

# Sacramental Policies & Guidelines Archdiocese of Santa Fe

The following policies were promulgated in 1991 and 1992 by then Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez. Additions and some minor revisions were made by Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan together with the Presbyteral Council in November of 1997, in October of 2001, and in September of 2005. They were updated June 2012.

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**LITURGICAL GUIDELINES** for sacramental celebrations may be found on the website under Sacramental Guidelines and on the Office of Worship web page.

*For information or clarification of these policies, please contact  
the Archdiocesan Office of Worship and Christian Initiation  
(505-831-8191)*

## THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL

*The sacraments of the New Testament, instituted by Christ the Lord and entrusted to the Church, as they are actions of Christ and the Church, stand out as the signs and means by which the faith is expressed and strengthened, worship is rendered to God and the sanctification of humankind is effected, and they thus contribute in the highest degree to the establishment, strengthening and manifestation of ecclesial communion; therefore both the sacred ministers and the rest of the Christian faithful must employ the greatest reverence and the necessary diligence in their celebration. (CIC 840)*

- 1 In the celebration of the sacraments in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, the ordained ministers are to use the liturgical books most recently approved by the Holy See and the Conference of Bishops of the United States.
- 2 Cultural sensitivity and adaptations through music and gesture in the celebrations of the sacraments is encouraged. In order to protect the integrity of the sacramental life of the Church and avoid abuses, the adaptations need the approval of the Archbishop. Requests for approval are to be made through the Office of Worship.
- 3 The ordained ministers may not refuse the sacraments to those who ask for them at appropriate times, are properly disposed and are not prohibited by law from receiving them. (CIC 843, §1)
  - 3.1 All members of the Church have the right to be assisted by their pastors with the spiritual riches of the Church, especially the Word of God and the sacraments. (cf. CIC 213) Therefore pastors are responsible for providing the sacraments to all members of the church living in the territory of the parish whether these persons are registered, contributing members of the parish or not.<sup>1</sup>
  - 3.2 Ordained ministers are not to create prohibitions of their own that are not already in the Code of Canon Law, the approved liturgical books and laws, and the policies set down by the Archbishop of Santa Fe.
  - 3.3 If one of the Christian faithful is requesting that a sacrament be celebrated after it has already been delayed/refused, the ordained minister that is being asked the second time ought to consult with the one that delayed/refused the first request or with the dean before the celebration of the sacrament takes place.
  - 3.4 Christian faithful who feel aggrieved by the decision of an ordained minister to delay/refuse a sacrament may have recourse to have their right to the sacraments vindicated if indeed they were violated. (cf. CIC 221; 1400) The minister is to follow the directives given by the competent authority.
    - 3.4.1 If the grievance is against one of the members of the parish staff, not the pastor, recourse is to be presented to the pastor.
    - 3.4.2 If the grievance is against the pastor, or the aggrieved party wants to appeal the decision of 3.4.1, recourse is to be presented to the dean.
    - 3.4.3 If the grievance is against the dean, or the aggrieved party wants to appeal the decision of 3.4.2, recourse is to be presented to the Tribunal Office of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.
    - 3.4.4 The decision of the Tribunal is ordinarily the final decision. If subsequent appeals are possible, the aggrieved party will be notified of the procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> While parish registration is not a requirement for the reception of sacraments, the parish census should be updated at the time that the sacraments are celebrated, e.g., names of the newly baptized infants added to the list, new registration for the newlywed, etc.

- 4 Catholic ministers may not ordinarily administer the sacraments to those who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church, with the exception mentioned in canon 844, §3.<sup>2</sup>
- 5 Beyond the offerings defined by the Provincial Bishops, the ordained Ministers are not to ask for further offering for the administration of the sacraments. (cf. CIC 848, 1264, 1161)<sup>3</sup> Care is to be taken that people are not denied the sacraments because they cannot afford the fees. Any appearance in trafficking is to be entirely excluded.
- 6 As a general rule the sacraments are to be celebrated in the parish church or approved chapels or oratories.
- 7 The *Sacramental Records Policy* for the Archdiocese of Santa Fe (June 2008) is to be followed when completing these records.
  - 7.1 Sacramental records of the parish are confidential.
  - 7.2 Since sacramental books are official documents of the Church, every effort must be made to keep them neat, and, as far as possible, safe from theft or fire or water damage. Fire-proof cabinets or safes are recommended.
  - 7.3 While it is a right of the faithful to obtain an authentic copy of the records that affect their status in the Church,<sup>4</sup> parish staff is not to allow them to inspect the parish sacramental books since they contain information about others.
  - 7.4 Pastors or Administrators are to see that their staff is properly instructed about the confidentiality of records and that they are sworn to keep secrecy about the information that is found in the parish records.
  - 7.5 In providing baptismal information of those who have been adopted, care must be taken that the natural parents are not revealed unless a court order has been issued in accord with the Statutes of the State of New Mexico.
  - 7.6 Historical records prior to 1900 should be delivered to the chancellor's office for safe keeping in the archives.
  - 7.7 Requests for genealogical research are to be made through the Archdiocesan Office for Historic-Artistic Patrimony and Archives.

<sup>2</sup> Catholic ministers may licitly administer the sacraments of penance, Eucharist and anointing of the sick to members of the oriental churches which do not have full communion with the Catholic Church, if they ask on their own for the sacraments and are properly disposed. This holds also for members of other churches which in the judgment of the Apostolic See are in the same condition as the oriental churches as far as these sacraments are concerned.

<sup>3</sup> Offerings approved by Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan and promulgated in March 2003:

	Minimum (the minister may choose to ask nothing)	Suggested (the normal offering expected throughout the Archdiocese)	Maximum (beyond which no one may ask)
BAPTISM	\$0	\$20	\$40
FUNERAL	\$0	\$100	\$150
WEDDING	\$0	\$100	\$200
MASS INTENTION	\$0	\$10	\$10

<sup>4</sup> Canon 487, §2: It is a right of interested parties to obtain personally or through their proxy an authentic written copy or a photocopy of documents which are public by their nature and which pertain to the status of such persons.