

Introduction

Over the years, parishes have been restructured in various configurations e.g. no regularly scheduled Mass, merged, clustered, twinned, etc. In these cases, the parish without a resident priest entrusts the sacramental registers to the parish with the resident priest responsible for its pastoral care. The parish priest is to ensure that the registers are carefully preserved.

It is of utmost importance that the location of all sacramental registers be known by the Office of Canonical Services and recorded accurately in the Archdiocesan Archives, including the dates when relocation occurred.

All sacramental registers of parishes without a resident priest should be kept in the parish responsible for its administration. If registers are still located in a parish without a resident priest or administration office, these should be brought to the parish responsible at the earliest convenience. It may be necessary to acquire a larger safe or to make room in the fire proof locked cabinet of the parish, or to take other means to ensure the proper preservation and security of the registers (c. 535 §4, §5).

The Chancellor is the custodian of the ordinary archives (c. 482§1).

Baptism Register (810-815)

Baptism Registers contain the details of baptism, and also details concerning the lifelong canonical status of a person, e.g., profession of faith (reception into full communion with the Catholic Church), confirmation, marriage, dispensation, decree of nullity of marriage, adoption, reception of sacred orders, laicization, perpetual religious profession, transfer to another Church *sui iuris*, formal defection from the Catholic Church, etc.

All annotations must be recorded in the Baptism Register and on any subsequent Baptism Certificate issued.

Access to Registers (822-824)

Sacramental registers are private records. They pertain to the canonical status of the faithful by reason of Baptism, Marriage, Holy Orders, Perpetual Profession in a religious institute, or Change of Rite (transfer to another Church *sui iuris*).

Access for sacramental reasons differs from access for genealogical reasons. Each has a different purpose, and a different certificate, in terms of the extent of information reflected on it.