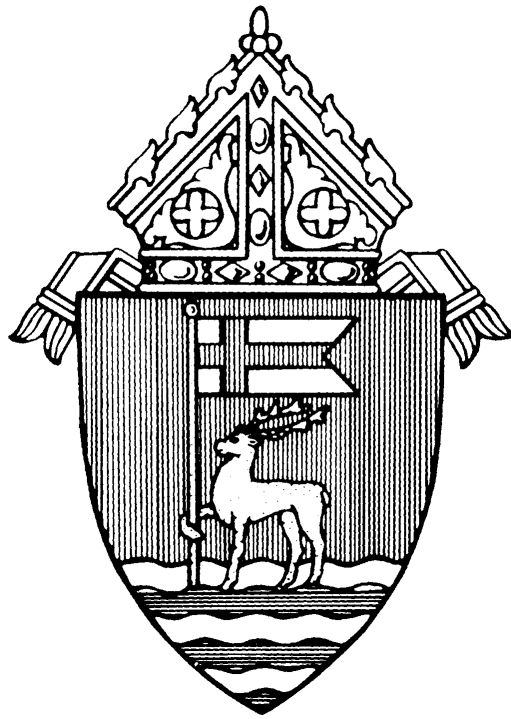


SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES



ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD

February 10, 2008



ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD
134 FARMINGTON AVENUE
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
06105-3784

OFFICE OF
THE ARCHBISHOP

Lent 2008

Dear Friends in Christ,

In speaking to children who had just received First Communion, our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI said, "It is precisely the invisible things that are the most profound...we do not see the Lord himself but we see the effects of the Lord: so we can understand that Jesus is present." (October 15, 2005) How well this describes what happens in the celebration of the Sacraments. The Risen Lord, whom we cannot see, becomes visible for us in sacramental signs as well as in the effects they have on our lives. Just as St. Paul could say in Colossians 1:15, "Jesus is the image of the invisible God," so we can say that the Sacraments are the image of the Lord Jesus.

Since the sacraments are so vital to our faith, I promulgate this set of revised Sacramental Guidelines on the First Sunday of Lent, February 10, 2008. These guidelines replace those issued in February 1989. My prayerful hope is that a renewed examination and appreciation of the sacraments will bring us more deeply into the mystery of Christ and open more fully for us the fountains of grace.

May the Lord who died and rose for us bless us abundantly now and for all the years ahead.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Henry J. Mansell*

Most Reverend Henry J. Mansell
Archbishop of Hartford

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The aphorism that many hands make light work was lived out in the careful production of the revised Sacramental Guidelines.

I wish to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of the committee:

The Reverend Michael F.X. Hinkley
Miss Patricia A. Keck
The Reverend Monsignor David Q. Liptak
The Reverend Monsignor John J. McCarthy
Sister Mary Kathleen Ronan, R.S.M.
The Reverend Robert B. Vargo
Miss Lucy L. Zocco

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Many thanks to the members of the Presbyteral Council for their review of the first draft of the guidelines.

Finally, thanks to Archbishop Henry J. Mansell, whose careful review of the first draft of the guidelines and words of encouragement were most influential in the formation of the guidelines.

May the Lord Jesus, whom we celebrate in each of the sacraments, continue to bring new life to the people of the Archdiocese.

The Reverend David J. Baranowski
Chairman
Sacramental Guidelines Committee
February 10, 2008

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Abbreviation Key and Sources

- BLS** *Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture and Worship: Guidelines of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.* Washington D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 2000.
- CCC** *Catechism of the Catholic Church, Modifications from the Editio Typica.* Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, Inc. - Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997, Glossary and *Index Analyticus*, USCCC, Inc., 2000.
- CIC** *The Code of Canon Law Annotated.* University of Navarra, Faculty of Canon Law. Montreal: Wilson & Lafleur Limitée, 1993.
- CLSC** *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law.* The Canon Law Society of America. New York, NY and Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2000.
- DNE** *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism.* Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. March 25, 1993.
- DS** Denziger-Schönmetzer, *Enchiridion Symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (1965)
- FAH** *Faculties Granted to Clerics of the Archdiocese of Hartford*, June 2004
- GIRM** *General Instruction of the Roman Missal.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Inc. 2003.
- GPD** *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities.* National Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 16, 1995.
- LA** *Liturgiam Authenticam: Fifth Instruction on Vernacular Translation of the Roman Liturgy (LA)*, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, March 28, 2001
- LG** Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*.
- NRHCBK** *Norms for the Celebration and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America*, USCCB, April 7, 2002
- PA** *Instruction, Pastoralis Actio*, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, October 20, 1980.
- RCIA** *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 1988.
- R-I, R-II** *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, vol. I (1990) and II (1991), Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press. [All references to *The Roman Ritual* will be taken from this edition and will include paragraph and page numbers for ease of consultation.]
- RS** *Instruction, Redemptionis Sacramentum: On Certain Matters to be Observed or to be Avoided Regarding the Most Holy Eucharist*, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Rome, March 25, 2004.
- SC** Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

Sacrament of Baptism

*Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as children of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission.*¹

Minister

- The ordinary minister of Baptism is a bishop, a priest or a deacon.² Administration of the Sacrament is especially entrusted to the parish priest.³
- In case of necessity, anyone with the requisite intention to do what the Church does can baptize.⁴

Subject

- Anyone who has never been baptized with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit can be baptized.⁵ When doubt exists, refer below to the section on “Conditional Baptism.”
- Infants normally are to be baptized within the first few weeks after birth.⁶ Concerning adopted infants see *Appendices I and II* of these *Guidelines* and, for special cases, *CIC* 111, 868§2, 870 and 871 or consult with the Chancery. See *Appendix III*.

Requirements

- Parental consent or the equivalent is required for the Baptism of infants and for individuals of any age who have not attained the use of reason.⁷ See *Appendix III*.
- In the case of infants, there should be a realistic hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic religion.⁸ This assurance may be offered by anyone who pledges to provide a Catholic upbringing for the child. In the event that such assurance is altogether lacking, the final decision concerning whether to delay Baptism remains with the pastor, who will decide in accord with the instructions of the Archbishop and ecclesiastical directives. Any postponement should be followed by continued efforts to encourage a life of faith in the parents or guardian.⁹
- The preparation of adult catechumens and the parents and godparents of infants should include pastoral advice, instruction and prayer.¹⁰
- Individuals living in invalid marriages or in situations inconsistent with Catholic moral teachings may not be accepted for instruction and preparation for Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist, such as the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)* until all such situations are remedied.

Danger of death

- An adult must manifest some personal knowledge of the four principal truths required for Baptism: specifically, that God exists, that God rewards the righteous and punishes

¹ Cf. *CIC* 849; *CCC* 1213.

² Cf. *CIC* 861.

³ Cf. *CIC* 530, no.1.

⁴ Cf. *CIC* 861§2.

⁵ Cf. *CIC* 864.

⁶ Cf. *CIC* 867.

⁷ Cf. *CIC* 852§2, 868§1, no.1.

⁸ Cf. *CIC* 868§1, nos. 1, 2.

⁹ Cf. Instruction, *Pastoralis Actio* (PA), Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, October 20, 1980.

¹⁰ Cf. *CIC* 851, no. 2; *The Rites* (R-I), “Baptism for Children” (BC), Introduction, no. 27, p.373.

evildoers, that there are three Persons in one God, and that the Second Person became incarnate and redeemed mankind.¹¹

- In danger of death, infants are to be baptized without delay.¹² Aborted fetuses, if alive, are to be baptized insofar as possible.¹³ Dying children may be baptized, confirmed and receive *Viaticum*.¹⁴

Godparents

Requirements

- Godparents must be chosen by the one to be baptized, or by the parents or guardians, or in their absence the pastor or the minister of the Sacrament.¹⁵
- One godparent is sufficient; but there may be two, one of each sex.¹⁶
- Godparents must present to the parish of the Baptism, if other than their own, a *Sponsor Certificate*, obtained from the clergy of their own parish. See *Appendix IV*.
- The minister of Baptism must verify:
 - that the person wishing to serve as godparent fulfills the requirements of the law. See *Appendix V*.
 - that there is at least one godparent;¹⁷ and, if a godparent is absent, that at least there is present a witness to the fact of the Baptism, if possible.¹⁸
- A godparent who is unable to be present for the baptismal ceremony, may be represented by a proxy designated by the parent(s) presenting the child for Baptism. The presence of the proxy is noted in the annotations column of the Baptismal Register, while the designated godparent is listed in the proper place in the Baptismal Register as well as on the certificate.

Restrictions

- Parents of the one to be baptized may not serve as godparents.¹⁹
- A non-Catholic Christian may not serve as godparent/sponsor, but may act as a Christian witness along with a Catholic godparent.²⁰ See *Appendix V*.

Celebration of the Sacrament

- Ordinarily, Baptism should be administered according to the rite prescribed in the approved liturgical books.²¹
- For validity, Baptism is to be conferred either by immersion in water or by the pouring of water²² while saying the form in the *Rite*, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”²³
- The pouring of the water or the immersion, together with the saying of the form, must be done by the same minister. (This is especially to be noted when Baptism is conferred by immersion.)

¹¹ Cf. *CIC* 865§2.

¹² Cf. *CIC* 867§2.

¹³ Cf. *CIC* 871.

¹⁴ Cf. (*R-I*), “Pastoral Care of the Sick,” no. 280, p. 888.

¹⁵ Cf. *CIC* 874§1, no.1; (*R-I*), *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA), Introduction, no. 11, p. 39.

¹⁶ Cf. *CIC* 873.

¹⁷ Cf. *CIC* 873.

¹⁸ Cf. *CIC* 875.

¹⁹ Cf. *CIC* 874§1, no. 5.

²⁰ Cf. *CIC* 874§2.

²¹ Cf. (*R-I*), (*BC*), (*RCIA*).

²² Cf. *CIC* 854.

²³ Cf. (*R-I*), (*RCIA*), no. 317, p. 207; (*BC*), no. 97, p. 403.

- For validity, the water must flow upon the skin. Baptism by aspersion (sprinkling or the use of a wet sponge) is disallowed because of requirements for validity.
- Baptism of infants may be celebrated on any day, though preferably on Sunday.²⁴ Ideally, parents should contact the parish office prior to the birth of their child or prior to adoption in order to discuss the protocols for scheduling Baptism. If pastorally opportune, Baptism may be administered occasionally during the Sunday Mass.²⁵
- Ordinarily the water for Baptism should be blessed in accordance with the *Rite*.²⁶
- The wearing of a stole by the one to be baptized is not permissible.²⁷
- For Baptism by immersion, the one to be baptized should be vested in a modest robe or garment. Decency and decorum should prevail.²⁸

Celebration of Conditional Baptism

- Only when doubt exists after serious investigation concerning the fact or the validity of the Baptism of someone belonging to a non-Catholic ecclesial community should Baptism be administered conditionally; e.g., "...If you are not baptized, I baptize you..."²⁹ This may be the case when a question exists as to whether Baptism was properly conferred with water (by immersion or infusion) and with the proper Trinitarian formula.
- The reasons for using the conditional rite should be discussed beforehand with an adult candidate, or with the parents of the child.³⁰

Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church

- For those baptized in emergency settings or due to other difficulties,³¹ it is appropriate, at a later date, in the parish church, to celebrate the *Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church*.³² See Appendix V.
- Notation should be made in the parish Baptismal Register of the date and place of the actual Baptism, together with a notification that the *Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church* has taken place.

Place of the Celebration

- Other than in emergency, the proper place for the administration of Baptism is a church or oratory with a font. The font, whether permanent or temporary, should be of a quality befitting the dignity of the Sacrament.³³ Except in cases of necessity, Baptism is normally not conferred in private homes.³⁴
- Ordinarily, the parish church of the one to be baptized is the proper place for the celebration of the Sacrament.³⁵
- For liceity, before baptizing a person who lives outside the parish boundaries, permission should be obtained, normally, from the proper pastor of the one to be baptized.³⁶

²⁴ Cf. *CIC* 856.

²⁵ Cf. (R-I), (BC) Introduction, no. 9, p. 369.

²⁶ Cf. *CIC* 853, (R-I), (BC), no. 118, p. 412.

²⁷ Cf. USCCB Committee for the Liturgy Bulletin, cited in Archdiocese of Hartford *Information Bulletin*, April 7, 2000.

²⁸ Cf. (R-I), (RCIA) no. 226, p. 159.

²⁹ Cf. *CIC* 869§§1, 2; (R-I), (RCIA), no. 480, p. 276-77.

³⁰ Cf. *CIC* 869§3.

³¹ Cf. (R-I), (BC), Introduction, no. 31.3, p. 375 and no. 185, p. 443.

³² Cf. (R-I), *nos.* 165-185, pp. 436-443.

³³ Cf. (R-I) "Christian Initiation," General Introduction, n. 19, p. 9, "Christian Initiation of Adults," (CIA) nos. 218-19 and 222, pp. 148-51.

³⁴ Cf. *CIC* 857§1, 859, 860§§1, 2.

³⁵ Cf. *CIC* 857§2.

³⁶ Cf. *CIC* 862.

Recording Baptism

- The baptismal record must be made with permanent ink in a bound book/volume. Other records whether on computer, on disc, or CD, cannot substitute for a handwritten documentation in the Baptismal Register. The parish Baptismal Register is to be retained in a fireproof and securely locked place, e.g., a file or a safe.
- The pastor of the parish of Baptism should see to it that a record is entered *permanently and without delay* in the Baptismal Register including all the information required by canon law and by local directives.³⁷ The name of a Deacon is to be recorded: “Deacon John J. Smith.”
- Whenever a Baptism occurs in a parish church, the proper pastor of that church must be informed so that the Baptism will be recorded.³⁸
- To record the Baptism of a child born to an unwed mother, special care must be taken to verify the identity of the parents before entering the names in the register.³⁹
- To record the Baptism of adopted children, directives of ecclesiastical and civil law are to be followed. See *Appendices I and II*.
- Parish personnel having access to parish registers have an obligation not to disclose any information which would identify or reveal, directly or indirectly, the fact that a person was adopted. See *Appendix I*.

Relation to other sacraments

- Unless a grave reason prevents it, an adult who is baptized is to be confirmed by the same priest immediately after Baptism. The baptized then participate in the celebration of Mass and receive First Communion. This normally occurs at the Easter Vigil.⁴⁰

³⁷ Cf. *CIC* 877 and 878.

³⁸ Cf. *CIC* 878.

³⁹ Cf. *CIC* 877 §2.

⁴⁰ Cf. (R-I), (CIA) “Introduction,” nos. 14 and 24, pp. 40-43.

Appendix I

- **Entries in the Parish Register for the Baptism of adopted children:**⁴¹

A child baptized after adoption:

- The Baptismal Register will contain a note on the fact of adoption but the names of the natural parents are omitted.

A child baptized before adoption:

- In the Baptismal Register of the parish of Baptism: Upon notification that a child baptized in the parish has been legally adopted by presentation of a Court Order, the following shall be entered in the register:
1) parentheses are placed around birth parents, 2) names of the adoptive parents are added, 3) the child's former surname is placed in parentheses, 4) child's new surname is added and the notation of the child's legal adoption.
- In the Baptismal Register of the parish of the adoptive parents:
1) date and location of original record of Baptism, 2) name of adoptive parents, 3) date and place of birth, and 4) the fact of the legal adoption

“Parish personnel having access to parish registers have an obligation not to disclose to any person any information which would identify or reveal, directly or indirectly, the fact that a person was adopted.” *Complementary Norm of the USCCB for Canon 877§3*, (October 20, 2000).

- **Preparation of certificates for the Baptism of adopted children:**⁴²

A child baptized after adoption:

- The Baptismal Certificate will contain less information than what is entered into the Baptismal Register.
- No mention is made on the certificate of:
 - 1) the names of the natural (birth) parents, or
 - 2) of the fact of adoption.

A child baptized before adoption:

- The certificate shall give only:
 - 1) the name(s) of the adoptive parent(s),
 - 2) the child's new legal surname,
 - 3) the date and place of Baptism, and
 - 4) the name of the minister who conferred the Sacrament.

⁴¹ Cf., *Complementary Norm of the USCCB for Canon 877§3*, (October 20, 2000).

⁴² Cf., *Complementary Norm of the USCCB for Canon 877§3*, (October 20, 2000).

Appendix II

RECORD OF BAPTISM OF CHILDREN BAPTIZED AFTER ADOPTION⁴³

PARISH REGISTER

- first name given by adopting parents → → → → → → → → → → → →
- family name of adopting parents → → → → → → → → → → → →
- adopting parents' names → → → → → → → → → → → →
- date and place of birth of child → → → → → → → → → → → →
- names of the sponsors selected by adopting parents → → → → → → → → → → → →
- date and place of Baptism → → → → → → → → → → → →
- name of the minister administering Baptism → → → → → → → → → → → →
- *the fact of adoption without names of birth parents*

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE

- first name given by adopting parents
 - family name of adopting parents
 - adopting parents' names
 - date and place of birth of child
 - names of the sponsors selected by adopting parents
 - date and place of Baptism
 - name of the minister administering Baptism
- NO MENTION IS MADE OF ADOPTION***

RECORD OF BAPTISM OF CHILDREN BAPTIZED PRIOR TO ADOPTION³

REGISTER OF THE PLACE OF BAPTISM

An original record exists.

→ → → → → → → → → → → →
→ → → → → → → → → → → →

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE

- date and place of Baptism
 - name of the minister
 - omit name/s of sponsor/s
-
- no mention of birth parents
 - only the names of the adoptive parents
-
- the child's new legal surname
 - ***NO MENTION MADE OF ADOPTION***
-
- **Notation is made that the child was legally adopted**

Add to the existing record the following:(once the adoption is finalized)

- Parentheses are placed around birth parents. → → → → → → → → → → → →
- Names of adoptive parents shall be added. → → → → → → → → → → → →
- Child's former surname in parentheses → → → → → → → → → → → →
- Child's new surname added → → → → → → → → → → → →
- **Notation is made that the child was legally adopted**

Upon presentation by the parents of a Court Order, a baptismal entry for the child shall be made in the Baptismal Register of the parish of the adoptive parents containing the following information: date and location of original record of Baptism, name of adopting parents, date and place of birth and the fact of adoption.

⁴³ *Complementary Norm of the USCCB for Canon 877§3, (October 20, 2000).*

Appendix III

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 16, 1995.

Baptism

8. Through the Sacrament of Baptism the faithful are incorporated into Christ and into his Church. They are formed into God's people and obtain forgiveness of all their sins. They become a new creation and are called, rightly, the children of God (*RCIA*, General Introduction, nos. 1-6, pp. 3-5).

9. Because it is the Sacrament of universal salvation, Baptism is to be made available to all who freely ask for it, are properly disposed, and are not prohibited by law from receiving it. Baptism may be deferred only when there is no reason for hoping that the person will be brought up in the Catholic religion (*CIC* 868 §1, no. 2). Disability, of itself, is never a reason for deferring Baptism. Persons who lack the use of reason are to be baptized provided at least one parent or guardian consents to it (*CIC* 868 §1, no. 1 and 852 §2).

10. So that Baptism may be seen as a Sacrament of the Church's faith and of admittance into the people of God, it should be celebrated ordinarily in the parish church on a Sunday or, if possible, at the Easter Vigil (*CIC* 856 and 857). The Church, made present in the local community, has an important role to play in the Baptism of all of its members. Before and after the celebration of the Sacrament, the baptized have the right to the love and help of the community (Cf. *The Rites*, "Rite of Baptism for Children," no. 4, p. 366 and no.10, p. 369).

11. Either personally or through others, the pastor is to see to it that the parents of an infant who is disabled, or those who take the place of the parents, are properly instructed as to the meaning of the Sacrament of Baptism and the obligations attached to it. If possible, either the pastor or a member of the parish community should visit with the family, offering them the strength and support of the community which rejoices at the gift of new life, and which promises to nurture the faith of its newest member. It is recommended that preparation programs for Baptism gather several families together so that they may commonly be formed by pastoral direction and prayer, and so that they may be strengthened by mutual support (Cf. *CIC* 851, no. 2).

12. If the person to be baptized is of catechetical age, the *Rite of Christian Initiation* may be adapted according to need. (Cf. *CIC* 851, no. 1 and 852 §1)

13. A sponsor is to be chosen who will assist the newly baptized in Christian initiation. Sponsors have a special role in fostering the faith life of the baptized person. As such, they are to be chosen and prepared accordingly. Persons with disabilities may be sponsors for these Sacraments of Initiation.

Appendix IV**Archdiocese of Hartford**

Parish Letterhead here

Church

address

city, state zip code

Godparent/Sponsor Certificate**Role of a Godparent/Sponsor**

To be a godparent/sponsor is both an honor and an awesome responsibility, as it calls one to draw even deeper into the heart of Christ to gain wisdom in guiding the spiritual life of the candidate in the ways of Christ and His Church. The godparent/sponsor, together with the parents, must be willing to help the baptized/confirmed grow in love for Christ and neighbor. By word and example, the godparent/sponsor will encourage the candidate to live the Christian life and fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 872).

Church law permits two godparents for Baptism. Only one is necessary. If two are chosen, there must be one of each sex (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 873). Only one sponsor of either gender is permitted for Confirmation.

Therefore, I _____,
desiring to assume the obligation of godparent/ sponsor for the Sacrament of:
Check one: () Godparent for Baptism () Sponsor for Confirmation
on behalf of: (*insert name*)

_____,
do here declare that I understand the responsibilities of a godparent/sponsor and that I am willing by prayer and example to encourage and instruct her/ him in living our Catholic faith.

Furthermore:

- I have received the Catholic Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.
- I attend Mass regularly on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
- I have attained the required minimum age of sixteen years.
- I am not the parent of the person being baptized/confirmed.
- My manner of life is in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken.
- [*If married*: My current marriage is canonically valid and recognized as such by the Catholic Church.]

I hereby testify before God and God's minister to the truth of what is stated here above.

Signature of applicant

This is to certify that _____
has attested to the above requirements in my presence, and, to the best of my knowledge, is qualified to act as godparent / sponsor for the Sacrament of:
Check one. () Baptism () Confirmation

Date

Parish Seal

Signature of the Pastor / Parochial Vicar

Appendix V

Requirements of one who will serve as godparent:⁴⁴

- The person must be a baptized Catholic, not less than sixteen years of age, unless the parish priest or the minister considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made.⁴⁵ It is permissible, however, for a just cause, for a member of the Eastern Orthodox Churches to act as godparent together with a Catholic godparent.⁴⁶
- The person must have received the three Sacraments of Initiation: i.e., Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.⁴⁷
- The person must be free from canonical penalty.⁴⁸
- The person must be living a life in harmony with the faith.⁴⁹ If the person is married it must be a valid marriage.⁵⁰

Requirements and restrictions for serving as a Christian Witness

- A person baptized as a Catholic who is now sacramentally or canonically ineligible to serve as a godparent may not serve as a Christian Witness. This includes those who subsequently renounced the faith in favor of another church community or entity.
- The unbaptized and those whose Baptism is considered invalid by the Catholic Church may not serve in the role of Christian witness.⁵¹

Protocols regarding children baptized in emergency and the meaning and purpose of “Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church”:

- *Decree*, Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, May 15, 1969, states that: “...a rite would be composed to make it clear that children baptized according to the shorter rite have already been received into the Church (SC 67-69)”.⁵²
- Use of the “Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church” is foreseen only after a child in danger of death, or following other difficulties, has been baptized, for example, during a time of religious persecution or temporary disagreement between the parents.⁵³

Norms regarding petitions for Baptism of the child of a Catholic parent before non-Roman Christian ministers:

- The fact that Baptism, received in a non-Roman Christian Church, is valid and cannot be repeated, should never be used by Catholics to petition Baptism before non-Roman Christian ministers. Roman Catholic Baptism incorporates one within the Roman Catholic Church. “While by Baptism a person is incorporated into Christ and his Church, this is only done in practice in a given Church or ecclesial Community.”⁵⁴

⁴⁴ Cf. *CIC* 872-875.

⁴⁵ Cf. *CIC* 874§1, no.2.

⁴⁶ Cf. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (DNE), 98,b.

⁴⁷ Cf. *CIC* 874§1, no.3.

⁴⁸ Cf. *CIC* 874§1 no.4.

⁴⁹ Cf. *CIC* 874§1 nos.1 and 3.

⁵⁰ Cf. *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, Washington, D.C.:U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006, p. 189.

⁵¹ Cf. *CIC* 874§2.

⁵² Cf. (R-I), (BC), p. 365.

⁵³ Cf. (R-I), (BC), no. 31.3, p. 375 and no. 185, p. 443.

⁵⁴ Cf. (DNE), no. 97.

Sacrament of Confirmation

*In the Sacrament of Confirmation there is a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the baptized person. The grace of Baptism is increased and deepened: it roots us more deeply in the divine filiation, unites us more firmly to Christ and increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us. Sealed with an indelible spiritual mark or character, the confirmed are more closely linked to the Church and more firmly obliged to witness to Christ and to spread and defend the faith.*¹

Minister

- The Ordinary Minister of Confirmation is a Bishop.²
- Only a priest who has the faculty to confirm by virtue of law or concession may administer Confirmation; e.g., to those whom he baptizes or to those already baptized whom he receives into full communion with the Catholic Church.³
- A priest can validly confirm baptized Catholics who have not received First Holy Communion only with the specific faculty granted by the Archbishop.
- Any priest may administer the Sacrament when someone is in danger of death.⁴
- Deacons do not have the power to confirm.

Subject

- One who has been validly baptized and never confirmed is capable of being confirmed.⁵ See *Appendix I*. The Roman Catholic Church recognizes the validity of the Sacrament of Confirmation only in Churches whose Orders are valid.
- To receive Confirmation lawfully, all who have the use of reason must “profess the faith, be in the state of grace, have the intention of receiving the Sacrament and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial community and in temporal affairs.”⁶
- A child of any age who is in danger of death may be confirmed.⁷
- In the Archdiocese of Hartford, youth who were baptized in the Catholic Church as infants are ordinarily confirmed after an appropriate catechetical preparation. Minimally, this would be in the fall or spring of tenth grade. See *Appendix II*.
- Before accepting individuals into formal preparation for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church, it must be determined whether they will be able to receive sacramental absolution. For example, an individual living in an invalid marriage or in a manner that is inconsistent with Catholic moral teaching, may not be confirmed or receive First Holy Communion.⁸

Sponsor

- One wishing to be a sponsor for Confirmation must present a Godparent/ Sponsor Certificate obtained from the clergy of his/her own parish, either a geographic area or an ascribed one, e.g., one who is a member of a national parish. The requirements are identical to those of a baptismal godparent. See *Appendix III*.

¹ Cf. *CIC* 879; *CCC* 1302-03.

² Cf. *CIC* 882.

³ Cf. *CIC* 883, no. 2; *The Rites* (R-I), “Rite of Confirmation,” (RC) Introduction no.7b, p. 481.

⁴ Cf. 883, no.3.

⁵ Cf. *CIC* 889 §1 and 890.

⁶ Cf. *CIC* 889 §2; *CCC* 1310, 1319; (R-I), (RC), Introduction, no.12, p. 483.

⁷ Cf. *CIC* 891; *CCC* 1307; (R-I), “Pastoral Care of the Sick,” nos. 48, pp. 791-92, nos.172-73, p. 847 and (RC), nos. 11-12, pp. 482-83.

⁸ Cf. (R-I), (RC), Introduction, no. 12, p. 483.

- As far as possible, the individual to be confirmed should have a sponsor. The sponsor serves in a manner similar to the godparent for Baptism, i.e., by providing an example for living the Christian life faithfully as a witness of Christ.⁹
- It is preferable that a baptismal godparent serve as sponsor for Confirmation, provided that the person fulfills the requirements of sponsor or baptismal godparent of this Archdiocese.¹⁰
- A parent may not serve as sponsor for his/her child.¹¹

Celebration of the Sacrament

- The Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred “through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”.¹² See *Appendix II*.
- The chrism used by the bishop or by a priest must have been consecrated by a bishop.¹³
- Usually Confirmation is celebrated in a church and during Mass, although for a just and reasonable cause it may be celebrated outside Mass, and in case of emergency, in any fitting place.¹⁴
- Appropriate attire that is modest and suitable for the occasion is required. The use by the candidates of anything resembling the stole of a priest, is prohibited.
- For those who are baptized at the Easter Vigil, Confirmation by the same priest follows immediately at the same Liturgy.
- Those being received into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil should be confirmed separately from those who have just been baptized.¹⁵
- Choosing a name for Confirmation is strongly encouraged. The practice offers an opportunity to select a heavenly intercessor whose way of life will remain a model of holiness to be imitated. The parents, sponsors and parish priest will make certain that the name is not contrary to Christian sentiment, as is the case for a baptismal name.¹⁶

Relation to Other Sacraments

- To receive Confirmation one should be in the state of grace. One should receive the Sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit.¹⁷
- All who request reception into full communion with the Catholic Church should receive adequate instruction regarding the Sacrament of Penance and celebrate the Sacrament before receiving Confirmation.¹⁸

Recording the administration of Confirmation

- A permanent record of the administration of Confirmation should be made promptly in the parish records in accord with all the requirements of the *Code of Canon Law*.¹⁹

⁹ Cf. *CIC* 892.

¹⁰ Cf. *CIC* 874 and 893 §2.

¹¹ Cf. *CIC* 893§1, 874 §1 no. 5.

¹² (R-I), (RC), Introduction, no. 9.

¹³ Cf. *CIC* 880 §2.

¹⁴ Cf. *CIC* 881; (R-I), (RC), Introduction, no. 13, pp. 483-84.

¹⁵ Cf. (R-I), “National Statutes for the Catechumenate,” nos. 34-35, pp. 347-48.

¹⁶ Cf. *CIC* 855.

¹⁷ Cf. *CCC* 1310.

¹⁸ Cf. *CCC* 1310, (R-I), “Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church” no. 482, p. 277; “National Statutes for the Catechumenate,” no. 27, p. 346 and no. 36, p.348.

¹⁹ Cf. *CIC* 894-96; (R-I), (RC), Introduction, no. 14, p. 484.

Appendix I

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 16, 1995.

Confirmation

14. Those who have been baptized continue on the path of Christian initiation through the Sacrament of Confirmation. In this way, they receive the Holy Spirit, conforming them more perfectly to Christ and strengthening them so that they may bear witness to Christ for the building up of his Body in faith and love (cf. *Rite of Confirmation*, nos. 1-2).

15. Parents, those who care for persons with disabilities, and shepherds of souls, especially pastors, are to see to it that the faithful who have been baptized are properly instructed to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and to approach it at the appropriate time (cf. *CIC* 890). The diocesan bishop is obliged to see that the Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred on his subjects who properly and reasonably request it (cf. *CIC* 885, 1).

16. All baptized, unconfirmed Catholics who possess the use of reason may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation if they are suitably instructed, properly disposed and able to renew their baptismal promises (cf. *CIC* 889). Persons who, because of developmental or mental disabilities, may never attain the use of reason, are to be encouraged either directly or, if necessary, through their parents or guardian, to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the appropriate time.

17. Confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful between the age of discretion (which is about the age of seven) and eighteen years of age, within the limits determined by the diocesan bishop, or when there is a danger of death, or in the judgment of the minister a grave cause urges otherwise.

18. A sponsor for the one to be confirmed should be present. The sponsor assists the confirmed person on the continuing path of Christian initiation (cf. *CIC* 892). For this reason, it is desirable that the one who undertook the role of sponsor at Baptism be the sponsor for Confirmation (cf. *CIC* 893 §2).

Appendix II

Confirmation of youth²⁰

A. Matters Sacramental and Liturgical

1. Change in the Policy for Confirmation

In the Archdiocese of Hartford, youths who were baptized in the Catholic Church as infants are ordinarily confirmed after an appropriate catechetical preparation. Generally, this is upon completion of the ninth grade. The earliest a youth may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Hartford, therefore, is in the Fall or Spring of tenth grade.

Validity of Baptism

Investigation into the validity of the Baptism of those seeking full communion with the Catholic Church is essential since Baptism is the gateway to all other sacraments.²¹

Record of Confirmation

- It is the obligation of the parish where Confirmation occurs to send notification to the parishes of those confirmed who were baptized elsewhere.²²
- When Confirmation is administered in exceptional circumstances, the minister is to see to it that a record of Confirmation is made in the proper place.

Cases requiring particular attention:

Admission to full communion with the Catholic Church through Confirmation and reception of first Holy Communion is directed toward a complete participation in the sacramental life of the Church, i.e. regular reception of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and Holy Communion. Therefore, if it is found, after careful screening prior to any period of instruction and preparation, that full incorporation is not possible at the present time, justice and charity require that the individual be informed of the difficulty. This would be the case if the person is in an invalid marriage or intends to continue living in a manner contrary to the teachings of the Church.²³

Essential Rite for the validity of the Sacrament of Confirmation;

Father Nicholas Halligan, *The Sacraments and Their Celebration*, New York: Alba House, 1986, p. 251. *CIC* 13 and 880 §1. *The Rites*, Introduction, no. 9, p. 482. “The anointing with the thumb sufficiently manifests the imposition of the hand (Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of the Decrees of Vatican II, 9 June 1972). The right thumb anoints the forehead with the oil in the sign of the Cross. *Rite of Confirmation*, no. 27.” Also, “the essential rite for the validity of this Sacrament is the anointing of the forehead, there being no need for the laying on of the hand on the head at the same time.” Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts, 9-06-1972, AAS 64 (1972) 526.

²⁰ Excerpt from Archdiocese of Hartford, *Information Bulletin*, May 18, 2007 (07/04).

²¹ *CIC* 845 §2.

²² (R-I), (RC), no. 14, 484.

²³ Cf. (R-I), (RC), Introduction, no. 12, p. 483.

Appendix III**Archdiocese of Hartford**

Parish Letterhead here

Church

address

city, state zip code

Godparent/Sponsor Certificate**Role of a Godparent/Sponsor**

To be a godparent/sponsor is both an honor and an awesome responsibility, as it calls one to draw even deeper into the heart of Christ to gain wisdom in guiding the spiritual life of the candidate in the ways of Christ and His Church. The godparent/sponsor, together with the parents, must be willing to help the baptized/confirmed grow in love for Christ and neighbor. By word and example, the godparent/sponsor will encourage the candidate to live the Christian life and fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 872).

Church law permits two godparents for Baptism. Only one is necessary. If two are chosen, there must be one of each sex (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 873). Only one sponsor of either gender is permitted for Confirmation.

Therefore, I _____,
 desiring to assume the obligation of godparent/ sponsor for the Sacrament of:
 Check one: () Godparent for Baptism () Sponsor for Confirmation
 on behalf of: (*insert name*)

do here declare that I understand the responsibilities of a godparent/sponsor and that I am willing by prayer and example to encourage and instruct her/ him in living our Catholic faith.

Furthermore:

- I have received the Catholic Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.
- I attend Mass regularly on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
- I have attained the required minimum age of sixteen years.
- I am not the parent of the person being baptized/confirmed.
- My manner of life is in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken.
- [*If married*: My current marriage is canonically valid and recognized as such by the Catholic Church.]

I hereby testify before God and God's minister to the truth of what is stated here above.

 Signature of applicant

This is to certify that _____
 has attested to the above requirements in my presence, and, to the best of my knowledge, is
 qualified to act as godparent / sponsor for the Sacrament of:
 Check one. () Baptism () Confirmation

 Date

 Parish Seal

 Signature of the Pastor / Parochial Vicar

Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

*The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of all worship and Christian life. In this Sacrament, Christ the Lord himself is contained, offered and received. In the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the memorial of the death and resurrection of the Lord, the sacrifice of the cross is forever perpetuated. By this Sacrament, the Church continually lives and grows and the unity of the People of God is signified and brought about.*¹

Minister

- A validly ordained priest is the only minister who, in the person of Christ, can bring the Sacrament of the Eucharist into being.²
- Catholic priests are forbidden to concelebrate the Eucharist with priests or ministers of churches or ecclesial communities which are not in full communion with the Catholic Church.³

Faculties - See General Appendix.

- Priests residing in the Archdiocese of Hartford, whether diocesan or religious, who are not incardinated here and who wish to exercise their ministry on behalf of the faithful, must present a letter to the Archbishop requesting faculties.
- Visiting priests from outside the diocese who are unknown to the pastor of the church, should present a *celebret* not more than a year old when seeking permission to celebrate the Eucharist for a public occasion.⁴

Subject:

Who may participate in the celebration of the Eucharist?

- Interior participation is open to all, even Catholics who cannot receive Holy Communion⁵ and guests of other religious traditions. This participation consists of the inner disposition whereby the individual unites him/herself with the offering of Christ through the Church in praise and thanksgiving to the Father through the Holy Spirit.⁶
- Full participation in the Sacrament includes reception of the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion and is permissible for Catholics living in full ecclesial communion who are properly disposed, free from mortal sin, and have fasted for one hour from food and drink, except water, save for extraordinary situations.⁷
- The reception of Holy Communion by non Catholic Christians, including the members of the Eastern Churches which do not have full communion with the Catholic Church, is regulated by Canon 844.
- Catholics who have divorced and, while held to a previous bond of marriage, attempt remarriage outside the Church, may not be admitted to Holy Communion.⁸
- With regard to persons with developmental and mental disabilities, the minimal criterion for reception of Holy Communion is the same as “for all persons, namely, that the person be able to distinguish the Body of Christ from ordinary food....” See *Appendix I*.

¹ Cf. *CIC* 897, *CCC* 1356-72.

² Cf. *CIC* 900; *Instruction, Redemptionis Sacramentum: On Certain Matters to be Observed or to be Avoided Regarding the Most Holy Eucharist* (RS), Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Rome, March 25, 2004, 42.

³ Cf. *CIC* 908; (RS) 42 and 172c.

⁴ Cf. (RS) 111.

⁵ Cf. *CCC* 1651.

⁶ Cf. *CCC* 1349-51, 1368-69, 1651.

⁷ Cf. *CIC* 837, 912-23; *CCC* 837, 1385-88, 1395, 1650-1651; (RS) 80-86.

⁸ Cf. *CIC* 915; *CCC* 1650-51, 1665.

- Any baptized Catholic who is not prevented by law must be admitted to Holy Communion. It is not licit to deny Holy Communion on the grounds that the person wishes to receive kneeling or standing, on the tongue or in the hand.⁹
- Reception of Holy Communion for a second time on the same day is permissible as long as it is within a Mass in which the person participates in the entire celebration.¹⁰
- Prior reception of Holy Communion on the same day is not an obstacle to the reception of *Viaticum*.¹¹

Children and First Holy Communion

- Children baptized as infants in the Latin rite and baptized non Catholics received into the Catholic Church as children, who have attained the use of reason, received the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, and been instructed concerning the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, may receive First Holy Communion.¹²
- First Holy Communion should always be administered by a priest.¹³
- A dying child who has not received First Holy Communion may be given the Sacrament for the first time with minimal preparation if, in the judgment of the priest, the child is able to “distinguish the Body of Christ from ordinary food and receive Communion with reverence.”¹⁴

Celebration of the Sacrament

Bishops, priests, deacons and the faithful carry out solely but completely that which pertains to them in the celebration of the Eucharist. Assigning multiple ministries to one individual during Mass should be avoided, e.g. Reader and Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion.

Place –

- Ordinarily Mass is celebrated in a church or oratory that has been consecrated or blessed for Catholic worship.
- A crucifix must be used for Mass, “either on the altar or near it, where it is clearly visible to the assembled congregation.”¹⁵
- When there is just cause, Mass may be celebrated outside of a church or oratory as long as the place is suitable, clean and prepared in accord with current liturgical norms.¹⁶
- Mass may not be celebrated in a temple or sacred place used by a non-Christian religion.¹⁷

Liturgical books

- The words, rubrics and directions for the gestures and actions of the celebration of the Eucharist are to be followed faithfully. See *General Instruction of the Roman Missal, English translation*, 2003, nos. 273-285, *Redemptionis Sacramentum* (RS) 5, 11-12, 31, 59, 62.
- The priest, acting always on behalf of the Church, is obliged to use the liturgical text prescribed for the celebration in its entirety. Only where it is specifically indicated, may adaptations of the text be made, whether by insertion or omission.
 - Only the wording of the current approved *Lectionary* may be used for the proclamation of the word of God.

⁹ Cf. *CIC* 843§1, 912; (RS) 91.

¹⁰ Cf. *CIC* 917.

¹¹ Cf. *CIC* 921§2.

¹² Cf. *CIC* 913-14; (RS) 87.

¹³ (RS) 87.

¹⁴ Cf. *CIC* 913 §2.

¹⁵ Cf. *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM), 122, 308.

¹⁶ Cf. *CIC* 932; (GIRM) 304-308.

¹⁷ Cf. (RS) 109.

- The *Lectionary* should be a bound volume. Binders may not be used.¹⁸
- Use of the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children is “restricted to Masses which are celebrated for *children only* or *Masses at which the majority of the participants* are children.” The term, “children” is understood as “those who have not reached the age of preadolescence.”¹⁹

Liturgy of the Word

- “The reading of Scripture during a Eucharistic celebration in the Catholic Church is to be done by members of that Church. On exceptional occasions and for a just cause, the Bishop of the diocese may permit a member of another church or ecclesial community to take on the task of reader.”²⁰
- The homily within Mass may be given only by a Catholic bishop, priest or deacon. No exception can be made.²¹
- If members of the laity are called upon to speak to the congregation, they may do so, with the permission of the pastor, before Mass begins or prior to the Dismissal, following the Communion Prayer.²²

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Gifts

Prior to being consecrated, the wine is to be poured into the individual vessels from which the priest and faithful will receive the Precious Blood of Christ.²³

*Eucharistic Prayer*²⁴

Communion Rite

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:

- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should not approach the altar before the priest and deacon have received Communion.²⁵
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion always receive the vessel for distributing the Sacred Species from the hands of the priest celebrant or a deacon.
- “Only when there is a necessity may Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion assist the priest celebrant [in the distribution of Holy Communion] in accordance with the norm of the law.”²⁶

Reception of Holy Communion:

- The USCCB has determined that a bow of the head is to be made by all before reception of each species.²⁷
- The faithful may choose to receive Holy Communion either in the hand or on the tongue unless Communion is given by intinction, in which case, it must be administered on the tongue.²⁸

¹⁸ Cf. (GIRM) 349; *Liturgiam Authenticam: Fifth Instruction on Vernacular Translation of the Roman Liturgy (LA)*, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, March 28, 2001, no.120; *USCCB Committee for the Liturgy Newsletter*, August 2006: “*Advisory on the Publication of Vernacular Ritual Editions.*”

¹⁹ Cf. *Sacramentary*, 1985, Appendix VI, Foreword, p.1097.

²⁰ *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism (DNE)*, no.133, Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, March 25, 1993.

²¹ Cf. (RS) 64-66.

²² Cf. (RS) 66, 74.

²³ Cf. (GIRM) 285a; (RS) 106.

²⁴ Cf. (GIRM) 32, 78-83; (RS) 51-56.

²⁵ Cf. (GIRM) 162.

²⁶ (RS) 88; cf. (RS) 32, 151-60.

²⁷ Cf. (GIRM) 160; (RS) 90.

²⁸ *Norms for the Celebration and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America (NRHCBK)*, USCCB, April 7, 2002, no. 41.

- “It is not licit for the faithful to take . . . by themselves . . . and, still less, to hand.., from one to another the sacred Host or the sacred chalice.”²⁹
- “Neither deacons nor lay ministers may ever receive Holy Communion in the manner of a concelebrating priest.”³⁰
- In the United States, it is customary to receive Holy Communion standing, but no one may be refused Holy Communion because of a choice to kneel.³¹
- Care should be taken to ensure that the Host is consumed by the communicant in the presence of the minister, so that no one withdraws while carrying the Eucharistic species in his hand.³²
- When administering Holy Communion, the words of the *Ritual* are to be used: “The Body of Christ” and “The Blood of Christ.”³³

Communion under both Species:

- A suitable number of Ordinary and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion is required.
- A sufficient but not excessive amount of hosts and wine is to be prepared.
- When Holy Communion is distributed under both Species, the faithful are always free to receive only under the form of bread.³⁴

From the Communion cup:

- Generally, for Communion from the cup, two ministers of the Precious Blood should be scheduled for each minister of the Body of Christ.³⁵

By intinction

- Communion by intinction is given directly on the tongue, never in the hand.
- The hosts to be used should be thick enough to retain their form as they are dipped and then placed in the communicant’s mouth.
- *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* gives the proper procedure for receiving Holy Communion by intinction. [Each] communicant, holding the paten under the chin, approaches the priest who holds a vessel with the sacred particles. At his side stands a minister holding the chalice. The priest takes a host, dips it partly into the chalice and, showing it, says: ‘*The Body and Blood of Christ.*’ The communicant responds, ‘*Amen,*’ receives the Sacrament on the tongue from the priest, and then withdraws.³⁶

Care of the Sacred Species and purification of the vessels:³⁷

Who may purify the vessels?

As Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, the priest and deacon purify the sacred vessels. An instituted acolyte may, by reason of his office, purify the sacred vessels. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may not purify the sacred vessels.³⁸

²⁹ (RS) 94; cf. (GIRM) 160; (NRHCBK), no. 44.

³⁰ USCCB (NRHCBK), no. 39.

³¹ Cf. (RS) 91-92.

³² Cf. (RS) 92.

³³ Cf. (GIRM) 161, 286-87; (NRHCBK), nos. 41, 43 and 49.

³⁴ (GIRM) 284.

³⁵ Cf. (NRHCBK), no. 30.

³⁶ Cf. (GIRM) 287.

³⁷ Cf. (GIRM) 278-80; (NRHCBK), nos. 51-55.

³⁸ Communication of Bishop William Skylstad, President of the USCCB indicating the termination of the indult for Extraordinary Ministers to purify the vessels, October 13, 2006, USCCB Committee for the Liturgy website and *Newsletter: USCCB Committee on the Liturgy*, vol. XLII, October 2006.

The manner of purification:

- “The reverence due to the Precious Blood of the Lord demands that it be fully consumed after Communion is completed and never poured into the ground or the sacrarium.”³⁹
- An Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion may consume what remains of the Precious Blood from his/her chalice of distribution.
- “...Consecrated hosts that are left, are to be consumed by the priest or deacon at the altar or carried to the place for the reservation of the Eucharist.”⁴⁰

Elements of the Eucharist

- Hosts must be made solely of wheat and water. Hosts to be used for intinction should ordinarily be a little thicker so as to retain their form as they are dipped partially into the Precious Blood and placed in the mouth of the communicant by the minister of Holy Communion.⁴¹
- No additional water, wine or hosts should be added to the vessels after the consecration of the Sacred Species.
- The wine to be consecrated must be pure, e.g., standard altar wine.⁴²

Gluten intolerance (allergy to wheat or *celiac* condition)

- Each parish should obtain a supply of hosts containing a low percentage of gluten. See *Appendix II*.
- At no time should hosts be accepted for consecration from the laity who offer them to the priest. The celebrant alone bears final responsibility that proper elements are used. See *Appendix II*.
- Hosts containing no gluten constitute invalid matter and therefore may not be used.
- The faithful who cannot ingest even a small amount of gluten may, at any Mass, communicate from a chalice or a special Communion cup that has been prepared for them. No intermingling of the Consecrated host with the Precious Blood should occur.

Sacred Vessels

- Vessels made from glass, earthenware, clay, or other materials that break easily, may not be used to hold the Body and Blood of Christ. The cup must be of non-porous material.⁴³
- The chalices used for the Communion of the faithful, whether for communicating the Precious Blood or for intinction, are, by reason of the sign value, to be smaller than the main chalice of the priest.⁴⁴
- For the Communion of the faithful, the Communion plate should be used.⁴⁵

Vestments

- Priests who celebrate Mass must wear an alb and stole, covered with the chasuble. At concelebrations, when there are not enough chasubles for all the concelebrants, a stole over the alb suffices.⁴⁶

³⁹ (NRHCBK), no. 55; cf. (RS) 107.

⁴⁰ (RS) 107, cf. (NRHCBK), no. 51; (GIRM) 163.

⁴¹ cf. (GIRM) 285 b; (RS) 48, 104.

⁴² Cf. (RS) 50.

⁴³ Cf. (GIRM) 327-32; (RS) 117.

⁴⁴ Cf. (RS) 105.

⁴⁵ Cf. (GIRM) 118; (RS) 93.

⁴⁶ Cf. (GIRM) 335-347; (RS) 121-128.

- The laity in the United States are permitted to wear an alb or other appropriate and dignified clothing when acting as servers, lectors or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.⁴⁷ The pastor may determine the vesture for the laity serving in his parish.

Reservation, Exposition and Custody of the Blessed Sacrament

- The Precious Blood may not be reserved, other than for use on that same day for the sick who cannot receive the Host. It must be carried in a vessel that is closed to eliminate all danger of spilling. Any that remains afterward is to be consumed immediately by the minister who is also responsible to cleanse the vessel.⁴⁸
- “[The] Most Holy Sacrament, when exposed, must never be left unattended even for the briefest space of time. It should therefore be arranged that at least some of the faithful always be present at fixed times....”⁴⁹
- When Communion is taken to the sick it “must be borne directly from the church to the house of the sick without interruption. Any hosts which remain ... should be consumed by the minister.” See *Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Guidelines*, Archdiocese of Hartford, April 16, 2006.
- It is the responsibility of the pastor to see to it that precautions are taken to place the key for the tabernacle in a secure place and that a very limited number of people have access to it.

Communion Services See *Appendix III*.

⁴⁷ Cf. (GIRM) 339.

⁴⁸ Cf. (NRHCBK), no. 54.

⁴⁹ (RS) 138.

Appendix I

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 16, 1995.

Holy Eucharist

Pastors are to be vigilant lest any children come to the Holy Banquet who have not reached the use of reason or whom they judge are not sufficiently disposed (Cf. *CIC* 914). It is important to note, however, that the criterion for reception of Holy Communion is the same for persons with developmental and mental disabilities as for all persons, namely, that the person be able to distinguish the Body of Christ from ordinary food, even if this recognition is evidenced through manner, gesture, or reverential silence rather than verbally. Pastors are encouraged to consult with parents, those who take the place of parents, diocesan personnel involved with disability issues, psychologists, religious educators, and other experts in making their judgment. If it is determined that a parishioner who is disabled is not ready to receive the Sacrament, great care is to be taken in explaining the reasons for this decision. Cases of doubt should be resolved in favor of the right of the baptized person to receive the Sacrament. The existence of a disability is not considered in and of itself as disqualifying a person from receiving the Eucharist.

APPENDIX II:

Gluten intolerance (Archdiocese of Hartford, *Information Bulletin*, September 17, 2004)
Policies for the Archdiocese of Hartford concerning Holy Communion for those of the faithful with allergy to gluten (Celiac condition):

Any member of the faithful who is unable to receive the Host may approach the priest and request reception of the species of the Precious Blood. This right is guaranteed by the *Code of Canon Law*. The request must be honored whether or not the assembly is offered the Precious Blood. No fraction/portion of the Host is to be added to that cup.

- a) Hosts that are completely gluten-free are invalid matter for the celebration of the Eucharist and may not be used. In order to assure the validity of the Eucharistic celebration, accept no hosts to be consecrated that have been presented to you by the laity.
- b) **Low gluten hosts are valid matter.** They may be used for the Communion of the faithful, but they must be obtained from a reliable supplier;
 e.g. Congregation of Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration, Sr. Rita, OSB
 Altar Breads Department, 31970 State Highway P, Clyde, Missouri 64432
 Phone: 1-800-223-2772 e-mail: altarbreads@benedictinesisters.org

The Archbishop grants permission to priests of the Archdiocese of Hartford to consecrate low gluten hosts and administer Holy Communion in the form of low-gluten hosts to the faithful who are unable to receive the customary host. No medical certificate is required of the faithful who make the request.

Measures to be taken in parishes:

- a) Order and retain a supply of low-gluten hosts in the sacristy in a labeled container. Requests for reception by parishioners or guests in the parish are to be granted. The exact number of hosts required at any Mass is to be placed in a separate suitable vessel for their consecration during the Liturgy. Low-gluten hosts are never reserved in the tabernacle.
- b) Individuals afflicted with the celiac condition should be told that it is their obligation to:
 - approach the priest at least ten minutes prior to Mass to request reception from the chalice or to receive a low-gluten host,
 - inquire about the location of the Communion station where they are to receive Holy Communion.
- c) Instruct all the faithful that Christ is received whole and entire under either species in Holy Communion.

Priests allergic to gluten or who wish to use mustum:

- Priests who need to use low gluten hosts themselves or *mustum* in place of regular altar wine should request permission of the Archbishop in writing.
- Information about sources for obtaining *mustum* that is in conformity with requirements for use at Mass, will be included in the reply to individual requests.

Appendix III

Communion Services

See *Archdiocese of Hartford Information Bulletin*, August 17, 2007 (07-06).

- On Sundays, in the event that a priest is gravely incapacitated with no other priest available, a deacon may celebrate a Communion Service for those who find it impossible to attend a Eucharistic Liturgy elsewhere. The deacon will conduct the Communion Service according to the Ritual: *A Ritual for Laypersons*, Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1993 or *Communion of the Sick*, Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2003.
- On weekdays, Communion Services in lieu of Mass celebrated in church, are prohibited. This does not apply to special settings such as nursing care facilities, etc.

Sacrament of Penance

*In the Sacrament of Penance the faithful who confess their sins to a lawful minister and are contrite for those sins, receive from God, through the absolution given by that minister, forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism, and at the same time they are reconciled with the Church.*¹

Minister

- Only a priest with the proper faculties is the minister of the Sacrament.²
- He is a minister of the Church and acts as judge and healer in accord with the teachings of the Magisterium and the Universal Law of the Church.³ See *Appendix I, Power of Remitting Penalties*.
- He is bound by the sacramental seal which is inviolable and cannot be revoked by anyone for any reason. The seal encompasses the content of the confession and the identity of the penitent.⁴
- “The confessor is *wholly forbidden to use knowledge acquired in confession* to the detriment of the penitent, even when all danger of disclosure is excluded.”⁵
- He should, in all circumstances, allow the penitent sufficient opportunity to confess every mortal sin; no limitation of any kind may be placed upon the confession of mortal sins.⁶
- He is obliged, ordinarily, to use the words for absolution contained in the *Rite of Penance*, the Ritual form. In case of emergency, just the essential words of absolution may be used.⁷
- Counseling may be done by a spiritual director, but the Sacrament of Penance may only be administered by a priest.

Penitent

- One who is contrite and who seeks sacramental absolution of sins committed after Baptism is capable of receiving the Sacrament of Penance if properly disposed, i.e., possessing sorrow and hatred for sins committed and a purpose of amendment.⁸
- The penitent should be willing to make satisfaction for sin.⁹
- He or she should confess all mortal sins that have not been confessed previously to a priest.
- One who is conscious of mortal sin is bound to confess at least once a year.¹⁰
- One who is free of mortal sin is to be encouraged to make regular use of the Sacrament for the confession of venial sins.¹¹ The “regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit.”¹²

¹ Cf. *CIC* 959; *CCC* 1451.

² Cf. *CIC* 965 and 966 §1.

³ Cf. *CCC* 1465-66; *The Rites*, (R-I) “Rite of Penance” (P) no. 10, p. 532.

⁴ Cf. *CIC* 983 §1; *CCC* 1467.

⁵ *CIC* 984§1; Cf. *CCC* 1467.

⁶ Cf. *CIC* 988§1.

⁷ Cf. (R-I), (P) no. 21, p. 536.

⁸ Cf. *CIC* 987; (R-I), (P) no 11, p. 533.

⁹ Cf. (R-I) “Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution,” (RSPICA) nos. 44 and 55, pp. 545-46 and 556.

¹⁰ Cf. *CIC* 989; *CCC* 2042.

¹¹ Cf. *CIC* 988 §2.

¹² *CCC* 1458; cf. (R-I), (P) no. 7, pp. 530-31.

- For persons with disabilities, pastors should consult the pertinent guidelines. See *Appendix II*.
- Members of separated Eastern Churches or other Churches whose Orders are valid, may receive this Sacrament if they spontaneously request it and are fully disposed.¹³
- The Sacrament may be lawfully administered to other Christians in danger of death who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church, who cannot approach a minister of their own community and who spontaneously ask for it, provided that they demonstrate the Catholic faith in respect of this sacrament and are properly disposed.¹⁴

Celebration of the Sacrament

- Individual auricular confession is the ordinary manner of celebrating the sacrament for all.¹⁵
- The fundamental structure of the sacrament is twofold and comprises: the acts of one who undergoes conversion through the action of the Holy Spirit: i.e., contrition, confession and satisfaction; and the action of God through the intervention of the Church. The Church, who through the minister forgives sins in the name of Jesus Christ and determines the manner of satisfaction, prays for the sinner and does penance with him. The sinner is thereby healed and reestablished in ecclesial communion.¹⁶
- The sacrament ordinarily is to be celebrated in a confessional or reconciliation room of a church or a chapel.¹⁷
- The penitent ordinarily must be given the choice of anonymous or face-to-face celebration of the sacrament. The confessor, for just cause, may require use of the screen in face-to-face confession.¹⁸
- A regular weekly schedule for confessions in the parish is to be published. Additional hours should be offered during Advent, Lent and the *Paschal Triduum*.

Communal celebrations

Communal celebrations at the Deanery or town level are to be encouraged.¹⁹

- No use of General Absolution at such celebrations is permitted in the Archdiocese.
- For a communal celebration, the individual confession of sins to a priest with the imparting of individual absolution and a penance are inserted into a celebration of the liturgy of the word comprised of Scripture readings, homily and a communal examination of conscience, request for forgiveness, recitation of the *Our Father* and a concluding expression of thanksgiving to God.²⁰

¹³ Cf. *CIC* 844§3.

¹⁴ Cf. *CIC* 844§3 and 4.

¹⁵ Cf. *CIC* 960; Pope John Paul II, in *Reconciliation and Penance*, Apostolic Exhortation, 1984, 31-32, (R-I), (P) no. 31, p.539.

¹⁶ Cf. *CCC* 1448, 1482.

¹⁷ Cf. *CIC* 964 §1,2; *Built of Living Stones*, nos. 103 and 105.

¹⁸ Interpretation of Canon 964§2 by the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts, July 7, 1998, (AAS 90 [1998] 711).

¹⁹ Examples may be found in (R-I), (RSPICA) nos. 48-59, pp. 549-59.

²⁰ Cf. *CCC* 1482.

Relation to other sacraments

- Admission of children to First Confession should always precede admission to First Holy Communion.²¹
- Catholics in the state of mortal sin are required to celebrate the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation prior to reception of Holy Communion.²²
- Prior to administering the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, efforts should be made to administer the sacrament of Penance.²³
- Prior to reception of Confirmation and First Communion, baptized non-Catholics preparing for reception into full communion with the Catholic Church are to receive the Sacrament of Penance.²⁴
- Prior to the celebration of Marriage it is strongly recommended that the couple or the Catholic party be urged to approach the Sacrament of Penance.²⁵
- If, prior to any period of instruction and preparation, preliminary investigation reveals that an individual is unable, at the present time, to receive sacramental absolution and therefore cannot be received into full communion with the Church, justice and charity require that the individual be informed. It should be explained that the choice to remain in a condition of life that is contrary to Church teachings prevents access to a full participation in the sacramental life of the Church, e.g., Holy Eucharist and Penance.

²¹ Cf. *CIC* 914; *CCC* 1457; *Redemptionis Sacramentum* no. 87.

²² Cf. *CIC* 916.

²³ Cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 74.

²⁴ Cf. *CCC* 1310; (R-I) “Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church,” no. 482, p. 277; “National Statutes for the Catechumenate,” no. 27, p. 346.

²⁵ Cf. *CIC* 1065 §2; *CCC* 1622.

Appendix I

Power of Remitting Penalties

Priests with the proper faculty may forgive the following sins and remit the penalties attached to these sins: apostasy, heresy or schism²⁶ and abortion.²⁷ See *General Appendix* to these *Guidelines* “Faculties granted to Clerics of the Archdiocese of Hartford,” June 2004, no. 4.13.

Remission of the penalty attached to these sins is reserved to the Holy See:²⁸

- Excommunication incurred from the desecration of the consecrated Eucharistic Species.²⁹
- Excommunication incurred from using physical force against the Roman Pontiff.³⁰
- The excommunication of a priest who violated canon 977 by attempting to absolve an accomplice of a sin against the sixth commandment except in *periculo mortis*.³¹
- The excommunication of a bishop who ordains someone a bishop without a pontifical mandate and the person who was ordained.³²
- The excommunication incurred from the direct violation of the seal of confession.³³

²⁶ Cf. *CIC* 1364.

²⁷ Cf. *CIC* 1398, 1355§2.

²⁸ *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Canon Law Society of America, “Appendix: Dispensations and Other Matters Reserved to the Holy See,” ed. J. Beal, J. Coriden, and T. Green, (New York, N.Y./Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000) pp. 135-36, nos 14-18.

²⁹ Cf. *CIC* 1367.

³⁰ Cf. *CIC* 1370.

³¹ Cf. *CIC* 1378.

³² Cf. *CIC* 1382.

³³ Cf. *CIC* 1388 §1.

Appendix II

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 16, 1995.

Penance and Reconciliation

22. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Christian faithful obtain from the mercy of God pardon for their sins. At the same time, they are reconciled with the Church, which they have wounded by their sins and which works for their conversion by charity, example, and prayer (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 11).

23. Only those who have the use of reason are capable of committing serious sin. Nevertheless, even young children and persons with mental disabilities often are conscious of committing acts that are sinful to some degree and may experience a sense of guilt and sorrow. As long as the individual is capable of having a sense of contrition for having committed sin, even if he or she cannot describe the sin precisely in words, the person may receive sacramental absolution. Those with profound mental disabilities, who cannot experience even minimal contrition, may be invited to participate in penitential services with the rest of the community to the extent of their ability.

24. Catholics who are deaf should have the opportunity to confess to a priest able to communicate with them in sign language, if sign language is their primary means of communication. They may also confess through an approved sign language interpreter of their choice (Cf. *CIC* 990). The interpreter is strictly bound to respect the seal of confession (Cf. *CIC* 983 §2 and 1388 §2). When no priest with signing skills is available, nor sign language interpreter requested, Catholics who are deaf should be permitted to make their confession in writing. The written materials are to be returned to the penitent or otherwise properly destroyed.

25. In the case of individuals with poor communication skills, sorrow for sin is to be accepted even if this repentance is expressed through some gesture rather than verbally. In posing questions and in the assignment of penances, the confessor is to proceed with prudence and discretion, mindful that he is at once judge and healer, minister of justice as well as of mercy (Cf. *CIC* 978 §1, 979, 981).

Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

*In the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, the Church commends those who are seriously ill to the suffering and glorified Lord that He may raise them up and save them. She exhorts them to contribute to the good of the Body of Christ by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and Death of Christ.*¹

Minister

- The Sacrament can be administered only by a priest or bishop.²
- Deacons are not empowered to confer this Sacrament. This is defined doctrine.³

Subject

Serious illness

- This Sacrament can be administered to any one of the faithful who, having attained the age of reason, begins to be seriously ill from sickness or old age.
- Those with serious mental or emotional illness, who would be strengthened by this Sacrament, may be anointed.⁴
- This Sacrament can be repeated whenever a seriously ill person falls again into grave illness or whenever a more serious condition occurs during the same illness.⁵
- “A sick person may be anointed before surgery whenever a serious illness is the reason for the surgery.”⁶

Other

- “Elderly persons may be anointed if they have become notably weakened, even though no serious illness is present.”⁷
- Persons with disabilities who have achieved the use of reason may receive this Sacrament. See *Appendix*.
- “Sick children may be anointed if they have sufficient use of reason to be strengthened by this Sacrament.”⁸
- In cases of doubt “as to whether the sick person has reached the use of reason, or is dangerously ill, or is dead, the Sacrament is to be administered” in accordance with the traditional norms of sacramental theology.⁹ This also applies to young children.
- Those who wish to be anointed should ask that a priest be notified. (This is particularly necessary in a hospital setting.)

Spiritual considerations

- Recipients of this Sacrament, hopefully, should be in the state of grace for its fruitful reception.¹⁰
- The Sacrament may not be conferred upon one who obstinately persists in manifest grave sin.¹¹
- The Sacrament can remit the sins of those who would have confessed them, and who, being unable to confess, are properly disposed.¹²

¹ Cf. *CIC* 998-1007; *CCC* 1499-1532.

² Cf. *CIC* 1003 §1; *CCC* 1516.

³ Cf. *DS* 1325, 1697 and 1719.

⁴ Cf. *The Rites* (R-I), “Pastoral Care of the Sick” (PCS) Introduction, no. 53, p. 792.

⁵ Cf. *CIC* 1004§2; (R-I),(PCS), General Introduction (Gen. Intro.), no. 9, p. 781.

⁶ (R-I),(PCS), (Gen. Intro.), no. 10, p. 781.

⁷ (R-I),(PCS), (Gen. Intro.), no. 11, p. 781.

⁸ (R-I),(PCS), (Gen. Intro.), no. 12, p. 781.

⁹ Cf. *CIC* 1005.

¹⁰ Cf. (R-I),(PCS), (Gen. Intro.), no. 15, p. 781.

¹¹ Cf. *CIC* 1007.

Danger of death

- When in danger of death, members of separated Eastern Churches or other Churches whose Orders are valid, may receive this Sacrament if they spontaneously request it and are properly disposed.¹³
- Anointing may be lawfully administered to other Christians in danger of death who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church, but cannot approach a minister of their own community and who spontaneously ask for it, provided that they demonstrate the Catholic faith in respect of this Sacrament and are properly disposed.¹⁴

Celebration of the Sacrament

- The Sacrament is administered using the words and the anointings prescribed.¹⁵ Members of the family or of the larger community of the faithful are encouraged to be present for the celebration of the Sacrament insofar as possible.
- In emergencies, the abbreviated “Rite for Emergencies” should be used.¹⁶
- The Oil of the Sick blessed at the most recent Chrism Mass is to be used. *Under no circumstances should unblest oil be added to the vessel containing the Oil of the Sick.*
- When this oil is depleted, oil may be blessed by the priest for a single occasion at the time of administration of the Sacrament. This oil is to be disposed of reverently and in the manner described in the General Introduction, “Pastoral Care of the Sick.”¹⁷
- No other use of the Oil of the Sick, apart from the celebration of the Sacrament, is permitted.
- Any priest may carry the Oil of the Sick with him so that he can administer the Sacrament in case of necessity.¹⁸
- For a grave reason, e.g., to avoid contaminating the holy oil, the use of an instrument such as a hospital glove or a cotton swab, is permitted.¹⁹
- To avoid unwarranted repetition, the fact of the administration of the Sacrament of Anointing should be recorded in hospitals, convalescent homes and public institutions.

Communal celebrations

- The practice of a communal celebration of the Sacrament is encouraged as long as it is in accord with the prescriptions and guidelines contained in *The Rites*, “Pastoral Care of the Sick,” and the *Code of Canon Law*.²⁰
- The faithful who receive the Sacrament in a communal celebration do so within the context of the celebration of the Eucharist or in a liturgical celebration of the Sacrament as described in *The Rites*.²¹

¹² Cf. *DS* 1694, 1696; (R-I),(PCS), (Gen. Intro.), no. 6, p. 780.

¹³ Cf. *CIC* 844§3.

¹⁴ Cf. *CIC* 844 §4.

¹⁵ Cf. (R-I),(PCS), “Anointing of the Sick,” pp. 814-43.

¹⁶ Cf. (R-I),(PCS), “Rite for Emergencies,” nos. 259-274, pp. 883-86.

¹⁷ Oil “left over after the celebration of the Sacrament... should be absorbed in cotton and burned.” (R-I),(PCS), General Introduction, no. 22, p. 783.

¹⁸ Cf. *CIC* 1003§3.

¹⁹ Cf. *CIC* 1000§2.

²⁰ Cf. *CCC* 1517-1519.

²¹ Cf. (R-I),(PCS), “Anointing Outside Mass,” nos. 111-130, pp. 819-830.

- *Prior individual investigation* by the pastor of the faithful who will approach the Sacrament, is required for communal anointing services. This is required to ensure that the faithful who approach the Sacrament are eligible to receive it.²²

The pastor or priest chaplain must determine whether the individual is:

- in a state of serious illness;
- anticipating serious surgery;
- suffering from an illness for which anointing took place, but in which the condition has deteriorated;
- in a weakened state owing to old age. Advanced age alone does not suffice as reason for reception of the Sacrament.²³

Relation to other Sacraments

- For a sick person who is conscious and not in immediate danger of death, the continuous sequence of celebrating the Sacraments is: The Sacrament of Penance, the Sacrament of Anointing, and Viaticum.²⁴
- For a sick person in immediate danger of death and who is capable of receiving Holy Communion, *Viaticum* is given. When feasible, *Viaticum* would follow sacramental absolution and precede Anointing.²⁵
 - Members of separated Eastern Churches or other Churches whose Orders are valid, if in danger of death, may receive *Viaticum* if they spontaneously request it and are properly disposed.²⁶
 - Viaticum may be lawfully administered to other Christians in danger of death who, although not in full communion with the Catholic Church, cannot approach a minister of their own community and who spontaneously ask for it, provided that they demonstrate the Catholic faith in respect of this Sacrament and are properly disposed.²⁷

²² Cf. *CIC* 1002; (R-I),(PCS), “Anointing of the Sick,” Introduction, nos. 102, 108, pp. 816-17.

²³ Cf. (R-I),(PCS), “Anointing of the Sick,” Introduction, no. 108, pp. 817-18.

²⁴ Cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 74; (R-I),(PCS), nos. 239-258.

²⁵ Cf. *CIC* 921; (R-I),(PCS), (Gen. Intro.), nos. 26-27, p. 784, and “Rite for Emergencies,” nos. 259-274, pp. 883-84.

²⁶ Cf. *CIC* 844§4.

²⁷ Cf. *CIC* 844§3 and 4.

Appendix

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 16, 1995.

Anointing of the Sick

26. Through the Anointing of the Sick, the Church commends to the suffering and glorified Lord the faithful who are seriously ill, so that they may be relieved of their suffering and be saved (Cf. *CIC* 998).

27. Those who have the care of souls and those who are close to the sick are to see to it that the faithful who are in danger due to sickness or old age are supported by the sacrament of anointing at the appropriate time (Cf. *CIC* 1001).

28. Since disability does not necessarily indicate an illness, Catholics with disabilities should receive the Sacrament of Anointing on the same basis and under the same circumstances as any other member of the Christian faithful (Cf. *CIC* 1004).

29. The Anointing of the Sick may be conferred if the recipient has sufficient use of reason to be strengthened by the Sacrament, or if the sick person has lost the use of reason and would have asked for the Sacrament while in control of his or her faculties (Cf. “Rite of Anointing,” nos. 12, 14). If there is doubt as to whether the sick person has attained the use of reason, the Sacrament is to be conferred (*CIC* 1005). Persons with disabilities may at times be served best through inclusion in communal celebrations of the Sacrament of Anointing (Cf. *CIC* 1002).

Sacrament of Holy Orders: Priesthood and Diaconate

*By the Sacrament of Holy Orders a man is marked indelibly with the sacramental character that constitutes him as a sacred minister within the episcopal, priestly or diaconal Order. Each, according to his degree, fulfills in the person of Christ the Head the offices of teaching, sanctifying and governing the people of God.*¹

Minister

Only a consecrated bishop is capable of ordaining a priest or deacon in accord with all that the law prescribes.²

Eligibility for Ordination

Priesthood

- To receive the Sacrament a candidate must be a male who has been baptized, confirmed, and has received the Holy Eucharist; and who has been living a life consonant with Catholic moral teachings.³
- The priesthood may be conferred only upon those who have completed their twenty-fifth year of age, and possess a sufficient maturity; moreover, an interval of at least six months between the diaconate and the priesthood must have been observed.⁴
- The individual must, in the judgment of the bishop:
 - be of sound faith,
 - be motivated by a right intention,
 - be endowed with the requisite knowledge,
 - enjoy a good reputation, moral probity, proven virtue and the other physical and psychological qualities appropriate to the Order to be received.⁵
- The subject must:
 - freely desire to be ordained,⁶
 - publicly undertake the obligation of celibacy,⁷
 - be aware of all the obligations incumbent upon him by ordination.⁸
- "Given the centrality of the celebration of the Eucharist in the life of a priest, one must proceed with great caution before admitting to Holy Orders those candidates unable to ingest gluten or alcohol without serious harm." This is particularly true in view of the fact that: "A priest unable to receive Communion under the species of bread, including low-gluten hosts, may not celebrate the Eucharist individually, nor may he preside at a concelebration."⁹
- The existence of a physical disability is not considered in and of itself as disqualifying a person from Holy Orders. See *Appendix*.

Diaconate

- Prior to ordination to the diaconate, permanent or transitional, the individual must have received the ministries of lector and acolyte and have exercised them for an appropriate time.¹⁰

¹ Cf. *CIC* 1008.

² Cf. *CIC* 1012.

³ Cf. *CIC* 1024, 1033.

⁴ Cf. *CIC* 1031§1.

⁵ Cf. *CIC* 1029.

⁶ Cf. *CIC* 1026.

⁷ Cf. *CIC* 1037.

⁸ Cf. *CIC* 1028.

⁹ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, July 24, 2003.

¹⁰ Cf. *CIC* 1035§1.

- Between the installation to acolyte and ordination to diaconate there must be at least a six month interval.¹¹
- Those who are destined for the priesthood are to be admitted to the Order of Diaconate only when they have completed their twenty-third year.¹²

Permanent diaconate:

- The National Conference of Catholic Bishops has established the minimum age of ordination for permanent deacons at thirty five years for both married and celibate candidates. The diocesan bishop may dispense up to one year from this age requirement.¹³
- A married candidate must have the consent of his wife.¹⁴

Simple and Perpetual Impediments

The following are “simply” impeded from receiving Orders

- a man who has a wife, unless he is lawfully destined for the permanent diaconate;
 - one who exercises an office or administration forbidden to clerics, in accordance with canons 285 and 286, of which he must render an account; the impediment binds until such time as, having relinquished the office and administration and rendered the account, he has been freed;
 - a neophyte, unless, in the judgment of the Ordinary, he has been sufficiently tested.¹⁵
- “An impediment may be simple; or it may be perpetual, in which case it is called an irregularity.”¹⁶

The following persons are “irregular” for the reception of Orders:

- one who suffers from any form of amentia, or from any other psychological infirmity, because of which he is, after experts have been consulted, judged incapable of properly fulfilling the ministry;
- one who has committed the offence of apostasy, heresy or schism;
- one who has attempted marriage, even a civil marriage, either while himself prevented from entering marriage whether by an existing marriage bond or by a sacred order or by a public and perpetual vow of chastity, or with a woman who is validly married or is obliged by the same vow;
- one who has committed willful homicide or one who has actually procured an abortion, and all who have positively cooperated;
- one who has gravely and maliciously mutilated himself or another, or who has attempted suicide;
- one who has carried out an act of Order which is reserved to those in the Order of the Episcopate or Priesthood, while himself either not possessing that Order or being barred from its exercise by some canonical penalty declared or imposed.¹⁷

In addition, a candidate for Orders must meet any requirements established by the Holy See and by the Archdiocese of Hartford.

¹¹ Cf. *CIC* 1035§2.

¹² Cf. *CIC* 1031§1.

¹³ Cf. Complementary Norm for *CIC* 1031§3.

¹⁴ Cf. *CIC* 1031§2.

¹⁵ *CIC* 1042.

¹⁶ *CIC* 1040.

¹⁷ *CIC* 1041.

APPENDIX

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 16, 1995.

Holy Orders

31. The existence of a physical disability is not considered in and of itself as disqualifying a person from Holy Orders. However, candidates for ordination must possess the necessary spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and psychological qualities and abilities to fulfill the ministerial functions of the order they receive (Cf. *CIC* 1029 and 1041, no. 1). The proper bishop or competent major superior makes the judgment that candidates are suited for the ministry of the Church (Cf. *CIC* 241 §1; 1025 § 2; 1051, no. 1). Cases are to be decided on an individual basis and in light of pastoral judgment and the opinions of diocesan personnel and other experts involved with disability issues.

32. Diocesan vocations offices and offices for ministry with persons with disabilities should provide counseling and informational resources for men with disabilities who are discerning a vocation to serve the Church through one of the ordained ministries.

Sacrament of Marriage

Marriage is rooted in the paschal mystery of Christ. The conjugal union between a baptized man and woman, entered into validly, is a Sacrament. By this Sacrament, a man and woman are joined as one, becoming an image of the union of Christ with His Church.

Essential understanding of the Sacrament

- The valid exchange of consent, legitimately manifested, between spouses capable of giving such consent is the indispensable element that “makes the marriage.” Consent is a human act by which the man and the woman give themselves to each other in marriage through a positive act of the will which is free of coercion or grave external fear. This consent finds its consummation through their sexual union.¹
- Once established, a valid and consummated sacramental bond of marriage between two baptized persons cannot be dissolved, even by the Church herself.

Non-sacramental but valid bonds

- A natural bond arises from the conjugal union of a baptized person and a non-baptized person or of two non-baptized persons. (It is to be noted, of course, that for Catholics to marry validly, the proper form must be dispensed from, or fulfilled.)
- A “natural bond” marriage entered into by those who are free to do so is also a presumably valid (albeit non-sacramental) marriage which endures until death.

Ministers

- The ministers of the Sacrament in the Latin Rite are the spouses who, as ministers of Christ’s grace, mutually confer the Sacrament upon each other by expressing their consent before the Church.²
- Ordinarily those marriages are valid which are contracted in the presence of the local Ordinary or parish priest (pastor) or the priest or deacon delegated by either of them, who, in the presence of two witnesses, assists.³ See *General Appendix: Faculties Granted to Clerics of the Archdiocese of Hartford*.
- Only that person who, being present, asks the contracting parties to manifest their consent and in the name of the Church receives it, is understood to *assist* at a Marriage.⁴

Who can marry?

- Those can marry who are not prohibited by law.⁵ This includes those: who have never been married or who have never attempted marriage even civilly, who have had a prior bond declared invalid by proper authority, whose spouse has died or who have been dispensed from any other impediment of ecclesiastical law.⁶ See *Appendix I*.
- The Catholic Church regards individuals who have entered into presumably valid sacramental or natural bond marriages to be married.⁷ A civil divorce between individuals has no effect upon the bond of marriage. Neither person may be considered free to marry.

Requirements:

- A man cannot validly enter marriage before the completion of his sixteenth year of age, nor a woman before the completion of her fourteenth year.⁸ See *Appendix II* for “State of Connecticut age requirements.” See *Appendix III* for Guidelines concerning persons with disabilities.

¹ Cf. *CIC* 1057§§1, 2; *CCC* 1623.

² Cf. *CCC* 1623.

³ Cf. *CIC* 1108 § 1, 1109.

⁴ Cf. *CIC* 1108 §2.

⁵ Cf. *CIC* 1058 and p. 7.4 of these *Guidelines*, “Civil Requirements.”

⁶ Cf. *CIC* 1057§1.

⁷ Cf. *CIC* 1059, 1060.

⁸ Cf. *CIC* 1083§1.

- The fact that an unmarried couple has been living together does not bar them from the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage. However, the Church's position on cohabitation should be explained to them.
- No one may be married in the Catholic Church who does not obtain a civil marriage license
- Without the permission of the local Ordinary, a priest or deacon is not to assist at a Marriage:
 - of transients;
 - which cannot be recognized or celebrated according to the norms of civil law, e.g. the minimum age in Connecticut is 18; See *Appendix II*.
 - of a person who is bound by natural obligations toward another party or children arising from a previous union;
 - of a person who has notoriously rejected the Catholic faith;
 - of a person who is under a censure;
 - of a minor child when the parents are unaware or reasonably opposed;⁹ or
 - to be entered into through a proxy, as described in c.1105.¹⁰
- A Marriage is brought into being by the lawfully manifested consent of persons who are canonically and legally capable. This consent cannot be supplied by any human power.¹¹
- A declaration and reaffirmation of faith by the Catholic party, with the promise to raise the children as Roman Catholics, is required for granting permission for a mixed Marriage. The non-Catholic party is to be made aware of this promise.¹² See *Appendix II*.
- The *Nihil Obstat* is required for Marriages to be celebrated outside the Archdiocese of Hartford -
 - All documents are to be sent, at the completion of marriage preparation, to the Chancellor's Office of the Archdiocese of Hartford. Following review, and if all is in order, the *nihil obstat* will be affixed by the Chancellor's Office and the material will be sent to the diocese of the Marriage.
 - The *Litterae Testimoniales* cover-sheet should accompany the aforementioned documents.
 - Care should be taken that all documentation is forwarded to the Chancellor's Office *well in advance* of the anticipated wedding date to allow for processing and mailing.

Investigation and Scheduling

At the first meeting, either the *Preliminary Interview*, see *Appendix IV*, or the *PMI* is to be administered in order to determine freedom to marry.

- Primarily, it pertains to the office of the pastor, to determine to the best of his ability that the consent exchanged will bring about a valid bond.¹³
The pre-nuptial investigation is a most serious matter during which a priest or deacon must consider:
 - the couple's proper intentions entering marriage, i.e. openness to children and to all essential obligations of marriage;
 - freedom to marry without external or internal pressure;
 - psychological maturity and readiness for marriage;
 - religious practice, etc.;
 - It is important to obtain all necessary dispensation(s). Failure to do so may affect the validity of the marriage. All questions concerning this should be directed to the Chancery.

⁹ Cf. *CIC* 1083§1.

¹⁰ Cf. *CIC* 1071.

¹¹ Cf. *CIC* 1057.

¹² Cf. *CIC* 1125 nos.1, 2, 3.

¹³ Cf. *CIC* 1066.

- Before the freedom of both individuals has been established, no priest or deacon of the Archdiocese of Hartford should give the assurance or even the impression that it will be possible to marry.¹⁴ Therefore:
 - *It is not permitted to schedule a wedding date even informally, before it is established that the man and woman are free to marry. In particular, a date is not to be set when one of the parties is seeking a declaration of invalidity. This date may be set only after the invalidity has been determined by the proper Tribunal. There is to be no oral promise or “penciling in” a marriage date until the freedom to marry for both parties has been established.*
 - *No marriage preparations may begin if either one or both individuals requesting the Sacrament of Marriage is: impeded by a prior bond, (includes Marriage, Holy Orders, Vows, etc.), in need of a declaration of invalidity of a prior sacramental or natural bond of marriage, or subject to a prohibition¹⁵ that has been attached to the declaration of nullity of a prior marriage. This pastoral measure is necessary to avoid any potential scandal or unfounded expectations of a marriage tribunal, as well as possible disappointment and financial and emotional hardship.*
 - When one or both of the parties are weak or non-practicing in their faith, the time of preparation can often be an occasion for reconciliation and a new deepening of faith. In the case of a non-practicing Catholic, simple neglect must be distinguished from rejection of the faith. In itself, simple neglect is not sufficient reason to postpone or delay Matrimony. However, the frank admission of both Catholic partners, or of the Catholic (where the other is non-Catholic), that they have not practiced nor intend to practice the faith, constitutes grounds for postponement.

Preparation

- Ordinarily, couples desiring to marry are required to follow the procedures for marriage preparation offered by the Family Life Office of the Archdiocese and/or parish organized programs. This includes: taking the *FOCUS Inventory* and attending an *Engaged Couple Conference*. This is to assure that both individuals have an adequate understanding of Marriage and its responsibilities.
- The usual period of preparation in the Archdiocese is a minimum of six months.
- Pregnancy should not be the sole reason for entering into Marriage and should not be considered the sole cause for overlooking or reducing Archdiocesan requirements for marriage preparation.
- Archdiocesan requirements for preparation of couples for Marriage apply equally to those who have obtained a dispensation from canonical form.

Celebration of the Sacrament

- A description of requirements is found in *Appendix V, “Guide for the Celebration of Marriage.”*
- The declaration of consent must follow the formula in the *Ritual*.¹⁶
- The Liturgy should be carefully planned and its meaning explained to the couple.
 - The couple should be invited to take an active part in the liturgical preparations.
 - Everything in the ceremony should contribute to awareness of the sacred character of the Sacrament.
 - The music used in the ceremony should be in conformity with the guidelines of the Archdiocese.

¹⁴ Cf. *CIC* 1114.

¹⁵ Cf. *CIC* 1684.

¹⁶ Cf. Archdiocese of Hartford, *Information Bulletin*, October 9, 1981.

- For the convalidation of a marriage, Mass is permitted. The degree of outward celebration for the convalidation is left to the discretion of the pastor who will discuss it with the couple.
- A mixed Marriage according to Catholic form ordinarily takes place outside Mass. Permission for a Mass may be granted only by the Archbishop.¹⁷
- For cases of Marriage with disparity of cult, the Rite is carried out without a Mass.

Recording and Notification

Every Marriage, together with any applicable dispensation and delegation, is to be clearly and carefully recorded in the Parish Register, listing all data as required. Notification of the Marriage of Catholics must also be sent, in order to be recorded, to the parishes of Baptism or of reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.¹⁸

- When priests and deacons of the Archdiocese give permission in their assigned parishes for Marriage, between a Catholic and a baptized person, this permission should be recorded in the Marriage Register. See *General Appendix*, “Faculties Granted to Clerics of the Archdiocese of Hartford,” par. 4.6.
- Entry should be made in the Marriage Register that a visiting priest or deacon has obtained from the proper pastor/cleric of the parish, delegation to assist at a Marriage. This affects the validity of the Marriage.¹⁹
- For a Marriage contracted with a dispensation from canonical form, the dispensation and the celebration should be recorded in the Marriage Register of the proper parish of the Catholic party whose parish priest carried out the inquiries concerning the freedom to marry. The Catholic spouse is obliged as soon as possible to notify the Ordinary of the fact that the Marriage was celebrated, indicating also the place of celebration and the public form which was observed.²⁰ The required notification should be sent to the Chancery. Normally, this responsibility is assumed by the parish priest.
- The notation of Marriage in which form is not dispensed must be recorded in the Marriage Register of the parish wherein it is celebrated.
- In the cases where permission has been given for a Marriage to take place in the Catholic chapel of an institution, records are to be entered into the Marriage Register of the parish within which the chapel is located, noting delegation from the local pastor. Notification of the Marriage is also to be sent to the Catholic’s parish of Baptism.
- The priest or deacon who asks for and receives the exchange of Marriage vows must sign the marriage license.

Relation to Other Sacraments

- “Catholics who have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation are to receive it before being admitted to Marriage, if this can be done without grave inconvenience.”²¹
- It is earnestly recommended that spouses approach the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist so that the Sacrament of Marriage may be fruitfully received.²²
- One intending to marry may be admitted to the RCIA only if he or she is free to marry.

¹⁷ Cf. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, par. 159; *Rite of Marriage*, no. 8.

¹⁸ Cf. *CIC* 1122§1-2.

¹⁹ Cf. *CIC* 1110, 1111§1-2.

²⁰ Cf. *CIC* 1121§3.

²¹ Cf. *CIC* 1065§1; *The Rites* vol.I, “Confirmation,” Introduction, no. 12, p. 483.

²² Cf. *CIC* 1065§2; *CCC* 1621-22.

Appendix I:

Diriment Impediments (CIC 1083-1094) that render marriage invalid unless proper dispensation is obtained: (Code of Canon Law Annotated, University of Navarra; English ed., Faculty of Canon Law. Montreal: Wilson and Lafleur Limitée, 1993)

INDIVIDUAL DIRIMENT IMPEDIMENTS

Can. 1083 §1 A man cannot validly enter marriage before the completion of his sixteenth year of age, nor a woman before the completion of her fourteenth year.

§2 The Episcopal Conference may establish a higher age for the lawful celebration of marriage.

Can. 1084 §1 By reason of its very nature, marriage is invalidated by antecedent and perpetual impotence to have sexual intercourse, whether on the part of the man or on that of the woman, whether absolute or relative.

§2 If the impediment of impotence is doubtful, whether the doubt be one of law or one of fact, the marriage is not to be prevented nor, while the doubt persists, is it to be declared null.

§3 Without prejudice to the provisions of canon 1098, sterility neither forbids nor invalidates a marriage.

Can. 1085 §1 A person obliged by the bond of a previous marriage, even if not consummated, invalidly attempts marriage.

§2 Even though the previous marriage is invalid or for any reason dissolved, it is not thereby lawful to contract another marriage before the nullity or the dissolution of the previous one has been established lawfully and with certainty.

Can. 1086 §1 A marriage is invalid when one of the two persons was baptized in the Catholic Church or received into it and has not by a formal act defected from it, and the other was not baptized.

§2 This impediment is not to be dispensed unless the conditions mentioned in canons 1125 and 1126 have been fulfilled.

§3 If at the time the marriage was contracted one party was commonly understood to be baptized, or if his or her baptism was doubtful, the validity of the marriage is to be presumed in accordance with canon 1060, until it is established with certainty that one party was baptized and the other was not.

Can. 1087 Those who are in sacred orders invalidly attempt marriage.

Can. 1088 Those who are bound by a public perpetual vow of chastity in a religious institute invalidly attempt marriage.

Can. 1089 No marriage can exist between a man and a woman who has been abducted, or at least detained, with a view to contracting a marriage with her, unless the woman, after she has been separated from her abductor and established in a safe and free place, chooses marriage of her own accord.

Can. 1090 §1 One who, with a view to entering marriage with a particular person, has killed that person's spouse, or his or her own spouse, invalidly attempts this marriage.

§2 They also invalidly attempt marriage with each other who, by mutual physical or moral action, brought about the death of either's spouse.

Can. 1091 §1 marriage is invalid between those related by consanguinity in all degrees of the direct line, whether ascending or descending, legitimate or natural.

§2 In the collateral line, it is invalid up to the fourth degree inclusive.

§3 The impediment of consanguinity is not multiplied.

§4 A marriage is never to be permitted if a doubt exists as to whether the parties are related by consanguinity in any degree of the direct line, or in the second degree of the collateral line.

Can. 1092 Affinity in any degree of the direct line invalidates marriage.

Can. 1093 The impediment of public propriety arises when a couple live together after an invalid marriage, or from a notorious or public cohabitation. It invalidates marriage in the first degree of the direct line between the man and those related by consanguinity to the woman, and vice versa.

Can. 1094 Those who are legally related by reason of adoption cannot validly marry each other if their relationship is in the direct line or in the second degree of the collateral line.

* * * * *

Appendix II

State of Connecticut age requirements for marriage:

The legal age for marriage in Connecticut is 18. Those under the age of 18 must have parental consent. Information obtained February 22, 2007 at:

<http://www.hartford.gov/Government/Town&CityClerk/Vital%20Records/Vital%20Records.htm#Marriage%20Lic>

* * * * *

Promises: See *CIC* 1125 and 1126, Statement on the Implementation of the Apostolic Letter on Mixed Marriages of the NCCB and *Information Bulletin*, Archdiocese of Hartford, July 1, 1994 (94/09)

From the Chancery (Information Bulletin, July 1, 1994)

1. REMINDER:

Declaration and Promise Required for Granting Permission for Mixed Marriages

Canon 1125 requires that, before permission can be granted for a marriage between a Catholic and a validly baptized non-Catholic, the following conditions must be fulfilled:

1^o the Catholic party declares that he or she is prepared to remove dangers of falling away from the faith and makes a sincere promise to do all in his or her power to have all the children baptized and brought up in the Catholic Church.

2^o the other party is to be informed at an appropriate time of these promises which the Catholic party has to make, so that it is clear that the other party is truly aware of the promise and obligation of the Catholic party.

The declaration and promise by the Catholic, necessary for permission to enter into a mixed marriage, shall be made in the following words or their substantial equivalent:

“I reaffirm my faith in Jesus Christ and, with God’s help, intend to continue living that faith in the Catholic Church.”

“I promise to do all in my power to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and reared as Catholics.”

The above-mentioned declaration and promise are made in the presence of a priest or deacon either orally or in writing as the Catholic prefers. The priest or deacon should attest to the reception of the declaration and promise by a special notation in the Pre-Matrimonial Investigation book, as well as in the Marriage Register.

Appendix III

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,
National Conference of Catholic Bishops, June 16, 1995.

Marriage

34. By the Sacrament of Marriage, Christians signify and share in the mystery of the unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and his Church. They help each other to attain holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children (*Rite of Marriage*, n. 1).

35. All persons not prohibited by law can contract Marriage (cf. *CIC* 1058).

36. The local ordinary should make the necessary provisions to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in marriage preparation programs. Through this preparation all couples may become predisposed toward holiness and to the duties of their new state. In developing diocesan policies, the local ordinary should consult with men and women of proven experience and skill in understanding the emotional, physical, spiritual, and psychological needs of persons with disabilities (cf. *CIC* 1063, nos. 2 and 1064). The inclusion of persons with disabilities in sponsoring couple programs is an especially effective way of supporting both the needs and the gifts of couples preparing for Marriage.

37. For matrimonial consent to be valid, it is necessary that the contracting parties possess a sufficient use of reason; that they be free of any grave lack of discretion affecting their judgment about the rights and duties to which they are committing themselves; and that they be capable of assuming the essential obligations of the married state (cf. *CIC* 1095). It is also necessary that the parties understand that Marriage is a permanent union and is ordered to the good of the spouses, and the procreation and education of children (cf. *CIC* 1096). Pastors and other clergy are to decide cases on an individual basis and in light of pastoral judgment based upon consultation with diocesan personnel involved with disability issues, and canonical, medical, and other experts. Medical and canonical opinions should be sought in determining the presence of any impediments to Marriage. It should be noted, however, that paraplegia in itself does not always imply impotence, nor the permanence of such a condition, and it is not in itself an impediment. In case of doubt with regard to impotence, Marriage may not be impeded (cf. *CIC* 1084, sect. 2).

38. Catholics who are deaf are to be offered the opportunity to express their matrimonial consent in sign language, if sign language is their primary means of communication (cf. *CIC* 1104 §2). Marriage may also be contracted through a sign language interpreter whose trustworthiness has been certified by the pastor (cf. *CIC* 1106).

39. Pastoral care for married persons extends throughout the married couples' lives. By their care and example, the entire ecclesial community bears witness to the fact that the matrimonial state may be maintained in a Christian spirit and make progress toward perfection. Special care is to be taken to include parishioners with disabilities in parish programs aimed at assisting and nourishing married couples in leading holier and fuller lives within their families (cf. *CIC* 1063 no. 4).

Appendix IV

ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD
PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW -- FREEDOM TO MARRY

This Interview Form or the PMI must be administered before a wedding date can be set.

From the first meeting, the priest or deacon who administers this *Intake form* will do everything possible to help you understand the requirements of the Church and of the Archdiocese of Hartford for entering into marriage. As you provide the information that the Church requires for the celebration of the Sacrament of Matrimony, know that your questions are welcome and your truthful responses are a vital part of the preparation for this significant moment in your life.

With this in mind, do you promise to tell the truth and provide complete and accurate information? ____

1. What is your full name? _____
2. What is your address? _____
3. When and where were you born? _____
 If you are under 18 years of age:
 Do your parents know you are planning to marry? _____
 Do your parents consent to the marriage? _____
4. Are you related by blood or by marriage to your intended spouse? _____
5. Are you related by adoption to your intended spouse? _____
6. What is your father's name and religion? _____
7. What is your mother's maiden name and religion? _____
8. Were you baptized? yes / no (circle one). If yes, when were you baptized? _____
 (date)

If yes, please complete the following: I was baptized _____
 (Catholic, Orthodox, Methodist, Lutheran, Baptist etc.)

Please describe: _____
 (city, state, country) (name of the parish or church)

- 1 If you were not baptized Catholic, were you later received into full communion in the Catholic Church?

yes__ no__ (circle one). If yes, please complete the following:

When? _____ Where _____
 (date) (City, state, nation, parish name)

How? _____
 (First Communion, Confirmation, Profession of Faith at the Easter Vigil, Other)

9. Have you been admitted to Holy Orders? ____ Have you taken vows as a religious? ____
10. Were you or your intended spouse previously married in any kind of ceremony, religious or civil? __yes__ no

If yes, please complete the following regarding the marriage:

To whom? _____ Before whom? _____

Where? _____ When? From (date) _____ Until:(date) _____

- 1 What was the cause of separation? Circle one: __death of spouse, __other If other...

Please describe: _____

- 2 Was this *prior* marriage the *1st* marriage for you / your intended? __yes__ no (circle one) If no,...

Please explain: _____

If you or your intended spouse were Catholic at the time of a prior marriage(s) :

7.10

1. Did the marriage take place in a Catholic ceremony? yes / no (Circle one)
2. When?_____ Where?_____
3. If not in a Catholic ceremony, was a dispensation from form granted? yes / no (Circle one).
4. When?_____ Where? _____
5. Was the *marriage* subsequently *validated*? _ yes___ no (circle one). **If yes,...**
6. When? _____ Where? _____
7. Have you ever requested an *annulment*? _yes _no (circle one). **If yes, ...**
Was the *annulment* granted?_ yes___no (circle one)_ **If yes....**
Date issued: _____ From what Diocese? _____
8. Are you choosing freely to marry? _____
9. Has any person or any circumstance pressured you to marry? _____
10. Is there any information about you that you have not shared with your future spouse?

(addiction to drugs, alcohol, serious psychiatric illness, criminal record, communicable disease, any children, sterility, impotence etc.)

DOCUMENTATION

Once the required documentation has been submitted and the freedom of both parties to marry has been demonstrated, a DATE and a TIME can be fixed for celebration of the marriage. **Please inform us immediately if you or your intended spouse: are awaiting the decision of a Tribunal; were denied an annulment; or need to request an annulment.**

Awaiting receipt of: _____ : _____ Documentation Complete _____
(document needed) (date) (date)

_____ Baptismal certificate (issued in the last six months) date issued: _____ date received: _____

_____ Death certificate or _____ Testimony of witnesses date issued: _____ date received: _____

_____ *Annulment* _____ Other _____ date issued: _____ date received: _____

REQUESTED WEDDING DATE: Year _____ Month _____ Day: _____ Time: _____

Requested Place of marriage _____

PROPOSED WITNESS: 1) _____

PROPOSED WITNESS: 2) _____

I hereby affix my signature and declare that the information given above corresponds to the truth.

Signature of Bride / Groom

PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW administered: _____ **P M I administered:** _____
(date) (date)

Signature _____
(Priest / Deacon) (Parish) City/Town

**PLEASE ATTACH THESE DIRECTIONS
TO THE INSIDE COVER OF THE BOOK OF INTERVIEW FORMS**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING THE PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW:

1. A **PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW** using the PMI or this Interview Form must be conducted at the first meeting by a priest or deacon and in person. At that first meeting:
 - The freedom of both parties to marry must be investigated.
 - **A date and time for the marriage should not be given until the freedom to marry of both parties is established with certainty.**
2. The completed PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW FORM, if used, is to be attached to the PMI.
3. No response should be given to questions such as: "Is April 27, 2003 open? (On the basis of such informal replies halls are reserved, invitations printed, musicians engaged and travel arrangements made.)"
4. *Unless proof has been presented of the freedom of both parties to marry, discussion of a date, even tentatively, entails serious risks. Whether a wedding date has been recorded in pencil, or merely discussed, any subsequent discovery of a prior bond would require an immediate withdrawal of the wedding date with possibly regrettable consequences.*

ADMISSION TO THE RCIA BY THOSE PLANNING MARRIAGE:

5. During the time of preparation for marriage one of the parties who is not a Catholic may express a desire to learn more about the Catholic faith with a view to receiving Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist, or to being received into full communion in the Catholic Church.

POLICY:

Individuals who plan to marry in the Archdiocese of Hartford, and who wish to enter the Catholic Church *must present proof of their freedom to marry at the time they seek admission to any level of the RCIA.*

The policy is based upon the principle that the Church is obliged to regulate the administration of the Sacraments in order that the faithful benefit from participation in the Sacramental life. The policy seeks to eliminate the possibility that individuals, after months of preparation in RCIA, will discover to their surprise and embarrassment that they cannot be admitted to full communion in the Catholic Church.

Appendix IV

Guide for the Celebration of Marriage -Introductory Notes

Canonical Form

Canonical form requires that a marriage involving at least one Catholic be contracted in the presence of the local Ordinary, the pastor, a priest or deacon delegated by either of them, who assists, and in the presence of two witnesses (cf. *CIC* 1108§1).

Only that person who, being present, asks the contracting parties to manifest their consent and in the name of the Church receives it, is understood to assist at a marriage.”(*CIC* 1108§ 2)

The declaration of consent must follow the prescribed formula from the *Ritual*.

Dispensation from canonical form may be requested in cases of a Catholic marrying a non-Catholic for serious religious, conscience and familial considerations.

GUIDE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

	TWO CATHOLICS	CATHOLIC AND BAPTIZED NON-CATHOLIC	CATHOLIC AND UNBAPTIZED PERSON
	WITHOUT DISPENSATION FROM FORM	WITHOUT DISPENSATION FROM FORM	WITHOUT DISPENSATION FROM FORM
Place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ordinarily, the marriage is in the parish church of either spouse;¹ and within a Nuptial Mass. If held outside the parish of both, permission of the pastor of at least one spouse is required for liceity. For compelling pastoral reasons, as exception, permission of the Archbishop may be sought for celebration in a suitable place such as the chapel of an educational institution only when one spouse has a relationship there. Places such as an outdoor setting or restaurant, club, park, etc. are considered unsuitable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ordinarily, the marriage is in the parish church of the Catholic or with permission of the Ordinary or the pastor it may be celebrated in another Catholic church or oratory.² A mixed marriage according to Catholic form ordinarily takes place outside Mass. Permission for a Mass may be granted only by the Archbishop.³ For compelling pastoral reasons, as exception, permission of the Archbishop may be sought for celebration in a suitable place such as the chapel of an educational institution only when one spouse has a relationship there. Places such as an outdoor setting or restaurant, club, park, etc. are considered unsuitable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ordinarily, the marriage is in the parish church of the Catholic or with permission of the Ordinary or the pastor it may be celebrated in another Catholic church or oratory.⁴ A marriage with a dispensation from <i>disparity of cult</i>, celebrated according to Catholic form takes place outside Mass in accord with the <i>Rite of Marriage</i>.⁵ By way of exception, and for serious pastoral reasons, permission of the Archbishop may be sought for a celebration of marriage in a location that is appropriate for a religious ceremony.⁶ Permission of the Archbishop for such a setting is required for each case.
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marriages may not be celebrated on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation; Since the liturgical celebration of Sunday begins at 4:00 p.m. Saturday, no wedding may be scheduled after 3:00 p.m. or one half hour before confessions or the Sunday Vigil Mass, whichever comes first. Saturday evening weddings are not ordinarily permitted. Marriage may be celebrated on weekdays convenient for celebrant, the couple and parish schedule, e.g. confessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marriages may not be celebrated on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation; Since the liturgical celebration of Sunday begins at 4:00 p.m. Saturday, no wedding may be scheduled after 3:00 p.m. or one half hour before confessions or the Sunday Vigil Mass, whichever comes first. Saturday evening weddings are not permitted. Marriage may be celebrated on weekdays convenient for celebrant, the couple and parish schedule, e.g. confessions. 	<p>If inside a Catholic church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marriages may not be celebrated on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation; Since the liturgical celebration of Sunday begins at 4:00 p.m. Saturday, no wedding may be scheduled after 3:00 p.m. or one half hour before confessions or the Sunday Vigil Mass, whichever comes first. Saturday evening weddings are not permitted. Marriage may be celebrated on weekdays convenient for celebrant, the couple and parish schedule, e.g. confessions. If outside of a Catholic church: It may be at any time convenient for the Catholic officiant and the couple.

GUIDE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

7.14

GUIDE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

	TWO CATHOLICS	CATHOLIC AND BAPTIZED NON-CATHOLIC	CATHOLIC AND UNBAPTIZED PERSON
	WITH DISPENSATION FROM FORM	WITH DISPENSATION FROM FORM	WITH DISPENSATION FROM FORM
	No dispensation from form will be granted to two Catholics		
Place	<i>not applicable</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ordinarily, the marriage is celebrated in the Non Catholic church. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The marriage may be celebrated in a setting that is deemed appropriate for marriage.
Time	<i>not applicable</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The marriage may take place at any time in the presence of a minister or other recognized Non Catholic religious officiant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The marriage may take place at any time in the presence of a civil or religious officiant.
Participants	<i>not applicable</i>		
		Officiant: a Non Catholic religious official	Officiant: a Non Catholic civil or religious official.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consent must be requested and received by the Non Catholic officiant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The consent must be requested and received by the Non Catholic officiant.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even with the dispensation from canonical form, some public form of celebration still is required for validity.⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even with the dispensation from canonical form, some public form of celebration still is required for validity.¹²
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not permitted to have two separate religious services with exchange of consent being expressed twice, or even one service with two exchanges of consent jointly or successively.¹⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is not permitted to have two separate religious services with exchange of consent being expressed twice, or even one service with two exchanges of consent jointly or successively.¹³
		Participation of Catholic priest or deacon in the celebration:	Participation of Catholic priest or deacon in the celebration:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Catholic priest or deacon may not receive the consent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Catholic priest or deacon may not receive the consent.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If invited by the officiant and the couple, the priest or deacon may offer appropriate prayers, read from the Scriptures, give a brief exhortation and bless the couple.¹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If invited by the officiant and the couple, the priest or deacon may offer appropriate prayers, read from the Scriptures, give a brief exhortation and bless the couple.¹⁴
		Catholics as Witnesses: Catholics may serve as witnesses at mixed marriages in other Churches or ecclesial Communities for which a dispensation from form has been granted.	Catholics as Witnesses: Catholics may serve as witnesses at marriages where a dispensation from disparity of cult and canonical form have been granted.
Other permissions or dispensations	<i>not applicable</i>	Permission for mixed marriage may be granted by all priests and deacons assigned to the parish of celebration of marriage. Such permission is not to be given, however, unless the conditions prescribed in Canons 1125§1-3 are fulfilled.	A dispensation from disparity of cult will not be granted unless the conditions prescribed in Canons 1125§1-3 are fulfilled.

NOTES

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- ¹ Cf. *CIC* 1115, 1118§1.
² Cf. *CIC* 1118§2.
³ Cf. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, par. 159, and *Rite of Marriage* par. 8.
⁴ Cf. *CIC* 1118§2.
⁵ Cf. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, par. 159, and *Rite of Marriage* par. 55 ff.
⁶ Cf. *CIC* 1118§3.
⁷ Cf. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, par. 158.
⁸ Cf. *CIC* 1118§3.
⁹ Cf. *CIC* 1127§2.
¹⁰ Cf. *CIC* 1127§3.
¹¹ Cf. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, par. 157.
¹² Cf. *CIC* 1127§2.
¹³ Cf. *CIC* 1127§3.
¹⁴ Cf. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, par. 157.

Faculties Granted to Clerics of the Archdiocese of Hartford

Revised June 2004



The Most Reverend Henry J. Mansell, D.D.

Faculties Granted to Clerics of the Archdiocese of Hartford

1. BY THE GENERAL LAW OF THE CHURCH, THE FOLLOWING FACULTIES ARE GRANTED TO ALL PRIESTS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPECIFIED CANONS:

- 1.1 To preach the Word of God everywhere with at least the presumed consent of the pastor of the parish (c. 764).
- 1.2 To preach to religious in their churches or oratories with the permission of the competent superior (c. 765).
- 1.3 To administer the following sacraments: baptism to those under the age of fourteen (c. 861 §1 and c. 863 – see also faculty 4.2), confection of the Eucharist (c. 900 §1), penance (c. 965) and anointing of the sick (c. 1003 §1).
- 1.4 To make an exception to the required age of 16 for a sponsor at baptism or confirmation but only for a just reason (c. 874 §1, 2° and c. 893 §1).
- 1.5 To admit a Christian who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community to be a witness to baptism but only together with a Catholic sponsor (c. 874 §2).
- 1.6 To administer the sacrament of confirmation to those in danger of death (c.883, 3°).
- 1.7 To celebrate the Eucharist according to the norms of canonical and liturgical law (c. 900 §2).
- 1.8 To celebrate the Eucharist without the participation of some member of the faithful for a just and reasonable cause (c. 906).
- 1.9 To consume food or drink before the second or third celebration of the Eucharist on the same day (c. 919 §2).
- 1.10 To permit the reception of Holy Communion under both species provided this can be done reverently and without undue delay in the celebration (c. 925).
- 1.11 To celebrate the Eucharist privately and while seated if one is sick or elderly and unable to stand (c. 930 §1).
- 1.12 To celebrate the Eucharist by using the text of any approved Mass if one is blind or suffering from another infirmity (c. 930 §2).

- 1.13 To celebrate and distribute the Eucharist on any day and at any hour, except those excluded by the liturgical laws (c. 931).
- 1.14 To celebrate the Eucharist in any fitting place (c. 932 §1).
- 1.15 To celebrate the rite of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and to give the Eucharistic blessing (c. 943).
- 1.16 To absolve from any kind of censures and sins any penitent who is in danger of death (c. 976).
- 1.17 To carry the oil of the sick so that in case of necessity the sacrament of anointing of the sick may be administered (c. 1003 §3).
- 1.18 To dispense, in danger of death and only when the local ordinary cannot be reached, from the form of marriage and from all impediments of ecclesiastical law except the impediment arising from sacred order of the presbyterate (c. 1079 §2).

Note: This faculty does not apply to impediments of divine law, such as prior bond.

- 1.19 To dispense, in occult cases, whenever an impediment is discovered after all the wedding preparations are made and the marriage cannot be deferred without probable danger of serious harm until a dispensation can be obtained from competent authority, from all impediments of ecclesiastical law except sacred orders and a public perpetual vow of chastity in a religious institute of pontifical right (c. 1080).

Note: This faculty is granted by general law to pastors and to those priests who are properly delegated (see faculty 4.5). It does not apply to impediments of divine law, such as prior bond.

- 1.20 To administer all sacramentals except those that require further faculties or the episcopal character (c. 1168).
- 1.21 To impart blessings, except those reserved to the Roman Pontiff and bishops (c. 1169 §2).

2. BY THE GENERAL LAW OF THE CHURCH, THE FOLLOWING FACULTIES ARE GRANTED TO ALL PASTORS, PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATORS (C. 540 §1) AND “Co-PASTORS”

(C. 543) IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPECIFIED CANONS:

2.1 To exercise the pastoral care of the community entrusted to him under the authority of the Archbishop so that for this community he may carry out the offices of teaching, sanctifying and ruling with the cooperation of other priests or deacons and with the assistance of lay members of Christ’s faithful in accord with law (c. 519).

2.2 To act in the person of the parish in all canonical matters (c. 532).

Note: In a “team parish,” this applies to the moderator only (c. 543 §3).

2.3 When he is legitimately prevented from offering the “Missa pro populo” on a Sunday or holy day of obligation, either to apply Mass for the people on these same days through another priest or to apply it himself on other days (c. 534 §1).

2.4 To confirm as part of the same ceremony, a person over the age of fourteen whom he has just baptized or received into the full communion of the Church (c. 883, 2° and faculty 4.2).

Note: This faculty does not apply to those people who were baptized as Catholics in infancy and were never either raised as Catholics or affiliated with any other church.

2.5 In virtue of their office, to hear confessions within their parish (c. 968 §1) and, by reason of c. 967 §2, everywhere in the world.

2.6 Within the confines of the parish, to assist validly at the marriages of their parishioners as well as of nonparishioners provided one of the contractants is of the Latin rite (c. 1109).

2.7 To delegate to priests and deacons the faculty, even a general one, to assist at marriages within the limits of their territory (c. 1111 §1 and, for “co-pastors,” c. 543 §1 and c. 137 §1).

2.8 To dispense from private vows made either by a parishioner or by a visitor within the parish provided no injury is done to the acquired rights of others (c. 1196, 1°).

2.9 To commute to a lesser good what has been promised by a private vow made either by a parishioner or by a visitor within the parish (c. 1197).

- 2.10 To suspend, dispense or commute a promissory oath provided no injury is done to the rights of others (c. 1203).
- 2.11 To dispense, for a just reason and in individual cases, from the obligation to observe a feast day or a day of penance (c. 1245).

3. *BY THE GENERAL LAW OF THE CHURCH, THE FOLLOWING FACULTIES ARE GRANTED TO ALL DEACONS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPECIFIED CANONS:*

- 3.1 To preach the Word of God everywhere with at least the presumed consent of the pastor of the parish (c. 764).
- 3.2 To baptize those under the age of fourteen (c. 861 §1 and c. 863 – see also faculty 4.2)
- 3.3 To administer Holy Communion both during and outside Mass (c. 910 §1).
- 3.4 To celebrate the rite of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and to give the Eucharistic blessing (c. 943).
- 3.5 To dispense, in danger of death and only when the local ordinary cannot be reached, from the form of marriage and from all impediments of ecclesiastical law except the impediment arising from sacred order of the presbyterate (c. 1079 §2).

Note: This faculty does not apply to impediments of divine law, such as prior bond.

- 3.6 To dispense, in occult cases, whenever an impediment is discovered after all the wedding preparations are made and the marriage cannot be deferred without probable danger of serious harm until a dispensation can be obtained from competent authority, from all impediments of ecclesiastical law except sacred orders and a public perpetual vow of chastity in a religious institute of pontifical right (c. 1080).

Note: This faculty applies only to those deacons who are properly delegated (see faculty 4.5). It does not apply to impediments of divine law, such as prior bond.

- 3.7 To administer the sacramentals of the Church, as provided for in the liturgical books. (c. 1168).

4. *IN VIRTUE OF THE POWER GIVEN HIM BY THE GENERAL LAW OF THE CHURCH THE MOST REVEREND ARCHBISHOP GRANTS THE FOLLOWING FACULTIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPECIFIED CANONS:*

- 4.1 To all priests assigned to a parish: to baptize or to receive into full communion an adult who does not dwell within the confines of the parish, provided the person has been admitted to the catechumenate in this parish (c. 857 §2).

Note: Notification of admission to the catechumenate and of the reception into full communion or reception of baptism should be made to the person's proper pastor.

- 4.2 To all priests and deacons: to baptize those over the age of fourteen (c. 863).
- 4.3 To all priests: for a good reason, to celebrate the Eucharist twice on weekdays and, if pastoral necessity requires it, three times on Sundays and holy days of obligation (c. 905 §2).
- 4.4 To all priests incardinated in or having a domicile in the Archdiocese: to hear the confessions of the faithful in the Archdiocese (c. 969 §1) and, by reason of c. 967 §2, everywhere in the world.
- 4.5 To all parochial vicars and to pastors emeriti and deacons assigned to a parish: to assist at marriages within the boundaries of the parish (c. 1111 §1).
- 4.6 To all parochial vicars and to pastors emeriti and deacons assigned to a parish: to grant other priests and deacons, in individual instances, the faculty to assist at marriages within the boundaries of the parish (c. 1111 §1).
- 4.7 To all priests and deacons assigned to a parish: to permit the marriage between two baptized persons, one of whom was baptized in the Catholic Church or received into it after baptism and who has not departed from the Church by a formal act, and the other of whom belongs to a Church or ecclesial community not in full communion with the Catholic Church. This permission is not to be given unless the conditions mentioned in canon 1125 are fulfilled (c. 1125).
- 4.8 To all priests and deacons assigned to a parish: to allow Church funeral rites for an unbaptized child, if the parents had intended to have the child baptized (c. 1183 §2).
- 4.9 To parochial vicars and to pastors emeriti and deacons assigned to a parish: to dispense from private vows made either by a parishioner or by a visitor within the parish provided no injury is done to the acquired rights of others (c. 1196, 1°).

- 4.10 To parochial vicars and to pastors emeriti and deacons assigned to a parish: to commute to a lesser good what has been promised by a private vow made either by a parishioner or by a visitor within the parish (c. 1197).
- 4.11 To parochial vicars and to pastors emeriti and deacons assigned to a parish: to suspend, dispense or commute a promissory oath provided no injury is done to the rights of others (c. 1203).
- 4.12 To parochial vicars and to pastors emeriti and deacons assigned to a parish: to dispense, for a just reason and in individual cases, from the obligation to observe a feast day or a day of penance (c.1245).
- 4.13 To all priests who enjoy the faculty of hearing confessions: to remit, within the Archdiocese, the automatic excommunication attached to apostasy, heresy or schism by c. 1364 and to abortion by c. 1398 (c. 1355 §2).

Revised June 2004

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities¹

*These guidelines are presented to all who are involved in pastoral ministry with persons with disabilities. They reaffirm the determination expressed by the bishops of the United States on the tenth anniversary of the pastoral statement on persons with disabilities "to promote accessibility of mind and heart, so that all persons with disabilities may be welcomed at worship and at every level of service as full members of the Body of Christ."*²

It is essential that all forms of the liturgy be completely accessible to persons with disabilities, since these forms are the essence of the spiritual tie that binds the Christian community together. To exclude members of the parish from these celebrations of the life of the Church, even by passive omission, is to deny the reality of that community. Accessibility involves far more than physical alterations to parish buildings. Realistic provision must be made for persons with disabilities to participate fully in the Eucharist and other liturgical celebrations such as the sacraments of reconciliation, confirmation, and anointing of the sick (*Pastoral Statement of U.S. Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities*, November 1978; revised 1989).

Preface

Catholics with disabilities, as well as those who minister to or with them, often point out that pastoral practice with regard to the celebration of the sacraments varies greatly from diocese to diocese, even from parish to parish. Inconsistencies arise in such areas as the provision of sign language interpreters for persons who are deaf, in the accessibility of church facilities for persons with mobility problems, and in the availability of catechetical programs for persons with developmental and mental disabilities. Pastoral inconsistencies may occur in other areas as well.

The inconsistencies in pastoral practice often arise from distinct yet overlapping causes. Some result from a misunderstanding about the nature of disabilities. Others arise from an uncertainty about the appropriate application of Church law towards persons with disabilities. Others are born out of fear or misunderstanding. Still others are the result of a studied and honest acceptance of the realistic limitations of a parish's or diocese's available resources.

These guidelines were developed to address many of the concerns raised by priests, pastoral ministers, other concerned Catholics, persons with disabilities, their advocates and their families for greater consistency in pastoral practice in the celebration of the sacraments throughout the country. With this objective in view, the guidelines draw upon the Church's ritual books, its canonical tradition, and its experience in ministering to or with persons with disabilities in order to dispel any misunderstandings that may impede sound pastoral practice in the celebration of the sacraments. It is our hope that the guidelines will complement diocesan policies already in existence.

¹ In November 1978, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved for publication a pastoral statement on persons with disabilities. Therein the bishops called for broader integration of persons with disabilities into the full life of the Church, through increased evangelization and catechesis and by participation in the Church's sacramental life. In 1988, the bishops reaffirmed this call to participate fully and actively in the life of the Church in a resolution marking the tenth anniversary of the 1978 pastoral statement. The present document is a further contribution to the efforts of the Church to advocate for ministry to and with persons with disabilities. It was prepared by the Committee on Pastoral Practices in response to requests for further clarification and guidance about the means for providing fuller access to the sacraments by persons with disabilities. The *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* was approved by the general membership of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on June 16, 1995. It is authorized for publication by the undersigned. Reverend Monsignor Dennis M. Schnurr, General Secretary, NCCB/USCC

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The bishops of the United States offer the *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* in order to give a more concrete expression to our longstanding concern for "realistic provision" for the means of access to full sacramental participation for Catholic persons with disabilities. While they do not address every conceivable situation that may arise in pastoral practice, the guidelines present a set of general principles to provide access to the sacraments for persons with disabilities. Diocesan staff, pastoral leaders, catechists, parishioners, health care workers, and all those who minister to or with Catholics with disabilities are invited and encouraged to reflect upon and accept these guidelines in their continuing effort to bring Christ's healing message and call to justice to the world.

I. General Principles

1. By reason of their baptism, all Catholics are equal in dignity in the sight of God, and have the same divine calling.
2. Catholics with disabilities have a right to participate in the sacraments as full functioning members of the local ecclesial community (Cf. canon 213). Ministers are not to refuse the sacraments to those who ask for them at appropriate times, who are properly disposed, and who are not prohibited by law from receiving them (Cf. canon 843, sect. 1).
3. Parish sacramental celebrations should be accessible to persons with disabilities and open to their full, active and conscious participation, according to their capacity. Pastoral ministers should not presume to know the needs of persons with disabilities, but rather they should consult with them or their advocates before making determinations about the accessibility of a parish's facilities and the availability of its programs, policies, and ministries. These adaptations are an ordinary part of the liturgical life of the parish. While full accessibility may not always be possible for every parish, it is desirable that at least one fully accessible community be available in a given area. Parishes may, in fact, decide to collaborate in the provision of services to persons with disabilities.
4. Since the parish is the center of the Christian experience for most Catholics, pastoral ministers should make every effort to determine the presence of all Catholics with disabilities who reside within a parish's boundaries. Special effort should be made to welcome those parishioners with disabilities who live in institutions or group homes and are unable to frequent their parish churches or participate in parish activities. However, pastoral ministers should remember that many persons with disabilities still reside with their families. Pastoral visitation, the parish census, and the diverse forms of parish and diocesan social communication are just a few of the many ways in which the pastoral staff can work towards the inclusion of all parishioners in the parish's sacramental life.
5. In accord with canon 777, n.4, pastors are responsible to be as inclusive as possible in providing evangelization, catechetical formation, and sacramental preparation for parishioners with disabilities. Persons with disabilities, their advocates and their families, as well as those knowledgeable in serving disabled persons can make a most valuable contribution to these programs. Parish catechetical and sacramental preparation programs may need to be adapted for some parishioners with disabilities. Further, parishes should encourage persons with disabilities to participate in all levels of pastoral ministry (e.g., as care ministers, catechists, etc.). Dioceses are encouraged to establish appropriate support services for pastors to facilitate the evangelization, catechetical formation, and sacramental preparation for parishioners with disabilities.
6. The creation of a fully accessible parish reaches beyond mere physical accommodation to encompass the attitudes of all parishioners towards persons with disabilities. Pastoral ministers are encouraged to develop specific programs aimed at forming a community of believers known for its joyful inclusion of all of God's people around the Table of the Lord.
7. In the course of making pastoral decisions, it is inevitable that pastoral care workers will encounter difficult cases. Dioceses are encouraged to establish appropriate policies for handling such cases which respect the procedural and substantive rights of all involved, and which ensure the necessary provision of consultation.

