

WEDDING GUIDELINES



University of San Diego
Founders Chapel
5998 Alcalá Park
San Diego, CA 92110
619-260-2229

CELEBRATING MARRIAGE AT FOUNDERS CHAPEL

A wedding is a joyful occasion for a bride and groom, for their families and friends. Indeed, matrimony is of such importance that the Catholic Church considers it to be one of the seven sacraments. The sacraments are signs of God's love instituted by Jesus Christ to bring salvation to the world. Because of this, the Church invites couples to celebrate their marriage in the context of prayer so that their love, the promises they make and the hope they hold for one another, become a living example of Christ's love.

Great care is taken to see that the prayer for this special moment is reverent, graceful, beautiful and open to the movement of God's spirit among us. Our celebrations of the sacraments, marriage included, are always rooted in the scriptures so that we can be nourished and strengthened by God's word. We always celebrate the sacraments as a community, gathering our brothers and sisters in faith and asking for their prayerful support. These religious celebrations are complete when they are filled with song, prayerful gestures and the silence in which we hear the voice of God in our lives.

In this spirit, Founders Chapel provides the following guidelines for celebrating weddings in the building which shelters the prayer of our community.

WHO MAY MARRY IN FOUNDERS CHAPEL?

The answer to this question is governed, in part, by Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church. At least one of the marriage partners must be Roman Catholic. The Chapel is reserved for:

- Current University of San Diego (USD) students
- USD alumni
- USD faculty, staff and administrators
- The children of these groups

They must secure their own priest or deacon (usually from their home parish) and within thirty (30 days) of reserving a tentative wedding date, obtain a commitment in writing from him that he will do the necessary marriage preparation, paperwork, and perform the ceremony. A special form for this is available from the wedding coordinator.

SETTING THE DATE.

In the Diocese of San Diego, couples are expected to contact their pastor, priest or deacon at least nine months in advance of the date on which they hope to celebrate their wedding. Although nine months may seem like a long time, we feel this time is important in order to complete the necessary pre-marital preparations in a manner which is not rushed. It is also important to develop a friendly relationship with the priest or deacon who will assist you in your preparations and preside at your wedding celebration. It is the responsibility of the engaged couple to secure a tentative date with Founders Chapel before making commitments with hotels, reception halls, caterers etc.

Only the Founders Chapel Wedding Coordinator may book a tentative date for the celebration of a wedding. The reservation with the Chapel is final and confirmed upon the receipt of:

- The Deposit
- The signed Couple's Statement of Agreement
- The signed Clergy Statement of Agreement

Founders Chapel reserves the right to cancel your tentative reservation after notifying you that you are not making sufficient progress in your preparations.

SCHEDULING THE TIME OF THE WEDDING CELEBRATION AND REHEARSAL

Founders Chapel is available for wedding celebrations on most Saturdays at 11:00 am, 2:00 pm and 5:00 pm.

Rehearsals are usually scheduled on the Friday prior to the wedding at 4:00 pm, 5:00 pm and 6:00 pm, respectively to the time of the wedding.

All persons who will take an active part in the wedding must attend the rehearsal.

DUE TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF WEDDINGS, REHEARSALS AND WEDDINGS MUST START PROMPTLY AT THE ASSIGNED HOUR. Please advise your wedding party of this requirement.

If you are hiring the services of a professional Wedding Coordinator, please ask him or her to call the Founders Chapel Wedding Coordinator to discuss details.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

In addition to meeting with the priest or deacon preparing you for marriage, the Diocese of San Diego requires a two-part preparation process:

- Attendance at a Diocesan Marriage Preparation Program (a one day conference usually held on Saturdays)
- Completion of the Catholic Engaged Encounter Weekend (You may select Evenings for Engaged if your parish has a trained ministry couple; If there is no trained ministry couple at your parish, you may go to another parish or you must select the Catholic Engaged Encounter Weekend)

Additional preparation may be necessary depending on your circumstances. We will provide you with registration forms for the Diocese of San Diego. If you are being prepared in a different city, your parish will provide you with these form and assist you in completing them. These programs are usually booked for months in advance, so we advise you to register for and attend these events as soon as possible to avoid any potential delay.

DOCUMENTS THAT ARE NEEDED BEFORE A WEDDING MAY BE CELEBRATED IN THE CHURCH

Each engaged couple must meet with their priest or deacon to fill out various papers. This is part of the process of determining your freedom to marry in the Church and of recording your marriage. To celebrate your marriage in the Church, the following documents will be needed:

1. A completed **Prenuptial Examination Form**
(A questionnaire filled out in the presence of a priest or deacon)
2. From Catholics, a newly typed **baptismal certificate dated within six months of the wedding**, as well as the date and place of **Confirmation**. From Non-Catholics, if baptized, a certificate of baptism (no time restriction)
3. A **certificate of Attendance at the Diocesan Marriage Preparation Program or pre-cana conference.**
4. A **certificate** of completion from either **Engaged Encounter Weekend**, or **Evenings for the Engaged.**
5. A valid California **Marriage License** (effective for 90 days from date of issuance). In San Diego, the license can be obtained at the Marriage License Bureau, County Clerks Office, 1600 Pacific Highway, Room #273, or at 9225 Clairemont Mesa Blvd.

Other forms may be needed. These will be specified by the priest or deacon depending on your particular circumstances

GUIDELINES CONCERNING DECORATIONS

Please give your florist or decorator a copy of these guidelines

Flowers and other decorations: Our beautiful Chapel does not require many flowers or plants and space is somewhat limited. The furniture in the chapel and the sanctuary are to remain in place. Additional furniture (wicker, kneelers, benches, arches, planters, etc.) may not be added. Additional Candelabra are not provided by the chapel, but are allowed in the sanctuary. Votive candles in glass containers and free standing candle torches are allowed with hurricane type covers.

The following are considered to be inappropriate for use: artificial flowers or plants, electric candles, balloons or caged birds. We also do not permit the use of live or artificial trees, large columns or pillars in the center aisle.

During Lent (the time between Ash Wednesday and Easter), the Octave of Easter, Advent (the four weeks before Christmas) and Christmas, the existing Chapel décor may not be removed or replaced. Check with the Wedding Coordinator if your wedding falls within these liturgical seasons.

Runners: Aisle runners of any type, cloth or plastic, are not allowed. On marble floors, the presence of a runner greatly increases the risk of injury.

Pews: Any decorations attached to the end of the pews must be attached with string, plastic pew clip or hung carefully with coated or wrapped wire, elastic bands or pipe cleaners. Tacks, staples or tape of any kind may not be used to attach decorations to the pews. There are 23 rows of pews on either side of the main aisle which seats approximately 300 people. Do not use pew decorations as reserved seating indicators. All pew decorations must run the length of the chapel. Pew decorations in quantities of 12, 16 or 24 look best in the Chapel.

No garland, ribbon or cloth may be suspended from pew to pew as this inhibits the movement of guests for communion or in the case of an emergency.

Preparations: All preparations and setup must be completed, and trimmings and equipment removed no later than twenty (20) minutes prior to the ceremony. If a wedding precedes yours, your florist may not begin decorating or remove the previous wedding's floral arrangements until the members of the previous wedding have vacated the sanctuary. FLORIST, PLEASE CHECK IN WITH COORDINATOR.

Clean up: Your florist or a designated member of your wedding party is responsible for the removal of all your decorations from the Chapel immediately following the ceremony. Founders Chapel does not have housekeeping staff available on Saturday.

OFFERING FOR CHAPEL AND CLERGY

It is customary to make an offering to the Founders Chapel operating fund on the occasion of the celebration of a marriage. The expected offering for the chapel fund is placed in the general operating expenses of the chapel. It is not retained by the presiding celebrant. The offering should be made by check, payable to FOUNDERS CHAPEL, one week before the wedding (it should be mailed with the rehearsal information sheet.)

Although a priest or deacon does not set a fee for his services, it is customary to provide an honorarium or clergy stipend appropriate for the occasion.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND REQUEST

Culture and devotions: some brides may wish to present flowers to the Virgin Mary as a sign of devotion to Our Blessed Mother. If you wish to do so, you should discuss the possibility with the Wedding Coordinator. The same is true of certain cultural practices: veil, cord, coins, bible, rosary, sword arch, etc.

Unity Candle: Founders Chapel supplies the stand if you wish to make the unity candle a part of your wedding celebration. The stand holds one standard pillar candle and two standard tapers.

Throwing of articles: Due to insurance regulations, **no rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals (real or silk)** or the like is to be thrown or otherwise spread inside and outside the Chapel grounds. It is your responsibility to inform those invited to the wedding of this limitation. Such materials could present a slip-and-fall hazard to your guest and members of our community. **Please note bubbles and sparklers are expressly prohibited.**

Participation by family members, friends, and guests: We encourage the participation of family members and friends as ushers, as lectors (readers), as presenters of the bread and wine (during a Mass), and as altar servers (optional). Please discuss your choices with the priest or deacon celebrating your wedding with you.

Behavior on premises: A Catholic Church is considered a sacred space, a house of prayer. All members of the wedding party and attending guests are expected to behave in a dignified manner appropriate to that setting during both the rehearsal and the ceremony. Loud talking and boisterous behavior must remain outside. Cellular phones should be turned off. Smoking is not permitted in any campus buildings. **ABSOLUTELY NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES MAY BE CONSUMED ON UNIVERSITY PREMISES.** Out of respect for you, it is expected that members of the wedding party will refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages prior to the rehearsal and wedding.

Dress: The dress of the wedding party and guests is expected to be appropriate to the dignity of the liturgy and the church setting. Attire should not in any way be a distraction; please use common sense and modesty. We do not have any specific restrictions in regards to strapless gowns.

Small Children: The procession of the wedding party to the altar is part of the liturgical celebration and is to be a reverent and dignified moment. Therefore, we generally recommend that children in your wedding party or procession be at least six years of age. Exceptions may be granted by the priest or deacon after he has met with the younger children whom you propose to include in the procession.

Dressing room: We have a dressing room for the use of the bride and her attendants. It is located in the West Sacristy at the Chapel. Flowers for the bride and her attendants should be delivered to the dressing room. The University of San Diego is not responsible for any valuables left in the bride's room or any other area of the Chapel during the wedding or any photo sessions. Because we have no janitor on duty during weddings, you must leave the room in the same clean condition as you found it.

Church Specifications: There are twenty-three (23) rows of pews on either side of the main aisle of the church, each full row accommodating approximately six to eight adults. The two front pews can accommodate four adults. Please discuss with the wedding coordinator if you require wheelchair accommodations. Parking is open on the weekends and guest may park in any yellow or white lined parking spaces on the street or in the lots. Founders Chapel does not have air conditioning.

Time limitations and allotments: Each couple has exactly a three hour block of time to use the Chapel and surrounding areas: one hour before the scheduled wedding time, one hour for the duration of the service, and the remaining time for pictures and clean-up. Please refer to the schedules in the addendum pages. The traditional "receiving line" should occur at the reception, not the Chapel.

After the ceremony: The license must be signed by two witnesses (usually the Best Man and the Maid/Matron of Honor) immediately following the ceremony. This is generally done in the sacristy. After the priest/deacon has ensured that the Marriage License is properly completed, it is sent by the wedding coordinator to the County Recorder for official filing. Copies may be obtained from the County Recorder, 1600 Pacific Highway, San Diego, CA, 92101.

GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

- Please give your photographer and/or videographer a copy of these guidelines.
- To assure that every wedding at Founders chapel will be as memorable as possible, we ask that all photographers and videographers abide by the following guidelines. The Catholic Wedding Ritual is a sacred moment. While the desire to record this event is understandable, at the same time the joy of this day should not be marred in any way by photo and taping equipment and those who operate it. If there is a need for more information or clarification, please contact the wedding coordinator.
- **BEFORE CEREMONY**
- If pre-wedding photographs are desired, the photographer and bridal party may arrive no earlier than one hour before the service. All photo sessions must be completed at least twenty minutes prior the scheduled starting time of the wedding.
- Pictures with flash may be taken during the procession and the recessional. Additional photos may be taken during the ceremony with out flash and with the consent of the priest or deacon.
- **DURING CEREMONY**
- Be unobtrusive and do not interfere with the ceremony. Never block the congregation's view or stop the processional.
- While video taping of weddings is allowed, artificial lighting may not be used. All video equipment must stay outside the raised sanctuary area. To create the least amount of distractions for the congregation, there should be as little movement around the Chapel as possible during the ceremony.
- During the ceremony, photographers and/or videographers should stay to the sides of the Chapel and are not allowed to enter the sanctuary at any time.
- If any studio equipment is required within the Chapel, such equipment must be removed half an hour before the ceremony begins. To avoid damage, no tape may be used on the marble, floor, sound system, equipment, music stands or microphones.
- You are advised to look at the present Chapel arrangement. Altar, lectern, pews and seasonal décor must remain in their positions for all services. Couples are responsible to communicate this regulation to photographers and videographers who might desire to rearrange the Chapel furniture for pictures. **PLEASE CHECK IN WITH COORDINATOR**
- **AFTER CEREMONY**
- Posed pictures of the bridal party and family may be taken in the Chapel for a maximum of thirty minutes (as long as the wedding begins and ends on time). It is the photographer's responsibility to make sure the spirit of reverence and respect are observed in the Chapel. Photographers should check with the individual clergy who will be presiding at the wedding ceremony for personal preferences. Some celebrants may have additional requirements.

GUIDELINES FOR WEDDING MUSIC

The guidelines for wedding music for the Diocese of San Diego outline the important criteria for music incorporated into the liturgy for the Sacrament of Matrimony. It is important that you familiarize yourself with the criteria and guidelines.

Arrangements for music groups, organists and soloist must be approved by the officiating clergy with proper attention being given to accepted liturgical norms. Founders Chapel has no full-time musicians, but can, if requested, suggest musicians who have performed at weddings here in the past.

At Founders Chapel, we have several music policies with which you should be aware. First, all music must be “Live”; taped or recorded music is not permitted. Second, musical instruments are not limited to the organ or piano. If you wish to look into other possibilities, please speak with the wedding coordinator. Please refer to the guidelines for wedding music for the Diocese of San Diego in the addendum pages.

IN CONCLUSION...

It is important that all who plan on celebrating their wedding at Founders Chapel realize that they have not rented a building for their personal use. Rather, they have been given the opportunity by a specific community of faith to share their worship space with you for your special day. For this reason, we ask that you respectfully comply with the guidelines of this agreement. Remember that these guidelines are intended to insure a reverent and joyful celebration of marriage within the context of the Church's prayer. Carrying out these policies will require pastoral sensitivity, and no small amount of time.

Know of our sincere desire to cooperate with you to make your celebration of the sacrament of marriage a meaningful and memorable one. You have received a copy of this document; please take the time throughout your preparation process to review it. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak with any member of our staff.

May the Lord greatly bless your marriage and may your happiness together be limitless.

Sincerely yours,
Rev. Msgr. Daniel J. Dillabough
Vice president, Mission and Ministry

A SUGGESTED TIMETABLE FOR YOUR WEDDING

Your Individual details may differ in your wedding. You can use this as a suggested guideline.

One year to eighteen months before the Marriage:

- ❑ Contact Darlene Polak, the Founders Chapel wedding coordinator, 619-260-2229 or www.mpolak@sandiego.edu to arrange the date for your wedding.
- ❑ Meet with the pastor, priest or deacon from your home parish to coordinate your wedding date and begin your preparation.
- ❑ Check availability of venues for your reception.
- ❑ When your wedding date, priest or deacon, and reception venue are confirmed, return the Founders Chapel agreement form. You must also include your non-refundable deposit with the agreement form.

Eight to twelve months before the Marriage:

- ❑ Sign up for your Pre-Cana preparation course and the Engagement Encounter Weekend.
 - ❑ If dispensations are necessary, request them from the priest/deacon.
 - ❑ Hire photographer or videographer, ask about Fall or Winter specials.
 - ❑ Hire florist.
 - ❑ Hire caterer.
 - ❑ Hire musicians for the ceremony and reception.
 - ❑ Arrange for Wedding Gown, other clothes.
 - ❑ Begin list for invitations.

Six months before the Marriage:

- ❑ Obtain recent copies of your Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation records and give them to your pastor, priest or deacon.
 - ❑ Plan music with musician or organist.
 - ❑ Arrange for printing of invitations, programs.
 - ❑ Choose scriptures for the wedding from Together For Life.
 - ❑ Invite friends or relatives to do the scripture readings and participate in ceremony.
 - ❑ Plan meal for reception.

Three months before the Marriage:

- ❑ Send out invitations.
- ❑ Contact all participants in the ceremony (Ushers, Bridesmaids, etc.) Give them an idea of what you need of them.
- ❑ Get a unity candle for your wedding (one standard pillar, two tapers) we provide the stand.

One month before the Marriage:

- ARRANGE TO GET THE MARRIAGE LICENSE. In the County of San Diego the license is good for 90 days.
- Finalize any details about the ceremony. (Flowers, music, people involved, etc.)
- Get final fittings for wedding clothes.

One week before the Marriage:

- Prepare final payments to all vendors including wedding musicians, organist and cantors.
- **RETURN the rehearsal information sheet via mail to: Founders Chapel, Attn: Darlene 5998 Alcalá Park, San Diego, CA 92110-2492 or by FAX 619-260-2262.**
- Make sure that members of the Wedding Party know the time of the rehearsal and will attend. If any are coming from a distance and cannot attend the rehearsal, make sure that they know their responsibilities.

The day before the Marriage:

- Bring the Marriage License with your completed wedding file to the rehearsal. However, it is our preference to have these items one week in advance.
- Bring the balance of your chapel offering, check payable to Founders Chapel to the rehearsal.
 - **Arrive at the rehearsal on time.**

WEDDING DAY:

- Have a good breakfast.
- **Arrive at the Church on time.** You should arrive 1 hour before the ceremony to handle any last minute details. (I know it is your special day...but the bride must also be on time!)
- Make sure all payments are made to all vendors including musicians, organist and cantors.
 - Keep calm and enjoy the ceremony. SMILE and BREATHE!
 - **Concentrate on God's message of Love for you.**