



Chapel of Our Lady of Peace

Since its inception, Bellarmine Chapel has been the spiritual, liturgical and sacramental heart of Xavier University. Generations of students, faculty, staff and parishioners have gathered here to hear the Word of God proclaimed and preached, to be fed at the Table of the Lord, to experience the graces of the other sacraments, and to seek solace in private and communal prayer. The recent establishment of the Chapel of Our Lady of Peace (Chapel of OLP) on campus is a privileged opportunity to recall and affirm the sacred role Bellarmine Chapel has played and continues to play at Xavier and provide appropriate guidelines for the new Chapel of OLP's use.

Bellarmino Chapel remains the ordinary locus for Christian worship and celebration on Xavier's campus. Hence, all sacramental celebrations properly belong there, although, by exception, sacramental occasions may, with suitable approval, be celebrated in the Chapel of OLP. This is especially true of the Eucharist as the center of Christian life and worship, and all devotional practices which flow from it (adorations, expositions, etc.). Regularly scheduled masses, by definition, belong always in Bellarmine Chapel; masses in the Chapel of OLP will only be permitted when there is a clear reason why the mass is more appropriate there than in Bellarmine. Approval of the Office of the President, charged with the care of the Chapel of OLP, is required. When the mass involves students, initial application should be made to the Director of the Dorothy Day Center for Faith and Justice who, should he/she approve, will forward the request to the Office of the President. Others should contact the Office of the President directly. All Eucharistic devotions outside of mass belong exclusively in Bellarmine Chapel.

As to the other sacraments, baptism and marriage most particularly, all guidelines established by Bellarmine Chapel will be in force and no baptism or wedding which cannot take place in Bellarmine may take place in the Chapel of OLP. Said another way, only Catholic baptisms and weddings will be permitted. The approval process for baptisms and weddings always involves two parts; planning well in advance is therefore strongly advised.

The first part is obtaining approval from the University President's Office. Ordinarily, parents arranging a child's baptism or a couple planning a wedding must have some relationship to Xavier University as student, alumni, faculty or staff or to Bellarmine Parish as parishioner. (The principle exceptions to this rule will be for members of the extended Williams family, donors of the Chapel of OLP.) Such sacramental celebrations requested by current students must initially be made through the Director of the Dorothy Day Center for Faith and Justice. Given that baptisms requested to take place in the Chapel of OLP happen by definition outside of usual times when baptisms are celebrated in Bellarmine Chapel and a presider for them cannot therefore be guaranteed, the party requesting the baptism must have already arranged for a presider to perform the ceremony. For weddings, space constraints in the Chapel of OLP mean that seating is strictly limited to 20 people (15 when musicians are involved, the space for whom is severely limited). As with baptisms, a couple intending a wedding in the Chapel of OLP must have arranged for a priest or deacon to conduct the wedding.

The second step in the approval process is gaining Archdiocesan approval. It is the responsibility of the priest or deacon performing the sacrament to obtain in writing the permission of the Archbishop. Approval by the University does not imply Archdiocesan approval. Those whose weddings or baptisms have been approved for the Chapel of OLP by both the University and the Archdiocese must then contact Bellarmine Chapel for Bellarmine's information. It is the responsibility of the couple who are planning a Catholic wedding or baptism to complete the sacramental preparation program of the Catholic parish to which they belong. Bellarmine Chapel maintains all records for weddings and baptisms conducted in the Chapel of OLP. For further information, please contact the Office of the President.

Within these guidelines, the proper role of the Chapel of OLP becomes clear: it is pre-eminently a place for prayer, for both individuals and groups, during the established hours when the Chapel of OLP is open for general use. It is available to all regardless of faith tradition on a first-come, first-serve basis. While groups are welcome to use the Chapel of OLP for group prayer (such as communal recitation of the rosary), no reservations for such purposes will be taken. Because other uses of the Chapel of OLP (as for lectures, recitals, etc.) will limit its availability as a space for prayer, such uses are not appropriate.