

**REQUESTING THE CELEBRATION OF SACRAMENTS  
AT OUR LADY OF LORETO CHAPEL  
LA BAHIA, TEXAS**

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## **WELCOME**

Welcome to Goliad. Roman Catholics have worshipped in this area for hundreds of years, dating to back to the Spanish presence in the sixteenth century. If you are just passing through, or if you are staying for a while, we welcome you.

The present site of the Presidio Nuestra Señora de Loreto de la Bahia (the fort of Our Lady of Loreto by the bay) located near the San Antonio River was established in 1749. This was the third and final location of the presidio, and the place of the massacre, which played a part in the subsequent battles to achieve Texas independence from Mexico.

Over her time from 1749, nine flags have flown over the Presidio, six countries: Spain (1519-1821), France (1685-1689), Mexico (1821-1836), the Republic of Texas (1836-1845), the Confederate States of America (1861-1865), and the United States of America (1845-1861, and 1865-present), and three revolutionary forces: the First Republic of Texas (1812), the James Long Expedition (1821), and Captain Phillip Dimmitt (December 20, 1835).

The chapel of Our Lady of Loreto, located in La Bahia, is under the pastoral care of the pastor of Immaculate Conception parish in Goliad, Texas. The chapel is the oldest continuous use chapel west of the Mississippi River. Mass is celebrated each Sunday, as well as other Sacraments, such as weddings.

The following serves as a guide to requests for holding sacramental celebrations in the chapel, with a brief history of the chapel.

The Reverend Ty Bazar  
Pastor

### Addresses/Information

Immaculate Conception Church  
238 N. Commercial Street  
Goliad, Texas 77963  
361.645-3095 361.645-3097 (f)

Presidio La Bahia  
217 U.S. Highway 183  
Goliad, Texas 77963  
361.645-3752 361.645-1706 (f)

## **A HISTORY OF THE CHAPEL AT THE PRESIDIO LA BAHIA**

This chapel in La Bahia dedicated to Our Lady of Loreto, also found its final resting spot here in Goliad. Built in 1749, it served as the chapel of the fortress, for the colonists from the United States and those Tejanos fighting in the rebellion against Mexico, and those settlers living in the area.

As in Mary's house of the Annunciation, this too was the third location of the fort in the history that would become that of Texas, as the fight for independence and later statehood would put Goliad at the beginning of Texas' revolution and independence from Mexico.

The chapel was reconstructed in the 1920's after years of disrepair, but the integral structure was still intact. The chapel has a unique groin vaulted ceiling supported by four foot thick walls. It is believed the 1749 version was of plastered jacal or adobe styled building, with a pole-framed pitched roof covered with thatch. The second was a stone walled rectangle with shingled roof. And the third was the present Spanish version of stone.

### **Saint Mary, Our Lady of Loreto**

The title of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Loreto, refers to the house which exists in Loreto, Italy at the most revered Marian shrine in the world. The house is historically and spiritually important because it is where the Annunciation took place, the visit of the Archangel Gabriel to Mary, announcing that she was to be the mother of Jesus. The house was transported by angels from the Nazareth in the Holy Land to Tersatto, Dalmatia (Trsat in present day Croatia) on May 10, 1291, secondly to Recanati, Italy on December 10, 1294, and finally to Loreto, Italy in 1295.

### **Patronage**

Because of the flight of the house from Nazareth to Loreto, Italy; Mary under the title of Our Lady of Loreto, became the patroness of aviators. Its longevity as a house has also made her the patroness of builders and construction workers.

## **The Doll of Our Lady**

The image above the main altar is another image of Mary that has been in the chapel for decades, but was absent for a while; some say even ending up in Mexico for a time. It dates back to 1722 when it was placed by the Marqués de Aguayo. It moved with the chapel furnishings to Mission Valley in 1724, and from there to the San Antonio River site in 1749. Left dirty and defaced in the years 1837-1936, the statue was rescued by a priest in charge of the old chapel, and taken to San Antonio to be restored by experts. It is dressed periodically in colors of the liturgical seasons.

## **The Statue above the Chapel Entrance**

This statue above the entrance of Mary, was executed by Lincoln Borglum during the 1960's restoration, specifically for the niche. Originally from Beeville, Texas, he is the son of famed sculptor Gutzon Borglum who sculpted Mount Rushmore.

## **The Loreto Replica Statue**

The carved statue in the adjacent room to the right is a replica of the image of Our Lady of Loreto in Italy. The statue depicts Mary holding the infant Jesus, and both are crowned. The original "Black Madonna" of Loreto was carved of cedar of Lebanon, but was destroyed by fire on February 23, 1921. Pope Pius XI granted a canonical coronation of the new statue of Our Lady of Loreto on September 5, 1922, replacing the torched one. The present statue in Loreto, Italy is made of cedar wood timbered from the Vatican gardens.



## **PROCEDURE FOR BOOKING A SACRAMENT**

*Note: This procedure is for booking a Sacrament by a Roman Catholic. All other events or inquiries outside of pastoral/sacramental concerns should be made to the Director of La Bahia.*

1. Please phone the pastor in Goliad to discuss your request. This is important, so as to determine if there are any pastoral concerns, before continuing with booking. The office phone number is 361-645-3095.
2. Phone the La Bahia office and speak with the director about available dates, fees for use of the chapel, and booking. The director will provide you with details concerning use of the chapel, such as times and special needs. The La Bahia office phone number is 361-645-3752.
3. If you are requesting the Pastor of Goliad to perform the Sacrament, phone the pastor with the scheduled date to make certain it is still available on his calendar.
4. If you are desiring to bring outside clergy for the Sacrament, please follow the procedure below, under frequently asked questions, and following the norms for those exercising ministry within the Diocese of Victoria

### **Baptisms**

- Consult the pastor to approve baptism and answer questions.
- Fill out the registration form, on the [www.goliadcatholic.org](http://www.goliadcatholic.org) website
- A copy of the Birth Certificate of the child to be baptized is required
- If you are registered at another parish, you must provide a letter from your pastor, attesting that you are a Catholic in good standing.

## Weddings

- \_\_\_\_\_ Weddings are generally booked six months in advance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parishioners, or those whose family belongs to the parish, as well as non-parishioners should contact the pastor first.
- \_\_\_\_\_ After contacting the pastor, they should contact the director for dates.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reception venues should be booked after the wedding is booked. There is no guarantee the wedding will take place even if the reception venue is booked.

## Quinceañeras

- \_\_\_\_\_ Please contact the pastor for scheduling and details.

This ceremony symbolizes the responsibility of a young lady at this age in her life to the human group of which she is a member. The custom is popularly understood today as the presentation of the young lady to society. In order to bring out the religious and spiritual dimensions, Catholics celebrate this custom with special emphasis on the awareness and sensitivity of the young lady in dealing with the values, concerns, and challenges of the Christian community.

While the quince años celebration is not a sacrament, the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist play a vital role in it.

### Basic Requirements:

#### **The young lady approaching her fifteenth birthday must:**

1. Be a registered member of the parish
2. Be a practicing Catholic attending Mass on Sundays/Holy Days
3. Currently be enrolled and attending Religious Education Classes
4. Be baptized a Catholic.
5. Have celebrated her First Holy Communion.
6. Schedule six (6) months in advance.
7. Attend the workshop when offered.

## Daily Masses – Pilgrimage/Tour Gatherings

----- If you are leading a group to La Bahia and would like to celebrate Mass, you will need to notify the pastor of Immaculate Conception in Goliad by phone or email to ask permission.

----- If you are a priest from outside of the Diocese of Victoria, you will have to prepare and send in the letter of suitability for permission from the Chancellor to enter the diocese and celebrate Mass.

The form is located on the Diocese of Victoria website:  
[www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org) under the Chancellor tab.

----- Dates and scheduling availability would then be directed to the Director of the Presidio.

We will assist in the setting up for the Mass, provided a sacristan is available.

We are more than ready to assist you in making a spiritual pilgrimage.

## CHECKLIST OF REQUIREMENTS

---- Letter of Suitability for visiting clergy (if necessary)

- Visiting clergy must complete the form on the diocesan website, six months prior to the event in the case of a wedding: [victoriadiocese.org/chancellor](http://victoriadiocese.org/chancellor). Immediate requests of visiting clergy may not be granted.

- Please fill out the online request form. It will be sent to the chancellor of the Victoria Diocese. He will compose the letter and send it to the designated official.

Note: The Testimony of Suitability Letter is not sufficient for canonical delegation. If a priest/deacon is officiating at a wedding, other than in his canonically assigned parish, he must obtain delegation from the pastor of the parish and follow all regulations of the diocese in which the wedding is celebrated.

---- Ask for delegation from pastor in Goliad.

*This may be written or verbal, but should be done by the clergy themselves. So you will want to call them and see that they are also free to perform the marriage, baptism, etc.*

## Fees

Any fees with regard to the chapel use are given by the Director of the Presidio.

The customary stole fee for a baptism for the priest/deacon is \$50.

The customary stole fee for a quinceanera for the priest/deacon is \$75.

The customary stole fee for a wedding for the priest/deacon is \$150.

Visiting clergy may assess their own fees, please consult them when scheduling.



## **SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Am I able to have a baptism in the chapel?**

Yes. But you will need to provide the necessary information by filling out the forms, providing a birth certificate, and speak with the pastor for approval.

### **Do I have to be baptized to baptize my children Catholic?**

It is preferred that at least one parent be baptized Catholic, due to the fact that the parents or legal guardians must agree to raise the child in the faith upon being baptized. Parents will be asked if it is their will that the child be baptized into the faith they profess during the ceremony, so they should have the same faith. If the parents refuse to raise their child in the Catholic faith, then the child may not be baptized.

### **I'm having trouble finding two godparents who meet all the qualifications, do I have to have two, one or any?**

The answer is yes; if you are not able to find godparents, you may still proceed with the ceremony. If you have two, one must be male and one must be female. You may also just have one godparent. They should be at least 16, be a baptized, confirmed, practicing Catholic (if married, married in the Church), living a life of faith and of good morals.

### **Do I have to be a member of the parish to have my wedding in the chapel?**

No. But you will have to provide membership verification from your home parish with a letter from your pastor for the bride and groom. You will have to also follow the norms for the Diocese of Victoria or diocese of residence with regard to marriage preparation. Following meeting requirements, all information is forwarded to the pastor of Immaculate Conception to be recorded and stored in the permanent file in Goliad.

### **Can I have a Mass to celebrate my wedding anniversary?**

Yes. Please contact the pastor for more information.

## **NORMS FOR THOSE EXERCISING MINISTRY WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS**

Any priest, deacon, religious (brother/sister), or lay person, who resides outside the Diocese of Victoria and either requests or is invited to enter into the diocese to teach/preach on faith, morals, and/or liturgy within a parish, Catholic school, religious house, or diocesan event, must receive appropriate permission (cf. CIC 756-772). The following norms apply to those seeking to exercise ministry within the Diocese of Victoria in Texas:

1. Any cleric, who is invited into the diocese to function in any kind of official capacity, must present proof of possessing the faculties of his own diocese of incardination and forward to the Office of the Chancellor a diocesan approved Letter of Good Standing and Testimonial of Suitability for Ordained Ministry. (cf. CIC 386.1, 903).
2. Clerics belonging to a religious order or institute of consecrated life, seeking permission to teach/preach in the diocese, must forward to the Office of the Chancellor a Letter of Good Standing and Testimonial of Suitability for Ordained Ministry from his major/local superior.
3. A religious brother/sister must present a Letter of Good Standing from his/her superior to the Office of the Chancellor, prior to the scheduled event.
4. All lay faithful invited to teach in the Diocese of Victoria are to submit to the Office of the Chancellor a letter of endorsement from his/her bishop and/or pastor testifying to their fidelity to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.
5. Pastors may grant permission for priests to concelebrate a wedding Mass/service, a funeral Mass or a Sunday/Weekday Mass, and for deacons to assist at such Masses and celebrations, on a one time basis, without obtaining the necessary documentation prescribed in paragraphs 1-2.
6. Before any request for diocesan publication/advertisement (diocesan website, newspaper, social media) for an event can be granted, with an invited speaker from outside the Diocese of Victoria, approval for the speaker must be obtained from the Office of the Chancellor.
7. In addition to the above norms, Institutes of Consecrated Life located within the Diocese of Victoria intending to invite speakers to teach/preach in their communities, are to inform the Office of the Chancellor, and in this manner obtain the Bishop's consent.
8. In addition to the above norms, if a person from outside the diocese (clergy, religious or lay) is invited to address a diocesan event, assembly or convention, the Office of the Chancellor must be consulted and, in this manner, obtain the Bishop's consent. This permission must be obtained PRIOR to extending the invitation to the speaker.
9. ALL permissions/approvals/letters of endorsement MUST be dated within a year of the intended event(s)
10. Clerics, religious or members of the laity, who have obtained permission to preach, teach or provide any type of ministry in the Diocese of Victoria, do not have to submit the required documentation or seek permission, if they return to the Diocese of Victoria within the course of the same calendar year.

*Approved and promulgated by Bishop Cahill on March 2, 2016*