



MADONNA DELLA STRADA CHAPEL

WEDDING INFORMATION PACKET



LOYOLA
UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Version 18
Revised September 3, 2024

Loyola University Chicago
Madonna della Strada Weddings
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THOSE WHO CAN BE MARRIED AT LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO:

At least one of the parties seeking the Sacrament of Marriage must be Roman Catholic and a part of the Loyola University Chicago community, as defined in the bullet points below.

- Currently enrolled students (part-time and full-time)
- Alumni
- Faculty
- Staff
- Trustees and Regents

Archdiocese of Chicago Policy Book IV, §404.3.1 states *“Marriages ordinarily shall take place in a parish church.”* *Madonna della Strada Chapel is not a parish church. Special permission has been granted to those who qualify with the above affiliation to Loyola University Chicago to be married in Madonna della Strada Chapel.*

Weddings of other denominations or faiths are not permitted. The chapel cannot be “rented” for a wedding.

TIMES WHEN THE CHAPEL IS AVAILABLE FOR WEDDINGS:

- Saturday at 11:00 a.m. with a 4:00 p.m. Friday Rehearsal
- Saturday at 1:00 p.m. with a 5:00 p.m. Friday Rehearsal
- Saturday at 3:00 p.m. with a 6:00 p.m. Friday Rehearsal

TIMES WHEN THE CHAPEL IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR WEDDINGS:

- Days other than Saturday afternoons such as Sundays, weekdays, Friday evenings
- Move-in weekend in late August
- Holy Week: Palm Sunday weekend to Easter
- Graduation Weekends
- Holidays
- Certain Holiday weekends
- Fall and Spring semester final exam weekends
- University closure periods
- Any other time that the chapel has been scheduled
- Any other time that the chapel staff deems it necessary for no weddings to be scheduled

PRESIDING PRIEST OR DEACON

- The couple should ask a priest or deacon to preside at their wedding. Priests or deacons are not supplied.
- The priest or deacon is ordinarily the person preparing the couple for the Sacrament of Marriage.
- If you have questions regarding your presider, please contact the Sacramental Life Office at 773.508.8045.
- Answers to common questions that priests and deacons may have are found on page 12.

THE FEE FOR A WEDDING AT MADONNA DELLA STRADA CHAPEL IS \$2,800.00

This fee includes:

- Chapel usage
- Chapel Coordinator
- Basic music (explained below)
- Sacristan
- Security guard
- One golf cart and one golf cart driver (explained below)
- Document administration

Basic music is required for every wedding and includes the services of the Music Director as the organist and the Chapel Cantor from the university roster (a cantor is the person who will sing at your wedding).

One golf cart and golf cart driver are for use on the day of your wedding for the scheduled wedding time period to shuttle guests between the parking structure and Madonna della Strada Chapel. Other uses, days, and times can be contracted through Conference Services.

Additional donations to Madonna della Strada Chapel or Loyola University Chicago are always welcome.

- **Please note that the stipend for your priest or deacon is not included in this fee. It is suggested that you offer a gift of \$200 to your presiding priest or deacon.**
- Please consult your signed contract for the refund policy.
- This fee is effective September 3, 2024.

All weddings at Loyola University Chicago must adhere to the policies as outlined in this entire document.

It is imperative that this entire document be read in its entirety prior to signing the wedding contract.

No exceptions are made to the policies outlined in this document.

By signing the contract you agree to the policies set forth.

Step 1: Making A Reservation

- The first step in planning your wedding is to email MDS@LUC.edu and request the available dates for weddings in the chapel. A list of available dates will be emailed to you along with information for how to hold a date and secure a date.
- In order for your reservation to be confirmed and secured, the Intake Form must be received, wedding fee paid, and contract signed.
- Upon receipt of your wedding fee, the contract will be generated and sent to you for your signature and approval.
- Any annulment proceedings must be cleared before a reservation can be made.

Step 2: Requesting Approval for Your Wedding

The normative location for a wedding is a parish church. Typically it is the parish where the bride and groom are registered members or the home parish of the bride or groom. Madonna della Strada Chapel is not a parish church and the following paperwork is, therefore, needed for each wedding held in Madonna della Strada Chapel.

MADONNA DELLA STRADA REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The following documentation must be provided by the bride and groom:

1. CURRENT PASTOR PERMISSION LETTER – A letter from the current pastor of the bride or groom indicating his permission for the bride/groom to be married outside of their parish church. This can be obtained from the parish where you are registered or from the Catholic Church that is closest to where you live.
2. PRESIDER'S REQUEST FOR DELEGATION AND PERMISSION FROM THE RECTOR OF MADONNA DELLA STRADA CHAPEL
 - a) This is a form letter available for download from our website, www.LUC.edu/mdsweddings, under the DOCUMENTS module. It is titled "[Presider Delegation Form.](#)"

Your presider who will perform your wedding ceremony is to complete this form letter indicating that he will work with the couple to see that the Chicago Archdiocesan guidelines on marriage preparation are fulfilled, and that he will provide Loyola University Chicago with the documentation for the marriage register and files. The letter requests permission from the Rector of Madonna della Strada Chapel to celebrate your wedding at Madonna della Strada Chapel. The letter also states that the presiding priest or deacon will abide by all chapel policies.

- b) If the presiding priest or deacon is not with the Archdiocese of Chicago, he must also provide a letter of eligibility/suitability from his diocese or religious order indicating that he is a priest or deacon in good standing.

Please email or mail these documents to the MDS Weddings Office or MDS@LUC.edu as you receive them.

Step 3: Preparing For Your Wedding

CATHOLIC CHURCH REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Every couple who marries in the Catholic Church needs to complete a wedding file. The following documents are required to complete your wedding file. Please turn these documents in to the MDS Weddings Office as you receive them.

1. The Prenuptial Questionnaire is a document completed and signed by the bride, groom and their presiding priest or deacon.
2. A Baptismal Certificate less than six months old is required for each Catholic. A newly reissued baptismal record must be obtained from the parish of Baptism. Non-Catholics who have been baptized are requested to provide a reissued baptismal certificate from the church of their baptism. Baptismal records may be obtained by writing to the church where this sacrament was administered.
3. The Confirmation date is needed for Catholics. Usually this will appear on the reissued baptismal certificate, even if you were confirmed in a different church. Receiving a reissued baptismal certificate is the easiest way to fulfill this requirement. If the confirmation date is not included on the reissued baptismal certificate, please contact the church of confirmation to request a reissued confirmation certificate.
4. Two affidavits each are required for the bride and groom. These affidavits are testimonials regarding your freedom to marry. The affidavits must be requested by two life-long family members/friends of the bride and groom and must be signed, sealed, and dated by a priest or deacon.
5. When a marriage takes place between a Catholic and a non-Catholic, a dispensation or permission is required.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

6. The priest or deacon preparing you for the Sacrament of Marriage will meet with you. Often, the priest or deacon will utilize a survey tool such as [Catholic Couple Checkup](#) (CCC) or [FOCCUS](#). These survey tools are designed to help couples explore the many dimensions of married life. The results are discussed with your presiding priest or deacon. If one of these survey tools is completed, please ask your presider to email MDS@LUC.edu that a discussion of the survey results has taken place amongst the three of you.
7. The Archdiocese of Chicago requires that all couples complete a pre-marital program. The Archdiocese of Chicago offers a pre-marital program, which is often known by the name Pre-Cana. Information can be found at the [Marriage and Family Ministry Team](#) website of the Archdiocese of Chicago. This program is designed to deepen your awareness of the challenges of living together in Christian marriage. Through discussions, exercises, and presentations, you will have the opportunity to concentrate more intensely on the many facets of married life. This marriage preparation program should be completed well in advance of the date of the wedding. Pre-Cana is required and documentation of attendance and completion must be obtained. The certificate of completion can be sent via mail or email to our office.

For your wedding to occur, all documents must be returned at least one month before your wedding date.

WEDDING CEREMONY WITNESSES

Two witnesses (best man and maid/matron of honor) are required. In an interfaith marriage, one witness must be Catholic.

CIVIL REQUIREMENTS: MARRIAGE LICENSE

A marriage license is required from the Cook County Clerk's office. The web site with complete information for obtaining a license is <https://www.cookcountyclerk.com/service/marriage-licenses>. Please bring your marriage license to the wedding rehearsal and give it to the Chapel Coordinator. Your wedding cannot occur without your marriage license.

In the State of Illinois, the only signature required on the license is that of your presiding priest or deacon. He will sign the license immediately following your wedding. The Chapel Coordinator will deliver the signed license to the MDS Weddings Office. The original will be mailed to the Cook County Recorder and a copy will be included in your sacramental wedding file.

Certified copies of marriage certificates are available upon written request, in person, or by mail to Cook County. Typically, certificates are available from Cook County 4-6 weeks after your wedding. You can find details online at <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/service-groups/vital-records>.

Step 4: Planning Your Wedding Ceremony and Rehearsal

THE WEDDING LITURGY

The wedding liturgy should be the highlight of your day. To celebrate it fully, Loyola provides guidelines for the planning and celebration of your wedding. We want your wedding to be celebrated with beauty and organization so that it may be one of the proudest and most special days of your life.

These guidelines are here to help your wedding be beautiful and to respect the chapel and its usage. It may be easy for you to feel hardship or hurt feelings over some of these policies. Please be sure to read this in its entirety and agree to it so as to prevent any hardship in planning your wedding.

Your wedding will take place within the context of the Catholic liturgy. The liturgy may either be a Mass – similar to that of a typical parish Mass, or a wedding ceremony – a liturgy without communion. Either service will be conducted with beauty and devotion. The determining criteria will center on the religious background of the bride and groom.

TIME SCHEDULE

11:00 a.m. Saturday wedding (use of chapel and rooms from 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.) with a 4:00 p.m. Friday rehearsal.

1:00 p.m. Saturday wedding (use of chapel and rooms from 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.) with a 5:00 p.m. Friday rehearsal.

3:00 p.m. Saturday wedding (use of chapel and rooms from 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.) with a 6:00 p.m. Friday rehearsal.

Rehearsals and weddings **START ON TIME.**

A maximum of one hour is allotted for rehearsals. Come prepared to your rehearsal. The rehearsal is not a time for decision-making but a time for logistics and coordination. It allows members of the immediate wedding party to become familiar with the environment of our chapel and with the public roles they will assume as part of the liturgy. The Chapel Coordinator directs the rehearsal and gives a brief overview of the liturgy to help all concerned understand the prayerful nature of the celebration. We ask that you require that all members of the wedding party be present for the rehearsal and that they arrive on time.

Please be aware that musicians are not present for the wedding rehearsal.

Each wedding is allotted 90 minutes from the scheduled start time for the wedding, including the last wedding of the day. Therefore, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE WEDDING BEGIN PROMPTLY to allow sufficient time to celebrate the service which you will have carefully planned. Weddings that start late risk losing time for picture taking. Receiving lines are not permitted following the wedding in order to allow ample time for picture taking. Keep in mind that numerous wedding rehearsals and weddings are scheduled on a single day, and the chapel is in great demand for other events.

You may arrive up to 30 minutes prior to your scheduled Mass or Ceremony start time.

Musicians and staff often have more than one commitment during the day. Please be respectful of their schedules. Weddings that start late risk losing musicians during the ceremony.

If members of the bridal party or family are late, it may be deemed necessary that the rehearsal or wedding begin without them. Please allow for city traffic and travel to and from the chapel.

FACILITIES

Madonna della Strada Chapel has a seating capacity of approximately 500. The chapel is fully air conditioned in the summer. The bridal room is located in a nearby campus building, and the north sacristy is available for the groom and groomsmen. Public restrooms are available at the rear of the chapel. Madonna della Strada Chapel is wheelchair accessible.

PARKING

Parking is available in the campus parking structure for a nominal fee. Information on parking at Loyola University Chicago can be found online at: www.LUC.edu/parking.

SAFETY CONCERNS

It is not permissible to throw rice or flower petals in or around the church due to safety hazards. Balloons are strictly prohibited inside and outside the chapel. Due to insurance and liability concerns, aisle runners are not permitted in the chapel. Animals of any kind are not permitted in the chapel nor may they be released following the wedding (including doves, butterflies, dogs, etc.). Food and beverages are not permitted inside the chapel. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the chapel, bride's room, groom's room, or at any non-catered event on campus.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY

Detailed information that must be agreed upon and sent to your vendors can be found at this link: [Please see our website under the GUIDELINES module "Photo and Video."](#)

FLOWERS AND DECORATING

Detailed information that must be agreed upon and sent to your vendors can be found at this link: [Please see our website under the GUIDELINES module "Floral and Decoration."](#)

MUSIC

Music for weddings should be planned jointly by the couple utilizing the Loyola University wedding music website, in consultation with the Director of Music of Madonna della Strada Chapel. Remember that the Sacrament of Marriage is a liturgical celebration. Therefore, one of the basic principles that should underlie your selection of music is whether the music is indeed liturgical music. Popular songs and secular music, no matter how meaningful they may be, have no place in the liturgy. They may be appropriately performed at your wedding reception. For the wedding liturgy you'll want to ensure the emphasis on sacred music, which derives its context from scriptural and liturgical sources, and by its very nature enhances your union within the liturgical rites being celebrated.

The Madonna della Strada Chapel Director of Music serves as organist and/or principal musician at all weddings. As principal musician for the wedding, the Director of Music is entrusted with the responsibility of determining the suitability of musical selections within the context of the Roman Catholic wedding liturgy and must approve all music and musicians chosen for the ceremony. The Director of Music also bears the essential responsibility of ensuring the proper performance and timing of the various musical portions of the wedding liturgy. The fee for the Director of Music is included in your wedding fee.

The Cantor (singer) fee is included in your wedding fees as well. Our cantors are on the voice faculty at Loyola as well as auditioned members of the Chicago musical community. This guarantees that your wedding will go smoothly because the cantor, organist and instrumentalists are accustomed to working with each other as well as with the specific acoustical demands of the liturgical space.

Instrumentalists (trumpet, violin, oboe, flute, harp, trio, quartet, etc.) may be used upon approval of, and arrangement with, the Director of Music at Madonna della Strada Chapel. Please contact the Director of Music before making any instrumentalist arrangements.

* Musicians are not present at the rehearsal the day before your wedding.

* Guest and visiting singers are not allowed, and members of the wedding party may not perform dual roles as musicians.

* Recorded musical accompaniment and/or recorded music is not allowed.

Couples are required to consult with the Director of Music before making any musical plans or arrangements. Our music director is Peter Morey, and he can be contacted at pmorey@LUC.edu or 773.508.3780. For your wedding music to occur, all music selections must be submitted via our wedding music website at least one month before your scheduled wedding date.

NON-CATHOLIC MINISTERS

Weddings held at Madonna della Strada Chapel are celebrated according to the worship books of the Roman Catholic Church: the Roman Missal, the Lectionary and The Rite of Marriage. Ministers of other denominations may assist in limited roles during the ceremony. This requires consultation with your presiding priest or deacon.

READINGS

The readings for your wedding can be reviewed and selected using our Wedding web site. In consultation with the priest who will preside at the wedding, the engaged couple will select two or three passages from scripture. Non-scriptural passages are never used in place of the scriptures. *Poems or other non-scriptural passages are also not permitted anywhere in the wedding liturgy.*

WEDDING VOWS

Wedding vows are provided in the wedding liturgy and you may select one of two options when you consult with your priest. The usage of vows from other sources or vows written by the bride and groom are not permitted in the Catholic Wedding Liturgy. Marriages using vows from other sources are considered not valid in the Catholic Church.

UNITY CANDLE

Though not an official part of the Catholic marriage rite, some couples wish to light a candle during the ceremony symbolizing their unity. Please be sure to discuss this with your priest and with the music director. Unity candles must be placed on the stand provided at the base of the altar, not on the altar itself.

CHAPEL COORDINATOR

The Chapel Coordinator will run the rehearsal and assist on the day of the wedding to provide for the needs of the bride and groom, their attendants and families, and to assure security. The coordinator will assist in making the ceremony run smoothly and with elegance. It is the Chapel Coordinator's responsibility to oversee photographer and florists in proper procedures and in conformity with their respective guidelines as outlined on our website. The Chapel Coordinator is present 45 minutes before each ceremony. No other outside wedding coordinator has any authority in the chapel and must yield all questions to the Chapel Coordinator. Any questions regarding the use of the chapel should be directed to the Chapel Coordinator and not to the priest or deacon.

CHAPEL SACRISTAN

A sacristan will be available on the day of the wedding to support the priest and ministers. The sacristan will prepare all vessels, vestments, linens, and other items needed for the celebration of the liturgy. The sacristan may also assist as an acolyte if the priest or deacon would like assistance.

WEDDING REHEARSAL AND LITURGY LOGISTICAL OUTLINE

(Please be sure to share this information with your presiding priest or deacon)

Bridal Room

The bridal room is available for the bride and bridal party prior to the wedding in one of our nearby buildings on campus. The bride and bridal party may also choose to welcome their guests as they enter the chapel.

Groomsmen Room

The Reconciliation Room in the north sacristy is available for the groom and groomsmen in the chapel. The groom and groomsmen may also choose to welcome their guests as they enter the chapel.

Prelude

Music will be played as guests take their seats for fifteen minutes prior to the start of your wedding.

Seating of the Mothers or Parents

Should you choose to have a ceremonial seating of the mothers or parents, the mothers or parents will be seated at the scheduled start time of your wedding.

Processional

The procession may take one of two forms:

- A) The bridal party with groomsmen and bridesmaids process together as couples
- B) The bridesmaids process and the groomsmen meet them at the foot of the altar

With either form, the bride and groom may process together or the groom may meet the bride at the altar. The bride may also choose to be escorted by parent(s) or other influential persons in her life.

Seating

The bride and groom may choose one of three options for their seating during the ceremony:

- A) In the center, on the kneeler. The bride and groom may stand at the center of the aisle right below the altar. A kneeler is provided for any time that the bride and groom are not standing. This keeps the bride and groom directly in the center for the entire ceremony.
- B) In the front row, on either side. The bride and groom come forward for the exchange of vows and nuptial blessing.
- C) In the sanctuary, next to the presider's chair and behind the ambo.

The bridal party is always seated in the front rows.

Liturgy of the Word

The bride and groom should choose their readings in consultation with their presiding priest or deacon. The bride and groom choose family members or friends to proclaim the readings. Copies of the readings are taken from the Rite of Marriage and will be available at the rehearsal.

Rite of Marriage

The bride and groom may choose one of two options for the Rite of Marriage:

- A) Bride and groom stand at the foot of the altar facing one another. The presiding priest or deacon stands facing the congregation on the step above the bride and groom.
- B) Bride and groom stand at the top step of the sanctuary facing each other and the congregation. The presiding priest or deacon stands on the same level as the congregation, facing the bride and groom.

With either option, the bride and groom may choose to have the wedding party stand with them.

Prayers of the Faithful

The bride and groom should choose the Prayers of the Faithful in consultation with their presiding priest or deacon. The bride and groom choose family members or friends to read the prayers. Copies of the Prayers of the Faithful will be available at the rehearsal. The bride and groom may choose to personalize and add appropriate prayers in consultation with their presiding priest or deacon.

Presentation of the Bread and Wine

The bride and groom may choose family or friends to present the gifts. The gifts will be brought from the back of the chapel. The bread and wine are presented. Other items are not permitted in the presentation.

Nuptial Blessing (Follows the Lord's Prayer)

If the bride and groom are seated in the front rows, they will move to the foot of the altar. They will kneel if they are at the kneeler.

Sign of Peace

The bride and groom may choose to exchange peace with a few friends and family.

Communion

The bride and groom may choose two family members or friends to assist with the distribution of communion. However, anyone who assists with communion must be a commissioned Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist.

The Chapel Coordinator and sacristan will assist with communion if no family members are able to assist.

Dedication to the Virgin Mary (optional)

The bride and groom walk to Mary together to offer prayers for a joyful marriage. The bride may also choose to walk alone or with another family member.

Recessional

The bride and groom, bridal party and family members recess down the main aisle and continue walking around to the side aisle and back up to the altar for picture taking. Photographs are taken inside the chapel immediately following the wedding and before outdoor photos are taken.

COMMON ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FROM PRESIDING PRIESTS OR DEACONS

- The chapel offers albs, chasubles, stoles and copes.
- The chapel offers a white dalmatic and corresponding stole for deacons.
- A sacristan will assist in the sacristy. This sacristan may also assist as an acolyte if the priest or deacon would like assistance.
- The Rite of Marriage is available in the sacristy as are the other liturgical books.
- The scriptural readings from the Rite of Marriage are available.
- It is very helpful for the presider to attend the rehearsal. Please consult and work with the Chapel Coordinator so that the ceremony is celebrated within the norms of the chapel.

SUGGESTED TIMELINE

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| ▪ Confirm wedding date at the Chapel | 1 to 2 years before your wedding |
| ▪ Review the details in the Wedding Packet | 1 to 2 years before your wedding |
| ▪ Begin working with your priest or deacon | 1 year before |
| ▪ Submit Pastor Permission Letter | 1 year before |
| ▪ Submit Presider Delegation Form and Letter of Eligibility, if required | 1 year before |
| ▪ Sign-Up for PreCana/Marriage Prep | 1 year before |
| ▪ Ask your presider if you should complete the Catholic Couple Checkup (CCC) or FOCCUS survey | 1 year before |
| ▪ Request Baptism/Confirmation Certificates | 6 months before |
| ▪ Submit completed Affidavits | 6 months before |
| ▪ Submit Prenuptial Questionnaire | 6 months before |
| ▪ Submit Liturgy and Music Planning Form which was emailed to you by the Chapel Music Director | 1 month before |
| ▪ Obtain Cook County Marriage License | 1 month before |
| ▪ Chapel Coordinator will contact you with specific liturgy details | 1 month before |