

**DIRECTIVES AND GUIDELINES  
FOR  
SACRAMENTAL AND PASTORAL  
PRACTICE**

**DRAFT**

**The Chancellery: 2011**

## ***Preamble***

This booklet is designed to be of assistance to priests and parish staff. It will also help in bringing about a uniformity of practice in these matters throughout the diocese.

Hopefully, too, priests and parish staff will find answers and guidance to the many complex situations they meet in the exercise of their ministry. These guidelines/directives address a significant number of pastoral situations that need to be appropriately dealt with. They are, nonetheless, but a beginning. Further guidelines/directives on areas not covered here will follow in due course. Equally, as situations change, revised guidelines/directives will be forwarded where appropriate.

As the situations people find themselves in are not always limited to what is outlined here, please feel free to contact us if you need any further clarification or assistance.

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## SECTION 1

### Baptism

A proper application form for the Sacrament of Baptism in parishes should enable matters to proceed without much difficulty. (cf. Appendix 1: *Request for Baptism*).

#### **1.1 Guardianship**

1. Guardianship describes the legal responsibility of parents to make decisions and perform duties in relation to their child's upbringing. Married parents are automatically joint guardians of their children. **Neither separation nor divorce changes this.**
2. A father who is not married to the mother of his child does not have automatic guardianship rights in relation to that child. To achieve this, the mother must agree and they must apply jointly to the State. In the absence of the mother's agreement, for him to have guardianship, the father must apply for this status to the District Court. Where the father has not obtained guardianship, the mother remains sole guardian.

#### **1.2 Parish Application Form**

- Requests should be signed by **both** parents, particularly if the parents are not married to each other. This will avoid the problem of the mother seeking Baptism and inserting the name of the father without his knowledge or consent.
- A copy of the *Birth Certificate* should accompany the application form. This ensures the accurate recording of the facts and that the child's surname is the same in both Church and State records.

The surname recorded in the Baptismal Register should always be that as recorded on the Birth Certificate.

Place of Marriage should be included on such a form. This will indicate the pastoral context within which the request is being made and also make clear whether or not both parents are the legal guardians.

- Please note: if the parent presenting the child has been married to and separated from the child's other parent that other parent's consent to Baptism is required.

#### **1.3 Godparents**

The basic requirement for Baptism is one Sponsor. If there are two, they are to be male and female. One cannot have two male Godparents or two female Godparents. A Christian of another denomination cannot be a Godparent or Sponsor. However, he/she can be a Christian Witness at a Catholic Baptism. The child in such a circumstance will still need a Catholic Sponsor or Godparent. [cf. APPENDIX 2: Requirements for the Office of Godparent (Sponsor)]

### ***1.4 Place of Baptism***

The normal place for Baptism is the parish Church in which the family is domiciled. With the permission of the parish priest the child can be baptised in a church of another parish. Baptisms are not allowed in any other location, such as private houses, hotels or religious Churches and chapels.

### ***1.5 Baptismal Registration***

The primary purpose of registration is to record the fact of Baptism and to establish the identity of the one who has received the Sacrament. All other information recorded is taken on trust from the person who is giving the details for Baptism.

- The handwritten register is the only authentic record. Where electronic records are maintained a manual record must **always** be made. (canon 535) [cf. APPENDIX 3 – Requirements for Sacramental Records]

### ***1.6 Particular Situations***

1. *The Child of an Unmarried Mother:* The mother's name is entered. The father's name can be entered when his paternity is established by a public document i.e. a full Civil Birth Certificate carrying his name, together with the signed request of the father. The mother as guardian has sole rights to make decisions concerning the child unless the State has granted guardianship rights to the father.
2. *The Child of a Civilly Married Couple:* Children born to Catholic parents in civil marriages are registered in accordance with the principles outlined above. However, in this instance, both parents have guardianship rights.
3. *The Child of a Married Woman by a Man other than her Husband:* If the woman and her husband are more than six months married or have not terminated their conjugal life for ten months or more, the legal presumption is that the husband is the father of the child (cf. *The Code of Canon Law*, can.1139§2). This presumption, however, falls to contrary proof (cf. *The Code of Canon Law*, can.1138§1). The name of the natural father can be inserted if his name is already recorded on a full Civil Birth Certificate, and if he states in writing that he is agreeable to his name being entered.

The surname of the child should always be that as recorded on the Birth Certificate.

### ***1.7 Issuing of Baptismal Certificates***

In general, certificates should only be issued to the baptised person or to his/her guardians or their delegate. Certificates issued for Marriage purposes should always include details of Confirmation or of a previous Marriage. If there are none then it should state "no record" in the sections for Confirmation and Marriage.

Where electronic records are also maintained, the manual Baptismal Register must always be consulted when issuing the Baptismal Certificate.

Care should be taken in relation to the personal information contained within the register.

### ***1.8 Baptismal Certificates for Adopted Persons***

The Baptismal record for a person adopted **before January, 1982** will be found in the parish of Baptism. For those adopted **after January, 1982** the record of Baptism will be found in the Adopted Person's Register in the Chancellery.

When the Baptism is recorded in the Adopted Persons' Baptismal Register in the Chancellery, the Chancellery will notify the original place of Baptism that their entry now ceases as the Baptismal record. All future requests should be referred to the Chancellery.

A Baptismal Certificate, when issued from the Central Register, will not carry the name of the Church where the Baptism actually took place. Priests should bear this in mind if the adoptive parents or the adopted person contact the parish of Baptism.

### ***1.9 "Foreign Adoptions" of Children Baptised in the Diocese***

1. When an adopted child is not from Ireland but the child's **adoptive** parents live in the diocese and the child is baptised here **after** legal adoption:
  - The parish of Baptism retains the official entry.
  - All future Baptismal Certificates will issue from the parish of Baptism.
  
2. When a child is baptised in the diocese and is later **adopted abroad** the Baptismal Registration, as a result, will need to be amended. In such cases:
  - The parish entry will cease upon receipt of appropriate documentation and notification to the parish by the Chancellery.
  - The registration will be that retained subsequently in the Chancellery.
  - All future Baptismal Certificates will issue from the Chancellery.

### ***1.10 Issuing a Certificate for Adopted Persons***

When a **parish** issues a certificate for a person adopted **before January, 1982** apart from date of birth and Baptism, the certificate should carry the adoptive person's name and those of his/her adoptive parents only. (No other details should be entered on this Baptismal Certificate, apart from the details appropriate to Confirmation or Marital status.)

### ***1.11 Access to and Confidentiality of Baptismal Registers***

Occasionally people doing genealogical research approach priests seeking to view the Baptismal Registers. It must be remembered, however, that Baptismal Registers are confidential. They are not open to the public. They give expression to the current status of a person in the Church, for example, whether they are married, ordained, laicised, etc. The only person who has a right to a Baptismal Certificate is the person in question or his/her delegate: or, in the case of a minor, his/her parent or guardian.

Priests, sacristans and parish secretaries should take great care in preserving the confidentiality of the Baptismal Register's contents, particularly when issuing certificates. They should also ensure that the register is not left unattended and open to easy access by others.

### ***1.12 Alterations to Entries in the Baptismal Register***

Facts cannot be changed. Errors can be corrected when proof is provided. Some emendations, however, are possible. For example, sometimes people adopt a new name for themselves or more especially for their children. If such name changes are publicly confirmed – either through the Birth Certificate of the person in question or by Deed Poll – the Chancellery will authorise such a name to be noted in the Baptismal Register and certificates issued accordingly.

Any alteration to the Baptismal Register must be authorised through the Chancellery.

### ***1.13 Substitute Godparents***

Occasionally, a priest is requested to remove a Godparent's name from the register and replace it with a new Godparent. It is important that **no** Godparent be struck off the Baptismal Register. It may be possible, in certain circumstances, to obtain authorisation, through the Chancellery, to add a substitute Godparent to the original entry. A substantial reason is required for this to be considered. Godparents, generally, are not notated on Baptismal Certificates.

### ***1.14 Adoption – Access to Confidential Information***

Any adopted person – or relative or friend – who seeks the original details of the Baptismal entry before adoption should be referred to the Adoption Agency which arranged the adoption. No details of the original entry should be given out.

## SECTION 2

### **Sacraments of Initiation**

The Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) for adults, are never to be separated but are celebrated in one rite of initiation, preferably at the Easter Vigil. The diocesan guidelines regarding the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) are to be followed.

#### ***2.1 Adults (unbaptised) seeking to become a Catholic***

Contact the Diocesan Liturgical Resource Centre if you have an enquiry. Early contact with full details is vital so that the right guidance can be given. If the enquirer has been previously married, the Chancellery should be contacted immediately.

#### ***2.2 Children (unbaptised) seeking to become a Catholic***

Where it is clear that no other influences pertain, e.g. – the proximity of First Communion or Confirmation – and that an unbaptised child of his/her own volition, with the support of his/her parents/guardians, seeks to become a Catholic, the Rite of Initiation for children of catechetical age should be followed and adapted to the particular circumstances. (See pages 149-185 of the RCIA). Contact the Diocesan Liturgical Resource Centre for further details.

The Church prefers to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation together, even for children who have reached the use of reason. However, if the Catholic peers of the child have not received **First** Communion or Confirmation, in such circumstances it may be deemed pastorally beneficial to confer the Sacrament of Baptism only.

#### ***2.3 Reception of a baptised person into Full Communion with the Catholic Church***

The Catholic Church does not espouse proselytism. At the same time, when a Christian of his/her own volition desires to become a Catholic the following should take place:

##### ***Adult:***

Contact the Diocesan Liturgical Resource Centre for information and the appropriate forms.

##### ***Child:***

Where no other influences pertain, e.g. the proximity of **First** Communion or Confirmation and that a child (seven years and over) of his or her own volition, with the support of his/her parents/guardians, seeks to become a Catholic the following should take place:

1. The Baptism Certificate of the child should be obtained.
2. An adequate course of preparation should take place.

3. At an appropriate time the child should be received into the Catholic Church. A rite of reception is available from the Chancellery.
4. The reception should be entered in the Baptismal Register as a reception with full details as well as a note concerning place of original Baptism.
5. The above is based on the presumption that the child's Catholic peers have not yet received full initiation, i.e. **First** Communion and Confirmation.

If it is the case that the child's Catholic peers have received full initiation, then the priest should seek the delegation necessary to fully initiate the child.

This does not apply to children of Orthodox Churches as they have already been fully initiated. (cf. APPENDIX 4)

Orthodox Christians, whether as adults or children on becoming Catholic do not belong to the Latin Catholic Church but to the Eastern Catholic Church which most closely resembles the Orthodox Church to which they originally belonged.

#### **2.4 Confirmation**

##### ***Catholics who have received the Sacrament of Baptism only***

On occasion, a priest can encounter a Catholic – particularly in relation to marriage preparation - who has received the Sacrament of Baptism but not Confirmation. After appropriate catechesis and formation, the priest should seek delegation from the Archbishop to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation. (This delegation is proper to the diocesan Bishop alone, namely, the Archbishop, and anyone to whom he has granted the general faculty in this Archdiocese i.e. the Moderator of the Curia.) The necessary form for delegation is available from the Diocesan Liturgical Resource Centre.

#### **2.5 Confirmation Name**

Adopting a Confirmation name is an appropriate custom. It is not, however, a requirement. It is preferable that the name chosen be that of a Saint who will become, in a way, the young person's Patron or that of an exemplary Christian they know – e.g. Grandparent. If another name is chosen it should not be foreign to Christian sentiment.

#### **2.6 Eucharist**

##### ***Reception of the Eucharist by those not in Full Communion with the Catholic Church***

##### ***Eastern Christians (Orthodox):***

Eastern Christians can receive the Eucharist in Catholic Churches if they spontaneously ask for it and are properly disposed. It should be noted the Orthodox Church in general does not allow its' faithful to receive the Eucharist in Catholic Churches.

### ***2.7 Christians of other Churches such as Church of Ireland, Methodist, Presbyterian:***

The level of ecclesial communion at this time does not allow such Christians to receive Communion in the Catholic Church. However, in situations of grave or pressing need requests can be considered on an individual basis.

Permission must be sought in each instance from the Archbishop by the individual Christian concerned. Each Christian applying must fulfil certain requirements – be unable to approach a minister of their own community – demonstrate Catholic faith in respect of the Eucharist - spontaneously ask for it – be properly disposed. If and when granted, it is only granted for a particular one-off situation.

### ***2.8 Involvement of other Catholic or Christian Children during First Communion and Confirmation Celebrations***

Eastern Catholic children and Orthodox Christian children (cf. APPENDIX 4) when initiated will have received Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist at the same celebration. While they may have received these Sacraments they may not have been subsequently catechised concerning them. Latin Catholic children receive this catechesis after Baptism and before they receive First Communion and Confirmation.

#### ***Eastern Catholic Children:***

They will already have received on the one occasion the Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist. If they are to receive Communion on the occasion of the reception of First Communion of Latin Catholic children they need to be properly disposed and have received similar catechesis as the Latin Catholic Children. It is imperative, therefore, for such children, that no confusion be created by giving the impression, for example, on the occasion of First Communion, that they may be making their **First** Communion. The richness of Catholic belonging should be explicitly adverted to in respect of these children.

#### ***Orthodox Children:***

They will already have received on the one occasion the Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist. Even though these children are not in full communion with the Catholic Church, they may, because of the closeness of ecclesial communion, receive Communion in the Catholic Church in certain particular circumstances.

The parents of such children should discuss the matter with a priest from their own Orthodox Church, if one is available. These children may not have received catechesis after their Christian Initiation. They too will also need to be properly disposed if consideration is to be given to their request to receive Communion in the Catholic Church on such an occasion. If they are sufficiently catechised and have, where available, the permission of their Orthodox priest, they may receive Communion.

No impression should ever be given during the ceremony that they are, in fact, Catholic or that they are, for example, making their **First** Communion.

***Children of the Church of Ireland, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran Churches, etc.*** Such children may not receive the Eucharist at a Catholic celebration. Their presence during such a celebration should, nonetheless, be welcomed and acknowledged.

At such times, some families who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church might desire – for the sake of full participation – to have their children become Catholic. While the Catholic Church always welcomes those who freely embrace the Catholic faith, a reception in such circumstances could be seen as opportunistic and as proselytism. It is not to be encouraged.

## **SECTION 3**

### **Marriage**

#### ***3.1 Booking the Church***

When a couple approaches seeking to book the Church for their wedding it is important that they understand the booking is provisional until their freedom to marry in the Catholic Church is verified through completion of the first sections of the pre-nuptial enquiry form. Couples should be assured that 'provisional' does not mean others could be given that date and time in the meantime. (cf. APPENDIX 5: *Form for Provisional Booking of Church*).

#### ***3.2 Required Notice for Marriage***

Couples are required to give the Church as well as the State a minimum of three months notice of their intention to marry. If, for a good reason, the couple is unable to give the required three months notice to the Church, a request for a dispensation should be made in writing by the couple to the Chancellery.

#### ***3.3 Who Prepares the Couple for Marriage?***

Ordinarily the local priest where the intending bride has domicile has overall responsibility for the couple's preparation for Marriage. Any exception to this should first be agreed with him. The intending groom's pre-nuptial enquiry form and relevant documentation should be completed by the local priest where he is domiciled and forwarded to the priest who has overall responsibility for the couple.

#### ***3.4 Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form***

The primary purpose of the pre-nuptial enquiry form is to record the results of the priest's pastoral preparation with the couple enquiring into their freedom, preparation and understanding of Marriage. The pre-nuptial enquiry form is a confidential document completed by the priest with each party individually and signed by them.

#### ***3.5 Marriage Preparation***

Couples must undertake some form of marriage preparation. This usually takes the form of a pre-marriage course. The principle provider of pre-marriage courses for the Diocese of Dublin is ACCORD. Other possible forms of marriage preparation include, arranging for the couple to do preparation with a suitably prepared couple in the parish, or preparation directly with the priest. It is the responsibility of the priest looking after the couple's preparation to ensure that some form of marriage preparation has taken place.

### **3.6 Documentary proof of Freedom to Marry**

Couples must establish their freedom to marry in a documentary way. This can take the form of one of the following:

- **Letters of Freedom** from all the places where the parties have had domicile since they were eighteen
- **Statement of Freedom to Marry** signed in the presence of their local priest, and witnessed by him, stating that, to the best of their knowledge, the person in question has never been married either civilly or religiously; (cf. APPENDIX 6: *Statement Concerning the Freedom to Marry of ...*)
- **A Sworn Affidavit** before a Commissioner for Oaths by each party attesting that they have never been married religiously or civilly in any jurisdiction.

### **3.7 Solemnisers**

On the 5 November, 2007 new civil requirements were introduced with regard to the Registration of Marriages in Ireland. In order for a priest to celebrate a Marriage recognised in Civil Law he must be registered by the local Bishop with the State, as a Solemniser.

- **Permanent Solemnisers:** priests with appointments in this diocese and retired priests of the diocese are on the list of Solemnisers sent to the Registrar General.
- **Temporary Solemnisers:** If a visiting or supply priest is to officiate at a Marriage and is not on the list of Solemnisers he will need to be registered as a Temporary Solemniser. A form for priests requesting that they be nominated as a Temporary Solemniser is available from the Chancellery (cf. APPENDIX 7: *Request to be Registered as a Temporary Solemniser* which should be completed by the priest and returned to the Chancellery together with the Testimonial Letter of the Diocese of Dublin completed by his Bishop or Provincial (cf. APPENDIX 8: *Testimonial Letter*). This form should be sent directly to the priest and not through the couple.

If a priest is not registered as a Solemniser he will not be able to celebrate the Marriage. You can check if a priest is on the list of Solemnisers by contacting the General Registrar's Office in Roscommon, Direct Dial: 090 6632900 or Local: 1890-252076.

### **3.8 Marriages of Couples who are Living Abroad**

When a couple living abroad are due to travel to Ireland to get married, the preparation and documentation for their Marriage is completed by the local priest where each of the parties lives. This completed documentation is then forwarded by the local priest to the local Bishop's office for onward transmission to the Chancellery, Archbishop's House. When the Chancellery confirms that everything is in order, the documentation is forwarded to the parish where the Marriage is due to take place.

### **3.9 Getting Married Abroad**

Couples living in the diocese who are marrying abroad must follow the same procedures as couples getting married within the diocese. When their preparation has concluded, the completed pre-nuptial enquiry forms, recently issued long form Baptism Certificates (i.e. within six months of the date of Marriage), proof of Confirmation, proof of freedom to marry and certification of marriage preparation undertaken, should be sent to the Chancellery. This documentation should also include the name and address of the Church where the Marriage is to take place, the name of the diocese and the name of the priest-celebrant of the Marriage. This documentation should be forwarded to the Chancellery at least two months before the scheduled date of the wedding (cf. APPENDIX 9: *Checklist*). When all is in order a Testimonial Letter will be added to the documentation and it will be forwarded to the Bishop's office of that diocese.

### **3.10 Wedding Planners**

The Chancellery deals directly with couples preparing for Marriage and not with wedding planners.

### **3.11 Place of Marriage**

The proper and ordinary place of the celebration of a Catholic Marriage is the parish Church of either party or with permission in any other suitable Church. Marriages may not take place in convent chapels or oratories.

### **3.12 Minimum Age for Marriage**

The minimum age for Marriage in the Catholic Church in Ireland is 18 years. (cf. *The Code of Canon Law*, can.1083 §1).

### **3.13 Marriage on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation**

The celebration of Marriage is not permitted on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation.

### **3.14 Permission for Mixed Marriage**

*(A Mixed Marriage is a Marriage between a Catholic and a baptised member of another Christian Church or Ecclesial Community)*

*A Catholic who wishes to marry a baptised member of another Christian Church or Ecclesial Community requires a Special Permission from the local Bishop (cf. The Code of Canon Law, can.1124).*

The Catholic party writes to the Bishop indicating his/her desire to marry a member of another Christian Church, gives their respective ages and a brief outline of the length of their relationship etc. He/she should also indicate the name of the Church where they hope to marry and the name of the priest helping them with their preparation. It is useful to include a daytime contact phone number. The receipt of this letter sets in motion a programme of pastoral concern aimed at assisting the couple in their preparation.

As is the case when Catholics marry each other, so with a Mixed Marriage, the Catholic party is asked to complete a pre-nuptial enquiry form. This entails

focusing on many of the moral obligations/responsibilities incumbent on all Catholics when marrying. Among these, two are of particular interest in this context, namely:

- Q.1** Are you resolved to remain steadfast in your Catholic faith and to practice it regularly?
- Q.2** Do you promise to do what you can, within the unity of your partnership, to have all the children of your Marriage baptised and brought up in the Catholic faith?

The Catholic's sincere and affirmative response to these and other questions is a declaration of their awareness and acceptance of their moral obligations/responsibilities. The Episcopal Conference permits these responses to be made either in writing or orally. No similar declaration is required of the other Christian party. However, they are to be made aware of the Catholic party's responsibilities. Moreover, "it is recognised that the other Christian party may well be conscious of like moral obligations which flow from their own baptismal commitment" (cf. *Ecumenical Directory*, 1993, n.150).

The other Christian party will be asked to provide proof of Baptism and freedom to marry. He/she will also be asked to complete relevant sections of a pre-nuptial enquiry form as Marriage among Christians has many common features e.g. exclusivity and permanence.

### ***3.15 Dispensation from Canonical Form***

*(When a Catholic wishes their Marriage to take place in the Church of the other Christian party)*

*All Catholics – even those marrying members of another Christian Church or Ecclesial Community – are obliged for validity to marry in the presence of a duly-delegated priest and two witnesses. This is known as the Canonical Form of Marriage. (cf. *The Code of Canon Law*, can.1108 §1).*

When there is a request for the Marriage to take place in the Church of the other Christian party a Dispensation from the Canonical Form is required in addition to the requirements already outlined for the permission to marry a member of another Christian in the Catholic Church.

A Dispensation from Canonical Form is normally granted when serious pastoral reasons warrant it. These pastoral reasons include "the maintaining of family harmony, obtaining parental consent to the Marriage, the recognition of the particular religious commitment of the other Christian partner, or of his/her blood relationship with a minister of another Church or Ecclesial Community" (cf. *Ecumenical Directory*, 1993, n.154). This dispensation allows the Marriage to validly take place in the Church of the other Christian party.

After the celebration of Christian Marriage with a Dispensation from Canonical Form, the Catholic is asked to inform the Chancellery, Archbishop's House of the

fact, so that the Marriage may be recorded in a Central Diocesan Marriage Register, in the Marriage Register where the Catholic party resided prior to the Marriage and also in his/her Baptismal Register.

### **3.16 Disparity of Cult Dispensation**

*(Marriage between a Catholic and a person who is unbaptised)*

*A Catholic wishing to marry a person who is unbaptised requires a Dispensation from the Impediment from Disparity of Cult (cf. The Code of Canon Law, can.1086 §2).*

The Catholic party writes to the Bishop indicating their desire to marry a unbaptised person, gives their respective ages and a brief outline of the length of the courtship etc. He/she should also indicate the name of the Church where they hope to marry and the name of the priest helping them with their preparations. It is useful to include a daytime contact phone number. The receipt of this letter sets in motion a programme of pastoral concern aimed at assisting the couple in their preparation.

When a Catholic marries an unbaptised person the Catholic party is asked to complete a pre-nuptial enquiry form – as in the case when Catholics marry each other. This entails focusing on many of the moral obligations/responsibilities incumbent on all Catholics when marrying. Among these, two are of particular interest in such a context, namely:

- Q.3** Are you resolved to remain steadfast in your Catholic faith and to practice it regularly?
- Q.4** Do you promise to do what you can, within the unity of your partnership, to have all the children of your Marriage baptised and brought up in the Catholic faith?

The Catholic's sincere and affirmative response to these and other questions is a declaration of their awareness and acceptance of their moral obligations/responsibilities. No similar declaration is required of the unbaptised party. They are to be made aware of the Catholic party's responsibilities.

The unbaptised party will be asked to provide proof of his or her freedom to marry. He/she will also be asked to complete relevant sections of a pre-nuptial enquiry form as Marriage has certain essential qualities.

### ***3.17 Request to Marry after an Annulment***

A person wanting to get married whose previous Marriage has been annulled must engage in a review process. The person whose Marriage was annulled should be referred to the Chancellery and **no date, even a provisional one,** should be set until this process has taken place.

### ***3.18 Lack of Canonical Form***

It is important to remember that Catholics who may have disregarded the requirement to marry according to the Canonical Form of Marriage, i.e. before a duly-delegated priest and two witnesses (cf. *The Code of Can Law*, can.1108 §1), and married - for example - in a registry office, may subsequently have had their Marriage convalidated in the Church. They should not automatically be regarded as free to marry. Such a Marriage must first be examined through a Chancellery process to ascertain the facts before a Declaration of Freedom can be made.

**No date, even provisional,** should be set until this process is complete and it is clear the person is free to marry in the Catholic Church.

## **SECTION 4**

### **General**

#### ***4.1 Visiting Clergy***

Clergy visiting family or on holidays should be asked for a current Letter of Good Standing, Testimonial Letter or Celebret. Clergy in good standing will rarely take offence at this request.

#### ***4.2 Catholic Funerals for other Christians***

The permission of the local Ordinary is required for such funerals. Such permission cannot be given if their own minister is available or if it is clear that the person would not have wished this to take place.

#### ***4.3 Legal Proceedings in Relation to the Parish***

Parish Priests and Moderators are the legal representatives of the parish. They need the Archbishop's permission if they wish to initiate or contest legal proceedings on behalf of the parish.

#### ***4.4 Use of Parish Churches***

1. ***Requests from other Christian Churches*** – other Christian Churches may request the use of a Catholic Church when, for example, one of its own Churches is undergoing repair or renovation. These requests, which require the permission of the Ordinary, will be sympathetically considered. These requests should be made to the Archbishop.
2. ***Filming in Churches*** – Requests for the use, externally or internally, of a Church for filming purposes can be made in consultation with, or by direct referral to, the Communications Office.

This is to assess the suitability of the project in the light of Christian sentiment.

Sacred vestments and vessels should not be used or loaned for any purpose other than sacred worship.

#### ***4.5 Parochial Registers***

The entries in all official parochial registers are strictly confidential. Accordingly, information contained in these registers may not be made available to any person or body who is not entitled by the law of the Church to receive such information.

The express permission of the Chancellery is required before any alteration or emendation may be made in an entry in any such parochial register.

## **APPENDICES**

(A4 size copies of these Forms can be obtained electronically or in hard copy format on request from the Chancellery)

**APPENDIX 1**  
**REQUEST FOR BAPTISM**

(Copy of Birth Certificate should accompany this Form)

Child's Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Christian Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place of Church marriage of parents: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

<p><u>Father</u></p> <p>Surname: _____</p> <p>Christian Name: _____</p> <p>Religion: † _____</p>
--

<p><u>Mother</u></p> <p>Maiden Name: _____</p> <p>Christian Name: _____</p> <p>Religion: † _____</p>
--

<p><u>Godfather*</u></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Is he over sixteen years? _____</p> <p>Is he a baptised Catholic who has been confirmed? _____</p>
---

<p><u>Godmother*</u></p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Is she over sixteen years? _____</p> <p>Is she a baptised Catholic who has been confirmed? _____</p>
---

We request Baptism for our child: \*\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Father

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Mother

---

† One of the parents must be a Catholic  
\* Minimum requirement is one Godparent. If there are two they must be male and female and must both be practising Catholics.  
\*\* Signature of mother alone is sufficient where she is unmarried, is sole guardian and is not requesting that the father's name be entered.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **Requirements for the Office of Godparent (Sponsor)**

A person must:

1. be appointed by the candidate for Baptism, or by the parents or whoever stands in their place, or failing these, by the parish priest or the minister; to be appointed the person must be suitable for this role and have the intention of fulfilling it.
2. be not less than sixteen years of age, unless a different age has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, or unless the parish priest or the minister considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made.
3. be a catholic who has been confirmed and has received the blessed Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken;
4. not labour under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared.
5. not be either the father or the mother of the person to be baptised.

A baptised person who belongs to a non-catholic ecclesial community may be admitted only in company with a catholic sponsor, and then simply as a witness to the Baptism.

(Canon 874)

### APPENDIX 3

#### **Requirements for the Secure Maintaining of Duplicate Electronic Sacramental Records in Parishes**

- The handwritten registers are considered the only authentic copy of sacramental records. The manual register must always be consulted when issuing a certificate.
- The handwritten registers must be maintained and the registers themselves are never to be destroyed or discarded.
- Sacramental records nonetheless may be duplicated on secure computers with no public access.
- These electronic files should be made secure through the use of password protection and encrypted to ensure that only those who should have access can do so, i.e. the parish priest and those whom he has authorised to assist him in the work of maintaining and up-dating sacramental records such as, parish secretary or sacristan.
- The inputting of data into the computer should only be carried out by those authorised by the parish priest.
- Amendments and alterations to the electronic files should simply reflect alterations which have already been made in the handwritten registers. Any amendment to a register needs the prior written permission and authorisation from the Chancellery.
- No copying of electronic files should be made beyond the back-up copy which should always be kept in a very secure place.
- The same confidentiality applies to both the handwritten registers and to the electronic records.

## **Software Programme Requirements for Electronic Sacramental Records**

- A computer software programme with a suitable format is always required that replicates all the details of the manual parish sacramental registers.
- The programme used must allow for files to be saved in a format that will be readable into the future.
- The programme should be password protected to ensure that only authorised persons can use it.
- The database needs to be encrypted in the interest of security.
- The electronic record should replicate all sections of the manual sacramental registers.
- If a detail (such as a name or date of birth) is corrected or amended in the manual register this must be replicated in the electronic register. The correction/amendment in the electronic record must not delete the original entry but must add the correction and include the annotation of who authorised this change. However in the printing of a certificate such as a Baptism Certificate it is only the corrected/amended version that should appear without the note of authorisation.
- As well as the usual annotations of Confirmation and Marriage the programme also needs to be able to record details such as ordination, religious profession or annulment of a Marriage. It must then be possible for these to appear on the printed certificate such as a Baptism Certificate.
- Annotations must be made explicit in the printing of certificates. If there is no record of Marriage or Confirmation the printed cert needs to say this i.e. Marriage no record, Confirmation no record.
- Each DVD supplied to the parish must also be supplied to the Chancellery Office, Archbishop's House, and must be copyright protected with given password.

***Scanning of Parish Registers***  
***Record and Agreement regarding maintenance and management***

Between \_\_\_\_\_ parish and \_\_\_\_\_ Provider

1) The following are the documents/registers to be scanned/microfilmed

2) Record here any visible damage to each document/register separately

3) The Provider undertakes to transport and maintain these documents/registers to the highest professional standards off-site.

- a. Data Protection requirements will be adhered to.
- b. Access to the documents/registers on behalf of an authorised parish representative is available during normal working hours.
- c. The return of the documents/registers can be requested at any time.

These documents/registers are due to be returned the week of  
.....the work having been completed.

- The final digital product shall become the property of this parish. In case of any doubt, no right to copyright of the data (including ownership) arising from the work contracted by the parish shall rest with the Provider.
- A certificate will be issued upon the secure destruction of data from the servers and systems of the company undertaking this work. Upon completion of the project and successful handover of data, no files relating to the parish shall be present with the company digitising the records.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorised Parish Representative

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorised Provider Representative

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 4

### Eastern Catholics and Eastern (Orthodox) Christians

***Eastern Catholics*** – An infant or an adult baptised as a Catholic in an Eastern Church in communion with the Pope, at the time of initiation, receives Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist. These Eastern Churches have their own liturgical rites different from our Roman or Latin Rites. They have a right and duty to retain these and their own specific identity as Catholics. Even if a child of Eastern Catholics is baptised by a Roman Catholic priest, the child remains a member of the Eastern Church of his/her parents. He/she does not become a Roman Catholic. As Catholics, nonetheless, they have full rights to Sacraments, such as Penance, Eucharist and Anointing of the Sick within Roman Catholic Churches. Such reception does not bring with it membership of the Roman Catholic Church. Greek Catholics and Syro-Malabar Catholics would be examples of these Eastern Churches present in Dublin.

***Eastern (Orthodox) Christians:*** These are Christians of Eastern Churches not in full communion with the Pope. At the time of initiation, be they infant or adult, they receive Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist. Access to the Sacraments in the Catholic Church is generally not condoned by the authorities of the Orthodox Churches. However, they may be granted access if they are properly disposed and spontaneously ask for them. (If an Orthodox Christian ever decides to become a Catholic, he/she will not become a Roman Catholic, even if received by a Roman Catholic priest in a Roman Catholic Diocese, but an Eastern Catholic belonging to the Eastern Catholic Church that most resembles the Orthodox Church to which he/she belonged.)

**APPENDIX 5  
FORM FOR PROVISIONAL BOOKING OF CHURCH  
PARISH OF**

The Wedding of \_\_\_\_\_ **Bride**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Address**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone/Mobile No.**

**and**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Groom**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **Address**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone/Mobile No.**

in the Church of \_\_\_\_\_

is provisionally booked for \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time**

We congratulate you both on this important occasion in your lives and we hope to give you every assistance in your preparation for the celebration of your Marriage.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Signature of Priest**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date**

***PLEASE NOTE***

Every booking is taken on the understanding that both parties are free to marry in the Catholic Church and that no impediment to the Marriage exists. The celebration of the Marriage depends on this being the case. Early clarification of this point is essential. While booking is provisional the date and time will be held for the couple. When the freedom of both parties is established, the booking can be confirmed.

**APPENDIX 6**

**ARCHDIOCESE OF DUBLIN**  
**Statement Concerning the Freedom to Marry**  
**of**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of other party:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Marriage:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place of Marriage:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Please state your relationship to the Bride/Groom\*: \_\_\_\_\_

2. To the best of your knowledge has he/she ever been married either religiously or civilly before? \_\_\_\_\_  
(yes/no)

If yes, please give details: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you know of any reason which could prevent this Marriage from taking place? \_\_\_\_\_  
(yes/no)

If yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of person making statement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**SEAL**

Priest-Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Place: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*To be completed by Father, Mother, Brother, or Sister of the party in the presence of a priest who will witness his/her signature*

**APPENDIX 7**

**Request to be Registered as a Temporary Solemniser**

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

Christian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Ordination: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Diocese/Religious Congregation etc: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reasons for request: Please indicate and give details

Particular Marriage:

Parish Supply:

<p>Wedding Details:</p> <p>_____ <i>Bride</i></p> <p>&amp;</p> <p>_____ <i>Groom</i></p> <p>Date of Wedding: _____</p> <p>Name and address of Church:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
--

<p>Supply Details:</p> <p>Name of Parish:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Length of Stay:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
--

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Proposed Solemniser

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX 8**

**ARCHDIOCESE OF DUBLIN**  
**Testimonial Letter**  
**(For Temporary Civil Solemniser Status Only)**

Surname (full) of applying priest/religious \_\_\_\_\_

First name(s) (official) \_\_\_\_\_

Name of his Diocese/Religious Congregation \_\_\_\_\_

---

1. The above-named priest has requested that he be registered as a Temporary Civil Solemniser in order to officiate at a wedding in this Diocese.  
Are you supportive of this request? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. If he is a member of an Institute of Consecrated Life or Apostolic Life, is he currently exclaustrated?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

3. Has he ever petitioned the Holy See for secularisation *praevis experimento* in accord with canon 693? If yes, give details.  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you any specific concerns about the performance of his ministry?  
If yes, give details. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Have there ever been accusations or charges against him for sexual misconduct?  
If yes, give details. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Have there ever been accusations against him concerning any form of impropriety towards children or young people?  
If yes, give details. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

7. Has he ever shown any behaviour that would indicate that he is a risk to children or young people?  
If yes, give details. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
8. Has he ever been arrested or had a criminal charge made against him?  
If yes, give details. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are there any other reasons why you would not recommend him as a celebrant of a Marriage in this Archdiocese?  
If yes, please give reasons. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
10. Any additional comments?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

I testify that the above-named priest/religious is a priest/religious in good standing in his Diocese/Religious Congregation and therefore I recommend him for registration as a Temporary Civil Solemniser so that he can officiate at a Marriage in the Archdiocese of Dublin.

*Seal*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print) (Bishop/Provincial)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 9

### MARRIAGES ABROAD CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS

- i) **A Pre-Nuptial Enquiry Form for both parties**  
a pre-nuptial enquiry form appropriately completed, is also required for all who are not Catholic
- ii) **Baptismal Certificate** – a full certificate issued within six months of the date of Marriage is required for Catholics. For all other Christians a record of Baptism suffices;
- iii) **Confirmation Certificate** – for Catholics, if Confirmation is not noted on the Baptismal Certificate, a separate Confirmation Certificate is required;
- iv) **Documentary proof of Freedom to Marry for both parties** – This can be either in the form of:  
**Letters of Freedom** from all the places where the parties have had domicile since they were eighteen;  
**Statement of Freedom to Marry** witnessed by local priest stating that, to the best of their knowledge, the person in question has never been married either civilly or religiously;  
**A Sworn Affidavit** before a Commissioner for Oaths attesting that they have never been married religiously or civilly in any jurisdiction.
- v) **Certificate or statement regarding the form of marriage preparation undertaken** (even if only attended to by the priest)
- vi) The following should be clearly printed:
  - a) name of **priest officiating** at the wedding;
  - b) name of **parish** where the wedding is to take place;
  - c) name of the **diocese** in which the parish is located;

*It is useful if a daytime or mobile phone number for the couple is included with the papers*

In order that the papers can be processed and forwarded to the Bishop's Office of the appropriate diocese - (before being passed on to the parish where the wedding is to take place) - they should be **sent to the Chancellery at least two months before the date of the wedding.**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

**IF EITHER PARTY HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY MARRIED NO MARRIAGE ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE UNTIL PERMISSION (FOR A RE-MARRIAGE) HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE CHANCELLERY.**