

MEMORANDUM

June 3, 2002

Memorial of St. Charles Lwanga and Companions

TO: All Priests and Deacons

FROM: The Very Reverend John J. M. Foster, J.C.L.
Judicial Vicar

RE: Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation before Marriage

Questions have arisen the past few months concerning the celebration of confirmation before marriage.

Canon 1065, §1 states: “Catholics who have not yet received the sacrament of confirmation are to receive it before they are admitted to marriage if it can be done without grave inconvenience.” While the canon expresses the Church’s desire that Catholics entering marriage should be confirmed, it does not require that they must be confirmed prior to marriage. Whether or not a party is confirmed does not affect the validity of the marriage. Therefore, it would be improper and a violation of a person’s right to marry for a pastoral minister to refuse to celebrate the marriage of a person because he or she was not confirmed.

Catholics who have not been confirmed prior to marriage should be warmly encouraged to enter a preparation process to celebrate the sacrament of confirmation. During this time, candidates can be suitably instructed and acquire the proper disposition (c. 889, §2).