

***Sacramental Registers***

**CHERYL M. THOLCKE**

Binder, Tab 5

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**Diocesan Statute 61**

Each parish is to maintain complete and accurate records (cf. c. 535). Sacramental records shall be inscribed in the appropriate sacramental registers. The deans, on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop, are to inspect the registers in their respective deaneries each year and indicate needed additions and/or corrections. Parish records are to include the following:

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**Diocesan Statute 61 (continued)**

**§1. Registers to be inspected by the deans:**

- a. Baptisms
- b. Confirmations
- c. First Communions
- d. Catechumens
- e. Marriages
- f. Sick Calls
- g. Deaths

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### Protocols for Sacramental Registers

- The spelling of all names is verified *prior* to the reception of the sacrament. Official document (i.e., birth certificate) should be used to verify name.
- The sacrament is administered.
- The information is written in the appropriate sacramental registry book by the pastor or his delegate after the sacrament is administered.
- The sacramental certificate is filled out and given or mailed to the person/family after the sacrament is administered. Certificates are not to be distributed at the sacramental celebration.

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### Notes Regarding Sacramental Registers

- **IMPORTANT:** The sacramental register book is the **FINAL WORD** on the information regarding a sacrament. If it is not in the sacramental register book, it did not happen. "Quod non est in actis non est in mundo." ("What is not in the Acts is not in the world.")
- The church of baptism is informed of the reception of a sacrament. The parish sends notification to the church of baptism of the sacrament administered.

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### Use of Witness Affidavits

- Witness Affidavits are used *in lieu of* sacramental certificates when...
- The parish verifies the sacrament was not recorded in the sacramental register:
  - Two witnesses may each complete and sign an affidavit attesting to being present when the sacrament was administered.
  - These affidavits must be signed in the presence of the pastor or his delegate.
  - Identification of the witness must be provided and verified.
  - The pastor or his delegate signs the form and the parish stamp or seal is affixed.
  - Give the original affidavits to the individual.

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**Use of Witness Affidavits  
(continued)**

- Place a copy of the affidavits in a pocket folder in the back of the register book.
- Nothing may be entered in the registry book based on the affidavits.
- No sacramental certificate may be issued.
- If a sacramental certificate “appears” or is “found,” it must be destroyed because it does not accurately portray what is in the register. Sacramental certificates “testify” to what is in the register.
- Pictures are not proof that a sacrament was administered.

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**Use of Witness Affidavits  
(continued)**

- If a request is received for a sacramental certificate, and only Witness Affidavits are available...
  - Make a copy of the affidavits from the ones tucked into the sacramental register.
  - Stamp each one with “Condordat cum Originale” stamp, sign and date.
  - Give the copy(ies) to the parish or individual or tribunal requesting them.

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**Sacramental Certificates**

- Sacramental certificates must have required information on them and be signed by the pastor or parochial administrator. No signature stamp may be used.
- See the certificate samples in the *Norms* booklet:
  - Baptism – p. 25
  - Confirmation – p. 27
  - First Eucharist – p. 28
  - Reception into Full Communion – p. 29
  - Marriage – p. 30

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