



Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

Office of Worship

David Wood, Director
Sandy Higgins, Associate Director

To: Acolyte Candidates
From: David Wood
Date: 10/11/2007
Re: **Sacramental Records**

A requirement for all those to be instituted as an acolyte is that they are fully initiated and living an exemplary Catholic way of life. This means, for example, valid marriage if married. A current sacramental record is required to assist in verifying this information. Typically this requires a request for your baptismal record with all notations. The notations indicate confirmation and marriage. When a person is confirmed or married, a notice sent to the baptismal parish. To this end, the Office of Worship must receive an official baptismal certificate issued within the last six months by the parish of baptism. We will not accept photocopies or faxed certificates. The parish seal must be present on the certificate. The certificate should contain all notations made in the sacramental record. This means that the certificate should contain a notation for confirmation and marriage. The Archdiocese will keep the certificate. At times, notifications were not sent to the baptismal parish. In this case, the candidate will need to contact the parish where confirmation and marriage were celebrated and request an official sacramental certificate for these sacraments.

What follows is information for resolving particular issues that are at times encountered when one seeks official certificates.

Baptismal Certificate

Among the attached forms is a request for a baptismal certificate which is requested from the parish where you were baptized. You will need to contact the parish to request the certificate. Often there is a minimal stipend requested. The parish can communicate this to you. Here are some pointers:

- If you do not know the name of the parish:
 - Contact a parent or other relative who would have been present
 - Look in old family Bibles
 - Look through old records which may include an old baptismal certificate which would contain the name and address
 - Go to your parish office and ask to look through the Kenedy Catholic Church Directory or go to the internet:
 - Look up the names of the parishes in your home town or the place you lived when young.
 - Contact the parishes and ask them if your name is in the record along with the name of your parents and an approximate date based upon your date of birth.



- NOTE: Sacramental records are private and it is possible that the parish may not assist you in this manner. However, all you are doing at this point is trying to find the baptismal parish. By telling them this, they will likely tell you if the record exists.
- If you know the parish where you received Confirmation or were married, check there asking the staff if there is any information about his baptism recorded on the record. Stress that you are trying to track your baptismal information.
- If the parish no longer exists or if the records have been destroyed, contact the diocesan archives office for the place you were baptized.
- Upon finding the record, complete the appropriate form.
- All notations must be included on the certificate.

Profession of Faith

- If you were baptized in another Christian tradition, e.g., Methodist or Baptist, then you made a profession of faith in the Catholic Church at the time you completed your sacraments of initiation. Contact that parish and they will have your complete sacramental record.
 - Locate the parish's contact information as described above concerning Baptism.
 - Send them the appropriate form requesting a Profession of Faith certificate (or a baptismal certificate if they do not have a Profession of Faith certificate).
 - All notations are to be included on the certificate.
 - NOTE: Even though you may have been baptized at First United Methodist, when you made a Profession of Faith you should have provided the Catholic parish with your baptismal information. The certificate the parish issues will reflect that you were baptized at First United Methodist. This is proper.

No Confirmation Notation

- If after you find your baptismal parish of record, you find that they do not have a record of your Confirmation:
 - Contact the parish where Confirmation was celebrated (locate the contact info as described above concerning baptismal certificates).
 - Verify the record of Confirmation exists by giving your name and the approximate date of the Confirmation and the name of your sponsor(s).
 - Request a new official copy of the certificate with the parish seal and provide that certificate to the Office of Worship.
 - Ask the parish to make the official notification of Confirmation to the parish of Baptism as they do not have the notation in their records. (You will likely need to make this request in writing.) You will need to provide the contact information for the baptismal parish.

No Marriage Notation

- If after contacting the baptismal parish, you find that there has been no notation made concerning Marriage:
 - Contact the parish where the Marriage was celebrated (locate the parish contact information as described above for baptismal certificates).



- Request a new official copy of the Marriage Record (certificate) to be sent to you. Send that Marriage Record to the Office of Worship.
- Request that the parish send an official notification of Marriage to the baptismal parish. They will need:
 - The contact information for the baptismal parish;
 - Your name, your parent's and Godparent's names, and the date of baptism.

No Marriage Notation – Marriage Outside of the Catholic Church with a dispensation from canonical form granted.

- If after contacting the baptismal parish you find that there has been no notation made concerning Marriage and you were married outside of the Catholic Church:
 - Contact the parish where you were a member at the time you were married (or where your marriage preparation took place):
 - Request a copy of the dispensation from canonical form that was granted and an official copy of the Marriage Certificate.
 - Request that they send an official notification to your parish of baptism supplying them the necessary information as described above.
 - If the parish does not have the record, contact the diocese and request a copy of the dispensation from canonical form.
 - Bring a copy of your Marriage License and a copy of the dispensation from canonical form to the Office of Worship.
 - Request that the Diocese or Parish send an official notification of marriage to your baptismal parish.

Sacraments Outside Of The United States

- What is described above is applicable for sacraments celebrated outside of the United States. Some additional points:
 - The Kenedy Catholic Church Directory is a directory only of parishes in the United States.
 - Use the internet to locate the parish by searching for “Roman Catholic Church” and the name of the city and country. Contact the parish and request the Baptismal Certificate with notations
 - Use the internet to locate the diocese for the city where the sacrament(s) were celebrated. Contact them and seek their guidance on obtaining the needed baptism certificate with notations or other certificates.
 - The parish or diocese can instruct about any fees that may be required.

After Exhausting All Avenues

- If after attempting all of the above you are still unable to resolve your situation, contact the Office of Worship.

Your Situation Is Not Addressed Above

- Speak with your parish office.
- If that does not resolve this situation, contact the Office of Worship.