This handbook is meant to serve as a guideline for those who handle sacramental records, from recording the information to preservation strategies.
INTRODUCTION

Sacramental records are legal documents produced by the Church that contain vital records. They are essential for tracking the growth and decline of parishes, populations, and communities as well as the ethnic heritage of areas within a diocese. Because of the importance of these records, it is crucial to understand how to properly store, handle, repair and record information in sacramental registers. It is our goal to provide those who work for the Church with the understanding of how to properly identify, organize, maintain, and preserve these records.

Each parish in the Diocese of Steubenville, according to Canon Law, will have registers of baptisms, communions, marriage, confirmations, and deaths. Each pastor is in charge of overseeing that these registers are appropriately preserved and inscribed (Canon 535). Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the Diocese, in collaboration with those pastors and staff, to ensure the proper use of these records by authorized persons.

This handbook is meant to serve as a guideline for those who handle sacramental records and a way to determine whether those handling registers are doing so responsibly and carefully. This guide has been designed with help from the Diocese of Columbus Sacramental Records Handbook and strives to cover all aspects of handling records, from recording the information to preservation strategies. However, there will surely still be aspects that may not have been covered in this guide. If there are any further questions, please feel free to contact the chancery or archive at the Diocese of Steubenville for assistance.
October 12, 2017

Dear Friend in Christ:

The Catholic Church has been entrusted with the sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ himself. The sacraments are efficacious signs of God’s Grace. As privileged recipients of these holy gifts from Jesus, it is all the more reason for our local church to possess guidelines to record the celebration of each sacrament.

The Sacramental Records Handbook provides the necessary protocols and continuity in the institutional memory of the sacraments celebrated in the Diocese of Steubenville. It is our hope that you will find these guidelines helpful in your pastoral service.

With prayerful best wishes and entrusting you to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, patroness of the Diocese of Steubenville, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Jeffrey M. Monforton
Bishop of Steubenville

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GENERAL NORMS REGARDING SACRAMENTAL RECORDS
1. GENERAL NORMS REGARDING SACRAMENTAL RECORDS

1.1 Applicable Canons Regarding General Norms for Sacramental Records

Canon 491

§1. A diocesan bishop is to take care that the acts and documents of the archives of cathedral, collegiate, parochial, and other churches in his territory are also diligently preserved and that inventories or catalogs are made in duplicate, one of which is to be preserved in the archive of the church and the other in the diocesan archive.

§2. A diocesan bishop is also to take care that there is an historical archive in the diocese and that documents having historical value are diligently protected and systematically ordered in it.

§3. In order to inspect or remove the acts and documents mentioned in §§1 and 2, the norms established by the diocesan bishop are to be observed.

Canon 535

§1. Each parish is to have parochial registers, that is, those of baptisms, communions, confirmations, marriages, deaths, and others as prescribed by the conference of bishops or the diocesan bishop. The pastor is to see to it that these registers are accurately inscribed and carefully preserved.

§2. In the baptismal register are also to be noted confirmation and those things which pertain to the canonical status of the Christian faithful by reason of marriage, without prejudice to the prescript of can. 1133, of adoption, of the reception of sacred orders, of perpetual profession made in a religious institute, and change of rite. These notations are always to be noted on a baptismal certificate.

§3. Each parish is to have its own seal. Documents regarding the canonical status of the Christian faithful and all acts which can have juridic importance are to be signed by the pastor or his delegate and sealed with the parochial seal.

§4. In each parish there is to be a storage area, or archive, in which the parochial registers are protected along with letters of bishops and other documents which are to be preserved for reason of necessity or advantage. The pastor is to take care that all of these things, which are to be inspected by the diocesan bishop or his delegate at the time of visitation or at some other opportune time, do not come into the hands of outsiders.

§5. Older parochial registers are also to be carefully protected according to the prescripts of particular law.

Canon 876.

To prove the conferral of baptism, if prejudicial to no one, the declaration of one witness beyond all exception is sufficient or the oath of the one baptized if the person received baptism as an adult.

Canon 894.

To prove the conferral of confirmation, the prescripts of canon 876 are to be observed.
1.2. **REGISTER**

**Required Records**
Each parish is required to maintain records of baptisms, communions, confirmations, marriages, and deaths. Maintaining records of first communions is optional, by Canon Law, but required in our diocese. In addition, there must be separate registers maintained for each parish, even when the same priest serves as pastor for more than one parish.

**Parishes and Other Institutions**
Only parishes are to maintain sacramental records and registers. Any other non-parochial institution that wishes to maintain records and registers must receive approval from the Bishop. If a pastor is in charge of an additional chapel or pastoral center, he should ensure that the records and registers are kept at the parish office.

**Inventories of Registers**
According to Canon 491 §1, parishes and missions must periodically prepare inventories of sacramental registers. These inventories should be sent to the diocesan archives. This should be carried out before the assignment of a new priest to a parish.

**Format**
Special registers are required. These are available from private vendors. Depending on its needs, a parish may retain separate registers for every sacrament or may keep a combined register.

**Acid Free Paper**
The pages of the registers are to be made of acid-free paper.

**Computer Reproductions**
Sacramental records may be duplicated on computers. However, this process must be recorded in the registers. Please note that the registers are the only authentic copy of sacramental records and must never be destroyed or discarded, even if there is a duplicate on a computer.

**Repair of Old Registers**
As registers become worn and damaged with time, they should be rebound by a professional binder. The original register is to be stored in a safe a place, where it can avoid any outside damage. Please contact the diocesan archive if you have books that are in poor condition. The only time the records may be transferred to a new register is when the original register is beyond repair.

**Safe Storage**
Sacramental registers should be stored in a locked place that is, preferably, fire-proof or fire-resistant. They may only be removed by authorized personnel and only for legitimate purposes. The only time a register may be taken of parish premises is for duplication purposes or to transfer it to the diocesan archive.
Non Transferable
Under no circumstances may an individual remove or take any parochial records when leaving the parish or transferring to another assignment. This includes sacramental registers. Outside the legitimate access described in the confidentially section below, neither the originals nor any copies of sacramental registers, nor the data they contain, whether on microfilm or otherwise, can ever be given, loaned, or sold to any person or institution without the written permission of the Bishop of Steubenville. Such permission shall specify the conditions for use, duplication, and publication.

Reporting Loss or Destruction
The loss or destruction of any sacramental register should be reported immediately to the Chancellor. The chancellor will assist the parish in reconstructing the registers from the duplicate copies or parish registers it holds.

Records of Closed Parishes, Missions, or Catholic Institutions
If a parish or mission is closed, the chancery staff will review the registers and all other records in order to determine the appropriate retention and disposition. After establishing the parish or mission’s closing after the last entry in the register, the registers will be transferred to the parish that assumed the territory of the closed parish or mission for future issue of sacramental certificates.

If a Catholic institution closes or combines with another institution in a manner that prevents the maintenance of specifically Catholic sacramental records, the registers must be discontinued and transferred to the territorial parish for future issue of sacramental certificates. All future sacraments performed at that location are to be recorded in the registers of the territorial parish.

For assistance with determining which parish is holding the sacramental records of a closed/suppressed parish or mission, clergy and staff may contact the chancery office. We have also included a list of such parishes in the Appendix of this guide.

Checklist of things to review in order to assure proper care of registers
1. Be sure anything inappropriately attached to the book is removed (please do so with caution in order to avoid damaging the book or pages)
2. Do not tape anything into or onto the book;
   a. No paper clips
   b. No sticky notes
   c. No loose pieces of paper
   d. Information from loose paper (such as notations), should be recorded into the corresponding entries in the book
   e. Documents connected with the book should be put in a folder that is to be placed between the last page and back cover of the book
3. Once any notes and information from separate papers are entered into the book, the original papers and notes may be destroyed
4. Save all adoption paperwork connected to a book in a file folder
5. Gently straighten out folded edges on the pages
6. Check for any whited-out places in the book. Remind parish staff not to use white-out. Instead, staff should be correcting mistakes by simply drawing one line through a mistake and writing in the correct wording above or beside it.

7. Anything written in pencil should be written over with an archival ink pen.

8. Carefully remove all staples.

1.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

Nature of Information
Care must be taken to protect the privacy of individuals. While sacramental records contain information about public events, they also contain confidential and personal information.

Access to Registers
Sacramental registers belong to the individual parish and are maintained for the good of the Christian faithful. They are private, not public, documents. No one, except for the pastor and his delegate, can claim a right to access the register directly.

Authorized Personnel
The pastor is the one who is ultimately responsible for the care and confidentiality of the registers themselves, including any reproductions. He has the authority to designate other persons to make entries into registers and prepare certificates. These persons may be employees or volunteers, but their number should be small. These persons must be well known to the pastor and able to work carefully to protect confidentiality. They also should be adequately trained by the pastor to work with the registers. Their work with registers is not to exceed their mandate from the pastor.

Genealogical Research
Sacramental registers should never be available for genealogical researchers. The pastor or designated persons may research the information for someone as requested, but should never allow an individual to have full access. Care must also be taken not to disclose confidential information. Furthermore, only information 70 years old or older is allowed to be released for genealogical research. The chancery archives will be glad to do genealogical research. Request forms and information may be found online on the diocesan website, www.diosteub.org, Offices, Archives, Requests.

1.4 ENTRIES

Type of Data
The only data that should be entered into sacramental registers is data that is required by Canon Law and considered necessary for the complete and accurate maintenance of records.

Timelines
Entries should be made as soon as possible after the event occurs.

Place of Entry
The proper parish for the recording of sacraments and deaths is the parish in whose territory the sacraments or rites of Christian burial were celebrated. For exceptions, see the individual register sections.
Chronological Order
All entries must be made in chronological order. If the chronology cannot be kept for a certain reason, a note should be made in the proper chronological location in the register with a cross-reference for the actual entry (e.g., “See SMITH, page 40).

Specific Columns
It is important to enter the data in the proper columns of the registers. For example, most registers contain several columns, which are titled as “Date of Birth,” or “Parents’ Names” or “Notations.”

Index
Every entry in the register must be recorded in the register’s index, according to the person’s last name.

Additional Notations
If there is not enough space to record all of the data in a specific column, the remaining information may be entered elsewhere on the same page or even a different page of the register. However, please be sure to include a cross-reference (e.g., “See JONES, page 40” or “JONES; CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39).

Sacramental Records File
Lengthy material should not be written in sacramental registers. Such material or related documents, such as civil records or correspondences, should be retained safely in a file in the parish archives. However, discretion must be exercised in deciding which material to place in this file. Not everything has to be retained. This file should be marked “Sacramental Records” and the words “See Sacramental Records File” should be printed in the “Notations” column of the sacramental register.

Legibility, Printing, and Ink
All entries must be printed plainly and legibly. Cursive or elaborate scripts must not be used. Entries should also be made in fade-proof and waterproof ink, with an archival pen.

Style for Names and Dates
The last name of an entry’s subject should be printed in upper case, e.g., “JONES.” In addition, print the last name of the month instead of using the month’s number (e.g., “Aug” rather than “8”).

Confidential Information
Confidential data, which is not to be included on certificates, should be marked as such when it is entered into the register. For example, write: “Confidential – do not include on certificate.” Parish clergy and staff will have to exercise discretion in determining what is to be marked confidential. If uncertain, clergy or staff members may consult with the chancery for guidance. For all cases, please observe canon 535, §2 for direction.
Minister of Sacrament
The minister of a sacrament does not need to sign the register if the person making the entry witnessed the event or has available a document (e.g., Sacristy Record of baptism) signed by the minister which clarifies the conferral of the sacrament. In these cases the name of the minister is printed in the register.

1.5 CERTIFICATES

Definition
A certificate is an official document that certifies that an individual received a sacrament. It is a duplicate of information already entered in a sacramental register.

Church Use Only
Sacrament certificates are only intended for internal church use, not for civil purposes. Since certain data is entered in the registers based on the word of someone else (e.g., the date of birth of a person being baptized), the certificate is simply repeating that data but not certifying it as true.

Authorized Source of Records
When it comes to who may issue a certificate, only the parish or other location holding the original sacramental record is allowed to do so. The information for the certificate should not come from a microfilm reproduction, but rather from the actual register. The only time a computer record may be used is if the information on the digital record corresponds identically to the information on the original record.

Authorized Requests
Any member of the Catholic Church has a right to request and obtain a certificate of a sacrament he or she received and which was recorded in a register. However, only that person, the parents of a minor, a legal guardian, and a pastoral minister of another Catholic parish or diocese has this right. If the parents of the individual are divorced, both of them, regardless of legal custody, have the right to a certificate.

Procedure for Requests
Requests for a certificate may be submitted either in writing or by phone request. They may also be received via the online application form on the diocesan website. Those who may request certificates are the individual whose record it is, parents or guardians of minors, and clergy, parish, or diocesan personnel in need of said documentation. It is recommended that a log of requests be kept on file for one year.

No information from sacramental registers should be provided to the individual via telephone or electronic means, except to another Catholic parish or agency. Even then, it is crucial to practice carefulness for the individual’s privacy.

Format
Certificates should have an official appearance and should always be issued in a consistent format. Blank certificates may be obtained by commercial vendors or local printers. All certificates must bear the name and address of the parish.
Authentication
All certificates must be typed, printed by computer, or hand-written in ink. They must be signed by the pastor or his delegate and stamped or impressed with the parish or diocesan seal. An original certificate with the pastor’s signature stamped on it along with the seal is also valid for authentication. Copies of certificates are not considered authentic documents.

Required Data
Certificates must include all data contained within the sacramental register. Only confidential information or information considered extraneous to the person’s canonical status is to be excluded. Non-confidential information written in the “Notations” column should always be included. If there is nothing in the “Notations” column, the words “No Notations” should be printed on the certificate.

Missing Record
A situation might occur when the information in a record requested for a certification cannot be found. Every effort should be made to find a record, including checking with parishes in the vicinity.

If the search is unwarranted or fails, canon 876 can be applied. The only information that should be entered in the register is that information which can be absolutely verified, even if this leaves an incomplete entry. The name of the witness or witnesses, the date of his or her testimony, and the words, “Based on the testimony of…” should be printed in the “Notations” column of the register.

1.6 CHANGE TO ENTRIES

Caution about Changes
Once information is entered into a register, the data is considered official and permanent. It may not be modified unless there are special conditions (as detailed below). Do not scratch out, white-out, or erase any original data.

Style for Minor Changes
Minor changes, such as correcting a misspelling, may be made directly to the original entry. These changes are to be made by drawing a straight, simple line through the word, number, or letter to be changed and then printing the correct text immediately above or below it.

Style for Major Changes
Major changes, such as recording an adoption after a baptism, may require a new entry to be created. In these cases, the original entry should be preserved without change. A new entry, with all the data from the original entry reproduced is to be made in the same register as close to the original entry as possible. Both entries, as well as listings in the index, are to be cross-referenced. “Do Not Issue Certificate from This Record” must be printed across the face of the original entry.
Authorization for Insubstantial Changes
An insubstantial error, such as a misspelling, can be corrected upon request of those persons who have a right to a certificate, as mentioned in the CERTIFICATES section above.

Authorization for Substantial Changes
More significant errors require authentic supporting documentation. Such documentation will typically consist of an original “raised seal” certificate from a civil or ecclesiastical office, court, agency, etc. The issuing agency, date of the certificate, and any protocol number should be printed in the “Notations” column of the register. If the error involves information pertaining to the celebration of a sacrament or rite of Christian burial (e.g., date, identity of godparent) such that no external verifying documentation exists, the written or oral testimony of a reputable witness will suffice.

Permitted Changes
The following are permitted changes:
- Correct name
- Correct date
- Correct spelling
- New legal name
- Adoptive parent(s)
2. BAPTISMAL REGISTER

2.1. APPLICABLE CANONS

Canon 296 §2. (Code of the Canons of the Eastern Churches) In the baptismal register are also to be noted the enrollment of the baptized into a determined Church sui iuris. According to the norm of canon 37, the administration of chrismation with holy myron as well as those things which pertain to the canonical status of the Christian faithful by reason of marriage, with due regard for canon 840, §3, adoption, and sacred orders or perpetual profession in a religious institute; these notations are always to be noted on the certificate of baptism.

Canon 535 §2. In the baptismal register are also to be noted confirmation and whatever affects the canonical status of the Christian faithful by reason of marriage, with due regard for the prescription of can. 1133, adoption, reception of sacred orders, perpetual profession in a religious institute, and change of rite; these notations are always to be noted on a document which certifies the reception of baptism.

Canon 852 §1. The prescripts of the canons on adult baptism are to be applied to all those who, no longer infants, have attained the use of reason.

Canon 869 §2. Those baptized in a non-Catholic ecclesial community must not be baptized conditionally unless, after an examination of the matter and the form of the words used in the conferral of baptism and a consideration of the intention of the baptized adult and the minister of the baptism, a serious reason exists to doubt the validity of the baptism.

Canon 870. An abandoned infant of foundling is to be baptized unless after diligent investigation the baptism of the infant is established

Canon 873. There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor

Canon 874 §1. To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must:

1. Be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;
2. Have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;
3. Be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;
4. Not be bound by a canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
5. Not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized

§2. A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the baptism.
**Canon 876.** To prove the conferral of baptism, if prejudicial to no one, the declaration of one witness beyond all exception is sufficient or the oath of the one baptized if the person received baptism as an adult.

**Canon 877 §1.** The pastor of the place where the baptism is celebrated must carefully and without any delay record in the baptismal register the names of the baptized, with mention made of the minister, parents, sponsors, witnesses, if any, the place and date of the conferral of the baptism, and the date and place of birth.

§2. If it is a question of a child born of an unmarried mother, the name of the mother is to be inserted if there is public proof of her maternity or if she asks this willingly, either in writing or before two witnesses; likewise the name of the father is to be inserted if his paternity has been proved either by some public document or by his own declaration before the pastor and two witnesses; in other cases, the name of the one baptized is recorded without any indication of the name of the father or the parents.

§3. If it concerns an adopted child, the names of those adopting are to be inscribed and, at least if it is done in the civil records of the region, also the names of the natural parents according to the norm of §§ 1 and 2, with due regard for the precepts of the conference of bishops.

**Canon 878.** If the baptism was not administered by the pastor or in his presence, the minister of baptism, whoever it is, must inform the pastor of the parish in which it was administered of the conferral of the baptism, so that he records the baptism according to the norm of canon 877, §1.

**Canon 1685.** As soon as the sentence is executed, the judicial vicar must notify the local ordinary of the place in which the marriage was celebrated. The local ordinary must take care that the declaration of the nullity of the marriage and any possible prohibitions are noted as soon as possible in the marriage and baptismal registers.

### 2.2 ENTRIES

For baptisms celebrated under typical circumstances, the following information is to be entered in the baptismal register (see canon 877 §1):

1. The Christian name(s) of the child as designated by the parent(s)/adoptive parents or the legal name of the adult (always use the maiden name of a woman)
2. The name of the father (first, middle, and surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle, and maiden name); or names of adoptive parents
3. Date and place of birth
4. Name(s) of the sponsor(s)
5. Place and date of baptism
6. Name of the minister performing the baptism

**Baptismal Certificates**

The data included on a baptismal certificate should reflect the information that is recorded in the baptismal register. The purpose of this is to prove the person’s status in the Church by including not only information regarding the baptism, but also information regarding other sacraments received. Once specific data has been changed in the sacramental register, the
original data is not transcribed onto the certificates (e.g., the natural parents’ names after adoption).

**Ascription to Proper Church Sui Iuris**
Ascription to a uniate Church sui iuris, (e.g., Byzantine or Maronite church) is determined by the rite of the father, not by the rite of the minister of parish of baptism, unless the person is 14 years of age or older, at which the individual can choose his or her rite. Thus, when a Latin priest or deacon baptized someone who by law is ascribed to an Eastern Catholic Church, a notation should be made in the “notation” column.

**Source of Data**
Ordinarily, the data used to create a record of baptism (as required by can. 877, §1) originates on a “Sacristy Record of Baptism,” a small form from a preprinted pad typically sold by commercial vendors. If someone other than the parents or legal guardians is trying to make arrangements for the baptism, please call the chancery for assistance. The sacristy record is filled out by someone in the parish office at the time the baptism is scheduled, by a member of the baptism preparation team during the catechetical program, or by the minister of baptism at the time of the actual baptism. Before the data is transferred to the baptismal register, a parent, guardian, or adult candidate should verify the data written on the sacristy record (usually at the time of baptism), and the minister must sign the sacristy record verifying that the sacrament was conferred. There should be a clear procedure in place for assuring that the data is transferred from the sacristy record to the baptismal register as quickly as possible.

**Recipients from more than One Parish**
When persons from more than one parish are baptized or received into full communion with the Catholic Church at a single ceremony, it is preferred that the record for all the persons be retained at the parish where the rites are celebrated.

**Emergency Baptism and Other Baptisms Outside Parish Church**
In the rare situation when baptism is conferred solemnly (that is with a priest or deacon celebrating the full rite of baptism) in a chapel, hospital, or home, the minister is to see to it that the baptism is recorded in the following baptismal registers:

- the hospital if one is maintained there;
- the church within whose boundaries the baptism occurred;
- and the church at which the person or person’s parents (for a minor) are registered.

The same procedure should be followed when a person is baptized “privately” by a lay person, even though there had been no danger of death.

**Conditional Baptism**
When conditional baptism is conferred, “baptized conditionally” is to be written in the “notations” column. Otherwise the entry is the same as for any other baptism. By virtue of canon 869, §2, baptisms in other Christian faiths are presumed valid until the contrary is clearly demonstrated. Therefore, only after careful investigation and with a positive doubt remaining as to the fact of a baptism or its valid celebration, a person is conditionally baptized. This conditional baptism is done privately (i.e., no fanfare and only the essential participants). In
such cases the date and place of the conditional baptism should be noted instead of the purported earlier baptism. A note as to its conditional celebration should be included.

**Reception into Full Communion by Profession of Faith**
When persons are received into full communion with the Catholic Church, after having been baptized previously in another Christian communion, an entry must be made in the baptismal register as well as in the confirmation register. The data concerning the Profession of Faith should be entered in the spaces provided for baptism, and the data concerning the original baptism should be entered in the notations column, especially the date and place. Special care must be taken to follow this procedure when young children along with their parents are received into full communion, even though there may be no ritual involving the children. For the Profession of Faith for a baptized adult (RCIA), the following information is to be entered in the baptismal register:

- the given and/or Christian name(s) of the person (always use the maiden name of a woman);
- the name of the father (first, middle if any, and surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle if any, and maiden name);
- the date and place of birth;
- the name of the sponsor;
- the date and place of the Profession of Faith are noted in the space provided for Baptism;
- marginal notations giving the date and place of the original baptism, reception of Eucharist and confirmation, and marital status (either current valid marriage or the convalidation of the current marriage). Any declaration of nullity of a marriage attempt (including where granted and protocol number) should be noted.

**Profession of Faith Certificates**
Certificates noting information related to the above described Profession of Faith for a baptized adult can be procured from providers of Catholic sacramental certificates. As in other cases, these certificates should be an exact duplicate of data entered in the sacramental register.

**Celebration of Baptism of an Adult**
For baptism celebrated for an unbaptized adult (RCIA) the following information is to be entered in the baptismal register (can. 877, §1):

- the given and/or Christian name(s) of the person (always use the maiden name of a woman);
- the name of the father (first, middle if any, and surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle if any, and maiden name);
- the date and place of birth;
- the name of the sponsor(s);
- the place and date of the baptism;
- the name of the minister performing the baptism;
- marginal notation of reception of Eucharist and confirmation and marital status (either current valid marriage or the convalidation of the current marriage). Any declaration of invalidity (including where granted and protocol number) should be noted.
Bringing a Baptized Child into the Church

For baptized children before age 7 (canon 852, §1) who are being received into the Church, the following information is to be entered in the baptismal register. This procedure also is to be followed when the child is being received, along with the parents, into full communion with the Catholic Church. The same is done when it is the case of Catholic parents returning to the practice of the faith and the children who are still beneath the age of discretion have already been baptized in a non-Catholic church in the meantime.

- the Christian name(s) of the child as designated by the parent(s);
- the name of the father (first, middle if any, and surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle if any, and maiden name);
- the date and place of birth;
- the name(s) of the sponsor(s) now selected by the parents;
- the date and place (church and town) ceremonies are supplied to effect formal reception into the Church are noted in the spaces provided for Baptism (cf. 1973 Rite of Baptism for Children #31.3);
- data concerning the original baptism should be entered in the notations column, especially the date and place (cf. 1973 Rite of Baptism for Children #31.3).

If it is discovered at the time approaching First Communion that the above was not done at the appropriate time, the parents should be advised to contact the parish where they made their profession of faith and ask that this be remedied. If this is not possible, a record for the children may be created at the parish where First Eucharist is to take place, indicating the facts as derived from the record of the parent’s(s’) profession of faith and/or the parent’s(s’) own trustworthy testimony. The most important consideration is that the children have their own record somewhere and that the parents know where it will be found in the future. Children in this situation should receive First Holy Communion without making a profession of faith (as they are already de facto Catholics). Confirmation would follow at the normal time for Catholic children.

In cases where the child is at or above the age of discretion when the parents convert or return to the faith, they should make their own profession of faith and receive the sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist, and appropriate records should be made in the sacramental registers.

Unbaptized Children at or Above the Age of Discretion Coming Into Full Communion

Because parents often desire that such children be allowed to receive Confirmation (and sometimes even First Communion) “with their class,” some discretion could be given to unbaptized children of “borderline” age to be baptized as “infants” and allowed to receive the other sacraments in due course. But it is difficult to separate a baptized child’s profession of faith from the other sacraments of initiation. Preferably, such children who clearly are of catechetical age should receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist when they make their profession of faith.
**Unmarried Parents**

It is important that the provisions of canon 877 concerning unmarried parents be followed. It is unjust to enter unauthorized names of parents in the baptismal register. The expression “Pater ignotus” (Father unknown) is not to be used in the registry or on any certificates.

**Children of Unknown Parentage**

For children whose parentage cannot be known (canon 870) or is unknown (canon 877, §2), the following information is to be entered in the Baptismal Register:

- the Christian name(s) of the child as designated by the mother or guardian(s);
- the name of the mother (first, middle if any, and maiden), if publicly known or requested by her before two witnesses;
- the name of the natural father (first, middle if any, and surname) only if paternity is established by a legal document or he makes a declaration before the pastor and two witnesses; otherwise leave blank;
- the date and place of birth, if known, or of being found or placed under guardianship;
- the name(s) of the sponsor(s) selected by the parent or guardian;
- the place and date of the baptism;
- the name of the minister performing the baptism.

**United States Norms for Baptism and Adopted Children**

On October 20, 2000, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued norms under canon 877, §3 for the purpose of assisting those with the responsibility of recording the baptism of children who had been adopted or who later are adopted. These norms were originally passed on November 18, 1998, and in turn received Vatican approbation on September 30, 2000.

**Baptism before Adoption**

For children baptized before adoption, the following information shall be added in the baptismal register after the adoption is finalized. (canon 877, §3):

- parentheses ( ) shall be placed around the names of the natural parents;
- the name(s) of the adoptive parent(s) shall then be added;
- the child’s former surname shall also be parenthesized ( ) and the new surname added;
- a notation shall be made that the child was legally adopted.

Baptismal certificates issued by the parish for these individuals should give the name(s) of the adoptive parent(s), the child’s new legal surname, the date and place of birth, the date and place of baptism, and the name of the minister who administered the sacrament. The name(s) of the natural parents and the sponsor(s) shall not be given, and no mention of the fact of adoption shall be made on the baptismal certificate.

A new entry should be made, and in the index cross-reference should be made to the old entry, with the following information:

- the new legal, Christian name of the child as designated by the adoptive parents;
- the names of the adoptive parents;
- the date and place of birth;
- the date and place of the baptism;
- the name of the minister performing the baptism;
Any certificate for this person should be issued from the record created after the adoption; no certificate ever should be issued from the record created before adoption.

**Baptism after Adoption**
For children baptized after adoption, no reference to the adoption or the natural parents is to be made in the baptismal register. Any such data which has been recorded is to be treated as confidential and is not to be included on any certificate.

The following information shall be entered in the register (canon 877, §3):

- the Christian name(s) of the child as designated by the adoptive parent(s);
- the name(s) of the adoptive parent(s);
- the date and place of birth;
- the names of the sponsors selected by the adoptive parent(s);
- the place and date of the baptism;
- the name of the minister performing the baptism.

Baptismal certificates issued by the parish for adopted children will be no different from other baptismal certificates. No mention of the fact of adoption shall be made on the baptismal certificate.

**Baptisms at Catholic Orphanages**
If an individual was baptized at a Catholic orphanage and his or her baptismal record verification is proving difficult, please call the chancery for assistance.

**Number of Godparents**
No more than two names may be entered in the “Godparents” or “Sponsors” column. Church law (canon 873) stipulates one and no more than two sponsors (one female and one male) of baptism. Two godparents of the same gender is not permitted.

**Proxy Godparent**
When a godparent or sponsor appoints a proxy to participate in the rite of baptism, both names should be entered in the register, with “Proxy” written after that person's name.

**Christian Witness**
Church law (canon 874, §2) allows a baptized person, who is not a member of the Catholic Church, to serve as “a Christian witness.” The designation “CW” might be useful for clarity. Church law (Ecumenical Directory # 98b) holds that a baptized Eastern Orthodox person is properly a godparent and not a Christian witness.

**Registers for Ritual Use**
A register used as part of the Church's ritual (e.g., Book of the Elect) should be completely distinct from the regular sacramental registers. The data from the ritual register should be transferred to the baptismal and confirmation registers as soon as possible after the conferral of sacraments or the reception into full communion.
The issuance of a baptismal certificate should reflect what is recorded in the Baptismal Register. Its purpose is to prove the fact of baptism and the reception of any subsequent sacrament or church action that affects that person's status in the Church.

2.3 CHANGES TO ENTRIES SPECIFIC TO BAPTISMAL REGISTERS

Most Changes Occur in the Baptism Register
The baptismal record is the primary sacramental record for Catholics. It serves as a log for all the significant, public developments in one’s relationship with the Church. As a result, most changes to entries in the sacramental registers will be made in the baptismal register.

Changes to Original Data
Some of these changes are actual modifications of the original data entered for baptism, for example, change of name or change of parent. Directions for making such changes can be found in the GENERAL NORMS section of this handbook.

Additions to “Notations” Column
Some of the changes are additions to the “notations” column. For example, when a Catholic is confirmed, married, or ordained, the churches where these sacraments are celebrated notify the church of baptism so the new sacraments can be noted in the baptismal register. Some parishes still give notice of first Communion, although this is no longer required. Also, when a marriage is declared invalid by an ecclesiastical tribunal or when a cleric is returned to the lay state, the Office of Church Law will notify the church of baptism so that a notation can be made in the person's baptismal record (See canon 1685).

Defection from Church
A parish occasionally will receive a notification from an individual or a church indicating that the person is no longer a Catholic and even asking that her/his name be removed from Catholic Church records. While it is appropriate to remove the person's name from the parish membership lists, no changes are to be made to the sacramental records, except for a notation in the “notations” column of the baptismal register: “Formal defection from Catholic Church, [date].” Such situations may call for a letter to the individual explaining the parish’s action and inviting him or her to return, at some future time, to the Catholic Church. In order for a person to make a formal defection from the Church, the following conditions are necessary:

- the internal decision to leave the Catholic Church;
- the realization and external manifestation of that decision;
- and the reception of that decision by the competent ecclesiastical authority (e.g., Ordinary or local pastor).

Reunion with the Church should also be noted, if the parish of baptism is made aware of the reunion.
**Style for Notations**
The notations mentioned in the two preceding paragraphs should be made neatly and succinctly in the “notations” column. Names, dates, places, and protocol numbers are usually the only information needed. These notations are not confidential and should ordinarily be included on certificates.

**Surgical Gender Change**
The Vatican Congregation for Doctrine of the Faith holds that no changes should be made to a baptismal record to reflect the “new” gender of an individual who has undergone what is commonly referred to as a sex-change operation. An October 15, 2002, letter from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops further clarifies:

“Therefore, even in cases of such [sex reassignment] operations the records are not to be altered. Specifically, the altered condition of the faithful under civil law does not change one’s canonical condition which is male or female as determined at the moment of birth. However, should a situation rise in which some sort of notation is determined to be necessary, it is possible, in the margin of the entry for baptism, to note the altered status of the person under civil law. In such cases, the date and relevant protocol number of the civil juridic act or document should be included along with, where possible, a copy of the document itself at that page of the baptismal registry.”

**Reference List—Determining Baptismal Validity by Church of Origin**
The list on the following page has been compiled to assist clergy and parish staff in determining the canonical status of individuals. This list is not exhaustive. If there are questions, contact the chancery for further advice.

**EASTERN CHURCHES IN COMMUNION WITH ROME**
Baptism and confirmation conferred in the Eastern Catholic Churches is always valid. It is sufficient to establish the fact that baptism was administered. Valid confirmation is always administered at the same time as baptism. Usually, the child has also received First Communion at the time of baptism. The Eastern Churches in Communion with Rome include:

**The Alexandrian Rite**
- Coptic Catholic
- Ethiopian Catholic

**The Antiochene Rite (West Syrian)**
- Malankara (Malankarese) Catholic
- Maronite Catholic
- Syrian (Syriac) Catholic

**The Armenian Rite**
- Armenian Holy Apostolic

**The Chaldean Rite (East Syrian)**
- Chaldean Catholic
- Syro-Malabar Catholic

**The Byzantine Rite**
- Melkite Catholic
- Byzantine Slovak Catholic
- Byzantine Ukrainian Catholic
- Albanian Catholic
- Byelorussian Catholic
- Bulgarian Catholic
- Greek Catholic
- Italo-Albanian Catholic
- Byzantine Yugoslav Catholic
- Russian Catholic
- Byzantine-Romanian Catholic
- Ruthenian Catholic
EASTERN CHURCHES NOT IN COMMUNION WITH ROME
The initiation rites conferred by the Eastern Churches not in communion with Rome are considered valid rites. The churches included in this are any of the Orthodox Churches and the Assyrian Churches of the East (also known as the Nestorian Church).

- An individual who wishes to enter into the Roman Catholic Church from an Eastern Church not in communion with Rome does not become a Latin rite Catholic, but rather a member of the ritual rite indicated by their baptism (e.g.: a Russian Orthodox becomes a Russian Catholic; a Syrian Orthodox a Syrian Catholic, and so on).
- The Roman Catholic Church recognizes all of the sacraments of the Eastern rites. A child receives all of the rites of initiation (Eucharist and Confirmation) when baptized so a person should never be reconfirmed. Instead, after catechesis, they would simply make a profession of faith (RCIA 474).

Valid Christian Baptism
The Roman Catholic norm for valid baptism must follow the proper matter and form. The “matter” is water baptism by immersion or pouring. The “form” is the Trinitarian formula (canons 849, 850; RCIA 226). Always ensure that this has been followed. If the rituals or established customs of a church or community prescribe baptism by immersion, pouring, sprinkling together with the Trinitarian formula (in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit), doubt can only arise if it happens that the minister did not observe the regulations of his or her own church or community. The Church considers the validity of these church’s baptisms as follows:

Valid Confirmations
If an individual is from a church with a valid baptism and confirmation and they wish to enter into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, they will need to make a profession of faith after a suitable period of catechesis (RCIA, 473-504).

Individuals from a Church with an Invalid Baptism
If an individual is from a church with an invalid or no baptism and they wish to enter into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, they will be treated as a catechumen and will need to enter into the steps and periods of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. They are fully initiated at the Easter Vigil (RCIA, 1-251).

Alternate Catholic or Orthodox Churches
It is important to read a baptismal certificate thoroughly. On occasion a certificate may read that the person has been baptized in the “Holy Catholic: or “Holy Orthodox” Church. This does not mean they have been baptized Catholic or Orthodox. In order to determine the validity of such a ceremony as a Christian baptism, be sure to utilize the guidelines regarding intention and the Trinitarian formula already described in this handbook. If further help is needed in this regard, please contact the chancery office for advice.
VALID CHURCHES

- Adventist Baptism
- African Methodist Episcopal Baptism
- African Methodist Episcopal Zion Baptism
- American (United American) Catholic Baptism/Confirmation doubtful
- Amish Baptism
- Anglican Baptism
- Assembly of God Baptism
- Baptist Baptism
- Chinese Catholic Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Chinese Christian Baptism
- Christian Fellowship Baptism
- Christian and Missionary Alliance Baptism
- Church of Christ Baptism
- Church of God Baptism
- Church of the Brethren Baptism
- Church of the Nazarene Baptism
- Community of Pope Pius X (Lefebvre) Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Congregational Church Baptism
- Disciples of Christ Baptism
- Dutch Reformed Church Baptism
- Eastern Non-Catholics (Orthodox) Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Episcopal Church Baptism
- Evangelical Church of Covenant Baptism
- Evangelical Churches Baptism
- Evangelical United Brethren Baptism
- International Council of Community Churches Baptism
- Liberal Catholic Church Baptism
- Lutheran Baptism
- Mennonite Baptism
- Methodist Baptism
- Missionary Hill Church Baptism
- Moravian Church Baptism
- New Apostolic Church Baptism
- Old Catholic Church Baptism
- Old Roman Catholic Church Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Polish National Church (is Eastern Rite) Baptism/Confirmation recognized
- Presbyterian Baptism
- Reformed Church Baptism
- Seventh-Day Adventist Baptism
- United Church of Canada Baptism
- United Church of Christ Baptism
- United Reformed Baptism
- Uniting Church of Australia Baptism
- Waldensian Baptism
- Zion Baptism

INVALID CHURCHES

- Apostolic Church Baptism
- Armenian Apostolic Baptism
- Baha'i Faith Baptism
- Bohemian Free Thinkers Baptism
- Christadelphians Baptism
- Christian Community (Rudolf Steiner) Baptism
- Christian Scientist baptism
- Church of Divine Science baptism
- Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) Baptism
- Church of the New Jerusalem baptism
- Church of Scientology baptism
- Church of the Universal Brotherhood (Doukhobors) Baptism
- Jehovah’s Witnesses baptism
- Masons baptism
- New Church of Mr. Emmanuel Swedenborg baptism
- Pentecostal Churches baptism
- People's Church of Chicago baptism
- Quakers (Society of Friends) Baptism
- Salvation Army baptism
- Shakers baptism
- Unitarians/Universalists baptism
3. COMMUNION REGISTER

3.1 Entries

For first Communion the following information is to be entered into the Communion Register (not required by Church law, but required in our diocese):

- the Christian names of the child;
- the date and place of baptism;
- the church and date of the first Communion;
- the name of the main celebrant of the Mass.

First Communion records are required to be retained and reported. They should also be shown on the baptismal record. Because they are a non-canonical record, First Communion records cannot be required for the administration of other sacraments, including marriage.
4. CONFIRMATION REGISTER

4.1 Applicable Canons

Canon 894. To prove the conferral of confirmation the prescripts of Canon 876 are to be observed.

Canon 895. The names of those confirmed with mention made of the minister, the parents and sponsors, and the place and date of the conferral of confirmation are to be recorded in the confirmation register of the diocesan curia or, where the conference of bishops or the diocesan bishop has prescribed it, in a register kept in the parish archive. The pastor must inform the pastor of the place of baptism about the conferral of confirmation so that a notation is made in the baptismal register according to the norm of Can. 535, §2.

Canon 896. If the pastor of the place was not present, the minister either personally or through another is to inform him as soon as possible of the conferral of confirmation.

4.2 ENTRIES

For confirmation celebrated under normal circumstances, the following information is to be entered in the confirmation register (can. 895):

- the legal and Christian names of the child or adult (use maiden name of a woman);
- the name of the father (first, middle if any, and surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle if any, and maiden name);
- the date and place of baptism;
- the name of the sponsor selected by the person;
- the place and date of the confirmation;
- the name of the minister performing the confirmation.

The place of baptism should be notified of the confirmation. In the case of a baptized person who was brought into full communion in the Church, the place of reception (“Profession of Faith”) is to be notified instead of the place of baptism.

Emergency Confirmation

As in the case of emergency baptism the record of an emergency confirmation should be recorded in the hospital’s confirmation register if one exists, and the registers of the territorial parish in which the confirmation occurred as well as the parish of the person confirmed.

Source of Data

When a large number of persons are to be confirmed, it is essential that someone collect the necessary information and see to it that it is communicated accurately to the parish or parishes of the recipients for proper recording in the baptismal register.
Large Group of Recipients
When several persons are confirmed at the same ceremony by the same minister, the date of conferral and the name of the minister may be written only once in the register so long as it is clear that the references apply to all the confirmed. If there is more than one minister at a single ceremony, the record should show clearly which ministers confirmed which recipients.

Recipients from More Than One Parish
When confirmation is conferred upon persons from several parishes at one ceremony, two methods of recording are acceptable: 1) all records made at the parish where the confirmation was celebrated; or 2) records are made at the respective parishes of the recipients. When there is a large representation from more than one parish, method #2 is preferred. When the number of recipients from outside the parish where the confirmation was celebrated is small, method #1 is preferred. Note that when the pastor of some recipient(s) is not present for the conferral of confirmation, the minister of the sacrament or the pastor where it was conferred are obliged to notify the absent pastor about the fact of confirmation.

Baptismal Certificate
In order to satisfy the obligation of notifying the parish of baptism about the conferral of confirmation, a baptismal certificate for each candidate for confirmation should be obtained in advance of the celebration of confirmation.

There are some additional reasons for obtaining a baptismal certificate:
- the fact of valid baptism and Catholicity will be established;
- any previous reception of valid confirmation, especially in the case of Catholics who were baptized in uniate Eastern Churches, will be uncovered;
- any discrepancies between name and parentage provided in the baptismal register and given at the time of confirmation will be discovered;
- the identity of baptismal godparents can be ascertained, pursuant to can. 893, §2.

Baptismal Data
It is recommended that the place and date of baptism be noted in the confirmation register. This can be especially helpful if a person has difficulty locating a baptismal record later in life.

Notification of Church of Baptism
Notification of the church of baptism about the fact of confirmation should be made as soon as possible by the pastor of the place where the record of confirmation is retained. This notification is to include the name of the recipient and the date of baptism, as well as the place and date of confirmation. The names of the minister, parents, and sponsor are not required. When a person previously baptized in another Christian communion is received into full communion and confirmed, the non-Catholic church of baptism is not notified. Notification documents should include a “turnaround” document to verify notations have been recorded.
5. MARRIAGE REGISTER

5.1 APPLICABLE CANONS

Canon 1121 §1. After a marriage has been celebrated, the pastor of the place of the celebration or the person who takes his place, even if neither assisted at the marriage, is to note as soon as possible in the marriage register the names of the spouses, the person who assisted, and the witnesses, and the place and date of the celebration of the marriage according to the method prescribed by the conference of bishops or the diocesan bishop.

Canon 1122 §1. The contracted marriage is to be noted also in the baptismal registers in which the baptism of the spouses has been recorded.

§2. If a spouse did not contract marriage in the parish in which the person was baptized, the pastor of the place of the celebration is to send notice of the marriage which has been entered into as soon as possible to the pastor of the place of the conferral of baptism.

Canon 1123. Whenever a marriage is either convalidated in the external forum, declared null, or legitimately dissolved other than by death, the pastor of the place of the celebration of the marriage must be informed so that a notation is properly made in the marriage and baptismal registers.

Canon 1685. As soon as the sentence is executed, the judicial vicar must notify the local ordinary of the place in which the marriage was celebrated. The local ordinary must take care that the declaration of the nullity of the marriage and any possible prohibitions are noted as soon as possible in the marriage and baptismal registers.

5.2 ENTRIES

For weddings celebrated with recognition by the Catholic Church, the following information is to be entered into the marriage register (canon 1122-1123):

- the legal names of the groom;
  - the name of the father (first, middle if any, and surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle if any, and maiden name) of the groom;
  - the legal names of the bride (always use the maiden name of a woman, even if a second marriage);
  - the name of the father (first, middle if any, and surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle if any, and maiden name) of the bride;
  - the date and place of baptism of each party;
  - the date and place (actual church and town) of the wedding;
  - the names of the witnesses;
  - the name of the priest/deacon/minister asking for and receiving the couple’s vows;
  - notation of any permissions, dispensations and delegations obtained for the valid celebration of the wedding (including protocol number if existing).
Source of Data
The informational facts in the prenuptial file are the source for the marriage register. The marginal notation column is for the purpose of noting any permission or dispensation and other significant factors (for instance, delegation for the minister or sanation).

The pastor is responsible for seeing that the necessary information is recorded in the parish where the marriage was celebrated. The premarital file ordinarily contains all the necessary information. However, the celebrant should be alert to any last minute changes or corrections to the information contained in the premarital file.

Marriage Outside Parish Church
When a marriage is celebrated in a location other than a parish church (e.g. a chapel), the proper parish for the marriage record is the territorial church in which that location stands. The only exception is with a dispensation from the canonical form of Catholic marriage. In that situation, the proper parish for the marriage record is the parish which prepared the couple for marriage from which the necessary dispensation was requested. This is normally the parish of the Catholic party.

Convalidation
When a marriage is convalidated, the data concerning the convalidation is to be placed in the usual columns. The date, place, and official of the original ceremony are to be noted in the “notations” column.

Sanation
When a marriage is validated by radical sanation, the data concerning the original ceremony is to be placed in the usual columns. The date, diocese, and protocol number of the sanation are to be noted in the “Notations” column.

Previous Civil Marriage
Marriages of persons who are baptized or received into full communion in the Catholic Church are not to be recorded in the marriage register unless the marriage was invalid and now is being convalidated or sanated. A notation concerning the marriage is to be placed in the person's baptismal record, in the “notations” column.

Notation of Dispensations and Annulments
When a dispensation is granted prior to marriage, or an annulment is granted after marriage, the date, diocese, and protocol number, along with the type of dispensation (e.g., "Dispensation from Disparity of Worship") or the word “annulment” (with the diocese granting and protocol number), are to be noted in the “notations” column (see canon 1081). Any special recording directions contained in the dispensation or annulment document are to be followed.

Notification of Church of Baptism
When the marriage of a Catholic is celebrated, convalidated, or sanated, the pastor of the parish where the record of marriage is retained must notify the church of baptism as soon as possible. This notification is to include the names of the spouses and the date and place of the wedding, convalidation, or sanation; the names of the official and witnesses are not required.
5.3 PREMARITAL FILES

Contents
Each parish is required to maintain a file of the papers collected during the period of marriage preparation. The file typically will include prenuptial forms, questionnaires, correspondence, notes, baptismal documentation, and dispensation documents. Though it is not required, a copy of the civil license may be retained in this file.

Location
Ordinarily, the premarital file for each couple should be retained by the parish where the marriage is recorded in the marriage register.

Filing
The file for each couple is to be kept in its own envelope or folder, clearly marked with the parties’ names and the date of the marriage. The files should be arranged in alphabetical or chronological order and kept together in a locked file cabinet or safe.

Retention
The premarital files are to be retained in hard copy for 60 years or until both parties have died. Expired files are to be destroyed by shredding or burning.

Transmission of File
If a legitimate request for a copy of the file is made by an ecclesiastical tribunal, or if the chancellor has authorized the surrender of the file to civil authority, a copy of the file should be sent. The original file should remain in the parish's archive, and a memorandum placed in the file regarding the transmission of the copy of the file, including date and to whom the copy was sent. If the copy of the original file is later returned, it must be destroyed by shredding or burning.
6. **DEATH REGISTER**

6.1 Applicable Canon

**Canon 1182.** When the burial has been completed, a record is to be made in the register of deaths according to the norm of particular law.

6.2 **ENTRIES**

*For deaths where the funeral is celebrated in the parish or in the parish boundaries, or when parish clergy celebrate a parish-related funeral outside the parish, the following information is to be entered into the death register (canon 1182):*

- the legal and Christian names of the person;
- the residential address of the deceased person;
- the date and place of death;
- the church and date of burial.

**Source of Data**

The data needed for the death register is ordinarily provided by the funeral director.

**Cremation**

When the body has been cremated, no reference to the date or place of cremation is made in the death register. However, the fact of cremation should be noted as well as the date and place where the ashes were interred.

**Notification of Church of Baptism**

No notice of death needs to be sent to the church of baptism.

**Non-Catholic Burial**

If a priest or deacon is called upon to preside at a non-Catholic burial, an entry can be made in the death register together with a notation concerning the religion of the deceased and the services that were provided.

**Burial Permits**

Burial permit books do not satisfy the conditions of a permanent death register.

**Cemetery Records**

For those parishes with cemeteries, there are applicable civil laws. For advice regarding civil laws, contact the diocesan attorney.