

4. CHANCERY INFORMATION

PRE-NUPTIAL INVESTIGATION

The pre-nuptial investigation book contains instructions regarding the dispensations and permissions needed for marriage in the Catholic Church. It also contains request forms to be used in seeking dispensations/permissions:

Form III - Mixed marriage (This permission may be granted by the pastor/priest in charge of a parish. A copy of the form is to be forwarded to the chancery office).

Form IV - Disparity of worship and disparity of worship *ad cautelam*.

Form V - Canonical form.

Form VI - Other dispensations/permissions.

Form VIII - Publication of banns.

Form IX - Testimonial letter and nihil obstat.

Regarding a marriage with a dispensation from canonical form, since a record of both the dispensation and the celebration is to be kept in the parish and the chancery, the pastor, who does the inquiry, is asked to send a copy of the marriage certificate to the chancery when he receives one.

SACRAMENTAL RECORDS

The chancery office keeps on file a record of each dispensation or permission granted relative to marriages.

Pastors are to forward to the chancery office the second copies of the "permission for mixed religion" which they grant.

In the cumulative file for each parish held in the chancery office there are lists of those persons who received the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, matrimony and last anointing in a given year. It is important for parishes to submit these names with the annual report.

CONVALIDATION OF MARRIAGE

There are two basic ways of validating a canonically invalid marriage. Both ways involve collecting and recording certain information, attaining proof of the couple's civil marriage, obtaining

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dispensations from any canonical impediments to the union and recording the validation in the parish marriage register and the baptismal records of the Catholic party(ies).

1. **CONVALIDATION:** Simple validations (cann. 1156-60) generally involve the couple contracting their marriage anew in the canonical form. This renewal of consent must be a new act of the will consenting to a marriage which the renewing parties know or think was invalid from the beginning. Such validations need only involve the chancery office if a dispensation/permission is required. However, it is good to include in the marriage file a written explanation of why the marriage was invalid. At the convalidation ceremony the couple and the witnesses should sign the parish sacramental register. Notations of the convalidation should be entered in the baptismal register also.
2. **RADICAL SANATION:** A "radical sanation" (cann. 1161-65) is a validation granted by the competent authority without the renewal of consent. It may be validly granted if the consent of both parties perdures, even if one or both of the parties is unaware of it; it is not, however, to be granted except for a grave reason. All requests for "sanations" must be referred to the chancery office. (The petition should include a request for dispensation from any impediments that are present, as well as from the requirement of canonical form, if it has not been observed, and a written explanation of why the marriage was invalid, giving the grave reason for requesting a radical sanction in the case.) Notations regarding "sanations" are to be made in the parish registers (marriage and baptismal).

ARCHIVES

In the Diocese of Grand Falls, older archival material is preserved in a vault and in a section of the diocesan office building removed from the other chancery offices. Information regarding parishes and memorabilia of a historical nature are organized and placed in the archives.

Parishes supply the archives with records and memorabilia that should be preserved for future generations in the Church.

Usually a special person called the archivist has the responsibility for collecting and organizing the archival material. She/he is contacted when additional material is being submitted and when information of a historical nature involving the diocese is needed.

A policy concerning diocesan and parish archives is contained elsewhere in this manual.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Once a year, usually in February, the various parishes of the diocese submit a report on the life of the parish for a given year. Details regarding parish life - statistical, sacramental, financial - are

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given in this report, forms for which are supplied by the chancery office.

The chancery office prepares a statistical report of the life of the diocese and of its various parts once a year. This is submitted to the Holy See and to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops. This report is prepared and submitted in the spring, usually in March or April, after the parish reports have been received and processed.