



DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR

GUIDELINES FOR THE RECORDING OF SACRAMENTAL RECORDS

2025

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In this document, **PASTOR** refers to: Pastor, Parochial Administrator, Sacramental Minister, Parochial Vicar, Parish Life Coordinator or Parish Director.

GENERAL NORMS

(Canons 535, 876, 894)

REGISTERS

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|---|---|
| <i>Required Records</i> | Each parish is required to maintain records of baptisms, first communion, confirmation, reception into full communion, marriages and deaths. When a priest serves as pastor of more than one parish, <u>separate</u> registers are to be maintained for each parish. For security and convenience, however, the registers may all be stored at one of the parishes. |
| <i>Parishes/Other Institutions</i> | Generally only parishes are to maintain sacramental records and registers. Non-parochial institutions must obtain the express approval of the Bishop to maintain sacramental records and registers. If a chapel or pastoral center (i.e. Newman Center) operates under the authority of the local pastor, its sacramental records should be kept in the parish register rather than separately. |
| <i>Format</i> | Special registers, which are available from religious supply companies, are required. A parish may retain separate Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage and Death Registers or may retain a combined register depending on the needs of the parish. |
| <i>Identification</i> | Each register should be inscribed with the name of the parish, an indication of which sacrament is being recorded, and the dates of beginning and ending entries. |
| <i>Acid Free Paper</i> | The pages of the registers should be made of acid-free paper. These registers can be purchased through religious supply companies. |
| <i>Retention</i> | Sacramental records may be duplicated on computers. <u>However</u> , a complete record MUST be maintained in the registers, and the registers themselves are NEVER to be destroyed or discarded. The registers are considered the ONLY authentic copy of sacramental records. |
| <i>Repair of Old Registers</i> | As registries become worn, they are to be rebound by a professional binder. Only if a register is beyond repair may the records be transferred to a new register. The original register is to be retained in as safe a condition as possible. The use of common tape or laminating materials to repair torn pages is discouraged. |
| <i>Storage</i> | The sacramental registers are to be stored together in a locked place, preferably one which is fireproof or fire resistant. Locations with extreme ranges of temperature or humidity should be avoided, since that will contribute to the deterioration of the registers. For example, the registers should not be stored in attics or basements. |
| <i>Handling</i> | Sacramental registers should only be removed from storage by authorized personnel and only for legitimate purposes. The |

registers may never be taken off the parish premises except with permission from the diocese.

Loss or Destruction

The loss or destruction of any sacramental register should be reported immediately to the Chancellor.

Parish Merger

If two or more parishes merge to form one parish, a new set of sacramental registers is to be utilized for the new parish, beginning with the date of the merger. The sacramental registers of the former parishes are stored at the new parish.

Closed Parishes

In the event that a parish is closed, the sacramental records are to be transferred to the parish in which the bishop designates as assuming parochial responsibility. The list of locations of registers are located in the Chancellor's office.¹

Ownership

Sacramental registers are the property of the parish.

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 Baptism or Confirmation Registers as soon as possible after the conferral of sacraments or the reception into full communion.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Nature of Information

Care must be taken to protect people's privacy. Although sacramental registers contain information about public events and other facts readily known to any interested party, they also might contain information which is very personal and confidential.

Access

The sacramental registers are maintained for the good of the Christian faithful, but they are private documents, not public ones. No one other than the pastor, or his delegate, may claim a right to direct access to the registers.

Authorized Personnel

The pastor is always and ultimately responsible for the care and confidentiality of the sacramental registers themselves, as well as any reproductions. He may designate other persons to make entries in the registers and to prepare certificates. These may be employees or volunteers, but their number should be minimal. These designated persons must be known well to the pastor, must be capable of careful work and protecting confidentiality, and must be adequately trained to work with the registers. Their work with the registers is not to exceed their mandate from the pastor.

Genealogical Research

Sacramental registers should not be made available to genealogical researchers. Due to limited archives and personnel at the diocesan

¹ When a parish closes or merges, formal arrangements are made for the transfer and retention of its sacramental registers. Refer to the *Wisconsin Pastoral Handbook* or the diocesan website for a listing of the locations where the sacramental registers of former parishes are retained.

level, genealogical questions will be referred to the parishes. However, individuals seeking access to records for such research may be delayed ion due to insufficient time on the part of the parish delegate to research the information.

ENTRIES

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| <i>Type of Data</i> | Only the data required by canon law and otherwise necessary for the complete and accurate maintenance of sacramental records are to be entered into the sacramental registers. (See later pages) |
| <i>Timeliness</i> | Entries should be made as soon as possible after the event. |
| <i>Legibility</i> | Entries are to be made accurately, promptly and legibly. Except for signatures, entries are to be PRINTED in fade-proof, water-proof black ink. |
| <i>Place of Entry</i> | As a general rule, the proper parish for the recording of the sacraments and deaths is the parish in whose territory the sacraments or rites of Christian burial were celebrated. |
| <i>Order</i> | Entries should be made in chronological order. If the chronological order cannot be kept in some particular case, a small note should be made in the proper chronological location in the register cross-referencing the actual entry, e.g. "See JONES, page 37". |
| <i>Specific Columns</i> | Each page of the register has several columns, and each column is titled. It is important to enter the data in the proper columns. The Baptism Register and others will have a column titled "Remarks", "Notations", or something similar. |
| <i>Index</i> | Every entry is to be listed in the register's index, according to the person's last name. |
| <i>Excess Data</i> | <p>If there is inadequate space for all the data to be entered, the excess data may be entered elsewhere on the same page or even on a different page of the register. Clear cross-referencing is <u>essential</u>, e.g. "See SMITH, bottom of page".</p> <p>It is good practice to allow some blank space at the bottom of each page of the Baptism Register, or to reserve a few blank pages at the end of the register. This will allow additional data to be entered, with proper cross-referencing, if the need should arise.</p> <p>The Sacramental Register should not be used to "file" other communications, such as notices of sacraments that are to be entered in the Baptism Register. After the notation has been duly made in the register, such communications should be filed according to the parish filing procedures.</p> |

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| <i>Style for Names and Dates</i> | The last name of the entry's subject should be printed in UPPER CASE (e.g. "JONES"). Printing the name of the month is preferred to using the month's number (e.g. "Aug." rather than "8"). |
| <i>Confidential Data</i> | Data which are confidential and which are not to be included on certificates is to be so marked when entered in the register (e.g. "Confidential-do not include on certificate"). The annotations of confirmation, marriage, holy orders, perpetual religious profession and change of rite are always to be reproduced on a baptismal certificate (cf. Canon 535 §2). |
| <i>Minister of Sacrament</i> | The actual minister of a sacrament is to sign the register. Another person who personally witnessed the event or has available a document (e.g. Sacristy Record of Baptism) signed by the minister which certifies the conferral of the sacrament may make the entry. In these cases, the name of the minister is printed in the register. |

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 data already entered in a sacramental register. All of the data in the register is to be duplicated on the certificate, except that which is marked confidential, and that which pertains to adoption. |
| <i>Church Use Only</i> | Certificates of sacraments are intended primarily for internal church use, not for civil purposes. ² Nonetheless, sometimes information may be legitimately requested for civil purposes, for example to correct an error on a birth certificate. |
| <i>Accuracy</i> | As an authenticated (i.e. signed and sealed) transcript of the original record, every certificate must be accurate, legitimate, and complete. |
| <i>Authorized Source</i> | Only the parish or other location holding the original sacramental record may issue a certificate. Only the actual register should be used in preparing certificates. A computer copy of the record may be used for a certificate, ONLY if there is assurance that the computer copy corresponds identically to the original register. The original register must be consulted to assure that the computer copy is accurate. While previous sacramental details should be entered into digital format for members preparing to receive another sacrament in a different parish, certificates may only be issued by the parish that confers the actual sacrament. |
| <i>Authorized Requests</i> | Any member of the Christian faithful has a right to obtain a certificate of a sacrament he or she has received and which was recorded in a sacramental register. But only that person, the |

² Since certain data are entered in the sacramental registers based purely 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.

parents of a minor, someone with legal guardianship of another or a bona fide pastoral minister at another Catholic parish have this right. When the parents of a child are separated or divorced, both parents, regardless of legal custody, are presumed to have the right to a certificate.

Procedure for Requests

Requests for certificates should be submitted in writing, although telephone requests from a Catholic parish or agency are acceptable. The written requests and a log of telephone requests should be kept on file for one year. No information from sacramental registers should be provided by telephone or other electronic means except to another Catholic parish or other Catholic agency. Even then, care for the privacy of persons is to be exercised.

Certificates are to be issued promptly and without charge.

If a person is seeking his own record or has a legitimate reason to request family records, the pastor or appointed parish personnel can examine the registers and issue the required information either directly, or by mail. On the other hand, if a pastor believes that an exception is justified in a particular case, it is important that he first contact the Chancellor or Vicar General.

If the inquiring person is not known to parish personnel, a signed request with proof of identification is required. If the request is in writing it must be signed and include the name of parents, date of birth, and other pertinent information so that there is no doubt that the person requesting the information is entitled to receive it.

Requests made by government or corporate agencies (i.e. Social Security Administration, Immigration, insurance companies, etc.) should be accompanied by a signed release by the person whose record is requested (or a legal qualified guardian) authorizing the release of the information.

Subpoena and other court orders demanding that records be handed over should be accepted, but no records should be handed over to the server of the subpoena. In cases where the pastor has been served a subpoena, contact the Chancellor or Vicar General before responding.

Any records requests for litigation, processing a lack of canonical form, etc. are to be referred to the Chancellor.

Format

Certificates should have an official appearance and should be issued in a consistent format. Parishes may obtain blank certificates from commercial vendors, have them printed locally, or generate their own templates for use. All certificates must bear the name and address of the parish.

Authentication

Certificates must be typed, printed by computer, or hand-printed in ink. They are to be signed by the pastor or his delegate and impressed with the parish seal. Photocopies, email scans and

facsimile copies of certificates are not considered authentic documents.

Required Data

Certificates are to include all data contained in the sacramental register, except that which is marked confidential, and that which pertains to adoption. Data in the “notations” column is to be included. If there is no data in the “notations” column, the words “No Notations” should be printed on the certificate. The annotations of confirmation, marriage, holy orders, perpetual religious profession and change of rite are always to be reproduced on a baptismal certificate (cf. Canon 535 §2). It is also possible to issue a signed and sealed certificate without adding the notations. Certificates of this kind must be clearly marked with the words “FOR NON-SACRAMENTAL PURPOSES” since they are not sufficient to certify the canonical status of an individual.

Missing Information

The absence of information to fill an item on a certificate shall be indicated by a line or the words “none” or “not given,” rather than by leaving the space blank.

Data After Changes

Once specific data has been changed in the sacramental register, the original data is not transcribed onto certificates (e.g. the natural parents’ names after adoption).

Missing Record

Sometimes when a certificate is requested, the record in question cannot be found. If there is any possibility that the sacrament may have been conferred in some other parish, a sincere effort should be made to check the sacramental records of that other parish or parishes. The Chancellor may be able to assist with such a search. If such a search is unwarranted or fails, Canons 876 (oath of witness) and 1573 (official deposition) can be applied.

Only the data which can be vouched for with certainty should be entered in the register, even though doing so may leave an incomplete entry. The name of the witness or witnesses, the date of testimony, and the words, “Based on the testimony of _____,” should be printed in the “Notations” column of the register.

Notarized sworn statements of parents, sponsors, and the pastor should be added to the Sacramental Records File with a notation written in the register that the entry is a “recreation of a missing record.” There needs to be a cross reference to the time when the event should have occurred.

CHANGES TO ENTRIES

Caution

Once entered into a sacramental register, data is considered official and permanent. It may not be modified except under special conditions.

Proper Way to Correct

The correction must be based on some written proof-of-error and the proof should be identified in the notation.

In case of a technical or incidental error (i.e. spelling, date out-of-sequence, etc.) that is obvious to the “person in charge,” once it is pointed out, a change in the original entry may be made without the need for the notation or proof. Permitted changes include correcting dates, names, spellings, and adoptive parents. In cases of doubt, the Chancellor shall be consulted.

Original data should NEVER be scratched out, “whited out”, covered over, or otherwise destroyed or obliterated. All changes to a record must be visible and dated.

Style for Minor Changes

Minor changes (e.g. correcting a misspelling) may be made directly to the original entry. Such changes are to be made by drawing a straight, simple line through the word, number or letter to be changed and printing the change immediately above or below the error. Example: ~~SMITHE~~

Style for Major Changes

Major changes (e.g. to record an adoption after baptism) may require that a new entry be created. In these cases, the original entry is to be preserved without change; a new entry, with all the data from the original entry reproduced (except the relevant change or changes), 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” is to be printed carefully across the face of the original entry.

Authorization for Minor Changes

An insubstantial error (e.g. misspelling) may be corrected upon request of those persons who have a right to a certificate, as mentioned in the CERTIFICATES section.

Authorization for Major Changes

More significant errors and other changes require authentic supporting documentation. Such documentation will ordinarily 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. When an error involves data pertaining directly to the celebration of a sacrament or rite of Christian burial (e.g. date, identity or Godparents) such that no external verifying documentation exists, the written or oral testimony of a reputable witness will suffice. Supporting documents are maintained in the Sacramental Records File.

Permitted Changes

Some permitted changes are:

- Correct name
- Correct date
- Correct spelling
- New legal name
- Adoptive parent(s)

NON-permitted Changes

Some non-permitted changes are:

- New Godparents or sponsors – The names of Godparents or sponsors are not to be changed because they have died or because parents feel they are no longer suitable. In these situations, parents can ask someone else to serve in the role without making a change in the permanent record or on certificates.
- Non-adopting stepparents
- Customary name or nickname

BAPTISMAL REGISTER

(Canons 877 §1, 878, CCEO 296 §2)

The Baptismal Register serves as the “master record” for a person’s membership into the Church and therefore notations concerning other sacraments received later in life are also recorded within.

REQUIRED DATA

The following data are to be entered into the Baptism Register for baptisms celebrated under “normal” circumstances:

- Name of the person baptized (Christian name of child designated by parent(s) or legal name of the adult – always use maiden name of a woman)
- Name of the minister
- Names of the parents (first, middle and surname of father; first, middle, and maiden name of mother; or names of adoptive parents)
- Names of the sponsor(s), god parent(s), or witness(es)
- Place and date of the baptism
- Place and date of birth

SOURCE OF DATA

Ordinarily the information listed above originates on a Sacristy Record (a small form sold by commercial vendors or created by the parish). The Sacristy Record is completed either 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 are transferred to the Baptism 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 should sign the Sacristy Record verifying that the sacrament was conferred. There should be a clear procedure in place for assuring that the data are transferred from the Sacristy Record to the Baptism Register as quickly as possible.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Certain notations in the baptismal register are accompanied by legal documents that serve as evidence and should also be preserved. Examples include adoption documents proving paternity, affidavits concerning previously omitted baptisms, and notarized court and governmental documents concerning name and/or date changes. After the appropriate notations are made, the items must be kept permanently in a separate file corresponding to each register and page number. The Sacramental Records File must be referred to in the “Notations.”

OUTSIDE CLERGY OR PEOPLE

When a priest or deacon baptizes in a parish church to which he is not assigned, he is responsible for the filing of the necessary records. The baptism shall be recorded in the parish where the baptism took place. If the family is registered in a parish other than the one in which the baptism took place, the baptism is to be recorded in the church where the sacrament was celebrated. In such a case, a notice shall also be sent to the family’s own parish requesting that the name of the person baptized be entered into the baptismal register with an indication of where the actual baptismal record can be found.

EMERGENCY BAPTISM

In the exceptionally rare situation when emergency baptism is conferred (that is, with any person celebrating the bare matter and form of baptism when the recipient is in danger of death), the minister (or some other witness) is to notify the church within the boundaries of which include the location of the emergency baptism. No record of emergency baptism is to be made in the Baptism Register; if possible, the pastor of the recipient should celebrate the Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church (properly adopted in the case of an adult recipient) and create a record of that event, with a notation of the date, place and minister of the emergency baptism in the “Notations” column in the Baptismal Register. The same procedure should be followed when a person is baptized illicitly by a lay person, even though there is no danger of death. Parents are to be fully informed of the parish in which the emergency baptism is recorded.

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, the records for all persons is to be retained at the parish where the rites were celebrated.

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. A person is baptized conditionally when there is doubt about the validity of a previous baptism.

GODPARENTS

No more than two names may be entered in the “Godparents” or “Sponsors” column. If there are two Godparents, there is to be one male and one female (cf. Canon 873). The names of Godparents or sponsors are not to be changed later in the baptismal register because they have died or because parents feel they are no longer suitable. In these situations, parents can ask someone else to serve in the role without making a change in the permanent record or on certificates.

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 the person’s name.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS

When a baptized non-Catholic serves as a witness to baptism, along with a Catholic sponsor, in accord with Canon 874 §2, the words “Christian Witness” should be placed after the witness’s name in the register.

PROFESSION OF FAITH AND RECEPTION INTO FULL COMMUNION

The names of persons who are baptized Christians and who enter into Full Communion of the Catholic Church by means of a Profession of Faith shall be recorded in the parish baptismal register under the date of profession together with the date and place of baptism of the individual, and all other information as required, as well as the date, if known, even if only approximate, of the non-Catholic baptism. Notations shall be recorded in the Confirmation register as well.

The data concerning the Rite of Reception into Full Communion should be entered in the space provided for baptism, and the data concerning the original baptism should be entered in the “Notations” column.

Special care must be taken to follow the proper procedure when young children are received into full communion along with their parents. In such cases, it is suggested that the ceremonies be supplied as in an emergency baptism, so that there is a formal reception into the Church.

For the “Full Reception into the Church” celebrated for a baptized adult (OCIA), the following information is to be entered in the Baptismal Register.

- The given or Christian name(s) of the person (use the maiden name of a woman).
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle, maiden name)
- The date and place of birth
- The name of the sponsor
- The date and place of the Rite of Reception 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 invalidity (including where granted and protocol number) should be noted.

Baptisms performed in the following churches are deemed to be invalid:

- All non-Christian groups and communities
- Amana Church Society
- American Ethical Union
- American (United American) - Catholic Valid Baptism/Confirmation is doubtful
- Apostolic Church (“Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God)
- Apostolic Faith Mission
- Armenian Apostolic
- Bohemian Free Thinkers
- Baha’l Faith
- Brethren
- Children of God (“The Family”)
- Christadelphians
- Christian Community (disciples of Rudolph Steiner)
- Christian and Missionary Alliance
- Christians of Universalist Brotherhood
- Church of Christ, Scientists (“Christian Scientists”)
- Church of Daniel’s Band
- Church of Divine Science
- Church of Illumination
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (“Mormons”)
- Church of Revelation
- Church of the New Jerusalem
- Church of the Scientology
- Erieside Church
- General Assembly of Spiritualists
- Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association
- House of David Church

- Iglesia ni Kristo (Philippines)
- Independent Church of Filipino Christians
- Jehovah's Witnesses
- Masons/Freemasonry
- Metropolitan Church Association
- New Church of Mr. Emmanuel Swedenborg
- National David Spiritual Temple of Christ Church Union
- National Spiritualist Association
- New Jerusalem Church (Swedenborg or "New Age" Church)
- Peoples Church of Chicago
- Pentecostal Churches
- Plymouth Brethren
- Quakers ("Society of Friends")
- Reunification Church ("Moonies")
- Salvation Army
- Shakers ("United Society of Believers")
- Some communities of Mennonites and Moravians (handle on a case-by-case basis)
- Spiritualist Church
- Swedenborg ("New Age")
- Unitarians
- Universal Emancipation Church
- World Harvest

BAPTISM OF AN ADULT

For baptisms celebrated for a non-baptized adult (OCIA), the following information is to be entered in the Baptismal Register:

- The given Christian name(s) of the person (use maiden name of a woman)
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle 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.

UNMARRIED OR UNKNOWN PARENTS

In the case of unmarried parents, the mother's name is to be entered if her maternity is publicly known or if she requests that this be done either in writing or before two witnesses. Similarly, the father's name is to be entered if paternity is established by a public document or by his own declaration in the presence of the parish priest and two witnesses. In other cases, the name of the baptized person is entered without mention of the father or of the parents. The expression "pater ignotus" (father unknown) is not to be used in the register or on any certificates.

SAME SEX PARENTS

Baptism of children in the care of same-sex couples presents a serious pastoral concern. Nevertheless, the Church does not refuse the Sacrament of Baptism of these children, but there

must be a well-founded hope that the children will be brought up in the Catholic religion. Since parentage may differ from case to case, please contact the Bishop's office for guidance in this area

BRINGING A BAPTIZED CHILD INTO THE CHURCH

For baptized children before age seven who are being received into the Church, the following information is to be entered in the Register. It is the same procedure to follow when the child is being received, along with the parents, into full communion with the Catholic Church:

- The Christian name(s) of the child as designated by the parent(s)
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle, 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 reception into the Church are noted in the spaces provided for Baptism
- Data concerning the original baptism should be entered in the "Notations" column, especially the date and place (Rite of Baptism for Children).

BAPTISM BEFORE ADOPTION

For children baptized before adoption, the following information shall be added in the Baptismal Register after the adoption is finalized.

- Parentheticals () 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 in parentheticals () and then 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. The certificate is issued from the record created after the adoption; no certificate ever should be issued from the record created before adoption.

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 parent(s)
- The name(s) of the adoptive parent(s)
- The date and place of birth
- The date and place of baptism
- The name of the minister performing the baptism.

BAPTISM AFTER ADOPTION

For a child 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.

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

The following information shall be entered in the Register:

- The Christian name 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 name(s) of the sponsor(s) selected by the adoptive parent(s)
- The date and place of baptism
- The name of the minister performing the baptism.

HOLY ORDERS

The diaconate, transitional and permanent, as well as priesthood ordination must be recorded in the baptismal register. The date and place and kind of ordination, and the name of the ordinary conferring the sacrament are to be noted in the “Notations” column of the baptismal register. The Ordination Register is kept and maintained at the Chancery.

RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

Records relating to the profession of perpetual vows are maintained by individual orders. Notification of the profession of perpetual vows is to be sent to the place of baptism. The date and place of profession, the name of the witness of the vows and the name of the Religious Institute or Society of Apostolic Life are to be noted in the baptismal register.

ASCRPTION TO PROPER CHURCH *SUI IURIS*

A church *sui iuris* is an autonomous church in communion with the Roman Pontiff. The term usually designates the Eastern Catholic Churches which are not governed by the 1983 Code of Canon Law but by the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*, the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches. In general, if both of the parents of a child who is under fourteen years of age belong to the same church *sui iuris*, the child is to be ascribed to that church. Thus, if both parents belong to the Latin Church, the child is ascribed to that church. If the parents belong to different churches *sui iuris*, the child is to be ascribed to the church *sui iuris* of the father unless the parents agree to have the child ascribed to the church *sui iuris* of the mother. Ascription is never determined by the membership in a church *sui iuris* of either the baptizing minister or the parish in which the baptism takes place. When a Latin priest or deacon baptizes a child under the age of fourteen who is to be ascribed to a different church *sui iuris*, or when a Latin priest or deacon baptizes a person over the age of fourteen who desires to be ascribed to a church *sui iuris* other than the Latin church, a notation should be made in the baptismal register identifying the church *sui iuris* to which the person is ascribed.

REQUEST TO LEAVE THE CHURCH (DEFECTION FROM THE CHURCH)

Occasionally a request is made from an individual stating that he or she is no longer a member of the Catholic Church and requesting that his or her name be removed from the baptismal register of the parish in which he or she was baptized. While a formal defection from the Church was possible in the past under the Code of Canon Law, the Code has been amended to exclude the possibility of a formal defection from the Church. Therefore, when a request for formal defection is received, no alterations are to be made and no notations are to be entered into the baptismal record. For pastoral reasons the baptismal parish may keep the written request on file and inform the person making the request that the request is on file in the parish.

FIRST COMMUNION REGISTER

Although not required by universal law, the Diocese of Superior requires parishes to maintain records of first Communion.

REQUIRED DATA

The following data are to be entered into the First Communion Register for first communion celebrated under normal circumstances:

- The legal and Christian names of the child or adult (use maiden name of a woman)
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first middle, maiden name)
- The date and place of baptism
- The place and date of first communion
- The name of the minister performing the confirmation

NOTIFICATION OF CHURCH OF BAPTISM

It is not required to send notification of this sacrament to the place of baptism.

See **PROFESSION OF FAITH AND RECEPTION INTO FULL COMMUNION** under Baptism Register for entering information for individuals who are going through the OCIA process.

CONFIRMATION REGISTER

(Canons 894-896)

REQUIRED DATA

The following data are to be entered into the Confirmation Register for confirmation celebrated under normal circumstances:

- The legal and Christian names of the child or adult (use maiden name of a woman)
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first middle, maiden name)
- The date and place of baptism
- The name of the sponsor selected by the person
- The place and date of confirmation
- The name of the minister performing the 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.³

Noting the place and date of baptism in the Confirmation Register can be especially helpful when 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 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 community is received into full communion and confirmed, the church of baptism is not notified. In the case of a baptized person, under the age of reason, 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.

When a large number of persons are to be confirmed, it is essential that one person be designated to 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 Confirmation Register.

EMERGENCY CONFIRMATION

In the case of an emergency confirmation for a catechumen in the OCIA program, the record of the emergency confirmation or profession of faith is kept in the parish the ceremony was performed and notated in the Baptism Register

LARGE GROUP OF RECIPIENTS

³ There are some additional reasons for obtaining a baptismal certificate: 1) the fact of valid baptism and Catholicity will be established; 2) any previous reception of valid confirmation, especially in the case of Catholics who were baptized in uniate Eastern churches, will be uncovered; 3) any discrepancies between name and parentage provided in the Baptism Register and given at the time of confirmation will be discovered; 4) the identity of baptismal Godparents can be ascertained, pursuant to Canon 893 §2.

When several persons are confirmed at the same ceremony by the same minister of confirmation, the date of conferral and the name of the minister of confirmation 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 of confirmation at a single ceremony, the record should show clearly which ministers of confirmation confirmed which recipients.

RECIPIENTS FROM MORE THAN ONE PARISH

When more than one parish joins together (as in a cluster of parishes) for the celebration of confirmation, the pastor of each of the parishes involved is responsible to see to the recording of the confirmations of his parishioners in his own parish register and to notify the places of baptism.

When confirmation is celebrated on a deanery level, the same responsibilities rest with the individual pastor of those confirmed.

MARRIAGE REGISTER

(Canons 1121-1123)

All marriages (including marriages convalidated in the external form) are to be entered in the Marriage Register.

REQUIRED DATA

For weddings celebrated with recognition by the Catholic Church, the following information is to be entered into the Marriage Register:

- The legal names of the groom
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle and maiden name) of the groom
- The legal names of the bride (always use the maiden name of a women, even if it is a second marriage)
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle 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 or deacon asking for and receiving the couple's vows
- Notation of any permissions, dispensations and delegations obtained for the valid celebration of the wedding

The informational facts in the prenuptial file or envelope are the source for the Marriage Register. The marginal notation column is for the purpose of noting any permission or dispensation, regardless of the source for the permission/dispensation, and other significant factors (for instance, delegation for the minister or sanation).

The priest or deacon who assists at the marriage is responsible for communicating the necessary information to the parish where the marriage was celebrated. The premarital file ordinarily contains all the necessary information. However, the assisting priest or deacon should be alert to any last-minute changes or corrections (for example, the names of the witnesses) to the information in the premarital file.

MARRIAGE OUTSIDE PARISH CHURCH

When a marriage is celebrated in a location other than a parish church (e.g. chapel; an outdoor location with permission from the Bishop; etc.) the proper parish for the marriage record is the one in which that location stands. The only exception is when a marriage is celebrated with dispensation from canonical form (e.g. when a Catholic receives a dispensation to marry a Protestant in the Protestant church). In that situation, the proper parish for the marriage record is the parish of the Catholic party or the parish where the couple prepared for marriage.

CONVALIDATION

When a marriage is convalidated (e.g. when Catholics, who were married outside of the Church without a dispensation, now marry in the Catholic Church), the data concerning the validation are 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 sanated (meaning the act of healing or curing) by the Bishop or his delegate, the data concerning the original ceremony are 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

The previous civil marriage of persons who are baptized or received into full communion with the Catholic Church is not to be recorded in the Marriage Register, unless the previous marriage was invalid and is now 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 DISPENSATION AND DECLARATION OF NULLITY

When a dispensation is granted prior to marriage, or a declaration of nullity (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 words “Declaration of Nullity” (with the diocese granting and protocol number), are to be noted in the “Notations” column. Any special recording directions that are contained in the dispensation or declaration of nullity document are to be followed.

Whenever a rescript is involved (meaning a legally binding command or decision entered on the court record), the name of the diocese, congregation, or tribunal, etc., which issued the rescript should be noted, together with the date and the protocol number if one is provided.

NOTIFICATION OF THE CHURCH OF BAPTISM

When the marriage of a Catholic is celebrated, validated or sanated, the pastor of the parish where the record of marriage is retained must notify the parish of baptism as soon as possible. This notification is to include the names of the spouses and the date and place of the wedding, validation or sanation; the names of the person who assisted and witnesses are not required.

PREMARITAL FILES

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 and dispensation documents.

The person who assisted at the marriage is to see to it that the marriage license is promptly filed with the County Register of Deeds. In Wisconsin, it is unlawful to make copies of the marriage license.

The premarital file for each couple should be retained by the parish where the marriage is recorded in the Marriage Register.

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 chronological order and kept together in a locked file cabinet or safe.

These files are to be retained forever.

If a legitimate request for a copy of the file is made by an ecclesiastical tribunal, a photocopy of the file should be sent. The original file should remain in the parish's archives. If the photocopy of the original file is later returned, it should be destroyed.

DEATH REGISTER

(Canon 1182)

Death registers are required to be kept by all parishes. All Catholic funerals at which a priest, deacon or other authorized parish minister officiates, even if not celebrated in the parish church but rather at a funeral home or cemetery, are to be entered into the parish Death Register.

REQUIRED DATA

The following data should be entered in the Death Register:

- The legal and Christian names of the deceased
- Date of birth
- Date of death
- Date and place of funeral rites
- Date and place of burial
- Name of spouse, if applicable
- Name of parents, if a child
- Other information that can be added, but not required, include: name of funeral home, next of kin, cause of death (but only if taken from official death certificate), vigil location, celebrant.

The data needed are ordinarily provided by the funeral director or the obituary.

The register should be chronologically arranged by date of parishioner death.

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 of the interment of the ashes.

NOTIFICATION OF THE CHURCH OF BAPTISM

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

GUIDELINES FOR RECORDING FOR OCIA (ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS)

REGISTER OF CATECHUMENS (OCIA 46)

Each parish shall keep a record in their archive of those who enter the catechumenate. This record may be any formatted book or binder the parish wishes to use. The register should include:

- The given or Christian name(s) of the person
- The date and place of birth
- The date and place of entrance into the catechumenate
- The name(s) of sponsor(s)
- The minister of admission to the catechumenate

BOOK OF THE ELECT (OCIA 119)

The Diocese of Superior Office of Worship will keep the Book of the Elect for those who attend the Rite of Election.

PROFESSION OF FAITH AND RECEPTION INTO FULL COMMUNION (OCIA 486)

The names of persons who are baptized Christians and who enter into Full Communion of the Catholic Church by means of a Profession of Faith shall be recorded in the parish baptismal register under the date of profession together with the date and place of baptism of the individual, and all other information as required, as well as the date, if known, even if only approximate, of the non-Catholic baptism. Notations shall be recorded in the Confirmation register as well.

The data concerning the Rite of Reception into Full Communion should be entered in the space provided for baptism, and the data concerning the original baptism should be entered in the “Notations” column.

Special care must be taken to follow the proper procedure when young children (who are not yet of catechetical age) are received into full communion along with their parents. In such cases, it is suggested that the ceremonies be supplied as in an emergency baptism, so that there is a formal reception into the Church (see Chapter VI of *The Order of Baptism of Children*, entitled “Order of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church”).

For the “Full Reception into the Church” celebrated for a baptized adult (OCIA), the following information is to be entered in the Baptismal Register.

- The given or Christian name(s) of the person (use the maiden name of a woman).
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle, maiden name)
- The date and place of birth
- The name of the sponsor
- The date and place of the Rite of Reception 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 invalidity (including where granted and protocol number) should be noted.

Baptisms performed in the following churches are deemed to be invalid:

- All non-Christian groups and communities
- Amana Church Society
- American Ethical Union
- American (United American) - Catholic Valid Baptism/Confirmation is doubtful

- Apostolic Church (“Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God)
- Apostolic Faith Mission
- Armenian Apostolic
- Bohemian Free Thinkers
- Baha’i Faith
- Brethren
- Children of God (“The Family”)
- Christadelphians
- Christian Community (disciples of Rudolph Steiner)
- Christian and Missionary Alliance
- Christians of Universalist Brotherhood
- Church of Christ, Scientists (“Christian Scientists”)
- Church of Daniel’s Band
- Church of Divine Science
- Church of Illumination
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (“Mormons”)
- Church of Revelation
- Church of the New Jerusalem
- Church of the Scientology
- Erieside Church
- General Assembly of Spiritualists
- Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association
- House of David Church
- Iglesia ni Kristo (Philippines)
- Independent Church of Filipino Christians
- Jehovah’s Witnesses
- Masons/Freemasonry
- Metropolitan Church Association
- New Church of Mr. Emmanuel Swedenborg
- National David Spiritual Temple of Christ Church Union
- National Spiritualist Association
- New Jerusalem Church (Swedenborg or “New Age” Church)
- Peoples Church of Chicago
- Pentecostal Churches
- Plymouth Brethren
- Quakers (“Society of Friends”)
- Reunification Church (“Moonies”)
- Salvation Army
- Shakers (“United Society of Believers”)
- Some communities of Mennonites and Moravians (handle on a case-by-case basis)
- Spiritualist Church
- Swedenborg (“New Age”)
- Unitarians
- Universal Emancipation Church
- World Harvest

BAPTISM OF AN ADULT

For baptisms celebrated for a non-baptized adult (OCIA), the following information is to be entered in the Baptismal Register:

- The given Christian name(s) of the person (use maiden name of a woman)
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle 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.

CONFIRMATION

Required Data

The following data are to be entered into the Confirmation Register for Confirmation celebrated under normal circumstances:

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

Baptismal Certification

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.

Noting the place and date of baptism in the Confirmation Register can be especially helpful when 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 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 community is received into full communion and confirmed, the church of baptism is not notified. In the case of a baptized person, under the age of reason, 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.

When a large number of persons are to be confirmed, it is essential that one person be designated to 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 Confirmation Register.

Emergency Confirmation

In the case of an emergency Confirmation for a catechumen in the OCIA program, the record of the emergency Confirmation or profession of faith is kept in the parish the ceremony was performed and notated in the Baptism Register.

FIRST COMMUNION see Profession of Faith and Reception into Full Communion

SAMPLE OF ENTRIES

| Page 43 | Baptism Registry | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|----------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| | No. | Name of Person | Place/Date of Birth | Date of Baptism | Father's Name Mother's Maiden Name | Sponsors | Priest | Date of Confirm | Notations | |
| Standard Entry | 32 | BROCKMAN, Richard Mark | Lodi, WI March 4, 1950 | March 11, 1950 | Robert J. Brockman Angela M. Torrini | Philip Brockman Agnes Lippert | James C. Felix | Oct. 23, 1961, St. Helen, Brule, WI | Married Janice Kennedy, June 14, 1973, St. Gabriel, Tonetown, WI | Notation of Marriage Notation of Confirmation |
| Unmarried Parents, No Father Noted | 33 | MARTIN, Teresa Ann | Lodi, WI Apr. 15, 1950 | March 18, 1950 | Margaret S. Martin | Ralph Martin Ruth Martin | James C. Felix | May 13, 1962, Holy Spirit, Lodi, WI | Perpetual Religious Profession, Sisters of the Sacred Heart, June 14, 1974, Detroit, MI | Notation of Religious Profession |
| Minor Change Rite of Bringing Baptized Child to Church, Proper Date | 34 | THOMPSON, Linda Susan Suzanne | Columbus, WI August 8, 1949 | April 15, 1950 | Michael A. Thompson Gloria N. Quinn | Thomas Quinn Andrea Quinn | James C. Felix | May 13, 1962, Holy Spirit, Lodi, WI | Rite of bringing baptized child to the Church; Emergency Baptism by nurse at St. Joseph Hospital, Columbus, WI (continued below) | Rite of Bringing Baptized Child to the Church Emergency Baptism Not Enough Space |
| | 35 | FASSOUD, Daniel Louis | Lodi, WI March 22, 1950 | April 20, 1950 | Emil Fassoud (Maronite) Marcia L. Dupage | Michael George Frances George (Christian Witness) | James C. Felix | April 20, 1950 Holy Spirit, Lodi, WI | Ascribed as Maronite | Ascription to Easter Catholic Church, sui iuris Christian Witness |
| Reception into Full Communion, Proper Date | 36 | LISTERMAN, Andrew Astor | Omaha, NE January 11, 1925 | May 3, 1950 | Quentin A. Listerman Rachel F. Astor | Steven Meyer | James C. Felix | May 3, 1950 Holy Spirit, Lodi, WI | Received into full communion May 3, 1950. Baptized Sept. 30, 1938, Emmanuel Lutheran, Omaha, NE. Married Jane Carswell, June 17, 1947, First Presbyterian, Dayton, OH | Reception into Full Communion Notation of Previous Marriage |
| Baptism before an Adoption is Finalized | 37 | OVERMEYER (POKOWSKI), Leonard James | Lodi, WI April 25, 1950 | May 10, 1950 | Samuel Overmeyer (Karl J. Schaefer) (Nancy Pokowski) Margaret Klein | Roger Antonelli Mary Jones (Proxy) Elizabeth Pokowski | James C. Felix | April 23, 1963, St. Joseph, Doyle, WI | Legally adopted, Jan. 10, 1951. Ordained transitional deacon, Nov. 1, 1975, Diocese of Superior. Ordained priest, June 6, 1976, Diocese of Superior | Notation of Holy Orders Proxy Godparent |
| Baptism after an Adoption is Finalized | 38 | PLOCHMAN, Isabella Marie | Glenwood, WI Sept. 7, 1949 | May 15, 1950 | Earl R. Plochman Maria Valdez | Jesus Valdez Carmen Valdez | James C. Felix | May 13, 1962 Holy Spirit, Lodi, WI | Legally adopted, April 7, 1950. Married Jose Gonzales, June 1, 1968, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Los Angeles, CA (see page 55) | |
| Excess data cross-referencing | | See THOMPSON (continuation of #34 above) | | | | | | | See Sacramental Records file for affidavit. Married Randy Smith, Sept. 28, 1973, St. Louis, Dayton, OH, | Notation of Declaration of Nullity |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| | | | | | | | | | Declaration of Nullity, Cincinnati, OH, Oct. 5, 1984, Prot. No. 136- 84 | |
| | | | | | | | | | Married Peter Ulrich, Feb. 3, 1985, Hyde Park United Methodist (Records at Nativity, Stone, WI) | Notation of Place of Marriage and Place of Record. When marriage is celebrated with a dispensation form Canonical form |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|--|----------|--------|--------------------|--|--------------|
| Page 55 | Baptism Registry | | | | | | | | | |
| | No. | Name of Person | Place/Date of Birth | Date of Baptism | Father's Name Mother's Maiden Name | Sponsors | Priest | Date of Confirm | Notations | |
| Excess Data Cross-referencing | | See PLOCHMAN, #38 on page 43 | | | | | | | Declaration of Nullity, Los Angeles, July 17, 1981, Prot. No. 356- 81. Marriage with Jorge Gomez validated August 7, 1981, St. Cecilia, Los Angeles. This second marriage | |
| | | | | | | | | | Declared null, Sacramento, CA, May 5, 1984, Prot. No. 151-84. Not to remarry without consulting the Tribunal | Special Note |