



DIOCESE  
of  
LAFAYETTE-IN-INDIANA

*Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana*

*CIC Book IV, Part I — The Sacraments*

# **Sacramental Records Policy**

Document ID: 2017-2

Version: 1.1

Effective Date: 25 March 2019

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017-2

## Document Information

<b>Document Owner</b>	Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana
<b>Document Location</b>	Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana
<b>Associated Documents</b>	None

## Review for Approval

As author, reviewer, or subject matter expert, my signature indicates that this document accurately and completely reflects the essential elements of this policy statement based upon the Diocesan desire to guide and direct appropriate and prudent keeping of Sacramental records.

Role	Name	Department	Signature	Date
Author	Rev. Andrew R. DeKeyser	Bishop's Office		
Peritus	Rev. Msgr. Robert L. Sell, III	Bishop's Office		
Chancellor	Very Rev. Theodore C. Dudzinski	Bishop's Office		

## Document History

Version	Changes	Effective Date
1.0	New Document	15 April 2017
1.1	First Communion and Catechumen Registers required	25 March 2019

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>SACRAMENTAL RECORDS POLICY</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Ownership . . . . .	1
1.2	Delegation to Person in Charge . . . . .	1
1.3	Responsibilities of Person in Charge . . . . .	1
1.4	Delegated Responsibility . . . . .	2
1.5	Inspection and Certification of Registers . . . . .	2
1.6	Non-Transferable . . . . .	2
1.7	Institutions . . . . .	3
<b>2</b>	<b>CREATION OF SACRAMENTAL REGISTERS AND THEIR ANNOTATION</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1	Registers in General . . . . .	3
2.1.1	Required Registers . . . . .	3
2.1.2	Permanent Bindings, Paper, Ink . . . . .	3
2.1.3	Accuracy and Legibility . . . . .	3
2.1.4	Corrections, Additions, Deletions . . . . .	4
2.2	Baptismal Registers . . . . .	4
2.2.1	In General . . . . .	4
2.2.2	Routine Notations . . . . .	5
2.2.3	Professions of Faith . . . . .	5
2.2.4	Illegitimacy (can. 877 §2) . . . . .	6
2.2.5	Adoption (can. 535 §2 and 877 §3 and USCCB Norms on can 877 §3) . . . . .	6
2.2.6	Supporting Documents . . . . .	7

2.2.7	Outside Clergy or People . . . . .	8
2.3	Confirmation Registers . . . . .	8
2.4	Marriage Registers . . . . .	8
2.4.1	Notations . . . . .	9
2.5	Death Registers (can. 1182) . . . . .	10
2.6	First Communion Registers . . . . .	10
2.7	Special Circumstances & Celebrations Outside a Parish Church Building . . . . .	10
2.8	Sacramental Certificates (can. 535 §3) . . . . .	11
<b>3</b>	<b>PRESERVATION OF SACRAMENTAL RECORDS</b>	<b>11</b>
3.1	Storage . . . . .	11
3.2	Restoration . . . . .	11
3.3	Copies . . . . .	12
3.4	Transfer to Diocesan Archives or Closed Parishes . . . . .	12
<b>4</b>	<b>ACCESS TO SACRAMENTAL RECORDS</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1	Sacramental Records in General . . . . .	12
4.1.1	Person Seeking His/Her Own Record . . . . .	13
4.1.2	Scholarly Research . . . . .	13
4.1.3	When Records Become Burdensome . . . . .	13
4.2	All Sacramental Records . . . . .	13
4.2.1	Fees . . . . .	13
4.2.2	Government Requests . . . . .	14
4.2.3	Subpoenas . . . . .	14
4.2.4	Certificates Issued Directly to Parish or Church Entities or to Next of Kin . . . . .	14

# **SACRAMENTAL RECORDS**

## **Introduction**

The parochial sacramental registers of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and Death are some of the most important sources for understanding the historical identity of the Diocese. These books are an invaluable record of the people who made up a parish, and collectively the Diocese, at a given time. They are of vital interest not only to the Church, but also to countless individuals and even whole communities. Their value is acknowledged in both civil and Canon Law. The following policy and attendant procedures are based partly on the provisions of Canon Law and Diocesan policies, and partly on questions that have been addressed nationally and locally concerning the creation, preservation, and use of sacramental records. This policy is meant to provide some practical norms for parish use and is not intended as a complete statement of all the issues raised in Canon Law, civil law, and archival practice.

## **1 SACRAMENTAL RECORDS POLICY**

### **1.1 Ownership**

The ownership of all Roman Catholic Sacramental Records for parishes, schools and institutions under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Lafayette-in-Indiana rests with the Diocese (can. 392).

### **1.2 Delegation to Person in Charge**

The Bishop delegates to the “person in charge” (whether pastor, chaplain, or administrator), the responsibility for ensuring that the sacramental records of the Diocese are kept in accordance with these policies, Canon Law, and attendant procedures (can. 535).

### **1.3 Responsibilities of Person in Charge**

It is the responsibility of the “person in charge” to ensure the following:

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

1. that sacramental records are properly maintained and kept in accordance with established Diocesan procedures and those of Canon Law (can. 535).
2. that sacramental records are clearly and promptly annotated (can. 535 §1).
3. that sacramental records are properly preserved (can. 535 §1 & §4).
4. that access to sacramental records is in compliance with accepted Diocesan procedures.

#### **1.4 Delegated Responsibility**

The person in charge may choose to delegate the day-to-day administration of these records to a parish secretary or another responsible person. Only the person in charge, or their chosen delegate, may access or view the sacramental registers. The registers may not be accessed or viewed by other individuals (can. 535 §4).

#### **1.5 Inspection and Certification of Registers**

If the person in charge does not personally make entries in the registers, the records shall at least be certified by his/her signature and dated at the foot of each page. All parish sacramental registers shall be inspected annually by the area Dean and certified as inspected with the appropriate *visum*, signature, and date of inspection. A Parochial Visitation Form (provided by the Chancellor), documenting the inspection shall be sent to the Chancery by the appropriate Dean. Sacramental Registers for the parishes of the Deans shall be inspected by the Chancellor or his delegate.

#### **1.6 Non-Transferable**

Under no pretext may anyone take with him/her any parochial books, including sacramental registers, when he/she leaves the parish, school, or institution or is transferred to another assignment. Outside of the legitimate access described in section 4. *Access to Sacramental Records*, neither the originals nor any copies of sacramental registers, nor the data they contain, can ever be given, loaned, or sold to any person or institution without the written permission of the Chancellor of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana. This permission, if granted, shall specify the conditions for use, duplication and/or publication.

## **1.7 Institutions**

The Sacraments of baptism and marriage conferred in Catholic or non-Catholic institutions should be recorded in the sacramental registers of the territorial parish in which the hospital/institution is located. These sacraments shall not be recorded in the parish to which the priest is assigned if it is not the territorial parish.

## **2 CREATION OF SACRAMENTAL REGISTERS AND THEIR ANNOTATION**

### **2.1 Registers in General**

#### **2.1.1 Required Registers**

Each parish shall keep the following sacramental registers: Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, and Death (can. 535 §1, 895). Additionally a parish Register of Catechumens is required (R.C.I.A 46). The Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana also requires each parish to have a First Communion Register. Each sacramental register shall include the name of the parish, the comprehensive dates for the register, and shall be indexed. Although computer storage may supplement the registers for reference or statistical purposes, it is not an acceptable replacement for the books themselves.

#### **2.1.2 Permanent Bindings, Paper, Ink**

Since the registers are meant for permanent preservation, the bindings and paper shall be of a quality that is considered permanent, durable, and acid-free (i.e., non-yellowing). The ink that is used shall also be of a permanent quality. Only black or blue ink shall be used. The best types of inks are those made for art work or India inks (usually found in cartridges). A black or blue ball-point pen is acceptable. Felt-tip pens and pencils are not acceptable.

#### **2.1.3 Accuracy and Legibility**

Since the registers are kept for future reference as legal proof (canonical and civil) of church events, age, and/or nationality status, it is necessary that the entries be made promptly, accurately, and legibly. For this reason, entries, except for signatures, shall be printed rather than written out

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

in cursive. An inaccurate or illegible record is a great future disservice to the persons involved and to their families.

#### **2.1.4 Corrections, Additions, Deletions**

One of the tests for the validity of a record as legal proof is whether it has been officially kept and whether there have been any alterations. For this reason, the proper way to correct a factual error (e.g. a name or date) is to add a notation and not to erase or cross out what someone claims is incorrect. The notation must be based on some written proof of error (this proof should be identified in the notation area). A photocopy should be made of the proof and placed in a permanent folder. This folder, if used, is to be maintained by the parish, school, or institution for the documentary proof used to change the original entry or to add a missed entry. This folder shall not include regular notations (e.g. Declarations of Nullity and notification of sacraments). In case of a technical or incidental error (i.e. spelling, date out of sequence, etc.) which is obvious to the “person in charge” once it is pointed out, a change in the original entry may be made without the need for the notation or proof (can. 876). In cases of doubt, the Chancellor shall be consulted.

## **2.2 Baptismal Registers**

### **2.2.1 In General**

1. The baptismal register shall record the following information for each baptism (can. 877 §1):
  - (a) the name, birth date, and place of birth of the baptized.
  - (b) the name of the minister of the sacrament.
  - (c) the names of the parents (including mother’s maiden name).
  - (d) the names of the sponsor(s).
  - (e) the names of the witness(es).
  - (f) the date of the conferred baptism.
2. If the sex of the person receiving baptism is recorded, it should be the birth sex of that person.
3. When the parent(s) present a child for baptism, if they are unknown in the parish, a birth certificate must be presented by the parent(s) in order for the child to be baptized. The information recorded in the baptism registers (birth date, birth place, and parent(s)’ name(s)) must agree with the birth certificate. (can. 877)
4. Canon Law requires every person to be baptized with a sponsor, insofar as it is possible (can. 872). Canon Law also requires that there be only one male and one female sponsor



Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

(can. 873). Additional honorary sponsors may be appointed by the parent(s) but should not be recorded in the sacramental register (can. 872–873).

### **2.2.2 Routine Notations**

The baptismal register serves as the “master record” for a person’s membership in the Church (can. 535 §2). Notations concerning other sacraments received later in life are to be entered there, e.g.:

1. Confirmation.
2. Marriage(s) (including convalidations).
3. reception of Holy Orders.
4. perpetual profession in religious institute.
5. change of rite.

Notations of Declaration of Nullity (and prohibitions on future marriages), laicization, and dispensation from vows shall also be entered when requested officially by the appropriate authorities.

### **2.2.3 Professions of Faith**

The names of persons who are baptized Christians and who enter into full communion with the Catholic Church by means of a profession of faith shall be recorded in the parish baptismal register under the date of profession, together with the date and place of baptism of the party, and all other information as required in section 2.2.1 *Baptismal Registers In General*, above. If the person is already in a valid marriage, proof of that marriage should be obtained (either from the Catholic parish of the marriage or from the civil government) and the marriage should be recorded in the margin of the baptismal register as in Section 2.2.2 *Baptismal Registers, Routine Notations*. (N.B. The names of catechumens shall be recorded in the parish register of catechumens, after the “Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens,” along with the names of the sponsors and the minister and the date and place of the celebration (R.C.I.A. 46). Once the elect receive the Sacraments of Initiation, their name shall be recorded in the baptismal register as set forth in section 2.2.1 *Baptismal Registers In General*, above, and notations shall be recorded in the Confirmation register.)

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

#### **2.2.4 Illegitimacy (can. 877 §2)**

If a child is born of an unmarried mother, the name of the mother is to be inserted in the baptismal register if there is public proof of her maternity (i.e., a civil birth record) or if she declares this either in writing by a notarized letter/statement or before two witnesses. Likewise, the name of the father shall be inserted in the register if his paternity has been proven either by some public document or by his own declaration before the pastor and two witnesses. If these conditions are not met, the child is to be recorded as being of “Unknown Mother” or “Unknown Father,” in Latin “mater ignota” or “pater ignotus.” (can. 877 §2) In such cases, it is not permitted to make an annotation that says “Illegitimate.” If the father admits paternity after the baptism, he must present a civil document to that effect before his name may be inserted in the register.

#### **2.2.5 Adoption (can. 535 §2 and 877 §3 and USCCB Norms on can 877 §3)**

Baptism shall be postponed until after the child has been placed with the adopting parent(s), except in extraordinary circumstances such as a serious threat of imminent death. This is with the understanding that the postponement will be for a relatively short time only. Baptisms of children legally in the care of same sex partners shall be handled in the same manner.

#### **Children baptized *after* their adoption is finalized.**

The following information shall be entered in the register:

- the Christian name(s) (i.e. the first name and if one is given, the middle name) of the child as designated by the adopting parent(s);
- the names of the adopting parent(s);
- the date and place of birth;
- the names of the sponsors selected by the adopting parent(s);
- the place and date of the baptism;
- the name of the minister performing the baptism; and
- the fact of adoption but not the names of the natural parents.

Baptismal certificates for adopted children issued by the parish will be no different than the baptismal certificates issued for children of natural (non-adopting) parents. The notation of adoption in the baptismal register shall *not* be entered on any baptismal certificate.

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

**Children baptized *before* their adoption was finalized.**

The following notations shall be added to the baptismal registers, but only after the adoption has been finalized and with due regard for the civil law of the jurisdiction:

- parentheses shall be placed around the names of the natural parents.
- in the notation column, the names of the adopting parent(s) shall then be inserted.
- the child's former name shall also be parenthesized and the new name added.
- parentheses shall be placed around the names of the original godparent(s)/sponsor(s).
- the name(s) of the new sponsor(s) shall be inserted.
- a notation, shall be made that the child was adopted, together with the name of the court or agency, date of adoption, and case number. The parents must submit adoption papers along with the birth certificate.

Baptismal certificates issued by the parish for these individuals shall give only the name(s) of the adopting parent(s), the child's new legal name, the date and place of baptism, and the name of the priest/deacon who conferred the sacrament. *The name(s) of the sponsor(s) shall not be given and the notation of adoption in the register shall not be entered on any baptismal certificate.*

For future ease in reference after the adoption has been finalized, a baptismal entry for the adoptive child can be made in the baptismal register of the adoptive parents' parish, citing the date and location of the original baptismal record, and listing only the names of the adoptive parents and the date and place of birth. Only the original church of baptism may issue the baptism certificate and record notations. *Parish personnel having valid access to parish registers have an obligation not to disclose to any person any information that would identify or reveal, directly or indirectly, the fact that a person was adopted.*

### **2.2.6 Supporting Documents**

Certain notations in the baptismal register are accompanied by legal documents that serve as evidence and should also be preserved. Examples include adoption documents proving paternity; affidavits concerning previously omitted baptisms; and notarized court and governmental documents concerning name and/or date changes. Newly received items shall never be glued, stapled or paper clipped into the actual register. After the appropriate notations are made, these items shall be kept in a separate file corresponding to each register and page number. The file shall be referred to in the notation. The file shall be kept permanently.

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

### 2.2.7 Outside Clergy or People

When a priest or deacon baptizes in a parish church to which he is not assigned, the pastor or person in charge is responsible for the filing of the necessary records. The baptism shall be recorded in the parish where the baptism took place. If the family is registered in a parish other than the one in which the baptism took place, the baptism is to be recorded **in the parish where the sacrament was celebrated**. Only the parish of baptism may issue certificates and record notations.

## 2.3 Confirmation Registers

The following information is to be noted in the Confirmation Register of the parish (can. 895):

- The names of the confirmed.
- the parents.
- the sponsors.
- the minister.
- the place and date of the conferral of confirmation.
- the place and date of baptism.

A notice must also be sent to the church of baptism indicating the name of the recipient; date and place of confirmation; and the name of conferring bishop/dean/pastor so that a notation may be made in the baptismal register.

## 2.4 Marriage Registers

All marriages (including marriages convalidated) are to be entered in the marriage register. The following items are to be noted (can. 1121):

- the names of the spouses.
- the priest or deacon who assisted.
- the names of the two witnesses.
- the names of the parents of each spouse.

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

- the place and date of the marriage celebration.
- any pertinent notation (e.g., date and place of baptism).

**Convalidation (can. 1156–1160)** In the case of a convalidation, a recent copy (i.e. issued within the last six months) of the civil marriage license is needed. The word convalidation should be noted in the notation section. A note should be made in the baptismal records of each party when the marriage is convalidated. The date of the marriage is the date of the renewal of consent (can. 1157).

**Radical Sanation (can. 1161–1165)** In the case of radical sanation, a recent copy of the civil marriage license is needed. The marriage register shall list the date when the marriage became valid and the date radical sanation was granted, with a notation indicating that sanation was granted by the Diocese or by the Holy See. Radical sanations issued by the Diocese are issued by the Office of the Vicar General. A note should be made in the baptismal records of each party when radical sanation is granted. The date of the marriage is the date of the original ceremony (can. 1161 §2), unless the decree of sanation specifies otherwise (e.g. due to can. 1162 §2 or 1163 §2). It is also necessary to retain the marriage preparation packet permanently in the parish marriage case files.

### 2.4.1 Notations

The following notations are to be entered in the marriage record:

- all permissions or dispensations.
- delegations to assist at weddings.
- decrees of dissolution or declarations of nullity for previous marriage(s).
- any restrictions on future marriages.

Whenever a rescript is involved, the name of the diocese, congregation, or tribunal, etc., which issues the rescript shall be noted, together with the date and the protocol number if one is provided. (For dispensations from canonical form, see section 2.7, below.) The pastor of the parish in which the marriage has taken place must forward this information as soon as possible to the pastor of the parish where each party was baptized (can. 1122).

## 2.5 Death Registers (can. 1182)

A bound register shall be used as noted in sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 above. Burial permit books do not satisfy the conditions of a permanent register. The registers shall be chronologically arranged by date of parishioner death. It may include the date of anointing and the date and place of interment/cremation. Additional information may include name of funeral home, next of kin, and cause of death (if known).

## 2.6 First Communion Registers

These registers shall include the names of the first communicant and parents as found on the baptismal certificate, the place and date of baptism, and the date of reception of the sacrament.

## 2.7 Special Circumstances & Celebrations Outside a Parish Church Building

When sacraments are administered in places other than a parish church building, in accordance with Diocesan norms, it is important that the records not be “lost” in an unexpected place and that they be retrievable for future reference:

**Baptism** Baptism shall be recorded at the parish whose territory encompasses the location at which the sacrament was celebrated.

**Marriage** When the wedding takes place according to canonical form, (can. 1108ff.) (i.e. before a priest or deacon and two witnesses, with all necessary dispensations, etc.) the sacramental records shall be entered and kept at the territorial parish within the boundaries of which the wedding was celebrated.

In the case of a wedding celebrated with a **dispensation from canonical form**, (can. 1121 §3) (i.e. a marriage celebrated in a sacred place other than a parish, such as in a Protestant church, a synagogue, or a mosque) the marriage shall be recorded in two places. (can. 1121–1123): (1) in the parish of the Catholic party whose pastor prepared the couple for marriage and requested the dispensation (or at least gave permission for another priest to do so). The marriage preparation packet shall also be stored at this parish; and (2) in the Chancery of the diocese which granted the dispensation from canonical form. The priest who requested the dispensation is responsible for sending the usual notification of marriage to the parish of baptism of the Catholic party. He is also

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

responsible for notifying the Chancery which granted the dispensation from canonical form *if the marriage was not celebrated*.

**Death** If, as a clergyman, a priest is called upon to preside at a non-Catholic funeral service and/or burial, an entry can be made in the parish’s death records together with a notation concerning the religion of the deceased and the services which were provided. All Catholic funeral liturgies, even if celebrated outside the church building, shall be entered in the parish death records.

## **2.8 Sacramental Certificates (can. 535 §3)**

As an authenticated (i.e., signed and sealed) transcript of the original record, every certificate shall be accurate, legible (preferably printed) and complete (including all notations except in cases of adoption as indicated above in section 2.2.5 *Baptismal Registers: Adoption*. The absence of information to fit an item on the printed form shall be indicated by a line or the words “none” or “no notation” or “not given,” rather than by leaving the space blank. It is also possible to issue a signed and sealed certificate without adding the notations. Certificates of this kind must be clearly marked with the words “FOR NON-SACRAMENTAL PURPOSES” since they are not sufficient to certify the canonical status of an individual.

## **3 PRESERVATION OF SACRAMENTAL RECORDS**

### **3.1 Storage**

Sacramental registers are to be kept in a secure place (e.g., the fire-proof parish safe or a fire-proof, lockable file cabinet) as well as stored and handled in an environment that ensures their preservation (can. 535 §1). Ideally this means a constant cool temperature with a relative humidity of 40% to 50% and no prolonged exposure to sunlight or artificial light. While most parish offices cannot fulfill such precise requirements, steps can always be taken to avoid high temperatures, dampness, and direct sunlight.

### **3.2 Restoration**

Registers that have been worn out by use and age can be rebound and restored, provided this work is done according to archival requirements. Rebinding that destroys any data or renders any part of

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

the records unusable is not acceptable. For these reasons, the Chancellor shall be consulted before any rebinding or restoration work is undertaken.

### 3.3 Copies

Sacramental registers can be protected from loss due to fire, age, or heavy use by making duplicate copies in any one of several ways: transcripts, microfilm, and digital images. **Under no circumstances, however, shall the original register be discarded.** The same restrictions of access apply to copies as to original records. (see section 4. *Access to Sacramental Records*, below). As with original records, no copies of sacramental records or the data they contain, whether on microfilm, digital images, or other form, may ever be given, loaned, or sold to any person or institution without the written permission of the Bishop, except for the legitimate access described in section 4, below. Permission so granted shall specify the condition for use, duplication, and publication.

### 3.4 Transfer to Diocesan Archives or Closed Parishes

The ordinary repository for sacramental registers is the parish that created them. In the event that a parish or institution does not have the facilities or the means to preserve their older books or to handle the volume of research requests, the Chancery shall be contacted for a possible transfer of the registers to the Chancery. In the event that a parish is closed, the registers and all other parochial records shall be surveyed by the Chancellor or his designated representative to determine appropriate retention periods. Sacramental registers shall be transferred, after inventory by the Dean, to the parish which assumes parochial responsibility for the majority of the closed parish's territory. (The Chancellor shall designate which parish assumes parochial responsibility.) The registers shall remain in the parish that assumes parochial responsibility.

## 4 ACCESS TO SACRAMENTAL RECORDS

### 4.1 Sacramental Records in General

These records are not open to examination.



Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

#### **4.1.1 Person Seeking His/Her Own Record**

If a person is seeking his/her own record or has a legitimate reason to request another family member's records, the pastor or authorized parish personnel shall examine the registers and issue the required information either directly or by mail. If the requester is not known to parish personnel, a signed request with proof of identification (picture ID) is required. If the request is in writing it must be signed and include the name of parents, date of birth, and other pertinent information so that there is no doubt that the person requesting the information is entitled to receive it. Genealogical research is only permitted in records prior to December 31, 1925. Records after that date may be accessed only by the person in the record or their next of kin. Next of kin must provide notarized copies of death certificate(s) and birth certificate(s) linking them directly to the person/people in the record. These requests must also include an approximate date of the sacrament as neither the Chancery nor parishes have the resources to do extensive research. Death records from the parishes may be open for research on the premises of the parish at the discretion of the pastor.

#### **4.1.2 Scholarly Research**

The use of sacramental records for scholarly research may only be done with the written permission of the Chancellor.

#### **4.1.3 When Records Become Burdensome**

If because of the age and value of the parish records, the demands of researchers, or if the proper care of the records becomes burdensome, the pastor should contact the Chancellor for a possible transfer of the registers to the Diocesan Archives where they may be more safely preserved and more easily administered.

### **4.2 All Sacramental Records**

#### **4.2.1 Fees**

Parishes should not charge any fees for providing information from sacramental registers.

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017–2

#### **4.2.2 Government Requests**

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

#### **4.2.3 Subpoenas**

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

#### **4.2.4 Certificates Issued Directly to Parish or Church Entities or to Next of Kin**

Certificates issued directly to a parish or other church entity for the purposes of canonical investigation (e.g. pre-nuptial preparation, tribunal, etc.) shall be clearly marked “For Canonical Investigation Only” with red ink. Certificates issued to a next of kin following the policy stated in section 4.1.1 must be clearly marked “For Genealogical Purposes Only” with red ink. These genealogical certificates should not bear the seal of the parish, school, or institution unless it is needed for legal reasons. In these few cases, the requester must provide the legal document that requires the sealed certificate (e.g. a completed citizenship application, probate documents, etc.).

Diocese of Lafayette  
Sacramental Records Policy  
Diocesan Policy 2017-2

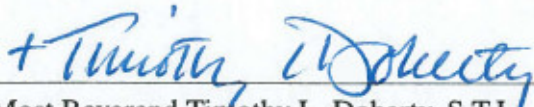
**Policy Approval**

By these directives I hereby affirm that the processes and policies adopted to manage the Sacramental Records within the parishes of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana are in accord with Catholic Moral Teachings and Principles.

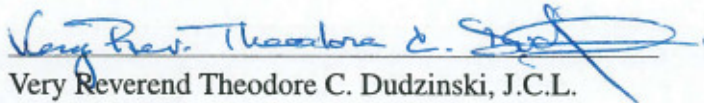
I also affirm that these directives have been adopted with the intention of being prudent and diligent caretakers of these same records, which further the ministry of the Church.

Effective April 15, 2017.

Given at the Chancery of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana on this fourteenth day of March in the year of Our Lord, 2017.



Most Reverend Timothy L. Doherty, S.T.L., Ph.D.  
Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana



Very Reverend Theodore C. Dudzinski, J.C.L.  
Chancellor