

Diocese of Colorado Springs

Handbook on Sacramental Records and Reports for Parish Personnel

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GENERAL CANONICAL NORMS:

- Canon 491 §1:** The diocesan bishop is to see to it that the acts and documents of the archives of cathedral, collegiate parochial, and other churches in his territory also are diligently preserved; also, inventories or catalogs are to be made in duplicate, one of which is to be kept in the church's own archive and the other in the diocesan archive.
- §2:** The diocesan bishop is also to see to it that there is a historical archive in the diocese in which documents having a historical value are diligently preserved and systematically arranged.
- §3:** In order to inspect or remove the acts and documents spoken of in §§ 1 and 2 above, the norms established by the diocesan bishop are to be observed.
- Canon 535 §1:** Each parish is to possess a set of parish books (read registers) including baptismal, marriage, and death registers as well as other registers 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 the person's confirmation and whatever affects the canonical status of the Christian faithful by reason of marriage, with due regard for the prescription of canon 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 (i.e. always to be noted on a baptismal certificate).
- §3:** Each parish is to possess its own seal; documents which are issued to certify the canonical status of the Christian faithful as well as all acts which can have juridic importance are to be signed by the pastor or his delegate and sealed with the parish seal.
- §4:** Each parish is to have a registry or archive in which the parish books are kept along with episcopal letters and other documents which ought to be preserved due to necessity or usefulness; all these are to be inspected by the diocesan bishop or his delegate during his visitation or at another suitable time; the pastor is to take care that they do not come into the hands of outsiders.
- §5:** The older parish books are also to be carefully preserved in accord with the prescriptions of particular law.

- Canon 876:** If it is not prejudicial to anyone, to prove the conferral of baptism, the declaration of a single witness who is above suspicion suffices or the oath of the baptized person, if the baptism was received at an adult age. (To prove that baptism has been conferred, if there is no conflict of interest, it is sufficient to have either one unexceptionable witness or, if the baptism was conferred upon an adult, the sworn testimony of the baptized person.)
- Canon 894:** The prescriptions of Canon 876 are to be observed for the proof of the conferral of confirmation.
- Canon 1573:** The deposition of a single witness cannot constitute full proof unless a witness acting in an official capacity (qualified) makes a deposition regarding duties performed *ex officio* (official capacity) or unless circumstances of things and persons suggest otherwise.

REGISTERS:

- Required:** Each parish is required to keep the following sacramental registers: Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and Death (Canons 535 & 895). In addition to these records, the Diocese of Colorado Springs requires that each parish keep a record of First Communions. Special register available from private vendors are to be used (notebooks or other non-formatted type of record keeping is prohibited.) A parish may use a combined register or separate registers depending on need.
- Suggested:** In each parish that has mission churches, oratories, and chapels it is highly advisable that separate registers be maintained. This is useful if these churches are ever raised to the status of parish or when care of a mission or chapel is transferred to another parish.
- Storage:** Sacramental records are permanent, historical records. As such they should be kept in a safe and secure place in the parish (preferably a fire/water resistant safe) and should not be removed or copied without recourse to Canon 491 §3. While computerized records are extremely valuable for indexing the records, **these are NEVER to be considered an acceptable substitute for the original handwritten records.** As such these original records are to be kept permanently, never destroyed. The registers are to be stored in a locked place, preferably one that is fire-proof or resistant. Loss or destruction of any sacramental registers is to be reported to the Chancellor's Office immediately.
- Repairs:** As registers become worn, they are to be rebound by a professional book binder, preferably one with experience in preserving older books. Only if the register is beyond repair are the records allowed to be transferred into a new register. This transferal should only occur after consultation with the Chancellor and Archivist of the Diocese. Old registers should be kept or may be transferred to the Diocesan Archives for safekeeping and the newly transcribed book should be used to issue certificates. Registers that are 90 years or older must be transferred to the Diocesan Archives.
- Confidentiality:** Sacramental records, while containing information about public events and other facts, they also contain information that is very personal. Registers should be kept in a safe secure place in the parish, and should not be removed, copied, or loaned without the approval of the Chancellor of the Diocese. When a parish is suppressed, the parish registers are maintained in the archives of the Diocese of Colorado Springs. When a parish is merged, the resulting parish maintains the registers of all merged parishes. Direct access to the registers is limited to the authorized parish or diocesan personnel. **As these records are a matter of public events, unless directed otherwise, anyone can obtain a copy of the certificate.**

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| <i>Genealogical Research:</i> | The actual registers should never be made available to genealogical researchers, unless authorized by the diocesan bishop. The pastor or regularly delegated person may do the research as time permits and make the information available on a separate sheet of paper. No confidential information is to be disclosed (i.e. information regarding adoptions). |
| <i>Mergers and Closures of Parishes</i> | It is recommended that when a parish closes or merges with another, the sacramental registers of the subsumed community be closed on the date the “new” parish begins. The closed registers are to contain a narrative at the appropriate space in the volume outlining what has occurred and at which parish any subsequent records can be found. The Bishop will make a determination on a case-by-case basis as to where closed registers are to be transferred. All auxiliary documents and files are maintained in the same location as the registers. |

CREATING/MAKING ENTRIES:

The creation and maintenance of sacramental registers is a service required by the Church. These records can also serve as important legal documents (eg.. in obtaining proof of citizenship for passports, proving ID, etc.) The proper person responsible for the proper care of these registers is the pastor or parochial administrator. The daily administration of the records may be delegated to a responsible person such as the parish secretary or business manager (canon 535).

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| <i>Type of Data:</i> | Only data required by canon law and that which is necessary for the complete and accurate maintenance of the records is to be entered into the Sacramental Registers. Data that is confidential and not to be included on certificates should be marked upon entry into the register (e.g. Confidential- do not include on certificate) with due regard to canon 535 §2. |
| <i>Printing/Ink:</i> | Information is to be written in with neatly printed letters, NOT cursive handwriting. Use a black pen. Do not use pencil, colored ink, or a marker of any kind. The surname of the entry’s subject should be printed in all capitalized block lettering. It is preferable that the name of the month be printed out instead of using the number (January or Jan. instead of “1”). |
| <i>Time/Place:</i> | Entries into the sacramental registers should be made promptly and accurately after the event has occurred. In general, the parish that is to record the sacrament or death is the one that has geographical jurisdiction over the location in which the event occurred. To see your parishes boundaries please see the parish listing by deanery on the diocesan webpage. http://www.diocs.org/Parishes/Parish-Overview |
| <i>Order of Entry:</i> | Entries are to be made in chronological order. If there is some reason that this order cannot be kept, a small note should be made in the proper chronological place in the register which cross-references the actual entry location. (e.g. see RYAN pg. 27, #2) |
| <i>Information to Be Entered:</i> | <p>In each of the required registers the basic information that is required is the same:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Christian name/s of those who are receiving the sacrament as designated by the parents/adoptive parents, or the legal name of an adult (Always use the maiden name of a woman) 2) The name of the parents or adoptive parents <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Father: first, middle, & surname b) Mother: first, middle, & MAIDEN NAME 3) The date & place of birth if a baptism or reception into full communion The date & place of baptism for all others (<u>confirmation, marriage, death, 1st Eucharist</u>) 4) The name(s) of the godparent(s), sponsor, or witnesses 5) The PLACE (actual Parish and town) and date of the sacrament 6) The name of the minister celebrating the sacrament with his title (e.g. Fr. Deacon, etc) 7) Any notations as necessary (see individual sacraments for further details). |

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| <i>Index:</i> | Every entry is to be listed in the register's index according to the person's last name. In the case of multiple last names (as in the various Latino/Hispanic traditions) the first last name should be used (e.g. Jorge CRUZ BRUCELA is listed under C). |
| <i>Discursive Material:</i> | Any discursive material is not to be written in the register. Such material or related documents should be retained either in an envelope within the register to which it pertains, within the pages of the register itself, or in a separate file that is kept in the same location as the registers. Not all documents need be retained and discretion should be used in making this determination. The file should be marked "Sacramental Records" and "See Sacramental Records File" should be printed in the Notations column of the register. |
| <i>Sacramental Minister</i> | The actual minister of the sacrament does not need to sign the register if the person making the entry personally witnessed the event or has a document (e.g. application form for Baptism) signed by the minister which certifies that the conferral of the sacrament. In these cases the name of the minister is printed in the register only, his signature is not necessary. |
| <i>Recipients from more than one Parish:</i> | When persons from more than one parish are baptized or received into full communion with the Catholic Church at a single ceremony, the records for the persons are retained at the parish in which the sacrament was received. |
| <i>Notification of Church of Baptism:</i> | When any sacrament of any Catholic is celebrated (convalidated or sanated in the case of marriages) subsequent to baptism, the pastor of the parish where the record of the sacrament is retained must notify the church/es of baptism as soon as possible (including First Communion). The notification/s is/are to include the name, the date, and the place of the sacrament (include the spouse's name for marriages). The names of the minister and the witnesses are not required. This notification is to be made even if the subsequent sacrament occurs in the same parish as the parish of baptism. In cases detailed immediately above, the preparing parish should help the parish of record in making this notification. No notification of death need be sent. |

CERTIFICATES:

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| <i>Definition:</i> | A certificate is an official document certifying that a particular individual has received a sacrament. It is an exact duplicate of non-confidential data already entered in a sacramental register. |
| <i>Use:</i> | Certificates of sacraments are intended primarily for internal Church use. |
| <i>Authorized Source:</i> | Only the parish or agency holding the original sacramental record may issue a certificate.. Only the actual register, as opposed to some other reproduction, should be used in preparing certificates, without prejudice to transcribed registers mentioned in <i>Repairs</i> |
| <i>Requests:</i> | Any member of the Christian faithful has a right to obtain a certificate of a sacrament he has received and was recorded in a register. <u>As these records are a matter of public events, unless directed otherwise, anyone can obtain a copy of the certificate.</u> There should be no fee charged for the issuance of a new certificate. |
| <i>Making a Request</i> | Requests for certificates should be submitted in writing (telephone requests from a Catholic parish or a diocesan official are acceptable). No information should be communicated by telephone or by electronic means. |

- Format** Certificates should be official in appearance and be issued in a consistent format. Parishes may use blank certificates from vendors or have them printed locally. All certificates must bear the name and address of the parish. Letters with pertinent information are not acceptable in lieu of certificates. They must be typed, printed by computer, or hand-printed in ink. They must be signed by the pastor and impressed with the parish seal. Photo, scan, and fax copies of certificates are not considered authentic documents.
- Data** The data to be included is all that is contained in the sacramental register that is not marked confidential or extraneous to the person's canonical status. Any data in the notations column is to be included. If there is no data in this column, the words "no notations" should be printed on the certificate.
- Missing Record** Sometimes a certificate is requested and the record cannot be found. If it is possible the sacrament was conferred in some other parish the person is to be referred to that parish or the Diocesan Archives. If such a search fails, it is asked that two witnesses be found who will sign affidavits (or swear an oath in person before the Chancellor) attesting to the facts of the sacrament (without prejudice to canon 876). Only that data which can be vouched for with certainty should be contained in the sworn statement. These affidavits should be sent, along with any other proofs; such as an original certificate or pictures, to the Chancellor's office which will issue a rescript for the creation of the record. These proofs or a copy of them will be retained in the Diocesan Archives. The rescript issued will have all the data that is to be recorded in the register, even though this may leave the entry incomplete. The rescript itself should also be kept in the same manner as the discursive material referenced above, with a cross reference to the rescript made in the record itself. NO PHOTOCOPIES shall serve as valid proofs.
- Chancery Copy:** Each year it is required that each parish submit a copy of the four canonically required registers (baptism, confirmation, marriage, death) to the Diocesan Archives (canons 491, 895, 535§1) in a clear format that includes all the important data for each record inscribed that year *including the date the sacrament was administered, the person administering the sacrament, and the parish in which the sacrament was administered*. This copy is to be signed on each page by the current pastor as well as the sacramental registers at the bottom of each completed page and/or year notarizing that those sacraments were indeed conferred during the previous year.

CHANGES TO A RECORD

- Changes in General:** Once a record is entered into a register, the data is considered official and permanent. Data may not be modified except under special circumstances, as detailed below. Original data should never be scratched out, erased, "whited-out", or otherwise destroyed or obliterated. If a change is to be entered, a written request along with the pertinent documentation is to be addressed to the Chancellor of the Diocese so that a rescript may be issued. Any such rescript should be kept in accordance with the [Discursive Material](#) section of this guide.
- During Inscription:** If a mistake is made during the inscription process, a single line drawn through the entire entry will invalidate the record. A new record is to be inscribed on the next line in the register.
- Changes:** All changes (e.g. orthographic errors, to record an adoption after baptism, etc.) require a rescript that is obtained by submitting a letter from the parish to the Chancellor detailing the change that is requested along with certified documents or originals, (NO PHOTOCOPIES) and may require that a new entry be created. For changes in which a new entry is not necessary, a single line is drawn through the error and the correction printed immediately

above or below it. For major changes, the original entry is preserved without change (unless otherwise specified below); a new entry, with all the data from the original entry reproduced (except for the relevant change/s), 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 clearly cross-referenced. ~~“DO NOT ISSUE A CERTIFICATE FROM THIS ENTRY”~~ is to be printed carefully across the face of the original entry as well as the location of the revised entry. In every case the rescript is to be kept.

Non-Permitted Changes

New godparents or sponsors Customary name or Nickname
Non-adoptive stepparents

Data on Certificates after Changes

Once specific data has been changed in the sacramental register, the original data is no longer transcribed onto certificates (e.g. the natural parents’ names after adoption).

Notification to Chancery

Each parish should maintain a running spreadsheet of notations entered into the Baptismal and Marriage Registers throughout the year and submit these along with the [Chancery Copy](#) so the copies held in the archives can be updated.

BAPTISMAL REGISTER:

RELEVANT CANON LAW: 296, 535 §2, 850-878, & 1685) & USCCB COMPLEMENTARY NORMS ON CANON 877 §3

The baptismal register serves as the “master copy” for the record of a person’s status within the Church. For this reason the Baptismal register must include all information prescribed on [page 3](#) and the following notations:

Notations:

- a. These are to be entered into the baptismal registers for subsequent reception of the sacraments of confirmation, marriage, and Holy Orders. Even if these sacraments are conferred at the same parish as the baptism, the notations are still required to be recorded in the baptismal register.
- b. Other notations include those of religious profession, conditional baptisms, rites supplied, annulments, laicization, change of rite, and dispensation of vows.
- c. These entries should be made succinctly. Names, dates, places, and protocol numbers are usually the only information needed. These are not confidential and are to be included on certificates.

Source of Data:

In most cases the data used to create the record of a baptism (in accordance with canon 877§1: name of baptized, minister, parents, godparents or witnesses, place, date of baptism, and date of birth) should come from a birth certificate & application form (or something similar). If someone other than the mother or father, as reflected on the birth certificate, of a child under the age of 7 is trying to make arrangements for the baptism, contact the Tribunal for further direction.

Verification of Information

A state issued birth certificate is to be used as supporting documentation for baptismal registry entry. If a certificate is not possible, the hospital record can be used in its stead to verify the date of birth and the parents’ names. If information is recorded solely on verbal statements or off of a simple application form, this can be problematic and may lead to inaccurate recording and inauthentic records (e.g. orthographic errors, wrong dates, etc.).

Godparents & witnesses:

Insofar as it is possible there should be at least one godparent and not more than two (one male and one female) in accordance with canons 872 and 873. **In order to be a godparent, one must be a confirmed, active Catholic in good standing (no canonical impediments), over the age of 16, & not the parent of the one to be baptized.** Canon 874 §2 allows for a baptized person who is not Catholic to be a Christian witness and this should be duly noted in the register. A baptized Eastern Orthodox person is properly a godparent and not a Christian witness. **Proxy godparents are not permitted.**

There may arise some cases where parents wish to change, or to institute new godparents/witnesses, sometime after the baptism. While it is laudable that parents seek to have better examples of the Faith for their children's growth, there is no possible way to change the fact of who witnessed the baptism and therefore no way to alter the register.

Ascription to Proper Church (Sui Iuris):

Ascription of a child to a Church *sui iuris* (read: Rite) is determined by the Church *sui iuris* of the father (e.g. Syro-Malabar, Maronite, Latin) and not that of the minister. There are two exceptions to this, if the child is 14 years of age and can make this decision on his own, or if the parents are of two different Church *sui iuris* (e.g. Latin father and Maronite mother), the parents are free to choose which Church *sui iuris* the child will belong. When a Latin priest or deacon baptizes someone ascribed to an Eastern Church *sui iuris* a notation should be made in the notations column. (Canon 111) See [Appendix A](#) for a complete list of Rites and abbreviations.

Registers for Rituals

A register such as a Book of the Elect should be completely separate from regular sacramental registers. The data from these books should be transferred to the baptismal and confirmation registers (with all notations, including marriages) as soon as possible once the sacraments have been conferred.

Baptism outside Parish Church

When baptism is conferred solemnly (a priest/deacon celebrates the full rite of baptism) in a chapel or prison, the minister of baptism must contact the territorial parish in which the chapel or prison is located so the sacrament can be registered. Such baptisms are not to be done in the home or hospital without express permission from the bishop or his delegate, in accordance with canon 860 §§1-2. The boundary map of the parishes of the Diocese can be found on the website (<http://www.diocs.org/Parishes/Parish-Overview>). Contact the Office of the Chancellor for further Assistance 719-636-2345.

Emergency Baptism

When a Catholic Baptism (with or without confirmation) is conferred in an emergency situation, the baptism is to be recorded properly in the territorial parish where the baptism was conferred. This parish (not that of the parent's choosing) is to be notified by the minister or the parents of the baptized (canon 878). Specific procedures should be worked out between hospital chaplaincy offices located within a parish's territory and the pastor.

After the conferral of the emergency baptism (with or without emergency confirmation), the minister of the baptism records the following: name of the hospital or institution, date of baptism, name of the baptized, mother's full maiden name, Father's name, city and state of birth, date of birth, minister of sacrament, address of parents, phone number of parents, & names of any witnesses (up to 2). Two copies of this record are made, one going to the one who is baptized (or the parents of an infant) and another to the territorial parish. All this is done in accord with canons 872 & 875-878.

If the full rites are conferred at a later date, the parish where the rite is completed should notify the place of baptism so that a notation, including the date and place the rite was

supplied, can be made in the margin of the entry in the baptismal register. The parish supplying the rites should make no entry for the baptism.

The territorial parish in which the baptism is recorded is rightfully the parish of record for all subsequent sacrament notifications and baptismal certificates are to be issued from this parish only, not the one in which the rites were supplied.

***Conditional
Baptism:***

Only after careful investigation in which positive doubt remains as to the fact of the baptism or its valid celebration is a person conditionally baptized. This baptism is done privately (no pomp and with only the essential participants). In such cases the date and place of the conditional baptism should be noted instead of the purported earlier baptism. When a conditional baptism is conferred, “baptized conditionally” is to be written in the notations column. All other information is the same as for any other baptism. In accordance with canon 869 §2, baptisms in non-Catholic ecclesial communities are presumed valid until the contrary is demonstrated.

***Reception into
Full
Communion of
Adults and
Children***

When persons are received into full communion with the Catholic Church after having been validly baptized previously in another Christian communion (i.e. candidates) and baptized children under the age of 7 (canon 852 §1), an entry must be made in the Baptismal Register. The source of data for both child and adult is a birth certificate and a baptismal “certificate” if available. The data concerning the Rite of Reception should be entered into the spaces provided for baptism, and the data concerning the baptism should be entered in the “Notations”, especially minding the date and place of the baptism.

Special care need be taken when receiving young children into full communion with the Church with their parents. In these cases, it is advisable that the ceremonies be supplied so there is a formal reception into the Church.

For the full reception into the Church celebrated for a baptized adult (candidate), the information on [page 3](#) should be entered into the baptismal register with the following considerations:

- 5) Date and place of the Rite of Reception/Profession of Faith is noted in the space provided for the baptism
- 6) The minister should be listed as the one who received the Profession of Faith
- 7) **Notations:** Marginal notations giving date and place of the following
 - a. Baptism
 - b. Reception of Eucharist and Confirmation
 - c. Marital Status (current valid marriage or convalidation of current civil marriage). Any declaration of nullity (including the Diocese and Protocol Number) should be noted. If the person is divorced, the broken union must be recorded in the register notations as well.

Thus, when an already baptized person is brought into full communion with Catholic Church, be they adult or child, there will be a record that includes their full canonical status. In such cases it is advisable that a certificate of Profession of Faith be used instead of a baptismal certificate though all notations must be included on any certificate issued from this record.

Unwed Parents

It is of utmost importance that the provisions of canon 877 §2 concerning unmarried parents are followed. It is neither just nor pastoral to enter unauthorized names of parents into the Baptismal Register. If no public proof is available, the name of the father or mother is not recorded. The phrase “father unknown” or “mother unknown” is to be used. One parent

cannot disallow the name of the other to be entered should his/her name appear on the required birth certificate.

***Children of
Unknown
Parentage***

For children whose parentage cannot be known, (canon 870) or is unknown (canon 877 §2), the information to be entered in the register (canon 877 §1) follows the guide on [page 3](#) with the following changes:

- 2) The names of the parents are omitted.
- 3) The date and place: of birth if known, of being found, or of placed under guardianship.

All other information is recorded as normal. If there is no birth certificate available contact the Chancellor.

***Baptism
occurred before
Adoption***

For any changes in regards to an adoption, the procedure and documentation in the section for [“Missing Record”](#) shall be followed using court documents (revised birth certificate issued by the state &/or adoption decree) as proof (no affidavits will suffice in this case) and a rescript will be issued from the Chancellor. The rescript is to be kept in the [“Sacramental Records”](#) file.

For children baptized before their adoption is finalized, the following information shall be added to the Baptismal Register in the original record, but only after the adoption is finalized (canon 877 §3):

- 1) Parenthesis () shall be placed around the names of the natural parents
- 2) The name/s of the adoptive parent/s shall then be added
- 3) Parentheses () shall be placed around the former surname of the child and the new surname added
- 4) In the notations column a note that the child was legally adopted should be made along with a cross reference to the new entry that is to be created (e.g. see SMITH pg. 54).
- 5) “DO NOT ISSUE A CERTIFICATE FROM THIS ENTRY” is to be printed carefully across the face of the original entry. (see [Changes](#))

A new entry should be made and a cross reference should be provided both in the index and the original record. The new entry should contain only the following:

- 1) The new legal, Christian Name of the child as designated by the court documents
- 2) Names of the adoptive parents
- 3) All other information is entered as on [page 3](#)
- 4) Cross reference to the original baptism record. (e.g. see RYAN pg. 27)

Baptismal certificates issued by the parish for these records should only come from the new entry and the fact of adoption should not be mentioned on the baptismal certificate.

For future ease in reference, and to afford what may often be the only possibility of reference after the adoption has been finalized, a baptismal entry for the adopted child can be made in the baptismal register of the adoptive parents' parish, citing the date and location of the original baptismal record, the names of the adoptive parents (not the natural parents), and the date and place of birth. This entry is not to be used to issue certificates, it is only for reference to the actual baptismal record. “For Reference Only” should be written in the notations column.

***Baptism after
Adoption***

For children baptized after an adoption, no reference to the adoption or the natural parents is to be made in the Baptismal register. Any such data that has previously been recorded is to be treated as confidential and is not to be included on any certificate. The information to be recorded can be found on [page 3](#) using the legal documents as required.

Baptismal certificates issued for adopted children will have no difference from other baptismal certificates. No mention of the adoption shall be made on the certificate.

***Additions to the
“Notations”
Column***

When a notification of the reception of a subsequent sacrament for a given record is received (e.g. first communion, confirmation, marriage, ordination) from the parish in which the sacrament was administered, the notation is made in the baptismal register. Even when these sacraments are received in the same parish as the baptismal parish the sacraments are to be recorded in the notations column.

So too, a marriage that has been declared invalid by a competent Tribunal or when a person has been returned to the lay state, the Tribunal will issue a notification to the church of baptism for a notation to be made in the baptismal record. These notations should include the date of the declaration, the diocese of the Tribunal that issued the decree, and the protocol number.

These documents should precipitate a return notification to verify that the notations have been recorded.

***Defection from
the Catholic
Church***

If a parish should receive a notification from an individual or a church indicating that the person no longer wishes to be identified as Catholic and even asks that his/her name be removed from Catholic Church records, it is appropriate to remove the person’s name from parish membership rolls. However, **no changes are to be made to the sacramental records.** As the “Formal Defection from the Catholic Church” was only in existence between 1983 and 2009, you may have notations of these defection in the notations column. If there is such a notation, reunion with the Church, if such a reunion ever happens, should also be noted, if the parish of baptism is made aware of the reunion.

***Style for
Notations***

The notations mentioned in the previous two sections should be made neatly and succinctly. Names, dates, places, and protocol numbers (if any) are usually the only information needed. As these notations are not confidential they should be included on all certificates issued except in rare circumstances.

Religious Profession: Records relating to the profession of perpetual vows are maintained by the individual religious institutions. Notification of the profession of perpetual vows is sent to the place of baptism. The date, place of profession, name of the religious institution, and the name of the witness of the vows (if provided) are to be noted.

Holy Orders: The date and place of ordination and the name of the Ordinary (bishop) conferring the sacrament are to be noted in the baptismal register. Separate notations are made for ordination to the diaconate and to the ministerial priesthood.

FIRST COMMUNION REGISTER:

REQUIRED IN THE DIOCESE OF COLORADO SPRINGS

Entries:

The following information is to be entered into the Communion Register

- 1) Legal and Christian names of the child
- 2) Date and place of baptism
- 3) Church and date of first Communion
- 4) Name of the main celebrant of Mass

Supporting Documentation: A baptismal certificate (issued within the last 6 months¹) is required as supporting documentation. NO PHOTOCOPIES This needs to be presented prior to the celebration of the person's First Eucharist to confirm the previous Catholic baptism and to aid in notifying the place of baptism afterwards. When there are large numbers of persons receiving this sacrament it is essential that the necessary information is collected and recorded accurately.

CONFIRMATION REGISTER:
RELEVANT CANON LAW: 894-896

Entries: For confirmation celebrated under normal circumstances, the necessary information to be entered into the Confirmation Register is the same as found on [page 3](#). There should be no "Notations" column

If space is provided in the register the following should also be recorded:

- 8) Age of the person receiving Confirmation
- 9) The name of the Chosen confirmation Saint (if one is chosen)

Supporting Documentation: A baptismal certificate (issued within the last 6 months²) is required as supporting documentation. NO PHOTOCOPIES. This needs to be presented prior to the celebration of confirmation to confirm the previous Catholic baptism and to aid in notifying the place of baptism after confirmation. When there are large numbers of persons being confirmed, it is essential that the necessary information is collected and recorded accurately.

Certificate for Marriage: A certificate may or may not be required for marriage depending on the norms issued by the local ordinary.

Confirmation outside your Parish Church When confirmation is conferred (only a Bishop, or Priest with delegation, administers confirmation validly) in a chapel, hospital, home, or prison, the minister of confirmation must contact the territorial parish in which the chapel, hospital, home, or prison is located so the sacrament can be registered. The boundary map of the parishes of the Diocese can be found on the website (<http://www.diocs.org/Parishes/Parish-Overview>).. Contact the Office of the Chancellor for further Assistance 719-636-2345.

Emergency Confirmation: As in the case of emergency baptism, the **record of an emergency confirmation is to be kept in the territorial parish in which the confirmation occurred.** The minister of the confirmation must contact the territorial parish in which the emergency confirmation occurred so the sacrament can be registered. The boundary map of the parishes of the Diocese can be found on the website (<http://www.diocs.org/Parishes/Parish-Overview>). Contact the Office of the Chancellor for further Assistance 719-636-2345.

All emergency baptisms and confirmations administered in any location are to be recorded in the territorial parish in which they occurred.

¹ One issued so recently is only necessary for those who are completing their sacraments of initiation after the age of 14.

² Ibid.

MARRIAGE REGISTER:
RELEVANT CANON LAW: 1081, 1121-1123, 1685

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>Entries:</i> | <p>For marriages celebrated with recognition by the Catholic Church, the necessary information to be entered into the Marriage Register is the same as found on page 3. The following notations should be entered in the proper column (include the issuing diocese, the date, type, & the protocol numbers (if given):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any permissions, dispensations, and delegations obtained for a valid celebration of matrimony• For Convalidation see below• For Sanations see below• Any declarations of nullity along with any prohibitions (<i>vetitum/monitum</i>) and when they were lifted |
| <i>Source of Data:</i> | <p>The informational facts in the prenuptial file are the source for the facts to be recorded in the Marriage Register. The marginal notation column is for the purpose of noting any permission or dispensation, regardless of the source of the permission/dispensation, and other significant factors (e.g. 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. If there are any last minute changes or corrections to the prenuptial file the celebrant should notify the pastor.</p> |
| <i>Marriage outside Parish Church</i> | <p>In cases where a marriage is celebrated in the chapel of an institution, the marriage is to be recorded in the territorial parish in which the institution resides.</p> |
| <i>Canon 1121 §3</i> | <p>IF THE MARRIAGE HAS BEEN CONTRACTED WITH A DISPENSATION FROM CANONICAL FORM, [...] THE CATHOLIC SPOUSE IS BOUND TO INFORM THE ORDINARY AND PASTOR IN THE DIOCESE THAT GRANTED THE DISPENSATION, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE MARRIAGE, THE PLACE OF CELEBRATION AND THE PUBLIC FORM THAT WAS OBSERVED.</p> |
| <i>Receptions into Full Communion:</i> | <p>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 is now being convalidated or sanated. A notation concerning the marriage is to be placed in the person's baptismal record (see Reception into Full Communion #7c).</p> |
| <i>Convalidation:</i> | <p>When a marriage is convalidated, the data concerning the convalidation is to be placed in the usual columns. The date, place, and official concerning the civil ceremony are to be placed in the notations column. Certificates are to be issued using the convalidation data, not the civil ceremony data (as this is not truly a marriage but only reflects the presence of a civil contract)</p> |
| <i>Sanation:</i> | <p>When a marriage is convalidated by <i>santio en radice</i> (literally <i>healing of the roots</i>), 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.</p> |
| <i>Notation of Pauline Privilege & Favor of the</i> | <p>In rare cases there may have been one of two possible privileges granted to one or both parties to a new marriage. In this case, it is imperative that the granting of such a privilege be noted both in the marriage register and the baptismal registers of the parties who receive the favor. This is especially important as they are favors granted once in a lifetime only. If there is a</p> |

Faith Dissolutions notice of one of these privileges, the same format for the information that is detailed in the notations [above](#) is to be entered into the register. The words Pauline or Petrine may be used as the type of privilege granted. (In the case of the Favor of the Faith or “Petrine Privilege” the diocese issuing would be Rome as it can only come from the Pope.)

Ratum sed non-consummatus dissolutions In other rare cases, there is a declaration from Rome granting the dissolution of a marriage that was ratified but not consummated. The data entered in the notations column for such a decree is the same as is noted in the privileges above using the words *non-consummatus* for the type of decree. Again, the decree can only come from Rome.

Premarital Files

Contents: Each parish is required to maintain a file of the papers and documents collected during the period of marriage preparation. This file usually includes current (dated less than six months prior to request) baptismal certificates with notations, completed prenuptial investigation forms, civil marriage license & civil marriage certificate (in cases of a convalidation), death certificate of a former spouse (when necessary), the dispensation or permissions granted (when necessary), a copy of the declarations of nullity/granting of the privilege cases for any and all prior marriages (when necessary) and any additional prenuptial forms/certificates required by the diocese or parish. A copy of the civil marriage license/certificate can be included after it is signed by all necessary persons. Only those proofs showing the pre-marital inventory had been taken and reviewed are to be retained, the inventory itself is to be destroyed.

Location: Ordinarily, this file is kept in the parish that has the marriage is recorded in the Marriage Register.

Storage: This file is to be permanently retained in the permanent files of the parish archives in its own envelope. The outside of the envelope should contain the party’s names and date of marriage and it may include a cross reference to the Marriage Register entry. The manner of filing is to be determined by the parish (e.g. alphabetical, chronological, etc.) so long as the file is easily located when necessary.

Unfinished Marriage Files: If a couple starts marriage preparation but does not complete it or the marriage does not take place, the documents are to be kept for one year. A list of the couples should be made to include the following: Names of the couple (maiden name of woman), date they began preparation, date the file was destroyed, and any dispensations or permission that were granted. If a dispensation or permission was granted but not used, the Chancellor’s Office must be notified in writing so that the diocesan archives can be updated

Transmission of File: If a legitimate request for a copy of a marriage file is made by an ecclesiastical tribunal, a photocopy of the file should be sent. The original file should remain in the parish’s archive. If the photocopy is returned, it should be destroyed.

DEATH REGISTER:
Relevant Canon Law: 1182

Entries: Although death is not a sacrament, a register is kept. For those deaths where a funeral is celebrated in the parish or its territorial boundaries, the following information is to be entered into the Death Register:

- 1) Legal and Christian names of the person
- 2) Residential address of the deceased person
- 3) Date of death
- 4) Date and place of burial (church/cemetery, city, state)
- 5) Presider at the Mass or Funeral Rites.

In the event that the funeral rites do not include a Mass but are merely performed at the funeral home, an entry may be made in the register if the person is considered a parishioner. The exception to this would be if a circumstance arose in which a Catholic person died away from home and could not have a funeral Mass or Rites in their home parish (Canon 1177 §3).

Notations: These may include information such as next of kin, age, whether the person received Anointing of the Sick, name of funeral home, and cause of death.

Source of Data: The data needed will usually be supplied by the funeral director or the death certificate.

Cremation: When a body has been cremated, no reference to the date or place of cremation is made in the Death Register. However, the fact of cremation along with the date and place of the interment of the ashes should be noted. (***Note: the practice of spreading ashes is condemned by the Church and should not be done, nor should ashes be kept at home, they should be interred just as corporeal remains would.*** See CDF Instruction: "Ad resurgendum cum Christo")

APPENDIX A:

ABBREVIATIONS FOR ASCRIPTION: *SUI IURIS*

(Use bolded words for baptismal entries)

| Name | Year united or legally established | Rite |
|---|--|-------------|
| 1) Coptic Catholic Church | 1741 | Alexandrian |
| 2) Eritrean Catholic Church | 2015 | Alexandrian |
| 3) Ethiopian Catholic Church | 1846 | Alexandrian |
| 4) Armenian Catholic Church | 1742 | Armenian |
| 5) Albanian Byzantine Catholic Church | 1628 | Byzantine |
| 6) Belarusian Greek Catholic Church | 1596 | Byzantine |
| 7) Bulgarian Greek Catholic Church | 1861 | Byzantine |
| 8) Byzantine Catholic Church | 1611 | Byzantine |
| 9) Greek Byzantine Catholic Church | 1829 | Byzantine |
| 10) Hungarian Greek Catholic Church | 1646 | Byzantine |
| 11) Italo-Albanian Byzantine Catholic Church | 1784 (never separated) | Byzantine |
| 12) Melkite Greek Catholic Church | 1726 | Byzantine |
| 13) Romanian Greek Catholic Church | 1697 | Byzantine |
| 14) Russian Greek Catholic Church* | 1905 | Byzantine |
| 15) Ruthenian Byzantine Catholic Church | 1646 | Byzantine |
| 16) Slovak Byzantine Catholic Church | 1646 | Byzantine |
| 17) Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church | 1595 | Byzantine |
| 18) Chaldean Catholic Church | 1552, 1692 | East Syrian |
| 19) Syro-Malabar Catholic Church | 1599 | East Syrian |
| 20) Maronite Church | 4 th c. a.d. (never separated) | West Syrian |
| 21) Syriac Catholic Church | 1781 | West Syrian |
| 22) Syro-Malankara Catholic Church | 1930 | West Syrian |
| 23) Latin | | Roman |