



The Roman Catholic
Diocese of Phoenix

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP


DECREE

Diocesan Norm for Weddings in High School Chapels of the Diocese of Phoenix

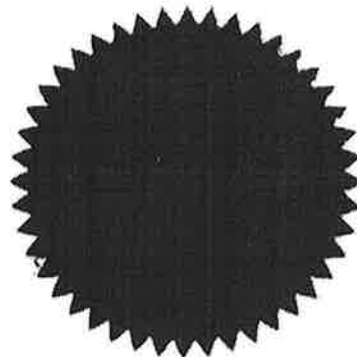
The question has been asked, as to the lawfulness of celebrating Marriage Rites in the Chapels of Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Phoenix. Since Chapels on high school campuses are not designated as "approved places" for hosting such ceremonies, the Bishop of Phoenix, Most Reverend Thomas J. Olmsted, in order to provide clarity to the current and future practice, hereby promulgates this Norm for the Diocese of Phoenix. For all intents and purposes, this Norm is to be considered *particular law* for the Diocese of Phoenix, and must be upheld by all Catholic high school Administrators and Clerics in the Diocese of Phoenix.

This Diocesan Norm reads: "Since Catholic theology and ecclesiastical laws view the Parish church as the ordinary and proper place for the celebration of the Sacraments, including marriages involving at least one Catholic, it is only by special permission and dispensation that a marriage ceremony is permitted to take place at an alternative location. Furthermore, it is left to the discretion of the diocesan bishop to determine which locations are appropriate for the lawful and valid celebration of the Rite of Marriage involving at least one Catholic person. Therefore, with this Decree, notwithstanding customs *contra leges* which enjoy the force of law¹, I hereby declare that Chapels located on the campuses of all Diocesan High Schools in the territory of the Diocese of Phoenix, do not qualify as "approved places" for marriages. Catholics are encouraged to celebrate the Rite of Marriage in the local parish to which they belong, or in some other parish church or approved location to which they have an affinity.

Given this day, 11th, of November, 2009


+Thomas J. Olmsted
Bishop of Phoenix


Sr. Jean Steffes, CSA
Chancellor



¹ It is established that "Brophy Chapel," has enjoyed the status of being an approved place for wedding ceremonies for many decades. Due to its longstanding custom and association with St. Francis Xavier Parish, weddings may continue to be celebrated at Brophy Chapel.