



CHANCERY

Procedure for the management of registers
(For more information, please consult the *Canon and pastoral guide at the service of the parishes* or call the Diocesan Chancery)

1. The register

- 1.1 Documents in the registry can be used for a maximum of five years; after that, you run the risk of them deteriorating due to multiple handlings.
- 1.2 Have just enough pages to complete one year; thus, you avoid having pages for one year in different registers.
- 1.3 Write legibly (think of the others!)
- 1.4 Use an archival quality pen (blue or black): Zebra Sarasa (available at e.g. Staples).
- 1.5 Preserve the margins for multiple annotations (the spaces are limited and reserved for official annotations).
- 1.6 Respect the wording of the pre-printed act when you fill it out; put a little dash in spaces you want to leave blank.
- 1.7 Always consult the Chancery in cases of adoption.
- 1.8 The registers are not accessible to the parishioners. An extract or a certificate can be issued only to the people mentioned in the act (cf Archbishop's decree of November 3rd, 2003).
- 1.9 Certificates and extracts can only be issued in the language of the register.
- 1.10 All annotations written in the margins must be mentioned in the certificates and extracts.
- 1.11 All ordained ministers named to a specific parish are depositary to its register.
- 1.12 People authorized to manage the register:
Only the priests and deacons in service are authorized to manage the parish register. However, it is always possible for them to delegate another person to accomplish these duties. On the other hand, each parish must

inform the Chancery about whom they chose. This person will thus be recognized as such by the diocese.

- 1.13 Correcting the register: please consult the Chancery, since only the Chancellor, and no-one else, can allow such changes.

I Baptism (under 14 years old)

- I.1 Enter the figures in full letters.

- I.2 Enter the number of words crossed out in letters.

- I.3 Make sure that the name of the child is written in correctly by consulting the notice of confirmation of birth, or the birth certificate.

- I.4 Write down the parish and the municipality of the parents.

The parents have their own roles, and thus cannot be godparents.

- I.5 Write down the municipality of the godparents.

Godparent: extension of the family and the Church beautiful and rich in its man-woman complementarity; thus, you cannot have two godfathers or two godmothers. Consult the Canon and pastoral guide, chapter I, n° 5.

- I.6 Can we change godparents after the baptism?
NO. Parents can however determine that the godparents are not correctly fulfilling their role, for many reasons: family conflicts; rupture with the in-laws due to a separation or a divorce; a change of religion by either godparent; a form of indignity, e.g. a godparent becoming a criminal or a junkie; etc., the extreme case being death. They would like to change the names of their child's godparents in the register.
- I.7 Witnesses: non-Catholic people whose baptism is recognized by the Catholic Church.
- I.8 Child presented by same-sex parents. Write down on a sheet of white paper that the child is presented for baptism by.....and by.....
- I.9 When the parents are legally declared, and one of them is absent for the baptism, both names are written in the register, even though one signature will be missing. (N.B. Signatures cannot be added later).

I.10 When there is only one legally declared parent, the other one will be written in the register only if he personally gives his approval. You must never write down in the parish register that a parent is « undeclared ».

I.11 Place of baptism: all baptisms must take place in a church, oratory, or chapel. For any other location, a permission from the bishop is needed.

II. Special acts (baptism of adults, adoptions, profession of faith: white pages at the end of the register)

II.1 Baptism of adults over 14 years old: consult the Chancery.

II.2 Profession of faith: consult the Chancery.

II.3 Adoptions: consult the Chancery.

II.4 The special acts are re-transcribed onto copies of the register.

II.5 Requests for apostasy: send the requests to the Chancery.

III. Confirmation (children and adults)

III.1 First write down the date of the celebration, and the name of the priest officiating the confirmation, then the names of the children, their birth dates, and the names of their godfather and/or godmother. Please note that the parents have their own role, and thus cannot be godparents.

III.2 Each page must be signed by the register custodian.

III.3 Send the annotation notices to the parishes where the people were baptized.

IV. Marriage

Concerning the register:

IV.1 Enter the number of words crossed out in letters.

IV.2 Carefully write down the name of the celebrant. After the name, write down if he's the parish priest/leader or vicar/deacon, or a properly delegated minister.

IV.3 Cross out the words « in accordance with the requirements of civil law in Quebec » when the spouses are already married civilly.

- IV.4 Do not forget to write down, if needed, the permission for a mixed marriage, or the exemption of cult disparity.
- IV.5 Date and time of the marriage.
- IV.6 Marriage of minors: consult the Chancery.

Concerning the file:

- IV.7 For non-parishioners, secure the authorization of the priest/leader of the parish of one of the spouses.
- IV.8 Obtain the birth certificate dated less than nine (9) months from the start of the prenuptial inquiry, to ensure the freedom of entering into marriage.
- IV.9 When there has been a previous marriage, secure the decree of nullity of that marriage, either from the Ecclesiastical Tribunal, or from the Chancery if it was a civil union.
- IV.10 Marriage of a person whose previous marriage was nullified by an Ecclesiastical Tribunal.
Always carefully check if a restriction was placed by the Tribunal in relation to a possible future marriage. A *monitum* or a *vetitum* restricts the rights of the person to enter into a new marriage before the Church.

The *monitum* is generally written as such: « XYZ will first have to consult the local Ordinary before entering into a new marriage ». It applies to serious, but temporary, cases of inability to enter into marriage, e.g. severe immaturity. As for the *vetitum*, it is written like this: « XYZ cannot enter into a new marriage without having first received an express authorization from the Ordinary of the place of marriage ». Here, it applies to much more serious and permanent cases of inability to enter into marriage, due to e.g. severe psychological problems.

In both cases, these restrictions must be lifted by the Chancery before these people can get remarried. These procedures are often pretty long and expensive, and may even require that the person concerned gets evaluated by a psychiatrist, at his own expense.

- IV.11 Completely fill out the prenuptial inquiry (Form 1) and affix the seal.
- IV.12 In case of revalidation: do not fill out the DEC 50.
- IV.13 Follow closely the sending and reception of the Inscription of the Marriage to the Act of Baptism (Form 7): write down on the envelope the date it was sent and received. If needed, you can do a recall.

V. Funeral

- V.1 Enter the figures in full letters.
- V.2 Enter the number of words crossed out in letters.
- V.3 Write down to whom the ashes were given when the site of deposition of the ashes is not known at the time of the funeral.
- V.4 Write down the name of the parish and the municipality where the deceased last resided (importance of Church membership).
- V.5 Ask one (1) or two (2) people present at the funeral to sign the act.
- V.6 In the case of a divorce or an unmarried couple living together, you leave the space « spouse of » blank.

Optional inscriptions for funeral or burial registers

In the funeral or burial act, a line is reserved for the inscription of the kinship of the deceased: *The deceased was the spouse of/ widow(er) of/son, daughter of... etc.* You should usually write down all that is required to well identify the deceased and, later, be able to trace back kinship: the name of the spouse, as well as the names of the parents of the deceased. However, in the case of e.g. a civil divorce, even if the Church still considers the religious marriage valid, and the couple as still married, it might be more appropriate to write down only the names of the parents, and not of the spouse, of the deceased, in order to spare the feelings of the family... You decide. There is no legal obligation forcing anyone to write down every link on this registry line: it exists only to facilitate the eventual identification of the deceased.

VI. Burial

- VI.1 Enter the number of words crossed out in letters.
- VI.2 Ask one (1) or two (2) people present at the burial to sign the act.
- VI.3 In the case of a demand to exhume the body, please consult the Chancery.

Useful addresses	Chancery 180, boul. Mont-Bleu Gatineau (Québec) J8Z 3J5 Tel.: 819 771-8391x255	Reliure Desmarais (ordering registers) C.P. 1068 Saint-Lazare (Québec) J7T 2Z7 Tel.: 514 825-7797 Fax: 450 200-0638	Reliure Diane Malo (ordering registers) 1197, rue Saint-Pierre Sud Joliette (Québec) J6E 3Z1 Tel.: 450 759-5204 Fax: 450 759-7597
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