To all couples planning the celebration of a Roman Catholic marriage in J. Irving Whalley Memorial Chapel (Whalley Chapel) at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown:

You have begun the important and exciting process of preparing to celebrate your marriage ceremony. Congratulations! In the case of all weddings involving at least one Roman Catholic party, it is the responsibility of the Pitt-Johnstown Roman Catholic Sacramental Minister to oversee the preparation process in accord with Catholic marriage law and the directives of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.

The current Sacramental Minister is Father Matthew Reese, who may be reached at St. Patrick Roman Catholic Church, 609 Park Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15902; (814)539-2186.

To begin the process of reserving Whalley Chapel, you must first contact Father Matthew Reese to coordinate clergy availability for the wedding ceremony. After you have spoken directly to Father Matthew Reese you should contact the Conference Center and check the opening of the date and time you want. If the date and time is open you may reserve the Chapel, but if the date and time in question is not available you should contact Father Matthew Reese again before making a final reservation with the Conference Center.

In addition, please note the following general considerations in regard to Roman Catholic marriages celebrated at college/university chapels according to the directives of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown (a copy of these directives must be given to the priest/deacon celebrating the wedding):

1. At least one party is registered and actively participates in a Roman Catholic parish. This information will be conveyed to the priest/deacon witnessing the marriage by means of a letter from the party’s pastor who grants permission for the marriage to occur outside of the home parish.

2. The couple must observe all requirements for the celebration of a Roman Catholic marriage. These requirements include:
   a. **Freedom to marry according to Catholic Canon Law.** Either party (Protestant or Catholic) must notify the witnessing priest/deacon and the Sacramental Minister immediately if he or she has been married previously by a priest, other minister, or civil official.
   
   b. Participation in an approved marriage preparation program (e.g. Pre-Cana, Engaged Encounter, or Sponsor Couple).
   
   c. The taking of the FOCCUS instrument and discussion with priest/deacon about the results.

   d. **Meeting with the priest/deacon witnessing the marriage** both to ensure a basic understanding of the Catholic Church’s teaching on marriage and to complete the necessary paperwork.

3. The priest/deacon witnessing the marriage must obtain delegation in writing from Father David Peles, Pastor of St. Benedict Parish, 2310 Bedford St., Johnstown, PA 15904 (814)266-9718 — (the territorial parish in which the Pitt-Johnstown campus is located.)

4. The pertinent documents must be filed and the marriage recorded at St. Benedict Parish, 2310 Bedford St., Johnstown, PA15904 (814) 266-9718, by the witnessing priest/deacon on the day of the wedding.

5. All university requirements for the use of the Whalley Chapel must be observed.

Your prompt attention to the aforementioned details will help us to make the celebration of your marriage in Whalley Chapel as positive, enjoyable, and a memorable as possible!

Last Updated: Spring 2013