reservation" and "Couple's Agreement" forms at the first pastoral visit.

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Wedding dates are put on the chapel calendar on a conditional basis, pending the fulfillment of the requirements listed on pages three, four, and five.

Requests for changes in the date or time of the wedding depend on availability and must be made as soon as possible. The nonrefundable fee may be transferred to another date if the marriage needs to be postponed. These requests should be addressed to the Chaplain in writing.

Customarily, the couple offers an honorarium or stipend to the priest or deacon who officiates at the wedding; this honorarium is separate from the fees set for the musician(s) and for chapel use. Couples are encouraged to offer clergy an honorarium of at least \$500.00 which may be given to him at the wedding rehearsal.

Please include the following costs when preparing wedding budgets:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Chapel Use Fee (May be adjusted for current students and recent graduates)	\$1000.00
Clergy's Stipend	\$500.00 plus, recommended
Music Director/Organist and Consultant	\$350.00
Cantor/Soloist	\$200.00

Parking

Only the bridal party limousine or its equivalent can park on the road immediately behind Dahlgren chapel. Note that this is a fire lane. Other vehicles may receive a parking violation of \$250 or more. In addition, **vehicles cannot park in the Dahlgren Quadrangle.**

Guests may park on campus in the lot below the Southwest Quadrangle, via Prospect Street or Canal Road. Contact GU's office of transportation management for parking fees. Street parking near campus is another possibility, though rather slim. Couples may wish to supply guests with maps of campus, available at <http://maps.georgetown.edu>.

Couples wanting to use shuttles should contact the Office of Transportation Management (OTM@georgetown.edu or (202) 687-4372).

Flowers and Decorations

When a chapel is reserved for a wedding, it is understood that you are accepting the chapel **as it is**.

Couples are solely responsible for floral arrangements. GU does not prefer or recommend florists.

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Wedding participants may arrange flowers in chapels within the 30-minute setup time before the ceremony begins. At the end, the bride and groom may take or leave the flowers.

Engaged couples marrying on the same day may wish to coordinate flower arrangements and share the costs. Unless stated otherwise, the Office of Sacraments may release the names, phone numbers and email addresses to representatives of each wedding.

Campus guidelines prohibit the throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals and other novelties inside and around the chapels, including the Dahlgren quadrangle. The campus ministry has also banned “runners,” made of paper or any other material, in the aisles of chapels.

Wedding decorations should complement that of the chapel during special liturgical functions or seasons. For example, during Lent, ceremonies should reflect the simplicity of this penitential season.

Photography, Videography and Wedding Coordination

Engaged couples must find their own professional photographer or video technician.

Third party wedding professionals are asked to coordinate details with the presiding priest(s). Couples should inform photographers, videographers and wedding coordinators of policies pertaining to GU’s sacred spaces.

Please give a copy of campus ministry’s wedding policies and guidelines to all third-party professionals for review before attending the wedding rehearsal. In addition, please alert them to the time limitations specified on page 1 of these guidelines.

GU Wedding Chapels

Chapels have no vestibules, foyers, or waiting rooms for wedding preparation. Members of wedding parties must come to the campus fully groomed and prepared. Brides and bridesmaids, however, may use any classroom on the first floor of Healy Hall as a waiting area before the ceremony.

- The length of the center aisle in Dahlgren Chapel is 50 feet and its seating capacity is approximately 250 (180 in the main body of the chapel), with 14 rows on one side and 11 on the other.
- St. William’s Chapel holds 120 participants. Located in Copley Hall, St. William’s was built directly above Copley Crypt Chapel.
- The center aisle in Copley Crypt is 20 feet long. The chapel seats approximately 54 people.

The following is the chapel address for wedding invitations:

Georgetown University
37th & O Streets, NW
Washington, DC 20057-1250

Please note, chapels have no public restrooms. All chapels are wheelchair accessible.

Contact Information

The best times to call the Administrative Assistant for Sacraments are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday between 9 a.m. and 1p.m.

Make phone appointments with Dr. Mastroianni, Senior Roman Catholic Chaplain, through the Administrative Assistant for Sacraments by phone at (202) 687-6880 or by email at sacraments@georgetown.edu.

The Chaplain and Administrative Assistant prefer to speak directly with the engaged couple and/or Clergy. Please help deflect calls from third parties including parents, Wedding Coordinators and Florists.

Sacraments at Georgetown University:

Mailing Address: Office of Campus Ministry
113 Healy Hall
Box 571250
Washington, DC 20057-1250

Phone Number: 202-687-6880

Fax Number: 202-687-5217

Email Address: sacraments@georgetown.edu

Location of Office for Pastoral Visit:

The office for Dr. Ennio Mastroianni, Senior Roman Catholic Chaplain, is located at 208 Gervase Hall (On the corner across from New South and Village A, see number 53 on interactive maps: <http://maps.georgetown.edu/>).