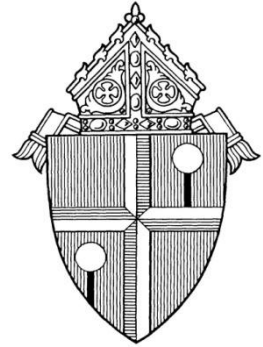


THE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Norms for the Sacramental Catechesis for

**Baptism
Confirmation
First Holy Communion
Penance and Reconciliation**

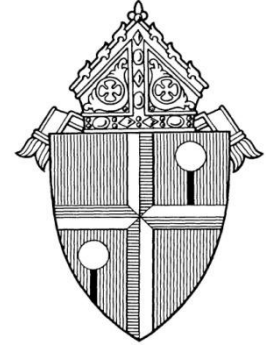
**For the Catholic Diocese
of Honolulu**

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Diocese of Honolulu
May 2010

THE OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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Norms for the Sacramental Catechesis for Baptism, Confirmation, First Holy Communion, Penance and Reconciliation

- I. Catechesis within the Church's Mission of Evangelization - ##1-13.....pp. 5-7
Evangelization and the Ministry of the Word - ##1-6
Nature and Purpose of Evangelization - ##7-8
The Tasks of Catechesis - #9
Inculturation of the Gospel Message - ##10-13
- II. Organizing Catechetical Ministry - ##14-16.....p. 8
General Principles - ##14-15
The Parish Community and Guidance - #16
- III. Baptism of Infants - ##17-31.....pp. 9-11
Preparation of Parents for the Baptism of an Infant - #19-20
Content for Catechesis - ##21-24
Delay of Baptism - ##25-28
Requirements for Godparents - ##29-31
- IV. The Sacrament of Confirmation – ##32-78.....pp.12-18
Requirements for the Reception of Confirmation - ##32-33
National Guideline Regarding Age - #34-35
Preparing Youth for the Sacrament of Confirmation - ##36-39
Content for Catechesis - ##40-44
Readiness for Confirmation - ##45-51
Immediate Preparation for Confirmation - ##52-53
Role of the Parents - ##54-60
Sponsors for Confirmation - ##61-64
Scheduling for the Sacrament of Confirmation - #65
Confirmation Name - ##66-67
Attire for Sacrament of Confirmation - ##68-69
Preparing Adults for Confirmation - ##70-71
Reception of Confirmation for Persons with Developmental Disabilities - ##72-73
Record of Conferral of Confirmation - ##74-77
Photography - #78

V.	<u>Celebration of First Communion - ##79-110</u>pp. 19-23
	The Candidate for First Communion - ##79-87
	Role and Responsibilities of Parents - ##88-94
	Content for Catechesis - ##95-96
	Location for Preliminary/Immediate Preparation - ##97-99
	Communion under Both Forms - #100
	Continuing Catechesis on the Eucharist - #101
	Reception of First Communion by Persons with Disabilities - ##102-104
	Administrative Tasks - ##105-106
	Date of First Communion - #107
	Attire for First Communion - #108
	Record Keeping - #109
	Photography - #110
VI.	<u>The Sacrament of Penance – First Reconciliation - ##111-122</u>pp. 24-25
	Children’s Right to Receive First Penance and First Communion- ##111-113
	Catechesis for Children’s First Reception of the Sacrament of Penance - ##114-116
	Content for Catechesis - ##117-118
	Parent Involvement - ##119-121
	Persons with Disabilities - #122
<i>Appendix 1</i>	Sourcesp. 26
<i>Appendix 2</i>	Sacramental Readiness for Confirmation, First Communion, and First Penance and Reconciliationpp. 27-28
<i>Appendix 3</i>	Directory of Valid and Invalid Baptism among Christian Churches -pp. 29-33
<i>Appendix 4</i>	Baptismal Certificates for Adopted Childrenp. 34

I. Catechesis within the Church's Mission of Evangelization

1. **Evangelization and the Ministry of the Word:** All members of the Church are called to engage actively in a *new evangelization* of the world. Directed to the members of the Catholic Church seeking to revitalize their faith and sacramental worship, the new evangelization entails motivating them toward permanently engaging in catechesis; toward integrating a truly Christian spirituality into the personal, political, economic, and social aspects of life; and toward acting in favor of social justice. The new evangelization is also directed to every member of the human family and to every dimension of contemporary culture; aiming to convert to Christ those who have not previously heard or understood the Gospel, moving them to explicitly confess faith in Jesus Christ and to open themselves to transformation in Christ.
2. Evangelization as a ministry of the Word is realized in four stages:
 - the Proclamation of Christ to non-believers and the indifferent
 - initial catechesis for the new believers
 - continuing catechesis to deepen and mature the faith of believers
 - pastoral ministry to those committed to Christ
3. Pre-evangelization, the initial state, ordinarily builds on the basic human need of those to be evangelized: food, shelter, love, security, and acceptance. Then the Word is announced in a way the hearers can understand: to members of other religious traditions, the religiously indifferent, non-believers, Christian children, Christians with minimal or deficient catechesis, and non-practicing Christians.
4. The next stage, initiatory catechesis, introduces catechumens, children and those with minimal knowledge of the faith into the life of the Christian community. Through systematic instruction, prayer, initiation into sacramental life and worship, and involvement in pastoral activities of the local church, initiatory catechesis nurtures a new way of life in Christ.
5. Next, the aim of post-baptismal catechesis (mystagogy) is to extend and fortify the believer's relationship to Christ and the Church. Through reflection, instruction, and prayer, Christians are led to deeper understanding of an active participation in liturgical worship and a life of charity and justice. Ongoing catechesis deepens a believer's knowledge of Christ and the Church and helps to integrate the truths of the faith into all spheres of life: individual, family, social, economic, and political.
6. This catechesis can take place in a liturgical or educational setting. Liturgical catechesis aims to enrich and expand the meaning and impact of the sacraments in the lives of the individual and the Church. Reflection upon sacramental signs, symbols, and rituals deepens and enhances the celebration of the Liturgy, especially the Eucharist. Theological catechesis systematically explores and investigates the truths of the faith in dialogue with philosophy and the social sciences. It aims to make the proclamation of the Gospel meaningful to contemporary men and women and to motivate ongoing conversion to a Christian way of life.

7. **Nature and Purpose of Evangelization:** The aim of catechesis is to lead believers to a deeper knowledge and love of Christ and the Church and a firm commitment to follow him. Jesus Christ is at the heart of all catechesis. It is in communion with Jesus that all believers share in the mystery of the Holy Trinity – the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit.
8. Catechesis is an action of the Church and is intimately bound with the whole of the Church's life. Catechesis shapes the initial proclamation of the Gospel. It prepares for the celebration of the sacraments, facilitates integration into the ecclesial community, urges apostolic activity and missionary witness, instills a zeal for the unity of Christians, and prepares one for the ecumenical understanding and mission of the Church. The Church is the origin, locus, and goal of catechesis.
9. **The Tasks of Catechesis:** Jesus formed his apostles into a community of faith. He instructed them, prayed with them, showed them how to live, and entrusted them the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. After his death and resurrection, he sent them the Holy Spirit and commissioned them to go out and teach all nations. The fundamental task of catechesis is, therefore, to form disciples of Christ and to send them forth in mission. Following the example of Jesus the teacher, catechesis encompasses six diverse yet interlocking tasks, as described in the National Directory for Catechesis:
- Catechesis promotes knowledge of the faith.
 - Catechesis promotes a knowledge of the meaning of the Liturgy and the sacraments.
 - Catechesis promotes moral formation in Jesus Christ.
 - Catechesis teaches the Christian how to pray with Christ.
 - Catechesis prepares the Christian to live in community and to participate actively in the life and mission of the Church.
 - Catechesis promotes a missionary spirit that prepares the faithful to be present as Christians in society.
(NDC, no. 20)
10. **Inculturation of the Gospel Message:** "The inculturation of the Gospel occurs within a dynamic process that has several interactive elements. Inculturation involves listening to the culture of the people for an echo of the word of God. It involves the discernment of the presence of authentic Gospel values or openness to authentic Gospel values in the culture. This discernment is governed by two basic principles: 'compatibility with the Gospel and communion with the universal Church.' (*On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate [Redemptoris Missio]*, no. 54). It involves, when necessary, the purification of the elements in the culture that may be hostile or adverse to the Gospel. And it involves an invitation to conversion." (NDC, no. 21)

11. The inculturation of the Gospel message is an urgent mission because it correlates faith and life. It seeks to dispose the people who live in a multicultural and pluralistic society to receive Jesus Christ in every dimension of their lives. The process of inculturation must involve the people to whom the gospel is addressed, so that they can receive the faith and reflect it. It touches them on the personal, cultural, economic, and political levels so that they can live a holy life in total union with God the Father, through the action of the Holy Spirit. "It is necessary to preaching in such a way that the Gospel is proclaimed in the language and in the culture of its hearers." (The Church in America Ecclesia in America)
12. In the inculturation of faith, catechesis has several specific tasks:
- To discover the seeds of the Gospel that may be present in the culture
 - To know and respect the essential elements and basic expressions of the culture of the persons to whom it is addressed
 - To recognize that the Gospel message is both transcendent and immanent – it is not bound by the limitations of any single human culture, yet it has a cultural dimension, that in which Jesus of Nazareth lived
 - To proclaim the transforming and regenerating force that the Gospel works in every culture
 - To promote a new enthusiasm for the Gospel in accordance with evangelized culture
 - To use the language and culture of the people as a foundation to express the common faith of the Church
 - To maintain the integral content of faith and avoid obscuring the content of the Christian message by adaptations that would compromise or diminish the deposit of faith.
(NDC, no. 21C)
13. The catechist performs a vital role in this process. By interpreting the gospel message faithfully and communicating it understandably in the idiom of the local culture, the catechist enhances the reception of the mysteries of Christ entrusted to the Church.

II. Organizing Catechetical Ministry

14. **General Principles and Guidance:**

- Organizations at the parish, diocesan and national levels should be part of an overall pastoral plan that comes from the Church's comprehensive mission.
- Organization for catechesis is person-centered, with particular support for the family, and encourages participation of all the catechized in determining organizational structures.
- The goals of catechesis, accountability, and channels of communication should be clearly stated.
- Organizations should ensure equitable distribution of services, resources, and opportunities. Parishes in need should have opportunities similar to those of more affluent parishes.

15. Essential aspects of catechetical organizational planning are analysis of the parish or diocesan situation, assessment of needs and resources, identification and prioritization of goals and strategies, establishment of a realistic budget and overall working plan for the catechetical mission, and periodic review and evaluation.

16. **The Parish Community:** The parish is the pre-eminent setting for the catechesis of adults, youth, and children. Like the diocese, every parish needs to develop a coherent catechetical plan. Sometimes this is done through a catechetical committee or commission that helps plan, coordinate, and implement various catechetical activities within the parish. The members of the committee or commission should be attuned to the diverse age, ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds present in the parish.

III. Baptism of Infants

17. Infants are considered those who have not yet reached the age of reason understood as seven years of age) and those who are not responsible for themselves. (Code of Canon Law, Latin-English Edition) ([canon, no.852](#))
18. Baptism of infants should be celebrated within weeks of their birth. ([canon, no. 867](#), §1)
19. **Preparation of Parents for the Baptism of an Infant**
The pastor, who is responsible to discern the existence of a “reasonable hope” that the child will be properly initiated into the Catholic faith by the commitment of its parents ([canon, no. 868](#)) should, with the assistance of a baptismal preparation team, prepare parents for the baptism of their infant. (Decree on Christian Initiation(DCI, Introduction)
20. In addition to the initial interview, at least one formal session of baptismal preparation should be provided by the parish community.
 - The baptism of a child offers a key moment in the evangelization of parents. Every effort should be made to ensure that the initial contact with the parish, the interview process, and the baptismal preparation are occasions of welcome, invitation and hospitality.
 - This process of preparation can begin even before the birth of the child.
 - The initial interview provides a time to discern the commitment of at least one parent or the person who lawfully takes the place of the parent to raise the child in the faith. It is also a time to guide parents in the selection of suitable godparents.
 - The preparation process should assist parents in assuming their role as primary catechists of their child.([canon, no.851](#),§2) This occasion should be viewed as an opportunity for evangelization, helping parents to grow in their commitment to Christ and their spiritual life beyond the current level of their faith understanding and commitment. The influential role of the grandparent as catechist may be taken into consideration during the preparation process.
 - A baptismal catechetical team should be comprised of catechists and other qualified persons.
21. **Content for Catechesis:** In preparation for the baptism of their infant, parents are expected to participate in the parish process of baptismal catechesis before the infant will be baptized.([canon, no.851](#),§2) An infant in danger of death is to be baptized without delay.([canon, no.867](#),§2)

22. The parish should present baptismal catechesis which
- Teaches that Baptism (1) is the foundation of the Christian life because it is the journey into Christ's death and Resurrection, which is the foundation of our hope; (2) gives sanctifying grace, that is, God's life; (3) gives them a new birth in which they become children of God, members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Spirit; (4) cleanses people from original sin and from all personal sins; (5) incorporates them into the life, practices, and mission of the Church; and (6) imprints on their souls an indelible character that consecrates them for Christian worship and is necessary for salvation in the case of all those who have heard the Gospel and have been able to ask for this sacrament (*see Catechism of the Catholic Church* [\(CCC\), no. 1257](#))
 - Teaches that through Baptism we receive a share in the mission of Christ as king, priest, and prophet
 - Teaches that Baptism "symbolizes the catechumen's burial into Christ's death, from which he rises up by resurrection with him, as 'a new creature'" ([CCC, no. 1214](#))
 - Teaches that Baptism is "the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit...and the door which gives access to the other sacraments" ([CCC, no. 1213](#))
 - Teaches that through Baptism the faithful "share in the priesthood of Christ, in his prophetic and royal mission" ([CCC, no. 1268](#))
 - Teaches that "the Most Holy Trinity gives the baptized sanctifying grace, the grace of *justification*" (thus "the whole organism of the Christian's supernatural life has its root in baptism")
 - "enabling them to believe in God, to hope in him, and to love him through the theological virtues"
 - "giving them the power to live and act under the prompting of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the Holy Spirit"
 - "allowing them to grow in goodness through the moral virtues" ([CCC, no. 1266](#))
 - Teaches that "having become a member of the Church, the person baptized belongs no longer to himself, but to him who died and rose for us. From now on he is called to be subject to others, to serve them in the communion of the Church, and to 'obey and to submit' to the Church's leaders, holding them in respect and affection" ([CCC, no. 1269](#)) . . .
 - Teaches that the ordinary minister for the Sacrament of Baptism is a priest or deacon . . . but that, in the case of necessity, any person [even a non-baptized person] who intends to do what the Church does can baptize by pouring water on the candidate's head and saying the Trinitarian formula ["I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." ([CCC, no. 1256, no. 1284](#)) (NDC, no.36:A1)
23. The catechesis should also include "a thorough explanation of the Rite of Baptism together with the fundamental signs and symbols that it employs: immersion in or the pouring of water, the words of the Trinitarian formula ["in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"], and the anointing with oil" (NDC, no. 36:A1).

24. The pastor, catechetical leader, together in collaboration with catechists, should determine what resources should be used by referencing the [Catechism Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series](#) published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Subcommittee on the Catechism.
25. **Delay of Baptism:** Following the long-standing tradition, infants are baptized into the faith of the Church and should not be deprived of the Sacrament of Baptism. (Rite of Baptism, no. 2)
26. While it is possible to refuse Baptism, the sacrament is to be delayed if there is not a founded hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic faith. Parents should be advised of the reason for the delay ([canon, no. 868](#), §1,2) and offered help to remedy the cause of the delay.
27. In the case of single parents or parents in irregular marriages, baptism should not be delayed if there is a founded hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic faith.
28. In cases of a pending [adoption](#), Baptism should be delayed until the adoption is finalized.
29. **Requirements for Godparents:** Godparents, together with parents, present the infant to the Church for Baptism. The selection of two godparents is customary, but only one – either male or female – is required for Baptism. If two godparents are chosen, one should be male and the other female. ([canon, no. 873](#))
 - A godparent must be a fully initiated Catholic (having received Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion) and should have completed his/her sixteenth year unless the pastor makes an exception for a just cause. ([canon, no. 874](#), §1.2, §1.3)
 - A godparent must be a practicing Catholic, leading a life in harmony with the Catholic faith and the role of godparent. (canon, no. 874, §1.3, §1.4)
 - A Christian, baptized in another faith tradition, may not serve as godparent, but may serve as a Christian witness along with the Catholic godparent and should be recorded accordingly. (canon, no. 874, §2)
30. Parents take the responsibility for choosing a godparent(s) who will serve as a good example for living the Catholic way of life. As a mark of the continuity between Baptism and Confirmation, a godparent(s) may later serve as the sponsor of the child when she/he is confirmed. ([canon, no. 893](#), §2)
31. Where cultural practice involves multiple godparents, pastors may allow the family to have a number of people participate in the celebration as honorary/secondary godparents. However, the names of only one set of godparents, one male or one female or one of each, are recorded ([canon, no. 873](#)). The rest may be listed on the reverse side of the Baptismal Certificate as “secondary” or “honorary” grandparents. Only those names recorded in the baptismal book will appear on any certificates issued after the initial certificate is given.

IV. The Sacrament of Confirmation

32. **Requirements for the Reception of Confirmation:** General Criteria: Baptism and the State of Grace. One must be validly baptized to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. ([canon, no. 889](#), §1) A certificate of Catholic Baptism must be on file with the parish.
33. In addition, if baptized persons have the use of reason, it is required that they are in the state of grace, properly instructed and able to renew their baptismal promises. (Rite of Confirmation, no. 12)
34. **National Guideline Regarding Age:** The Bishops of the United States have agreed that the conferral of Confirmation will occur between the age of discretion and about sixteen years of age.
35. Cautionary notes regarding age and proper determination of process:
- In the case of unbaptized children of catechetical age (catechumens), they are to receive Confirmation at the time of their Baptism after the proper catechesis;
 - In the case of other baptized Christian (not Catholic) children of catechetical age (candidates), they are to receive Confirmation at the time they are received into full communion with the Church.
 - In the case of baptized youth who are older than the normal age at which the sacrament is usually celebrated, a special catechetical approach for preparing them may need to be provided that incorporates the goals and duration (two years) of the normal age process.
 - In the case of a practicing Catholic adult who has not yet been confirmed, she/he ought to be suitably prepared as needed – in a process determined by the pastor as to length and content before celebrating the sacrament:
 - A celebration of Confirmation with the Bishop may be offered each year on each island on an as-needed basis strictly for adult candidates, coordinated through the Office of Worship.
 - The adult may join the parish Youth Confirmation celebration; or
 - A special celebration of Confirmation may be observed. The Eastertide is recommended as the proper time for celebrating all sacraments of initiation with Confirmation. In this case, in order to complete their initiation with Confirmation, the pastor may formally request delegation from the Bishop, and is given the particular faculty to confirm in the Bishop's absence. ([canon, no. 884](#))
36. **Preparing Youth for the Sacrament of Confirmation:** Preparation for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation should be seen as a component of the on-going catechesis and faith development of the candidates. It should be situated within a solid parish-based ministry to young people of which Confirmation is only one part. It should not be an isolated program that has no contact with the larger parish community. Catechesis, including sacramental preparation, is just one component of a solid ministry to young people – the Confirmation process should include all components of youth ministry.

37. Parents in a home school context are required to use the same or equivalent materials used in the parish catechetical process and both parent and candidate must participate in various elements of the parish process.
38. In the Diocese of Honolulu, the guidelines for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation for youth are as follows:
39. The candidate for Confirmation ought to:
 - Be at least in the ninth or tenth grade
 - Have participated in a two-year parish Confirmation preparation process. Generally, those who do not participate in the parish program should not be confirmed since suitable catechesis is important for all who wish to celebrate the sacrament. ([canon, no. 843](#))
 - Express a stated personal desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - Demonstrate a willingness to witness more fully to Christ by word and action.

To help foster this Christian imperative of life, each candidate is to participate in the on-going service ministry of the parish.

- These should not be viewed as “service projects”. This service in ministry should not be reduced to a ‘task’ to be completed but rather meant to be understood as an initiation into (apprenticeship in) and participation in the local community’s on-going/conscious identity to ministry (to the poor, shut-ins, persons with disabilities, homeless, and other essential parish ministries) which fosters the well-being of the parish community and larger local community.
 - Each is required to participate in at least 25 – 30 hours of service ministry over the two-year process. Hopefully, this involvement gives rise to a personal mission-consciousness, becoming a daily way of life, as a result of being initiated into “full, conscious, active participation” in the mission of Christ in the community of the Church, his Body.
40. **Content for Catechesis:** Preparation for the reception of Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit in order to be more capable of assuming the responsibilities of Christian life. To this end, catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community as a participating and empowered member of the Body of Christ. ([CCC, no. 1309](#)) . The pastor, catechetical leader, together in collaboration with catechists, should determine what resources should be used by referencing the [Catechism Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series](#) published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Subcommittee on the Catechism.
 41. The following are themes to be used with youth ([CCC, no. 683-747](#); [no. 1285-1321](#))
 - God's Gift
 - Baptism begins membership

- Call to be responsible workers in God's reign
 - Call to discipleship – work for justice and peace
 - Role of the Spirit
 - Interrelationship of Trinity – create, redeem and sanctify
 - Empowered by gifts of the Spirit (wisdom and understanding, right judgment and courage, knowledge and reverence, wonder and awe – (RCIA, no. 234 and Rite of Confirmation(RC), no. 42)
 - Ritual
 - Scriptural roots (RC, no. 61, 62 for references from the Old and the New Testaments)
 - Signs and symbols (oil, anointing with Chrism, baptismal vows, laying on of hands, sign of peace, welcoming the newly confirmed into the family – the Body of Christ)
42. Confirmation catechesis for youth should provide opportunities for prayerful reflection (retreat), appropriate understanding of doctrine, and opportunities for involvement in the mission of the Church (service) by respecting the following principles:
43. Confirmation is a sacrament of Initiation – calling for a remembering and renewal of Baptism.
- Confirmation is rooted in the Trinity – remembering God's love, following the person of Jesus, and living justly in the activity of the Spirit.
 - Confirmation is about discipleship and mission – drawing persons into the life, work and mission of the Church.
44. Confirmation is a celebration of the faith community – the responsibility of all the faithful to accept and use the diverse gifts for the kingdom of God.
45. *Readiness for Confirmation*: God's initiative comes first – the candidate's response to his initiative, prompted by the grace of the Holy Spirit, is central in discerning readiness.
46. The pastor is responsible for providing sacramental preparation of all eligible youth and parents. The design and operation of the parish process are usually delegated to the director or coordinator of religious education so that, given the candidate requirements, [readiness](#) to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation may be discerned. The catechist is responsible for the catechetical session; the parents and/or guardians are responsible for participating as required and supporting the efforts of the catechetical staff.
47. The pastor, parents (or guardians), sponsors, coordinators of both the Confirmation process and of youth ministry and others involved in ministry with youth should take part in this process.
48. Interviews:

- Candidates for Confirmation are to be [interviewed](#) by the pastor or his designee at the outset of Year One in the preparation process to assess readiness, appropriate attitudes and adequate understanding of the process.
 - At the beginning of Year Two to ascertain where the candidate is in the journey through the process;
 - With the pastor or his designee to determine readiness for the sacrament. In advance of this interview, all those who are directly involved with the candidates (catechists, parents or guardians, sponsors, youth ministers) would have had an opportunity to participate in some way.
49. Ultimately, the burden of responsibility for meeting the requirements for the reception of Confirmation belongs to the candidate. The Sacrament of Confirmation should not be seen as a reward or something one can or must earn.
50. If a candidate decides to delay Confirmation, or if the pastor (upon the recommendation of the catechetical team) discerns that one is not ready, the sacrament may be delayed (not denied) until some future date. Such a personal (or communal decision) ought not to be interpreted as a rejection of faith. Alternate catechetical programs are to be in place to meet their needs for continued faith formation and discernment.
51. If a candidate misses the parish celebration due to sickness or some other Legitimate reason, it is possible that Confirmation may occur in a neighboring parish. The pastor or catechetical director should contact the pastor of the neighboring parish for permission and make whatever arrangements are deemed necessary.
52. *Immediate Preparation for Confirmation:* After determination of readiness, candidates are expected to participate in immediate preparation for the reception of Confirmation which includes the following:
- Catechesis on the Holy Spirit ([CCC, no. 683-747](#))
 - The Sacraments of Initiation ([CCC, Baptism no. 1213-1284](#); [Confirmation no. 1285-1321](#); [Eucharist no. 1322-1419](#))
 - A weekend retreat; at least a day or evening of prayer
 - Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance
 - Review the Rite of Confirmation
 - Rehearsal for the celebration of Confirmation
53. Immediate preparation should be adapted to the needs of persons with developmental disabilities. (Guidelines for the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities, General Principles, no. 3)(GPD)
54. *Role of the Parents:* A special program (to which Sponsors may be invited to participate) ought to be designed for parents in order to remind them both of their role and ways of fulfilling that role as faith formators/examples; to have them understand the process and its parts to enhance their full participation; and to serve as an occasion to have them grow in their understanding of the sacrament(s) and in their own commitment to the faith. ([canon, no. 890](#))

55. Parents express a desire for their teenagers to celebrate Confirmation by enrolling them in the parish process. While they are enablers to the process, the ultimate decision rests with the candidate.
56. While parental participation is expected, its lack should not prevent the Confirmation of one who desires it.
57. In some cases, one might be prepared in a home program. However, since the community-building aspect of catechesis is so important, participation in essential aspects of the parish process is encouraged, especially the retreat, participation in parish ministry experiences (service), parent meetings, the discernment process and other liturgical celebrations.
58. If the youth's parents are not practicing Catholics, but desire that their son or daughter celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, and the youth in question has been practicing the faith, has been properly catechized and seeks to receive the sacrament, then the sacrament cannot be denied. Pastoral sensitivity should be shown to the family's circumstances and sincere efforts made to strengthen the relationship of the family to the parish community. Particular care is to be taken in the choice of sponsor to provide the youth support in ongoing faith formation.
59. In the case of a youth – younger than 18 and living with someone other than the parent(s) or guardian – written permission of the parent or legal guardian is necessary prior to the start of the process. If permission is not forthcoming, preparation for the sacrament ought to be postponed (not denied) until such consent is received or until the youth attains the age of 18.
60. In cases of joint custody, written permission of both parents must be secured prior to the start of the process.
61. *Sponsors for Confirmation:* A sponsor functions as a public representative of the community and as a role model and ongoing support to the candidate. The sponsor assists the parents in the ongoing faith formation of the candidate, especially should the parent(s) be unable to do so. There should be one sponsor for each of those confirmed. (RC, no. 5)
62. A sponsor:
 - Should be at least 16 years of age and sufficiently mature for this responsibility
 - Is to be a Catholic, fully initiated (who has been baptized, confirmed, and has already received First Communion) and is leading a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken
 - Is not the parent of the candidate
 - May be either male or female
 - May be one's Baptismal sponsor
63. Special catechetical sessions ought to be provided for sponsors to enable them to understand the importance of:
 - Sharing their faith understanding with their candidate
 - Being a good role model in the living of their faith

- Being available to accompany and participate with their candidate in mission/service activities
 - Being able to answer questions and concerns the candidate may have
 - Continuing in their own faith formation through parish adult formation programs
64. A proxy may be chosen if the sponsor cannot be present for the actual Confirmation celebration. A proxy must be designated in writing and meet the same qualifications as a sponsor. However, the name of the sponsor, not that of the proxy, is recorded in the parish register.
65. *Scheduling for the Sacrament of Confirmation:* A date for Confirmation is secured by contacting the Office of the Bishop. The parish consults with the Office of Worship, which establishes the liturgical guidelines for the celebration of the sacrament and approves the final parish-prepared, ritual Order of Worship for the parish celebration.
66. *Confirmation Name:* The rite says nothing about taking a new name at Confirmation. Therefore, candidates may retain their baptismal name rather than take a new one. This is desirable because it manifests an understanding that Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism.
67. This name can be worn on a badge pinned to the shoulder or printed on a card to be handed to the priest or deacon assisting the Bishop. This practice is preferred over the sponsor or confirmandi announcing their name directly to the Bishop.
68. *Attire for Sacrament of Confirmation:* The dress encouraged for the candidates should not give the impression of a graduation. Regular (Sunday best) dress attire is satisfactory. However, to emphasize the relationship between Confirmation and Baptism, dressing in a white tone (or white garment or robe) may be used at Confirmation, just as a white robe is used to clothe the newly baptized.
69. The practice in some places of using stoles at Confirmation seems to have risen out of a desire to provide a symbol of Confirmation. However, the distinction between the universal priesthood of all the baptized and the ministerial priesthood of the ordained is blurred when the distinctive garb of the ordained ministers is used in this manner. Therefore, stoles are not to be used by the newly confirmed.
70. **Preparing Adults for Confirmation:** Catechesis directed towards parents, sponsors and adults wishing to celebrate the sacrament themselves, should reflect the following themes ([CCC, no. 683-747](#), [no. 1285-1321](#))
- Fulfillment of Initiation
 - Baptism begins the process.
 - Confirmation renews baptismal promises and gifts of the Spirit.
 - Eucharist nourishes the daily faith.
 - Role of the Spirit
 - Work of the Trinity

- Gifts of the Spirit – (wisdom and understanding, right judgment and courage, knowledge and reverence, wonder and awe – (RCIA , no. 234 and RC, no. 42)
 - Ritual of Confirmation
 - History
 - Scriptural roots
 - Signs and symbols (oil, anointing with Chrism, baptismal promises, laying on of hands, sign of peace, welcoming the newly confirmed into the family – the Body of Christ)
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Witness to the world
 - Personal development
71. Adults who have been baptized and who have celebrated First Communion are to receive catechesis which is age appropriate but distinct from children's catechesis.
72. **Reception of Confirmation for Persons with Developmental Disabilities:** Appropriate adaptations in candidate requirements should be made for persons with developmental disabilities who have the use of reason. Judgment of readiness for them should be based on whether they demonstrate acceptance of the faith and a desire for greater participation in the life and mission of the Church.
73. Persons who may never attain the use of reason are to be encouraged, through their parents or guardians, to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the appropriate time. (Guidelines for the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities, General Principles, no. 3)
74. **Record of Conferral of Confirmation:** The full name of the confirmed with mention of the minister; parents – including mother's maiden name; sponsor; place and the date of the conferral of Confirmation are to be noted in the Confirmation Register of the parish. At the pastor's discretion, this responsibility may be done by the parish secretary, who should be provided the necessary information in a timely manner.
75. Notation of the conferral of Confirmation is also to be made in the Baptismal Register (when the confirmed was baptized in the parish where Confirmation occurred) or, if not, sent to the Church of Baptism, with complete information described above.
76. A certificate of reception of Confirmation may be prepared for distribution at a later date. If certificates are distributed at the end of the celebration, care must be taken to avoid a perception of a "graduation ceremony".
77. The date of Confirmation should be entered on the family records in parish and Catholic school programs.
78. **Photography:** Families need to be informed of the parish's policy for the taking of photographs or videotaping during the Confirmation. Confirmation team members need to monitor and implement this strictly.

V. Celebration of First Communion

79. **The Candidate for First Communion:** A child who has been baptized and has reached the use of reason (understood as seven years of age) and has been properly catechized may celebrate First Communion. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated prior to First Communion.
80. One must be a baptized Catholic to receive First Communion. A baptismal certificate should be on file at the parish where the child is to receive First Communion.
81. First Communion should properly occur in the parish where the child/family worships on Sunday, not in a private/parochial school setting or parish.
82. Children, seven years of age or older, who have not been baptized are to be prepared in an adapted process of the Rite of Christian Initiation, (RCIA) at the time of their Baptism, they are to receive Confirmation and First Communion. The preferred time for this celebration is at the Easter Vigil.
83. Children who have been baptized in another Christian faith and are preparing for full communion in the Church, having expressed a faith commitment, ought to be confirmed and receive First Communion within the same celebration of reception. Usually this occurs at Easter.
84. Children who are older than seven and who have been baptized, have celebrated reconciliation and are catechized – but have not celebrated First Communion – may celebrate the sacrament at any suitable time that is agreeable to all involved.
85. Children who have been baptized and are older than seven years of age but are not catechized should enter a catechetical program appropriate to their age. Reconciliation should precede the celebration of First Communion.
86. Children with developmental disabilities are to be given suitable catechesis over a sufficient period of time and should be included in the parish celebration according to their capacity.(GPD, no. 3)
87. For all as well as for the person with a developmental disability, the criterion for reception of First Communion *is the ability to distinguish the Body of Christ from ordinary food*, if not verbally, then through manner, gesture or reverential silence. Doubt should be resolved in favor of the right of the baptized to receive (GPD, no. 3)
88. **Role and Responsibilities of Parents:** Parents indicate their desire that their child celebrate First Communion by enrolling their child in the parish or school (second grade) program.

89. The parish offers support to parents as primary teachers of their children through a parish sacramental preparation process that is designed to nourish the faith-life and theological understanding of the sacrament among parents. Such a program should also focus on the Eucharist as a shared meal; the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist; and ways to share scriptural stories with their child. As primary educators of their children, parents, along with godparents, have the duty to be actively engaged in the preparation of their children.
90. Under some circumstances, parents may choose to prepare their child at home with help and direction from the parish, using the same or equivalent resources; and participating in any communal activities including retreat, interview and practice. Parents may also be required to attend parental meetings at the discretion of the pastor.
91. In cases where the child's parents are non-practicing Catholics but who enroll their child to receive First Communion, the child should be permitted to receive, providing the child has been properly catechized and received sacramental reconciliation. Parents should be encouraged to participate in the sacramental preparation process with their child.
92. If a child is living with someone other than the parent(s) or guardian, permission from either parent(s) or guardian must be obtained before the child may receive. In cases of joint custody, permission of both parents must be secured beforehand in writing.
93. Parents, with the assistance and advice of the pastor and/or his catechetical leaders, should determine if their child is [ready to receive](#). An interview with the pastor or his delegate could facilitate the judgment of readiness. If the determination is negative, First Communion is to be delayed to a future date and help offered to parents to remedy the cause of the delay.
94. Parents should accompany their child to Sunday Mass, initiating the child into the worship of the community and inviting the child to participate as fully as possible. While attendance in the catechetical program (parish or school) is required, it is not sufficient preparation in and of itself.
95. **Content for Catechesis:** As described above, the parish should provide parents with a preparation process that enables them to take on their role as primary educators of their children. For the child, preliminary preparation takes place in the first grade and a more intentional/focused preparation takes place in the second grade. The pastor, catechetical leader, together in collaboration with catechists, should determine what resources should be used by referencing the [Catechism Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series](#) published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Subcommittee on the Catechism.
96. Parishes should present age-appropriate catechesis for the reception of First Communion that
 - Teaches that the Eucharist is the living memorial of Christ's sacrifice for the salvation of all and the commemoration of his last meal with his disciples

- Teaches not only “the truths of faith regarding the Eucharist but also how from First Communion on ... they can as full members of Christ’s Body take part actively with the People of God in the Eucharist, sharing in the Lord’s table and the community of their brothers and sisters” (*Directory for Masses with Children*, no. 12)
- Ensures that the baptized have been prepared, according to their capacity, for the Sacrament of Penance prior to their First Communion
- Develops in children an understanding of the Father’s love, of their participation in the sacrifice of Christ, and of the gift of the Holy Spirit
- Teaches that “the Holy Eucharist is the real body and blood of Christ” and that “what appear to be bread and wine are actually His living body” (*National Catechetical Directory* [NCD], no. 122)
- Teaches the difference between the Eucharist and ordinary bread
- Teaches the meaning of reception of the Holy Eucharist under both species of bread and wine
- Helps them to participate actively and consciously in the Mass
- Helps children to receive Christ’s Body and Blood in an informed and reverent manner
(NDC, no. 36)

97. **Location for Preliminary/Immediate Preparation:** The parish (or catechetically within the Catholic school setting) is the primary site of a catechetical program and liturgical celebration. The home parish provides the immediate preparation.
98. In Catholic school settings, special sensitivity must be shown to children from other parishes. The rightful place of celebration (and the process) remains in the home parish. Every effort must be made to safeguard and support the “return” of the child to her/his rightful parish community.
99. Permission by the home pastor must be obtained if the child is to receive First Communion at another parish; this exception should be used sparingly and only in very exceptional cases. At the very start of the second grade and at the outset of the preparation, the school community ought to remind parents in written form of the need to attend Mass at their home parishes so that they may begin the process of integration within the home parish.
100. **Communion under Both Forms:** Catechesis should include the importance of the full sign of the Eucharist. While children are strongly encouraged to receive Communion under both forms, they should not be forced, especially in regard to the Cup. Children should be taught they never receive wine at Communion, but the Blood of Christ. Care should be taken that the children do not think they are drinking human blood in the biological sense but that it is truly the sacramental presence of Christ. Children should be given a small taste of unconsecrated wine during their preparation so that they will not make unpleasant faces when and if they receive the Blood of Christ. They and their parents may then decide whether they should receive Communion from the Cup. Even when children do not receive Communion from the Cup, they should be taught about it so that they will understand what is being offered when they see others receiving Communion from the Cup.

101. **Continuing Catechesis on the Eucharist:** Since young people develop gradually in their ability to understand the mystery of the Eucharist and to grow in faith, continued catechetical formation is needed. Children and teenagers should be provided with catechesis each year as they mature in the practice of their faith.
102. **Reception of First Communion by Persons with Disabilities:** Persons with disabilities should be provided the necessary adaptations and support to assure preparation for the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist as well as their active and meaningful participation in sacramental celebrations.
103. No age/grade is set for the reception of First Communion by persons who are developmentally disabled. Each and all may receive First Communion if, after sufficient preparation, she/he has some understanding of the person of Jesus, his life, death and resurrection; is able to distinguish between the Eucharist and ordinary bread/wine and shows some desire to receive the Eucharist. Others might help the disabled person to demonstrate this understanding. Judgment of readiness should balance reverence for the sacraments with each person's need and right to the benefits of the sacraments.
104. If a question remains whether the above conditions are met, the person with disabilities may receive First Communion with the consent of the pastor, parents and catechist. In cases of doubt, the presumption of readiness should be in favor of the recipient.
105. **Administrative Tasks:** The pastor is responsible for providing sacramental preparation for all parish children. Implementation is usually delegated to the catechetical leader who, with the help of catechists, provides sessions for the children and parents. Parents are responsible for participating as required, supporting the efforts made by the parish catechetical staff.
106. Parish and school programs ought to be closely coordinated and conducted in conjunction with one another to the maximum extent possible, especially in parent sessions, retreats, receptions/breakfasts, and liturgical celebrations. Although students may be in separate preparation programs, they are all part of the same parish and should celebrate the sacraments together. Any favoritism or preference of one over the other should be strictly avoided.
107. **Date of First Communion:** The pastor, in consultation with the catechetical community and parents, determines the date and time for the reception of First Communion which is customarily celebrated during the Eastertide. Should a child miss the scheduled First Communion, parents should make arrangements through the catechetical leader so that a new date and time may be secured.
108. **Attire for First Communion:** Since First Communion is a sacrament of initiation completing Baptism, and since the newly baptized are given a white garment, white should be considered as the preferred color of dress. Children and their parents should be instructed on what is considered to be appropriate attire. Veils are not necessary but cultural sensitivities may invite flexibility in this and other matters of custom.

109. **Record Keeping:** A record of those who celebrated First Communion is to be kept in the parish First Communion Record Book. For those who have been baptized in another parish, notice ought to be sent to the church of Baptism, providing the necessary information immediately after the celebration of First Communion. It is recommended that a certificate of First Communion be given to the children on the day they celebrate the sacrament, or shortly thereafter.
110. **Photography:** Families need to be informed of the parish's policy for the taking of photographs or videotaping during the First Communion. First Communion team members need to monitor and implement this strictly.

VI. The Sacrament of Penance – First Penance

111. Children’s Right to Receive First Penance and First Communion

Children who have reached the age of reason have the right to receive First Penance/Reconciliation and First Communion. “For the administration of the Most Holy Eucharist to children, it is required that they have sufficient knowledge and careful preparation so as to understand the mystery of Christ according to their capacity, and can receive the Body of the Lord with faith and devotion”. ([canon, no. 913](#), §1)

112. Those responsible for parish sacramental preparation programs should arrange for parents to be involved in the preparation of their children.

113. An interview with the pastor or his delegate could facilitate the [judgment of readiness](#). If the determination is negative, First Penance is to be delayed to a future date and help offered to parents to remedy the cause of the delay.

114. Catechesis for Children’s First Reception of the Sacrament of Penance:

The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is so essentially tied into the meaning of life and the meaning of the Gospel message, that it should be included at all levels of a parish education program according to the age, maturity and level of faith development of the individual. This process is intended for those preparing to receive the Sacrament for the first time. It presumes that as the child matures, further catechesis will be provided in the middle grades, junior high and high school years.

115. Since growth in faith continues throughout life, adults also will seek out catechesis to help them integrate their maturing understanding of sin, penance and reconciliation.

116. Catechesis for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation is to precede the catechesis for First Communion and must be kept distinct by a clear and unhurried separation. This is to be done so that the specific identity of each sacrament is apparent and, so that, before receiving First Communion, the child will be familiar with the Rite of Reconciliation and will be at ease with the reception of the Sacrament.

117. **Content for Catechesis** The parish should provide parents with a preparation process that enables them to take on their role as primary educators of their children. The pastor, catechetical leader, together in collaboration with catechists, should determine what resources should be used by referencing the [Catechism Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series](#) published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Subcommittee on the Catechism.

118. Parishes should present age-appropriate catechesis for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation that helps children to:
- Acknowledge God's unconditional love for us
 - Turn to Christ and the Church for sacramental forgiveness and reconciliation
 - Recognize the presence of good and evil in the world and their personal capacity for both
 - Recognize their need for forgiveness, not only from parents and others close to them, but from God
 - Explore the meaning of the symbols, gestures, prayers, and scriptures of the Rite of Reconciliation
 - Understand how to celebrate the Rite of Reconciliation
 - Understand that "sacramental Confession is a means offered children of the Church to obtain pardon for sin, and furthermore that it is even necessary *per se* if one has fallen into serious sin." (*General Catechetical Directory*, Addendum, no. 3)
(NDC, no.36, §3B2)

Finally, catechesis for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation should also help children to understand the seal of confession. What penitents tell the confessor is kept secret. The seal of confession is inviolable. ([CCC, no. 1467](#))

119. **Parent Involvement:** Catechesis for children prior to their first reception of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation must always respect their natural disposition, ability, age, and circumstances. Since the family is intimately involved with the formation of a child's moral conscience and ordinarily integrates the child into the wider ecclesial communities, parents should be involved in the preparation of their children for this sacrament so that they can affirm and reinforce frequent participation in the sacraments. They orient the child toward God and encourage continual growth in the understanding of God's mercy and love.
120. It is recommended that a communal celebration that includes the family be used for Penance and Reconciliation.
121. Home-schoolers are required to participate in the immediate preparation for the sacraments in which all parish children participate, e.g. interviews for sacramental readiness, practice for sacramental celebrations, retreats, etc.
122. **Persons with Disabilities:** No age or grade is set for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance for persons who have developmental disabilities.

APPENDIX 1

SOURCES

- CCC Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Canon Code of Canon Law, Latin-English Edition, New English Translation
- DCI Decree on Christian Initiation, Introduction
Directory for Masses with Children
- GPD Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with
Disabilities
- EA The Church in America (Ecclesia in America)
- NDC National Directory for Catechesis
- NCD National Catechetical Directory
- RC Rite of Confirmation
- RIB Rite of Infant Baptism
- RM On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate (Redemptoris Missio)

I. Sacramental Readiness for Confirmation, First Communion and First Penance

1. Confirmation

[return to paragraph #46](#)

For various reasons, there may be questions if a candidate is ready for Confirmation. Although we cannot determine what is in the heart in terms of readiness for Confirmation, the following guidelines could be helpful in determining readiness on an objective level.

- Has the candidate met all requirements for the parish program?
- Has the candidate shown growth in terms of commitment, particularly in the areas of Mass attendance, service opportunities, and class discussions?
- Does the candidate have a basic understanding of Catholicism?
- If Mass attendance is problematic, what steps have been taken to get the candidate to understand the responsibility for participating? This means more than telling them to go to Mass. (i.e. Connect the youth with an adult mentor or create an agreement for improvement on attendance.)
- It is important to remember that not all parents find regular Mass attendance or faith involvement a priority; therefore, the teens should not be punished for this circumstance. Additionally, Confirmation is not a reflection of adult faith, but a sacrament of initiation, which allows for further growth and commitment.

2. Confirmation Interviews

[return to paragraph #48](#)

An interview with the candidate by the pastor or his delegate is recommended. This is an opportunity for some one-on-one time to get to know the candidate and where he/she stands in relation to the Confirmation process. A follow-up interview is also recommended to help assess the growth of the candidate throughout the process. Suggestions for discussion may include:

3. Initial Interview

- Give three events or experiences that have changed or shaped your life.
- What three adjectives/words would you use to describe yourself?
- What would you like to get out of the Confirmation process?
- Complete this sentence: One thing I know about myself is...
- How would you describe your current level of participation and frequency of attending Mass?
- What kinds of things do you struggle with as far as faith, God, and Church?
- What would you like to cover in the Confirmation process to help you more fully understand God, faith, and Church?
- What would make this the best possible experience for you?
- How do you pray?

4. Follow-up Interview

- Review the three events (from the initial interview). See if anything has changed or shaped them.

- What is Confirmation?
 - What is the connection between Baptism and Confirmation?
 - Why should you do service?
 - What's the connection of service to Confirmation?
 - What have been good service experiences?
 - What have you learned?
 - With what do you still struggle?
- Give an example of when the Holy Spirit has been present with you in a unique way.
- What can we (the parish) do to keep you active, involved, and interested in the Church?
- What changes have you seen in yourself since the Confirmation process started?
- Name the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and how they relate to your life.
- What does being confirmed mean? (It is not being an adult in the Church, but answers may include:
 - Holy Spirit, service, deeper sense of Catholicism, conversion, etc.)

5. First Communion

[return to paragraph #93](#)

Children show readiness to receive First Communion when:

- They have sufficient knowledge and careful preparation so as to understand the mystery of Christ according to their capacity and can receive the Body of the Lord with faith and devotion ([canon, no. 913](#))
- They understand that when the bread and wine are brought to the altar and blessed, they are no longer ordinary bread and wine, but have become Jesus' Body and Blood for us
- They show a sense of reverence for God
- They show a sense of reverence at Mass
- They have the desire to celebrate the Sacrament
- Prayer is part of their life
- They and some family members regularly attend Sunday Eucharist.

6. First Penance and Reconciliation

[return to paragraph #113](#)

Children show readiness to celebrate the Sacrament when:

- They know the difference between right and wrong
- They know the difference between sin and accidents or mistakes
- They are capable of saying, "I am sorry" on their own
- They are capable of reflecting on their actions when asked about them
- They understand God will always forgive them
- They show a sincere desire to right wrongs
- They have a desire to celebrate the sacrament
- Prayer is part of their lives
- They and some family members regularly attend Sunday Eucharist.

APPENDIX 3

Directory of Valid and Invalid Baptism among Christian Churches

Most baptisms are recognized as valid baptisms. Some are not. It is very difficult to question the validity of a baptism because of intention either on the part of the minister or on the part of the one baptized. What follows is a partial list only, regarding the matter and form, not the intention.

ADVENTISTS:

Water baptism by immersion using the Trinitarian formula. Baptism is conferred at the age of reason. **VALID**

A dedication ceremony is administered to infants. The two ceremonies are separate. Many protestant religions have the dedication ceremony which is NOT BAPTISM. (*If the Church has the dedication ceremony, baptism is generally not conferred until the age of reason or until APPROXIMATE AGE OF 13.*)

AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL:

Baptism conferred with water by sprinkling, pouring and/or dunking using the Trinitarian formula: **VALID**. There is an open door ceremony with is NOT Baptism.

AGLIPAYANS:

The latest information is from Fr. Archutegui, SJ, Manila, September 1982. Fr. Archutegui is the Secretary of the Bishops' Commission for Promoting Christian Unity.

The following practical norms may be of help:

Any baptism administered in the IGLESIA FILIPINA INDEPENDIENTE (IFI) or Philippine Independent Church (PIC) **prior to 7 April 1948** when a formal "re-consecration" of the PIC bishops by Episcopalian bishops took place must be considered *at least as doubtful* unless it had been administered by a former Catholic priest or there is some incontrovertible proof to the contrary. This norm is applicable to all baptisms administered by any of the Aglipayan groups prior to 1948.

Baptisms administered by the IFI as IFI prior to 1948, or by the Unitarian groups issuing from the IFI even after 1948 up to the present, and particularly by the "Independent Church of Filipino Christians" [the bigger Aglipayan group after the PIC which still carries the original tenets of the IFI and is considered by many as the "genuine" IFI], are to be held **INVALID**, since the official baptismal Unitarian formula taken from the OFICIO DIVINO (1906) was and is being used. Again the exception would be if the baptism has been administered by a former Catholic priest or the contrary is evident.

Since today the biggest, and juridically the official IFI/PIC is the Philippine Independent Church, the main attention should be directed to this group. Within this group in turn, three tendencies/traditions must be acknowledged:

1. The baptism of the majority of the ILOCANOS, even if they belong now to the PIC but if they were baptized prior to September 1961, **most probably** is **INVALID** due to the fact that in Ilocos region, Aglipayans maintained their allegiance to the original Unitarian IFI until very late.

2. If the baptism has been administered by an Aglipayan minister of the PIC who after September 1961 received his training in St. Andrew's Episcopalian Seminary together with seminarians of the Philippine Episcopal Church (PEC), the baptism is to be considered **VALID**.
3. If the minister belongs NOW to the Philippine Independent Church but did NOT receive his training at St. Andrew's Seminary, baptisms administered should be considered **DOUBTFUL**, unless there is evidence to the contrary.

Problem: Because of burnings during WWII and the migration of the Ilocanos to the Central Plain in Luzon and to Coronadal Valley in Mindanao, there is great difficulty in tracing records as well as ministers. Inquire about the birthplace, birth date, date of baptism. *If they come from the cities, or fairly large towns or centers, they most probably have merged with the Philippine Episcopal Church, and their baptism is VALID.* If they come from remote towns with small chapels, they most probably still belong to the original IFI where the Unitarian baptism is used, and is **INVALID**.

AMISH: VALID

This is coupled with the Mennonites. No infant baptism. The rite of baptism seems **valid**.

ANGLICAN: VALID

APOSTOLIC CHURCH: VALID

THE ASSEMBLY OF GOD: VALID

A dedication ceremony is possible. Infants are not customarily baptized. Baptism through water takes place when a person is mature enough to understand its implications. The method of baptism is not outlined, but appears **VALID**.

BAPTISTS:

No infant baptism. There is a ceremony of dedication, which is NOT BAPTISM. **VALID** baptism takes place at the approximate age of 13.

BOHEMIAN FREE THINKERS: NO BAPTISM

The name giving ceremony is NOT BAPTISM. There is no Trinitarian formula.

CHRISTADELPHIANS: INVALID

This community shares a belief in a spiritual rebirth by immersion. No Trinitarian formula since there is no belief in the Trinity.

CHRISTIAN and MISSIONARY ALLIANCE: INVALID

No belief in infant Baptism, but only to those who give evidence of repentance and new birth. Baptism is seldom conferred before the age of 12. Conferred by immersion, it is given upon the personal confession of Christ as the Savior of this person. The formula is not given.

CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS: INVALID

The mother Church of all Christian Science Churches states: "Baptism is an individual spiritual experience. It is not a religious rite or ceremony performed by an ordained minister or priest." The textbook states that it is purification by spirit. A letter from the Board of Directors states there is no baptismal ritual in the Christian Science movement.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN [formerly called DUNKERS]: VALID

Baptism is made by triune immersion. The formula in Matthew is used.

CHURCH OF DIVINE SCIENCE: INVALID

The ceremony is a christening ceremony, but not one of baptism. There is no change brought about in the person who is blessed. The church does not believe in original sin, so the child is blessed only when received into the church.

CHURCH OF GOD:

There is a public infant dedication with no sacramental significance.

Baptism is conferred later by immersion and with the Trinitarian formula: **VALID** baptism is conferred when the individual asks for it.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH: VALID

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE: VALID

Infants are baptized or dedicated according to the wish of the parents. The Trinitarian formula is used. The matter is not mentioned.

DISCIPLES AND CHRISTIANS [Disciples of Christ]:

There is a dedication service. No infant Baptism. The Trinitarian formula used in baptism by immersion at an older age: **VALID**

DOOR OF FAITH CHURCH:

Infants are anointed with oil which is NOT Baptism.

Baptism is conferred when they are older and are "born again". Baptism is by immersion using the Trinitarian formula: **VALID**.

EPISCOPALIANS: VALID

EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN: VALID

Members are not received into this church unless they have been baptized. Assurance of baptism is required before membership is extended. There is a dedication ceremony. Baptism by water is valid and is generally done by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling. The Trinitarian formula is used.

EVANGELICAL CHURCHES: VALID

JEHOVAH WITNESSES: INVALID

It appears that the Jehovah Witnesses are fundamentalists, Unitarians. The divinity of Christ is explicitly denied, as is the existence of the Holy Spirit as a person. In the ceremony of baptism there is a discourse. It is really a symbol of dedication rather than baptism. The person enters the water but his/her name is not called. No words or formula are pronounced while the person is submerged or immersed in the water. The intention of the minister is to baptize the person into the Jehovah Witness sect, thereby not intending to baptize in the name of the Triune God.

LATTER DAY SAINTS [Mormons]: INVALID

There is a dedication ceremony in which **no water** is used. Baptism takes place by immersion but not before the age of 8. The Roman Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake has stated that "in regard to **matrimonial cases**, Mormon baptism is presumed to be **valid**." This is also stated in the Canon Law Digest, vol. 8, p 677. However, because of **theological** problems, Mormon baptism is **INVALID for purposes of the R.C.I.A.**

LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH: VALID

Apparently valid baptism with respect to matter and form.

LUTHERAN CHURCH: VALID

MASONS: NO BAPTISM

MENNONITES: See AMISH

NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP [Four-Square Gospel]: VALID

The Trinitarian formula is used.

METHODIST CHURCH: VALID

However, there is a cradle roll, which is a listing of the names of infants too young to attend Sunday school. This record is kept separate from the Baptismal record. In many instances, names appear on both rolls. If a name appears on one, it is no indication that it would or should appear on the other. Since the church baptizes infants, however, if one is listed on the cradle roll, at least one pastor has stated it would seem to indicate that there was also baptism which may or may not have been recorded.

OLD CATHOLICS: VALID [Separated themselves after Vatican I]

PENTECOSTAL CHURCHES: INVALID

Baptism is considered invalid because of their use of the Unitarian formula. This is found in the official book of the Pentecostal Assembly. Yet baptism is considered necessary for salvation and is done by immersion.

THE PEOPLES CHURCH OF CHICAGO: INVALID

Dr. Preston Bradley stated that the doctrine of his church on baptism is that it is a naming ceremony, a dedication and consecration of the child, and a commitment of the parents to teach and, by example, to help the child grow in knowledge and love of God. It is not absolutely necessary for salvation. Water is used but only the name of God the Father is mentioned in the formula.

POLISH NATIONAL CHURCH: VALID

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH: VALID

QUAKERS [Society of Friends]: INVALID

Enrollment in Sunday school rolls does not mean baptism. The Friends Church does not observe baptism as an outward rite, but rather as an inward work of God. There are no baptismal records. Baptism is spiritual, and “in no way strengthened by the application of water.” Since no water is used, baptism is considered to be **invalid**.

REFORMED CHURCHES: VALID

SALVATION ARMY: NO BAPTISM

The Salvation Army Headquarters state they do not have a baptismal service, but a religious ceremony called dedication service of children, and also a cradle roll.

SCIENTOLOGY CHURCH: NO BAPTISM

The scientology church has a naming ceremony for infants. The church does not confer baptism on its members.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST: VALID

[Congregationalist, Evangelical and Reformed Churches]

UNIVERSALISTS: INVALID

Universalists and Unitarians merged in May 1960, which took effect in 1961. Before that time, Universalists favored ultimate salvation and rejected original sin. In time, they denied the Trinity and the Divinity of Jesus. NO VALID BAPTISM in either church.

APPENDIX 4

Baptismal Certificates for Adopted Children

[return to paragraph 28](#)

Decree of Promulgation given at the offices of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington, DC, on October 20, 2000.

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in accord with the prescriptions of canon 877§3, hereby decrees that:

(I) For children baptized after their adoption is finalized, the following information shall be entered into the register:

- a) the Christian name(s) of the child as designated by the adoptive parent(s);
- b) the name(s) of the adoptive parent(s);
- c) the date and place of birth;
- d) the names of the sponsors selected by the adoptive parent(s);
- e) the place and date of the baptism;
- f) the name of the minister performing the baptism; and
- g) the fact of adoption but not the names of the natural parents.

Baptismal certificates issued by the parish for adopted children will be no different from other baptismal certificates. No mention of the fact of adoption shall be made on the baptismal certificate.

(II) For children baptized before their adoption is finalized, the following notations shall be added to the baptismal register, but only after the adoption has been finalized and with due regard for the civil law of jurisdiction:

- a) parentheses shall be placed around the names of the natural parents;
- b) the name(s) of the adoptive parent(s) shall then be added;
- c) the child's former surname shall also be parenthesized and the new surname added; and
- d) a notation shall be made that the child was legally adopted.

Baptismal certificates issued by the parish for these individuals shall give only the name(s) of the adoptive parent(s), the child's new legal surname, the date and place of baptism, and the name of the minister who conferred the sacrament. The name(s) of the sponsor(s) shall not be given, and no mention of the fact of adoption shall be made on the baptismal certificate.

For future ease in reference, and to afford what may often be the only possibility of reference after the adoption has been finalized, a baptismal entry for the adopted 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 name of the adoptive parents, and the date and place of birth.

Parish personnel having access to parish registers have an obligation not to disclose to any person any information which would identify or reveal, directly or indirectly, the fact that a person was adopted.