

I pray this communiqué finds you, your loved ones and your community doing well. What's more, I hope you had a restful and rejuvenating summer. As you probably know there are certain practices that our people typically need to be continually reminded of. Usually these vary and depend upon location but typically need to be addressed. Some of these practices include cremations, memorial services and weddings on fast days. While all these guidelines are referenced in the Archdiocese yearbook we still need to remind our faithful of their practices.

Recently, we have seen more and more cases of couples who wish to marry, and reserve the wedding hall on a fast day unaware that weddings are not allowed. You can help alleviate this by posting the spiritual guideline\* (permanently) in your weekly bulletin and with a friendly and pastoral email to your parishioners.

Furthermore, and this has been repeatedly emphasized, prior to instructing a couple to write this office for permission to marry on a fast day (or another day when marriages are prohibited), you should exhaust all efforts to get the couple to change the date. Only then, and when the circumstances warrant should you ask them to write to His Grace to seek approval. While the Chancellery tries to be pastoral, it has to be emphasized that these exceptions are not automatic, with each request considered on its own merits and a decision made on the validity of the reasons cited for the accommodation.

May you and your loved ones experience a blessed and uplifting Ecclesiastical New Year and may the Feast of The Universal Exaltation of the Holy Cross be a blessing to all.

With brotherly love and in Christ's Service,

Fr. Chrysostom Panos

*\*Sample Bulletin Listing:*

**BEFORE YOU RESERVE YOUR WEDDING DAY**

*The Holy Church has a sacred obligation to uphold and abide by the spiritual guidelines which have been formulated over the ages. One of these guidelines dictates that Wednesdays and Fridays are to be observed as days of fasting, in some cases that includes Saturdays and Sundays. Therefore, weddings are prohibited on such days. In order to avoid confusion and conflict, before you reserve a reception hall you need to check with the church if that day is indeed a day when weddings are allowed.*

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The Very Reverend Archimandrite  
Fr. Chrysostom Panos  
*Office of the Chancellor  
of the  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America  
and of the  
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