To: All Priests and Deacons of the Diocese of Santa Rosa

Date: September 12, 2002

The Diocesan policies for the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage are in the accompanying folder. During the 2001 – 2002 session of the Presbyteral Council these diocesan policies were revised after consultation with the members of the five deaneries. Along with these sacramental policies, for your convenience, I have included the sacramental policies in English and Spanish for First Penance and First Eucharist which were promulgated in 1997.

I am deeply grateful to those Priests' Council members for their efforts in coordinating the revision of these sacramental policies. I present them to you now confident that they will assist you in your priestly/diaconal ministry and above all that the spirit of these policies will provide for the salvation of souls.

Also in the accompanying folder are guidelines in Spanish and English for a Quincenenera Ceremony and guidelines for Cremation which I trust will be helpful in your ministry as well.

With gratitude for your ministry, I am

Your Brother and Servant in the Lord,

Most Reverend Daniel F. Walsh
Bishop of Santa Rosa, in California
A. INTRODUCTION

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19-20).

"Holy 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. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons and daughters of God, we became members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission. "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word"” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1213).

B. PERIOD OF PREGNANCY

Before the child is born, the parents are encouraged to make contact with those responsible for baptismal preparations in the local parish concerning the intended baptism, so that proper arrangements may be made for the celebration. In this way, the parents are able to fulfill their responsibility as stated by Canon Law of baptizing their child within the first few weeks of birth. Pregnancy is the natural period of preparation for welcoming the infant into the family and the faith community alike (Canon 867, §1).

C. FOLLOWING THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

Pastoral practice regarding infant baptism must be governed by two principles:

1. Baptism is a gift from God and is the sign and the means of His prevenient love. In this Sacrament we are freed from original sin and it communicates to us a share in His divine life. Considered in itself, the gift of these blessings to infants must not be delayed.
2. Assurances must be given that the gift thus granted can grow by an authentic education in the faith and Christian life in order to fulfill the true meaning of the sacrament. As a rule, these assurances are to be given by the parents (at least by one parent or by a legal guardian, cf. Canon 868: §1 2). If these assurances are not taken seriously, there can be grounds for delaying the sacrament.

D. DELAYING CONFERRAL OF BAPTISM

It sometimes happens that pastors are approached by parents who apparently have little faith and practice their religion only occasionally. In this case the pastor will endeavor, to arouse the parents’ interest in the sacrament they are requesting and make them aware of the responsibility that they are assuming. In fact, the Church can only accede to the desire of these parents if they give an assurance that, once the child is baptized, it will be given the benefit of the Christian upbringing required by the sacrament. The church must have a founded hope that the baptism will bear fruit. If the assurances given, for example, the choice of godparents who will take sincere care of the child, or the support of the extended family are sufficient, the
priest cannot refuse to celebrate the sacrament without delay, as in the case of Christian families. If on the other hand they are insufficient, it will be prudent to delay baptism; however, the pastors should keep in contact with the parents so as to secure, if possible, the conditions required on their part for the celebration of the sacrament. If even this solution fails, it can be suggested as a last resource, that the child be enrolled in the catechumenate when the child reaches school age.

It must be clear that the delay or refusal of baptism is not a means of exercising pressure on the parents. Rather it is a time of educational delay according to individual cases, aimed at helping the family to grow in faith or to become more aware of their responsibilities. With regard to the assurances, any pledge giving a founded hope for the Christian upbringing of the child deserves to be considered as sufficient.

Applications of these Guidelines in the Diocese of Santa Rosa
1. In making the difficult and exceptional decision to defer baptism of an infant, the key issue my be stated: When is “founded hope” present and when is it not? Some of the negative criteria used at times by individual ministers of the sacrament do not seem to establish the absence of “founded hope” and therefore should not be used by themselves as sufficient reason for the delay or the refusal of the sacrament. Likewise, whether the parents’ marriage is valid or not is a pastoral concern that needs to be prudently addressed on the occasion of the arrangements for baptism, but it likewise does not constitute the key as to whether the “founded hope” required by Church law is present or absent. Even when the parents and/or godparents do not come to the pre-baptism catechesis which the parish provides, this is not, in and of itself, sufficient reason to judge that the necessary “founded hope” is absent.

2. In the case of the first couple of children of a family, the person with baptismal responsibility has “founded hope” merely from their own way of living as Catholics or from their sincere intention or promise. However, if there is a convergence of circumstances, all of which tend to indicate that this child will not be raised in the Catholic faith by parents or other responsible parties in any realistic sense, then there may well be grounds to delay baptism until the situation changes. If parents do not attend Mass, express no great determination to see that their children go to Mass, or attend some form of religious instruction and are unwilling to participate in some basic catechesis on the meaning of baptism and their responsibilities as parents, such a convergence of circumstances would be present and a “founded hope” can hardly be seen to be present. If a couple have older children who have not been raised as Catholics, the “founded hope” is clearly lacking.

3. Delay of baptism should only be used as a last resort. When baptism is deferred, the door should always be left open so that the parents may return at a later date to the Church.

4. Particular sensitivity must be exercised towards those who consider themselves as Catholics, who realize the importance of baptism for their children, but do not necessarily attend Mass with any regularity. In some cases these Catholics objectively may give little evidence of Catholicity, but subjectively may be leading lives of faith in the Lord. In such instances it is pastorally sound to admit the child to baptism, as long as the parents participate in a pre-baptismal program that will deepen their understanding of their faith in relation to the Christian community. This can be a time of great grace in their lives to draw a little closer to Christ in the mystery of the Church, which is a life-long process for all of us.
E. PRE-BAPTISMAL CATECHESIS

1. Catechesis is a ministry of the word which flows from the common worship and leads the faithful to witness through service. The goal of catechesis is to "make a person's faith 'become living, conscious, and active" (N.C.D. #32). Programs of pre-baptismal catechesis should move parents to a deeper faith life, and facilitate their incorporation into the worshipping community and its ministry of service. If they are prepared through a process that supports these goals of catechesis, they will enter into the ritual celebration with a deeper and more personal awareness of its meaning, its symbolism and its responsibilities.

2. Pastors are encouraged to involve lay couples in the ministry of baptismal catechesis, as they are able to share their own personal experiences, struggles and joys, of living out their faith in a Christian family. In smaller parishes, this catechesis can be given on a personal basis. In larger parishes, this catechesis may be given with a large number of parents but opportunity should be given for faith sharing. One formal session of catechesis is the minimum required. Godparents should be encouraged to attend but should not be absolutely required.

3. Parents who have been recently catechized in preparation for the baptism of a previous child are not required to participate in the one formal session of baptismal catechesis; however, the parish priest should encourage the parents to attend as an opportunity to deepen their own faith in preparation for the baptism of this new baby.

4. Each child must have at least one godparent (sponsor) or a child may have one of each sex (Canon 873). To be a godparent one must have completed the sixteenth year (an exception can be made by the priest or deacon for a just cause); be a confirmed practicing Catholic; not be bound by any canonical penalty; not be the father or mother. A baptized non-Catholic cannot act as a godparent but can be a Christian witness along with a Catholic sponsor. A non-baptized person cannot act as a godparent or witness. When a particular culture leads parents to seek more than two godparents it is the responsibility of the child's parents to determine the one or two principal godparents for the Church records.

A godparents’ responsibility is the nurturing of the faith life of the infants and support of the parents. The ministry of godparent is not viewed by the Church as merely an honorary position, nor does this presume the physical or financial support of the infant. It is preferable that the godparent(s) live in close enough proximity to the child and his/her family to take an active part in the faith lives of the parents and child, but this cannot be a condition for being a godparent (See Canons 872, 873, 874).

5. Although most Catholics are familiar with the conferral of the Sacrament of Baptism through infusion (pouring of water over the head of the person to be baptized), the Church has in recent times reinstated the Rite of Immersion. During the pre-baptismal catechesis the possibility of immersion should be explained, what is entailed in the rite and why it is more symbolic to baptize by immersion.

6. According to the documents of the Second Vatican Council, (cf. Liturgy, Chapter 1. #27), as well as the Rite of Baptism for Children, a communal celebration of the sacrament is to be preferred to that which is individual and 'quasi-private'. In keeping with this norm, baptism in the context of the Eucharist is highly recommended. "If possible, baptism should take place on Sunday, the day on which the Church celebrates the paschal mystery. It should be conferred in a communal celebration for all the recently born children, and in the presence of the faithful, or at least of relatives, friends, and neighbors, who are all to take an active part in the rite." (Rite of Baptism for Children, #32, also see Canon 856).
F. CONCLUSION

The Lord himself affirms that baptism is necessary for salvation (John 3:5). He also commands his disciples to proclaim the Gospel to all nations and to baptize them. Baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the possibility of asking for this sacrament. The Church does not know of any means other than baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude; this is why she takes care not to neglect the mission she has received from the Lord to see that all who can be baptized are "reborn of the water and the Spirit." God has bound salvation to the sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1257).

G. APPENDIX

1. It is the pastor's responsibility to ensure that the proper information relative to the newly baptized child's parents' names, including the mother's maiden name, the date & place of birth of the child and the name(s) of godparent(s), etc., is entered in the parish baptismal registry.

2. Concerning adopted children. The NCCB, in accord with the prescriptions of Canon 877 §3, hereby decrees that:

   a. For children baptized after their adoption is finalized, the following information shall be entered in the register:
      1. The Christian name(s) of the child as designated by the adoptive parent(s)
      2. The name of the adoptive parent(s)
      3. The date and place of birth
      4. The names of the sponsors selected by the adoptive parent(s)
      5. The place and date of the baptism
      6. The name of the minister performing the baptism
      7. The fact of adoption, but not the names of the natural parents.

   b. 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 the jurisdiction:
      1. Parentheses shall be placed around the names of the natural parents
      2. The names(s) of the adoptive parents(s) shall be added
      3. The child's former surname shall also be parenthesized and the new name surname added
      4. A notation shall be made that the child was legally adopted

   c. 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. 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.

Approved July 1, 2002
2. Parental Role
Since parents are the primary teachers of their children in the ways of faith, they need to understand the role of Reconciliation in their own lives. Thus, parishes are to provide ongoing catechesis for parents about the role of Penance/Reconciliation in the development of faith. As parents are informed, they can form their children in the faith, and all participate in the transformation of the world. The content for this catechesis is related to ongoing conversion:

Conversion is accomplished in daily life by gestures of reconciliation, concern for the poor, the exercise and defense of justice and right, by the admission of faults to one's brethren, fraternal correction, revision of life, examination of conscience, spiritual direction, acceptance of suffering, endurance of persecution for the sake of righteousness. Taking up one's cross each day and following Jesus is the surest way of penance. (CCC 1435)

Adult catechesis for Penance/Reconciliation may include:
- various prayer forms
- conscience formation
- Jesus as the great healer/reconciler
- Scriptural basis of the sacrament
- child development
- issues of conversion and faith development
- family experiences of forgiveness and reconciliation
- training for liturgical experiences of forgiveness
- penance in the life of the church

3. Liturgical Celebration of the Sacrament

The revised ritual (Reconciliation) offers forms and options for celebration of this sacrament. Among these are communal celebrations which more clearly show its ecclesial nature. Penitents have a choice of the customary anonymity (option 1) or face-to-face with the confessor (option 2). A choice is also offered among various prayers and readings (NCD 124).

Two forms for the Rite of Penance/Reconciliation are appropriate for the celebrations of this sacrament with children:

1. Rite of reconciliation for an Individual
   a) Reception of the penitent
   b) Reading of the Word of God
   c) Confession of Sin
   d) Acceptance of Satisfaction
   e) Prayer of the Penitent and Absolution
   f) Proclamation of the Praise of God
   g) Dismissal
CATECHESIS FOR FIRST RECONCILIATION

THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Catechesis for children must help the child recognize moral good and evil, repent of wrongdoing, and turn for forgiveness to Christ and the Church. It should encourage the child to see that, in this sacrament, faith is expressed by being forgiven and forgiving. It should encourage the child to approach the sacrament freely and regularly.

Catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance) is to precede First Communion and must be kept distinct by a clear and unhurried separation. This is to be done so that, before receiving First Communion, the child will be familiar with the revised Rite of Reconciliation and will be at ease with the reception of the sacrament. The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance) normally should be celebrated prior to the reception of First Communion. Because continuing lifelong conversion is part of what it means to grow in faith, catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance) is ongoing. Children have a right to a fuller catechesis each year. Lent is an especially appropriate season for this. (NCD 126/CCC 1457)

GUIDELINES

Children should be well prepared for First Penance/Reconciliation. Parents and pastors, along with the catechetical team, have the responsibility to provide catechesis that allows the child to come to know God's mercy and forgiveness, and the reality of sin.

The catechesis should genuinely provide for the child's right to go to confession. It should be very simple and in keeping with what is required for the first confession of young children, namely:

a) an ability to distinguish between right and wrong,

b) an awareness of the need for forgiveness,

c) a trust in the Father's forgiving love,

d) an ability to express both sorrow and a desire to change,

e) an ability to describe wrongdoing in his/her own words, and

f) an ability to understand that reconciliation is also between the penitent and the community.

PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Materials and Resources

Most publisher's textbooks have incorporated First Penance and First Eucharist preparation in their second grade books (ref. NCD 229, 264). Supplemental material for older children and/or more intense catechesis on preparing children for sacraments is provided in additional books by these same publishers. Any questions about textbooks or other appropriate material should be directed to the Office of Religious Education. Sound catechetical material enhances and promotes effective catechesis. It is always desirable to provide the best materials and resources to support catechetical preparation (ref. NCD 249).
Diocese of Santa Rosa
Sacrament Preparation Guidelines
First Penance and First Eucharist

PREAMBLE

1. General Purpose

THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS
The catechesis of children, young people and adults aims at teaching them to meditate on the Word of God in personal prayer, practicing it in liturgical prayer and internalizing it at all times in order to bear fruit in a new life. (CCC 2688)

GUIDELINES
All sacraments are parish centered celebrations of God's presence among us. It is essential that parents, pastors, catechists and parish communities strive to approach children's First Penance and First Eucharist preparation as unique opportunities to enhance their children's spiritual journey and to further develop their relationship with God.

Guidelines for First Penance and First Eucharist preparation for baptized children are intended to:

a) insure effective and appropriate preparation for children,
b) provide direction and support for parish programs,
c) address some practical and particular concerns.

It is understood that a parish may find it necessary to adapt certain directives according to the child's, parental, pastoral, or catechetical needs. It is also understood these adaptations will be done keeping in mind the spirit and intent of sacramental preparation set forth in the National Catechetical Directory.

2. READINESS

THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS
Catechesis for children must always respect the natural disposition, ability, age and circumstances of individuals. It seeks first to make clear the relationships of the sacrament to the child's life. (NCD 126)

GUIDELINES
To foster the necessary understanding of faith at a child's particular age level a minimum of two full consecutive years of catechetical instruction is to precede the reception of sacraments. Appropriate sacramental readiness, not chronological age or school grade, will determine a child's preparedness to encounter Christ in a sacramental celebration.
3. PARENTAL ROLE

THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. (CCC 2223)

Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. (CCC 2226)

Parents have a right and duty to be intimately involved in preparing their children for First Penance and First Eucharist. Catechesis aims to help parents grow in understanding and appreciation of the sacraments and participate readily in catechizing their children. (NCD 122)

GUIDELINES

Sufficient support to enable parents to fulfill this privilege and obligation should be provided by the parish in the form of parent education, encouragement of active involvement in their child's catechesis and participation in the planning, preparation and celebration of liturgies.

PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is desirable and advisable to place a child within an age peer group within a parish program while providing additional and simultaneous specific sacramental catechesis. This specific preparation can be in the form of special classes provided in the parish setting or by instructing and enabling parents to prepare their children at home in cooperation with parish directives. For either approach it is most important to provide individual faith support for every child, preferably from within the immediate family.
THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Catechesis for children must help the child recognize moral good and evil, repent of wrongdoing, and turn for forgiveness to Christ and the Church. It should encourage the child to see that, in this sacrament, faith is expressed by being forgiven and forgiving. It should encourage the child to approach the sacrament freely and regularly.

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PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

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2. **Parent’s Role**

Since parents are the primary teachers of their children in the ways of faith, they need to understand the role of Reconciliation in their own lives. Thus, parishes are to provide ongoing catechesis for parents about the role of Penance/Reconciliation in the development of faith. As parents are informed, they can form their children in the faith, and all participate in the transformation of the world. The content for this catechesis is related to ongoing conversion:

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Adult catechesis for Penance/Reconciliation may include:
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- conscience formation
- Jesus as the great healer/reconciler
- Scriptural basis of the sacrament
- child development
- issues of conversion and faith development
- family experiences of forgiveness and reconciliation
- training for liturgical experiences of forgiveness
- penance in the life of the church

3. **Liturgical Celebration of the Sacrament**

The revised ritual (Reconciliation) offers forms and options for celebration of this sacrament. Among these are communal celebrations which more clearly show its ecclesial nature. Penitents have a choice of the customary anonymity (option 1) or face-to-face with the confessor (option 2). A choice is also offered among various prayers and readings (NCD 124).

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   a) Reception of the penitent
   b) Reading of the Word of God
   c) Confession of Sin
   d) Acceptance of Satisfaction
   e) Prayer of the Penitent and Absolution
   f) Proclamation of the Praise of God
   g) Dismissal
2. **Communal Rite of Penance/Reconciliation with Individual Confession and Absolution**
   a) Introductory rites:
      - Song
      - Greeting
      - Opening Prayer
   b) Celebration of the Word:
      - First Reading
      - Psalm
      - Second Reading
      - Gospel
      - Homily
   c) Examination of Conscience
      - General confession of sin
   d) Individual Confession and Absolution
   e) Proclamation of Praise for God's Mercy
   f) Concluding Prayer of Thanksgiving
   g) Dismissal

The communal rite for First Penance/Reconciliation can also incorporate appropriate use of Scripture for the age level (such as role playing, dialogue readings, etc.) and appropriate music.

4. **Act of Contrition**
   With regard to a set or memorized form of the Act of Contrition, any simple form in keeping with the child's age and understanding is to be used. An example can be found in any approved textbook.
THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS
The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life". The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. (CCC 1324)

The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify..., to build up the body of Christ and finally, to give worship to God. Because they are signs, they also instruct. The not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen and express it. That is why they are called sacraments of faith. (CCC 1123)

Catechesis for First Communion is conducted separately from introductory catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance), since each sacrament deserves its own concentrated preparation. Continued catechesis is given yearly in all catechetical programs for children in as much as the sacraments require lifelong study and prayer (NCD 122).

GUIDELINES
1. Preparation
Preparation of a child for Eucharist should be the cooperative effort of parents, catechists and pastor. Each has a significant and vital role to play in assisting the child's maturing concept of Eucharist. The reality that what appears to be bread and wine is actually the real body and blood of Christ must be taught in a way that helps the child develop an understanding of this mystery. From the experiences of sharing, listening, eating, conversing, giving, thanking and celebrating, children will be able to begin to grasp the abstractions of "unity" and "belonging". Understanding these concepts and becoming familiar with the main events in Jesus' life helps children to participate meaningfully in the celebration of the Eucharist.

2. Parents
Parents are vital in helping children identify feelings of belonging and unity through the living of everyday family life. Parents are also compelling models of a living faith. In their unique role parents create for the child experiences which are essential to the child's understanding (ref. NCD 122).

3. Instruction
Catechetical instruction should always address the child at his/her age level and provide what is required for First Communion of a young child, namely:

a) an ability to understand that Eucharist is different from ordinary bread and wine,
b) a desire to receive Jesus in communion,
c) and an understanding of faith appropriate to age.

Such instruction could also include prayers and the development of a lively affection for the reception of the sacrament.
4. Discernment of Readiness
The primary decision regarding when a particular child is ready to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Eucharist rests with the parents and child. The child is initiated into the ongoing sacramental life of the whole church and therefore, if adequate preparation has taken place, the parish priest and catechist are slow to pre-empt the parental right to judge an individual's readiness.

PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Liturgical Celebration of the Sacrament
Parents, in dialogue with the pastor and Coordinator/DRE have the option of having their children receive Eucharist:

   a) as one of a group of first communicants in a solemn celebration;
   b) as a member of a small group with their families at a regular parish Sunday mass; or
   c) as an individual with his/her family on a day agreeable to priest and parents.

Families who choose an individual or small family group setting may also participate in the parish solemn celebration.

2. Planning Liturgies
Readings are chosen from an accepted translation with children in mind and in accord with the liturgical season.

The homily can be addressed primarily, although not exclusively, to the children present. It is best for the presider to give the homily, but it can be given by another qualified person if there is a need (ref. CIC, Canon 766).

The Eucharistic prayer should be selected from those approved specifically for use with children.

Music is chosen with the spirit of children in mind and selected from works that are both liturgically appropriate and familiar to the children.

Gifts should normally include only bread and wine, but can occasionally include other specific items that are in keeping with the spirit of gift and the purpose of the liturgical celebration.

Planning should actively include the children and their families along with the catechist and presider. Banners, decorations and booklets may be used to enhance the liturgy.

The liturgy should represent the community present, enrich their spiritual lives and provide an opportunity for all to worship.

3. Communion
Catechesis for the reception of Communion is to be done carefully, with reverence for the teaching of the Church about what we are doing and what we are receiving. The option of receiving communion in the hand or on the tongue belongs to the communicant. The cleric,
extraordinary minister of communion, the catechist or parent does not make the decision as to the manner of reception of communion. It is the communicant's right to make the choice. (NCCB Liturgy Newsletter, August 1977).

4. Communion Under Both Species

"The meaning of communion is signified as clearly as possible when it is given under both kinds. In this form the meal-aspect of the Eucharist is more clearly manifested, and Christ's intention that the new and eternal Covenant should be ratified in his Blood is better expressed. Also the connection between the eucharistic meal and the heavenly banquet in the Father's kingdom becomes easier to see." (GIRM 240)

The full sign of Eucharistic sharing at communion is eating and drinking just as Christ did with his disciples at the Last Supper. The bread and cup are integral to the fullest signification of our celebration.

Catechists must become familiar with the dual sign of eating and drinking and use both consistently in the lessons on the Eucharist. Children are to have an understanding that they will eat and drink the Body and Blood of Christ under the forms of bread and wine.

It must always be remembered that the fullness of Christ is received in either element if only one is distributed; that is, we receive the whole Christ in only one species. However, the ideal is to eat and drink: to have the fullness of the sign from the time one receives his/her First Communion.

Parents need to be catechized, too. Pastors are encouraged to offer the cup regularly on Sundays. Thus, the reception of communion under both species will be normative for all (GIRM 241)

Source Footnotes:


Diócesis de Santa Rosa
Directivas para la Preparación Sacramental
Primera Penitencia y Primera Eucaristía

PREÁMBULO

Consideraciones Teológicas
La catequesis de los niños, jóvenes y adultos está diseñada para enseñarles, por medio de oración personal, a meditar sobre la Palabra de Dios, practicándola en la oración litúrgica, interiorizándola siempre para que así de fruto a una vida nueva.

Directivas
Todos los sacramentos son celebraciones parroquiales de la Palabra de Dios entre nosotros. Es esencial que los padres de familia, párrocos, catequistas y comunidades parroquiales luchen por tomar la preparación de los niños para la Primera Penitencia/Reconciliación y Primera Eucaristía como oportunidades únicas para enriquecer la jornada espiritual de los niños y desarrollar más su relación con Dios.

Las directivas de preparación para la Primera Penitencia/Reconciliación y Primera Eucaristía para niños bautizados intentan:
- a. asegurar una preparación efectiva y apropiada para niños,
- b. proveer dirección y apoyo para programas parroquiales,
- c. discutir ciertos intereses prácticos y particulares.

Es entendido que una parroquia vea la necesidad de adoptar ciertas directivas de acuerdo a las necesidades del niño, de los padres de familia, párrocos o catequistas. Es también entendido que estas adaptaciones se harán teniendo en cuenta el espíritu y el intento sacramental contenido en el Directorio Catequético Nacional.

Disposición

Consideraciones Teológicas
La catequesis para los niños debe siempre respetar la disposición natural, la habilidad, la edad y circunstancias de los individuos. Esta busca primero poner en claro las relaciones del sacramento con las de la vida del niño. (DCN 126).

Directivas
Para fomentar el entendimiento de la fe del niño al nivel de edad propia es necesario dar instrucciones catequéticas por lo mínimo dos años consecutivos antes de recibir los sacramentos. La preparación apropiada sacramental, no la edad cronológica o el grado
escolar, determinará la preparación del niño para su encuentro con Cristo en la celebración sacramental.

**El Papel De Los Padres De Familia**

**Consideraciones Teológicas**

Los padres de familia son los primeros responsables de la educación de sus hijos. (CCC 2223).

La educación de los niños en la fe, hecha por los padres de familia, debe comenzar desde la temprana edad. Esto ya sucede cuando miembros de la familia se ayudan unos a otros a crecer en la fe, siendo testimonio de vivir una vida cristiana de acuerdo al evangelio. Catequesis familiar precede, acompaña y enriquece otras formas de instrucción en la fe. Los padres de familia tienen la misión de enseñar a sus hijos a orar y descubrir sus vocaciones como niños de Dios. (CCC 2226).

Los padres de familia tienen el derecho y el deber de estar íntimamente involucrados en la preparación de la Primera Penitencia/Reconciliación y Primera Eucaristía de sus hijos. La meta de catequesis es ayudar a los padres de familia a crecer en entendimiento y apreciación de los sacramentos y prepararlos para participar en catequizar a sus hijos. (DCN 122).

**Directivas**

La parroquia debe ofrecer suficiente apoyo a los padres de familia, por medio de educación para padres de familia, animándoles a involucrarse activamente en la catequesis de sus niños y participando y planeando la preparación y celebración de liturgias.

**Consideraciones Pastorales**

Es deseable y aconsejable el colocar al niño en un grupo de su edad en un programa de la parroquia y ofrecerle al mismo tiempo adicional y simultáneamente una catequesis sacramental específica. Esta preparación específica puede ser en forma de clases especiales ofrecidas en un ambiente parroquial, instruyendo y enriqueciendo a los padres de familia para preparar a sus hijos en casa en colaboración con las directivas parroquiales. Para cualquier forma de instrucción que se elija es importante ofrecer apoyo individual de fe a cada niño, preferiblemente de alguno dentro de la familia inmediata.
CATEQUESIS PARA LA PRIMERA PENITENCIA/RECONCILIACIÓN

Consideraciones Teológicas
La catequesis para niños debe ayudarles a reconocer el bien y el mal moral, el arrepentimiento al hacer mal, y volverse hacia Cristo y la Iglesia para pedir perdón. Debe animar al niño a ver que en este sacramento la fe está expresada en perdonar y ser perdonado. Debe animar al niño a acercarse al sacramento frecuentemente y voluntariamente.

La catequesis para el sacramento de Reconciliación (Penitencia) debe preceder la Primera Eucaristía y debe mantenerse distinta por una separación clara y lenta. Esto debe hacerse para que, antes de recibir la Primera Eucaristía, el niño esté familiarizado con el Rito de Reconciliación revisado y se sienta tranquilo al recibir el sacramento. El Sacramento de Reconciliación (Penitencia) debe ser normalmente celebrado antes de recibir la Primera Eucaristía. Por la razón de que una conversión de por vida continua es parte de lo que significa crecer en la fe, la catequesis para el Sacramento de Reconciliación (Penitencia) es un proceso continuo. Los niños tienen derecho a una catequesis más rica cada año. La cuaresma es una época especialmente para ésto. (Ref. NCD126/CCC 1457).

Directivas
Los niños deben estar bien preparados para la Primera Penitencia/Reconciliación. Los padres de familia y los párrocos, junto con el equipo de catequistas, tienen la responsabilidad de proveer una catequesis que permita al niño llegar a conocer la misericordia y el perdón de Dios, y la realidad del pecado.

La catequesis debe genuinamente proveer al niño el derecho de ir a confesión. Debe ser muy simple y cumplir los requisitos para la primera confesión de niños, es decir.
   a) habilidad para distinguir entre el bien y el mal
   b) conocimiento de la necesidad de perdonar
   c) fe en el amor compasivo del Padre
   d) habilidad para expresar pena y el deseo de cambiar
   e) habilidad para describir sus faltas en palabras propias
   f) habilidad en comprender que la reconciliación es también entre el penitente y la comunidad.

Consideraciones Pastorales
1) Materiales y Recursos
La mayoría de los editores de libros de texto han incorporado la preparación Penitencia/Reconciliación y Primera Eucaristía en sus libros de segundo año (ref. NCD 229, 264). Material suplemental para niños y/o catequesis más intensa para preparar a los niños para los sacramentos es ofrecida en libros adicionales por estos mismos editores. Cualquier pregunta acerca de libros de texto u otro material apropiado debe ser dirigido a la oficina de
Educación Religiosa. Material catequético bueno realza y fomenta una catequesis efectiva. Es siempre deseable el ofrecer los mejores materiales y recursos para apoyar la preparación catequética. (Ref. NCD 249).

2) El Papel De Los Padres De Familia

Ya que los padres de familia son los primeros maestros de sus hijos en lo que se refiere a la fe, ellos deben entender el papel de Reconciliación en sus propias vidas. Así pues, las parroquias deben ofrecer catequesis continua para los padres de familia acerca del papel de Reconciliación y Penitencia en el desarrollo de la fe. Cuando los padres de familia están informados, ellos pueden formar a sus hijos en la fe, y todos participan en la transformación del mundo. El contenido de esta catequesis está relacionado a una conversión continua:

La conversión es lograda en la vida diaria por medio de gestos de reconciliación, interés por los pobres, ejercicio y defensa por la justicia y el derecho humano, por la aceptación de las faltas de nuestros hermanos, corrección fraterna, revisión de la vida, examinación de conciencia, dirección espiritual, aceptación del sufrimiento, tolerancia de persecución por lo que es justo. El cargar uno la cruz de cada día y siguiendo a Jesús es la forma más segura de penitencia. (CCC 1435).

La Catequesis Adulta para Reconciliación puede incluir:
- varias formas de oración
- formación de conciencia
- Jesús como el gran salvador/reconciliador
- base sacramental bíblica
- desarrollo infantil
- asuntos de conversión y desarrollo en la fe
- experiencias familiares de perdón y reconciliación
- entrenamiento para experiencias litúrgicas de perdón
- penitencia en la vida de la Iglesia.

3. Celebración Litúrgica Del Sacramento

El ritual revisado (Reconciliación) ofrece formas y opciones para la celebración de este sacramento. Entre éstas están las celebraciones comunales que muestran más claramente su naturaleza eclesial. Los penitentes tienen la opción de la anonimidad usual (opción 1) o de cara a cara con el confesor (opción 2) otra opción es también ofrecida en varias oraciones y lecturas. (NCD 124).

Dos formas del Rito de Reconciliación son apropiadas para las celebraciones de la Primera Penitencia para los niños:

A). Rito de Reconciliación para un individuo
   a) Recibimiento del Penitente
   b) Lectura de la palabra de Dios
   c) Confesión de Pecado
d) Aceptación de satisfacción  
e) Oración del Penitente y Absolución  
f) Proclamación de la Alabanza a Dios  
g) Despedida

**B). Rito Comunal de Reconciliación con Confesión Individual y Absolución**

a) Ritos Preliminares:  
- Canto  
- Bienvenida  
- Oración de Apertura

b) Celebración de la Palabra de Dios  
- Primera Lectura  
- Salmo Responsorial  
- Segunda Lectura  
- Evangelio  
- Homilía

c) Examinación de Conciencia  
- Confesión general de Pecado

d) Confesión Individual y Absolución  
e) Proclamación de Alabanza por la Misericordia de Dios  
f) Conclusión con la Oración de Gracias  
g) Despedida

El rito comunal para la Primera Penitencia/Reconciliación puede también incorporar el uso apropiado de la Biblia para el nivel de edad (tal como desempeñando un papel, dialogando lecturas, etc.) y música apropiada.

4) **Acto de Contrición**  
En cuanto a una forma establecida o memorizada del Acto de Contrición, se debe usar cualquier forma simple tomando en consideración la edad y el entendimiento del niño. Un ejemplo puede encontrarse en cualquier libro de texto aprobado.
CATEQUESIS PARA LA PRIMERA EUCARISTIA

Consideraciones Teológicas

La Eucaristía es "la fuente y cima de la vida Cristiana." Los otros sacramentos, y por supuesto todos los ministerios eclesiásticos y trabajos de apostolado, están unidos con la Eucaristía y orientados hacia ella. (CCL 1324).

El propósito de los sacramentos es santificar..., el edificar el cuerpo de Cristo y finalmente, dar alabanza a Dios. Porque son símbolos, también instruyen. No solamente presuponen la fe, sino que por medio de palabras y objetos también la nutren, fortalecen y expresan. Es por esto que son llamados sacramentos de fe. (CCC 1123).

Catequesis para la Primera Eucaristía es conducida separadamente de la catequesis preliminar para el Sacramento de Reconciliación (Penitencia), ya que cada sacramento merece su propia preparación concentrada. Catequesis continua es ofrecida anualmente en todos los programas catequéticos para niños ya que los sacramentos requieren estudio y oración de por vida. (NCD 122).

Directivas

Preparación

La preparación de un niño para la Eucaristía debe ser el esfuerzo cooperativo de los padres de familia, catequistas, y párroco. Cada uno tiene un papel vital para desempeñar en ayudar al niño en el concepto de madurez en la Eucaristía. La realidad de que lo que aparenta ser pan y vino es actualmente el cuerpo y la sangre real de Cristo y debe ser enseñada en una forma que ayude al niño a desarrollar y entender este misterio. De las experiencias de compartir, escuchar, comer, conversar, dar, agradecer y celebrar, los niños podrán empezar a captar las abstracciones de "unidad" y "pertenencia". Comprendiendo estos conceptos y familiarizándose con los eventos principales en la vida de Jesús ayuda a los niños a participar significativamente en la celebración de la Eucaristía.

El Papel de Padres de Familia

Los padres de familia son vitales en ayudar a los niños a identificar los sentimientos de penitencia y unidad a través de la vida familiar diaria. Los padres de familia también son modelos fuertes de una vida de fe. En su papel único los padres de familia crean por el niño experiencias que son esenciales para el entendimiento del niño. (Ref. NCD 122).

Instrucción

La instrucción catequística debe siempre dirigir al niño de acuerdo a su edad y ofrecer lo que es requerido para la Primera Eucaristía de un niño, es decir:
a) la habilidad para entender que la Eucaristía es diferente al pan y vino
    ordinario,

b) el deseo de recibir a Jesús en su comunión,

c) y el entendimiento de fe apropiada a la edad.

Tal instrucción puede también incluir oraciones y el desarrollo de un gran afecto por el
sacramento.

Discernimiento de Preparación
La primera decisión acerca de cuándo un niño está listo para celebrar el Sacramento de
Reconciliación o Eucaristía depende de los padres de familia y el niño. El niño es
iniciado en la continua vida sacramental de toda la iglesia y, así pues, si la preparación
adecuada ha sido impartida, el sacerdote parroquial y la catequista lentamente se
apropian del derecho paterno de juzgar la preparación del individuo.

Consideraciones Pastorales
1) Celebración Litúrgica del Sacramento
Los padres de familia, en diálogo con el párroco y el coordinador/director de Educación
Religiosa, tienen la opción de que sus hijos reciban la Eucaristía:
   a) como grupo de primeros comulgantes en una celebración solemne;
   b) como miembros de un pequeño grupo y sus familias en una misa dominical
      normal; o
   c) individualmente con su familia en día acordado por el sacerdote y los padres
de familia.

Las familias que seleccionan un ambiente de grupo familiar o individual también
pueden participar en la celebración solemne parroquial.

2) Planeando Liturgias
Las lecturas son escogidas de una traducción aceptada teniendo en cuenta a los niños y
de acuerdo a la estación litúrgica.

La homilía puede ser primeramente dirigida, aunque no exclusivamente a los niños
presentes. Es mejor que la personal que preside dé la homilía, pero si es necesario
puede ser dada por otra persona capacitada. (Ref. CIC, Canon 766).

La oración Eucarística debe ser seleccionada de aquéllas específicamente aprobadas
para utilizarse con niños.

La música es seleccionada teniendo en mente el espíritu de los niños y seleccionada de
las obras que son litúrgicamente apropiadas y familiares para los niños.

Los obsequios deben normalmente incluir solamente pan y vino, pero pueden incluir
ocasionalmente otros objetos, tomando en cuenta el espíritu del obsequio y propósito de la celebración litúrgica.

La planeación debe activamente incluir a los niños y sus familias junto con la catequista y la persona que preside. Banderas, decoraciones, y libretos pueden ser utilizados para realizar la liturgia.

La liturgia debe representar la comunidad presente, enriquecer sus vidas espirituales, y ofrecer una oportunidad para que todos alaben.

3) Comunión
La catequesis para la recepción de la Eucaristía debe ser hecha cuidadosamente, con reverencia por la enseñanza de la Iglesia acerca de lo que estamos haciendo y recibiendo. El comulgante debe de recibir la Eucaristía en la mano o en la lengua. El clero, el ministro extraordinario de la Eucaristía, la catequista o el padre/madre no decide la manera de recibir la Eucaristía. Es el derecho del comulgante tomar la decisión. (NCCB Boletín de Liturgia, Agosto 1977).

4) Comunión Bajo Las Dos Especies
“El significado de comunión es indicado lo más claramente posible cuando la comunión es dada bajo las dos especies. De esta manera el significado de comida Eucarística es más claramente manifestado, y la intención de Cristo de que el nuevo y eterno convenio debe ser rectificado en su Sangre es expresada mejor. También la conexión entre la comida Eucarística y el banquete celestial en el reino del Padre es más fácil de ver”.(GIRM 240).

El símbolo completo de la compartición Eucarística en la Comunión es el comer y beber tal y como Cristo lo hizo con sus discípulos en La Última Cena. El pan y la copa son integrales al símbolo pleno de nuestra celebración.

Las catequistas deben familiarizarse con el símbolo doble de comer y beber y utilizarlos consistente entre las lecciones de la Eucaristía. Los niños deben tener un entendimiento de que comerán y beberán el Cuerpo y la Sangre de Cristo bajo las formas de pan y vino.

Debe siempre ser entendido que la plenitud de Cristo es recibida en cualquiera de las dos especies, es decir recibimos a Cristo completo en cualquiera de las dos especies. Sin embargo, lo ideal es comer y beber para obtener la plenitud del símbolo de cuando uno recibe su Primera Eucaristía.

Los padres de familia también necesitan ser catequizados. A los sacerdotes se les incita ofrecer la copa regularmente los domingos. De esta manera, la recepción de comunión bajo las dos especies será norma para todos. (GIRM 241).
Notas de Origen:


Directivas revisadas en enero, 1997. SR REAB. mh
CONFIRMATION

Introduction

Confirmation, for those baptized prior to the age of discretion (that is, the completion of the 7th year) completes the Sacraments of Initiation into full membership in the Catholic Church. It seals the presence of the Living Spirit of God already present within the baptized. Confirmation conforms believers more perfectly to Christ and strengthens them so that they may bear witness to Him for the building up of his body in faith and love. (Rite #2 and CCC #1316)

This policy regarding the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Diocese of Santa Rosa is in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church, The Code of Canon Law, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Decree of Promulgation concerning the Age of Confirmation.

1. Discernment

A. Preparation for discernment can be done in a variety of settings.

B. The minimum age for enrollment in the Confirmation process is the freshman or sophomore year of high school, with exceptions made for pastoral reasons.

C. The final phase of preparation is formal candidacy. Discernment of readiness for formal candidacy is demonstrated by:

   i. Personal Faith Life which shows itself in a personal prayer life and an understanding of the Gospel of Christ and the teachings of the Church in an age-appropriate manner.

   ii. Community Life which shows itself by a regular attendance at Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy and participation in parish life.

D. Discernment of readiness for formal candidacy is determined by individual interviews with each prospective candidate. Interviewers are the members of the Confirmation team, the pastor, and/or members of the pastoral staff. It is not sufficient to accept for formal candidacy the entire confirmation class without individual discernment.

2. Formal Candidacy

A. The process, including discernment and formal candidacy:
   i. is to be age-appropriate
   ii. should be at least one school year in length
   iii. will include Diocesan-approved content
   iv. is to be parish-based
B. All sponsors must be confirmed and practicing Catholics who have completed the 16th year and are able, by word and example, to encourage, support, and model Catholic Christian living (Canons 892, 893, 874).

C. A baptismal godparent is desired as the Confirmation sponsor, so as to emphasize the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation (Canon 892, #2). In those cases where the godparent no longer has a close relationship with the candidate, it is appropriate for the candidate to choose a different sponsor. Parents of the candidate are not to be sponsors. A parent may "present" the child for Confirmation with another qualified person being the sponsor (Canon 893 with reference to Canon 874, #5).

3. Celebration
   A. The Celebration of Confirmation is at a point in the life of a Catholic when one is able to proclaim in word and deed the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church in an age-appropriate manner.
   
   B. Confirmation is publicly and liturgically celebrated by the parish community, preferably during mass.

4. Special Circumstances
   A. Unbaptized persons who have reached the age of discretion but have not yet reached adulthood enter into an RCIA process adapted for Children and complete the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil or during the Easter Season.
   
   B. Persons with Special Needs should also be prepared for Confirmation and may need pastoral adaptations to make their preparation appropriate to their situation.
   
   C. Persons seeking to be prepared for Confirmation in a parish other than their own are to obtain permission of both pastors.

5. Confirmation for Adults
   Adults, those over the age of 18, seeking Confirmation should participate in an age-appropriate process for discernment and formal candidacy. The process, including discernment and formal candidacy, is to be at least one school year in length and will include Diocesan-approved content. The time period for preparation may be shortened for pastoral reasons.

Conclusion
This policy is to be followed in accordance with the Diocesan Guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Approved July 1, 2002
MARRIAGE

A. PASTORAL APPROACH ABOVE ALL

Couples requesting marriage in the Church present a wonderful opportunity for pastoral care. Many of them are open at this point in their lives to reexamining their commitment to God and the Church. It is most important that they meet a welcoming representative of the Church, whether it is a priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister.

Whatever their faith-life or motives for seeking marriage, couples are making a contact with the Church . . . perhaps for the first time in years. To turn them away, for whatever reason, is to lose an opportunity for evangelization. Indeed these couples are often excellent candidates for R.C.I.A., “Welcome Back” or other such Church processes.

At each stage of the marriage preparation process, the pastoral minister is present primarily as a guiding and caring witness to the love of Christ.

B. PREPARATION PERIOD

Preparation for marriage in the Church is a means by which the couple and the priest or deacon together discern a vocation to Christian marriage. The couple is to meet with the priest or deacon soon after becoming engaged, no later than six months before the planned wedding date, and before any commitments to others have been made. All couples should receive a helpful publication on the sacrament of marriage and parish policies at this initial meeting.

If either party has had a previous marriage, whether a Catholic ceremony or not, such a case is to be submitted to the Marriage Tribunal; no date is to be set for the wedding unless and until an affirmative decision is rendered.

At least two months should be allowed between the completion of the marriage preparation program and the date of the wedding. This preparation includes participation in an approved pre-marriage preparation program, followed by the priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister completing the pre-nuptial inquiry.

A tentative wedding date may be scheduled when the couple first meets with the priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister in order to facilitate any tentative plans the couple may have made for their wedding celebration with others (i.e. reception hall, photographer, caterer, etc.). The couple must be made aware that the wedding date will be delayed if the preparation process is not completed successfully. Until this preparation is completed and approved, wedding invitations are not to be sent. This will assure the couple’s maximum freedom in making their final decision. Church preparation is to take precedence, both in timing and importance over other wedding plans and concerns.

C. COUPLES WHO LIVE TOGETHER BEFORE MARRIAGE

Some couples live together for months or even years before requesting marriage in the Church. This is a pastorally significant matter that the cleric and the couple cannot ignore; nor can they ignore the fact that such arrangements are in public contradiction to the teachings of the Church. Clerics must be mindful of the scandal that could arise from condoning, publicly or privately, cohabitation. Both cleric and couple should be prepared to discuss this in a frank, caring and constructive manner.
The cleric must help the couple distinguish between cohabitation and life-long sacramental marriage. This is particularly important if one or both parties have lived with others setting a pattern of serial monogamy. For the couple and for all those involved, the period of preparation and the wedding ceremony are important teaching moments. Both should stress the singular commitment of Christian marriage, reflecting clearly the teaching of the Church.

Recent studies show that couples who do not cohabit before marriage enjoy a lower rate of civil dissolution than those who do. Hence, couples who already live together are not exempt from any part of the marriage preparation requirements, and indeed may need additional attention and preparation time and, in some cases, counseling.

D. PRE-MARRIAGE PROGRAMS

The priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister, when first meeting with the couple, is to explain that the couple is to choose at least one of the pre-marriage preparation programs listed below:

- **Assessment Inventories**
  
  Marriage counseling agencies in the diocese and some parishes offer valid and reliable premarital assessments of couples issues. (e.g. Prepare and FOCCUS). The priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister receives a summary of the premarital assessment. If it is deemed necessary, with the couple’s permission, the priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister shares this information with the preparation leaders should the couple decide to participate in an additional preparation program such as Engaged Encounter Weekend, Evenings for the Engaged or a Parish Based Program.

- **Evenings for the Engaged:** This is parish based, led by a married couple in their home and involves the couple participating in six sessions.

- **Engaged Encounter Weekend:** This is a retreat for couples led by two married couples and a priest. It begins on Friday evening and ends early Sunday afternoon.

- **Parish Based Program:** This program is led by married couples in the parish beginning on Friday evening and ending on Saturday night.

At the approved programs listed above, there is a presentation on natural family planning or at least literature on this subject is provided to the couple. It is highly recommended that couples entering a second marriage with children still at home utilize a program specifically designed to address second marriage issues. Additional marriage preparation in the form of family counseling or step-parenting groups may be recommended because of the unique challenges facing step families and the issues that can arise for children.

Couples living in other dioceses may use a program approved by that diocese. Should the local couple not be able to utilize a program in the Diocese of Santa Rosa they may utilize programs available in other dioceses.

E. MEETING WITH THE PRIEST, DEACON OR PASTORAL MINISTER

After the couple has completed a pre-marriage preparation program, the primary concern is the spiritual preparation of the couple. The priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister is to meet with the couple on a few occasions in order to:

1. Review the Church’s understanding of marriage as a sacrament with emphasis on its relationship to the Christian community.
2. Dialogue on their journey of faith and the centrality of Jesus Christ in their own lives and relationship.

3. Encourage those who have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation to start the RCIA process or to receive the sacrament before the wedding, if this can be done “without grave inconvenience.”

4. Encourage their celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and regular attendance at Mass.

5. Review and reinforce insights the couple has gained from the pre-marriage preparation program.

6. Other special considerations as indicated. (e.g., obligations to children from previous unions, family therapy, health, care of aging parents, bereavement.)

In addition the priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister doing the preparation is obliged to see that the following are fulfilled:

- The couple is to furnish a certificate of completion of the preparation program.
- Complete the Bride and Groom and Witness questionnaires
- Obtain the required dispensations and/or permissions from the Chancery.
- Obtain a recently Issued Baptismal Certificate(s) of the Catholic party or parties.
- Obtain proof of baptism for baptized non-Catholic parties.
- Plan the wedding liturgy with the couple.
- Inform the couple of the fee for the use of the church.
- Inform the couple that the fee for the use of the church does not include a donation to the celebrant.
- Discuss the role of the musicians, florists, photographers, etc., parish policies and arrangements for their services.
- Arrange for the rehearsal.
- Obtain the civil marriage license/certificate at the time of rehearsal or before.

After the ceremony, it is the responsibility of the priest or deacon who assisted at the marriage to

- Record the marriage in the register of the parish where the wedding is celebrated.
- Notify the parish of Baptism of the Catholic party or parties that the marriage was celebrated.
- Place the documentation in the files of the parish where the wedding is celebrated.
- Mail the civil license that has been signed by the witnesses and the priest or deacon to the County Recorder’s Office and give the signed marriage certificate to the couple.

F. THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY ITSELF

The celebration of marriage should normally take place within the Mass. The ceremony should stress the liturgy of the word, the consent of the couple, the nuptial blessing and the reception of Holy Communion. *(Rite of Marriage #6)*

For marriages celebrated both within Mass and outside Mass the proper liturgical books are to be followed in preparing and celebrating the ceremony. For marriages celebrated on Sundays or solemnities the Mass of the day is to be used with the nuptial blessing. Account is to be taken of special liturgical seasons, especially Lent and Advent. *(RoM #11)*

Whether the marriage is celebrated within Mass or outside it, the choice of music for the ceremony is to reflect the Christian understanding of marriage and the religious nature of the ceremony and all songs that are alien to Christian sentiment are to be avoided.
G. THE PLACE WHERE WEDDINGS CAN BE CELEBRATED

A marriage is to be celebrated in the parish where at least one of the parties has a domicile, quasi-domicile or one month residence, if both are Catholic, or the Catholic party if only one party is Catholic. The marriage of a couple in transition is to be celebrated in the parish where they actually reside. The permission of the proper ordinary or proper pastor of the Catholic party is required to lawfully celebrate the marriage in another parish.

H. TYPES OF CATHOLIC MARRIAGES

Sacramental Marriages (Can. 1118 #1 & 2)

1. A marriage between Catholics is to be celebrated in the proper parish church of either party.

2. The marriage between a Catholic and a baptized non-Catholic is to be celebrated in the parish of the Catholic party. However, in either case above the ordinary or pastor can permit the wedding to be celebrated in another (Catholic) church or oratory.

3. For a marriage between Catholics or between a Catholic party and a baptized non-Catholic, only the local ordinary can give permission for the wedding to be celebrated in another suitable place.

Non-Sacramental Marriages (Can. 1118 #3)

A marriage between a Catholic party and a non-baptized party can be celebrated in a church or in some other suitable place with the permission of the local ordinary.

"Suitable Place"

The local ordinary is the one who determines what constitutes a suitable place. A suitable place can include a non-denominational chapel, or a place of worship of another Christian church or ecclesial community or it could include a hall, private residence or some place that will safeguard the celebration of the wedding as a sacred event.

Interfaith Marriages (Cann. 1125-1127)

When one of the parties to a proposed marriage is a baptized non-Catholic or a non-baptized person, the priest, deacon or lay pastoral minister overseeing their preparation should discuss with the couple: the feelings of the members of their families; agreement and disagreement between the couple's faith tradition; membership in two different church communities and the religious formation of their children.

The Catholic party will be asked to sign or promise orally the promises to protect their own faith and to do all in their power to have any children born of their union baptized and raised in the Catholic faith. The non-Catholic party is to be informed of this promise.

Should serious difficulties hinder the priest or deacon from assisting at the wedding, then a dispensation from canonical form can be requested from the local ordinary. Should this dispensation be granted the non-Catholic minister, rabbi or civil official alone is to ask for and receive the consent of the parties to take each other as husband and wife. The priest or deacon may attend the wedding ceremony and offer a prayer or blessing if invited.

Approved July 1, 2002
GUIDELINES FOR A QUINCEAÑERA CELEBRATION

1. The parish is to welcome the young girl and her family who request a Quinceanera. Since this is a teachable moment in the life of the quinceañera and her family each parish is to appoint a catechist to explain the spiritual aspects of the celebration emphasizing that it is not just a social event.

2. It is recommended that the quinceañera and her family contact their territorial parish at least six months in advance of the celebration to give adequate time to attend the preparation classes and to reserve the date with the church. Should a priest or deacon from another parish be invited to celebrate the Quinceañera ceremony he is to obtain permission from the pastor where the Quinceañera is to be celebrated. Ordinarily the preparation period is to be conducted and completed in the parish where the Quinceañera is to be celebrated.

3. At the initial meeting with the quinceañera and her family emphasis is to be placed on giving God thanks for the life of the young girl and on the importance of her spiritual development. After the preparation process is discussed, the terms are put in writing and signed. The education classes are determined in accord with the level of instruction the quinceañera requires. If she actively participates in the church, two sessions are sufficient, however, if she does not actively participate in the church she is to complete the six sessions. The quinceañera is to supply a certificate of Baptism and first Holy Communion at this initial interview. Should the quinceañera not attend the classes in a timely and courteous manner then the Quinceanera celebration is not to take place.

4. Class sessions are to include the following:

- History and purpose of Quinceanera
- Instruction on the Mass/Prayer
- The Creed and other Catholic beliefs
- The Seven Sacraments
- The Beatitudes and the Commandments
- Social Justice
The quinceañera is to participate in the regular parish religious education programs, youth group and confirmation preparation if she has not received that sacrament. Religious education and spiritual development is to be ongoing since the six sessions that review the faith and morals of the Catholic Church are not sufficient. Those who attend the sessions will receive a certificate which is valid for two years.

5. The quinceañera can serve as a Lector or Eucharistic Minister but care is to be taken that she is properly prepared to fulfill such a function. The Quinceañera ceremony itself can be celebrated during Mass. However, should a deacon officiate he begins with the Liturgy of the Word, followed by the Quinceañera ceremony and then the distribution of Holy Communion to those present who wish to receive. If the quinceañera has not received the Sacraments of Initiation (Confirmation being an exception), a liturgy of word with the dedication and blessing is most appropriate while the family and the quinceañera are being reintroduced to the life of the Church. Music during the liturgy is highly recommended.

6. The fee to the Church where the Quinceañera is to be celebrated is to be paid during the initial interview. The fee for a Mass with damas and chambelanes, who accompany the quinceañera, are the same as for a wedding ceremony in that parish. For a Quinceañera during a weekend Mass with the quinceañera and her parents only, the parish is to establish the amount. At the discretion of the family a separate offering can be given to the priest or deacon who officiates at the ceremony. Should the Quinceañera ceremony, for any reason not occur, twenty-five per cent (25% of the total fee) is retained by the parish to compensate for any administrative costs.

7. Since, in recent years, Quinceañera ceremonies have become increasingly popular in the United States, especially in the Southwest, it should be addressed in religious education classes and in youth groups in order to emphasize its religious, spiritual and parish-community centered dimension. This will help to counteract the present tendency to just have an extravagant social event.

8. Textbooks for the six session religious instruction to prepare the quinceañera are available from Catholic publishing companies. One resource is: Mexican American Cultural Center P.O. Box 28185, San Antonio, TX 78228-5104 Telephone: 210-732-2156. Fax: 210-732-9072 www.maccsa.org

Revised July 1, 2002
Lineamientos para las Quinceañeras

1. Las Parroquias darán la bienvenida a la familia de la joven que solicite una Quinceañera. Este puede ser un momento para la joven y su familia de aprender juntos. Habrá una persona de catequesis que esté encargada de estas celebraciones quien trabajará con la familia enfatizando el aspecto religioso y espiritual de la celebración en vez de sólo un mero evento social.

2. Las familias deberán quedarse en sus propias parroquias. Es fuertemente recomendado que las familias contacte su parroquia (y no parroquia, sacerdote o diácono como una tienda) cuando menos seis meses de anticipación para reservar el día y atender las clases. Si la familia invita un sacerdote de otra parroquia para hacer la Quinceañera, se requerirá pedir permiso del Párroco de la parroquia en la cual la Quinceañera será celebrada.

3. En la entrevista inicial con la Quinceañera y su familia se dará énfasis en el agradecer a Dios por la vida de la joven y en el desarrollo espiritual en lugar de la extravagancia. El proceso de preparación se discutirá y puesto por escrito y firmado por todos los interesados. Las sesiones educacionales serán puestas de acuerdo al nivel de instrucción necesitado por el Quinceañero. Tal vez dos sesiones, si esta la joven activa en la Iglesia, o seis sesiones si la joven no está participando en el Iglesia. Los certificados de Bautismo y Primera Comunión se pedirán en esta entrevista. También la donación de la Iglesia puede ser pagada en este momento. Si las citas para las clases no se cumplen a tiempo, se le dirá con cortesía a la familia que la Quinceañera no se hará y que se les devolverá el dinero, dejando para la Iglesia el 25% para los gastos administrativos.

4. Las Clases o Sesiones podrán incluir los siguientes temas:

- Historia y propósito de la Quinceañera
- Iglesia Católica/Credo
- Oración/Mass
- Bienaventuranzas/Mandamientos
- Sacramentos
- Justicia Social

Nosotros podremos invitar a la Quinceañera a participar en clases regulares de religión, a grupos juveniles o a clases de confirmación; si no
esta aún confirmada. La Educación Religiosa y desarrollo espiritual de la joven podría ser un proceso continuo que no solamente dure seis sesiones que revisan las creencias de la Iglesia Católica. Un certificado se dará el cual será válido por dos años.

5. La quinceañera podrá ser preparada para leer o dar la comunión en su ceremonia. Esta liturgia podrá ser en Inglés o Español o bilingüe. Los sacerdotes pueden celebrar la Misa o el Diácono oficiar una Liturgia de la Palabra con la dedicación y bendición de la joven.

6. La cuota de la Iglesia deberá ser pagada en la entrevista inicial de acuerdo a la clase de Quinceañera que se pida. La cuota será pagada a la Iglesia donde se celebre la Quinceañera y donde será preparada. Una misa especial con damas, chamberlanes, etc. Acompañaran a la joven en su ceremonia. Si se puede la cuota será la misma que se pide para una boda. Si la Quinceañera se hace en una misa regular de fin de semana, entonces la cuota será como intención de la Misa de fin de semana. Una donación es sugerida para el sacerdote o el diácono que realice la liturgia. Esta será dejada a discreción de la familia.

7. En años recientes, las Quinceañeras en grupo se han convertido más populares en los estados del suroeste. Deberíamos guardar esa posibilidad abierta y tal vez empezar a sugerir esto en las clases de educación religiosa y en los grupos juveniles. Esto hará las Quinceañera más religiosa y más centrada en la vida parroquial y no cont tanta extravaganza. Este acercamiento podría trabajar mejor en parroquias grandes y en donde muchas quinceañeras son solicitadas.

8. Más materiales para Quinceañeras pueden ser obtenidos en:
Centro Cultural Mexico-Americano — Mexican American Cultural Center
PO Box 28185 San Antonio, TX 78228-5104
Telephone (210) 732-2156 Fax (210) 732-9072 www.maccsa.org

También para las clases o sesiones, cualquier texto de alguna editorial puede ser utilizado.

1 Julio, 2002
To: Funeral Directors in the Diocese of Santa Rosa, California  
From: Most Reverend Daniel F. Walsh, Bishop of Santa Rosa.  
Date: May 24, 2002

UNIFORM TITLES FOR CATHOLIC FUNERAL SERVICES

In accord with the *Order of Christian Funerals* for use in the United States, I request that you use the following terminology in publishing funeral service notices:

Vigil Service: Any service held the evening before the funeral. It may contain the Rosary, but need not, and is based in Sacred Scripture. (Replaces “Rosary Burial” or “wake”).

Funeral Mass: The Mass for the funeral of the deceased, whether the body is present or not. (Replaces “Mass of Christian Burial” or “Mass of Resurrection”).

Funeral Liturgy: A service conducted by Catholic clergy for the deceased, which is not the Mass. (Replaces “Memorial Services” or Catholic Blessing Services”).

Committal Service: A service held in the cemetery for the burial of the deceased. This is normally included in the Funeral Mass or Funeral Liturgy and not mentioned separately. If, however, it is to be the only service, this term is used. (Replaces “Graveside Service”).

I very much appreciate your cooperation in standardizing these terms according to the Ritual. Some Catholics may not understand these terms; I suggest you refer them to the local priest or deacon for an explanation. If you have any concerns about these terms, please consult your local priest or deacon.

GUIDELINES FOR CREMATION

Although the Catholic Church permits cremation, it does not enjoy the same value as burial of the human body. It is preferred that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral Rites because the presence of the human body expresses better the values which the Church affirms in those Rites.
The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. A worthy vessel to contain the ashes is to be used and care and attention to appropriate placement, transport, and final disposition should be observed. The cremated remains should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium. The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, or on the ground or keeping cremated remains in the house of a relative or friend of the deceased are not the reverent disposition that the church requires. Whenever possible, a plaque or stone should record the name of the deceased.

It is recommended that the cremation take place after the Funeral Mass or Liturgy. However, through an indult from the Holy See, the presence of the cremated remains of the body of a deceased person is permitted during the vigil service and the celebration of the Funeral Mass or Liturgy. In such a case a small table or stand is to be prepared for the cremated remains at the place normally occupied by the casket. The cremated remains may be carried in procession to its place or may be placed on this table or stand before the Liturgy begins.

OFFERINGS FOR FUNERALS

The Synod of Bishops, 1971, on the Ministerial Priesthood and canons 1181, 1264, 531 and 551 of the Code of Canon Law, provide the directives for such offerings. Thus in accord with these provisions and having sought the counsel of the Presbyteral Council, I hereby decree the following:

1. The offering to the Church for a Vigil Service, a Funeral Mass, a Funeral Liturgy or a Committal Service or any combination of them is $150.

2. The offering to the priest or deacon is $50 for each of the services mentioned in number one above.

3. The funeral director is to give two separate checks – one for the church and one for the cleric.

4. For active and contributing parishioners and for hardship cases the offering to the Church and the offering to the cleric can be reduced or waived.

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MEMO

To: Priests and Deacons
From: Father Dan Whelton
Date: July 8, 2003
Subject: Increase in fees for cases of marriage nullity

For many reasons it has become necessary to raise the current schedule of fees for all cases of marriage nullity. The last time these fees were raised was in 1989. Since that time salaries and benefits for tribunal personnel has increased along with other tribunal expenses. I have consulted the tribunals in other Dioceses of California and they too have increased their fees either last year or this year. The increase will bring our tribunal in line with other California tribunals in the schedule of fees. These increases which are effective as of July 1, 2003, have been approved by Bishop Walsh, the Presbyteral Council and the Diocesan Finance Council.

Please remind the petitioner that there is a fee for any type of marriage nullity case submitted to the Tribunal. Please note that for Lack of Canonical Form cases you are asked to submit the $50 fee along with the green colored petition. As you are aware, no petition will be refused or affected by an inability to pay the fee. The new fee schedule is listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Case</th>
<th>Fee Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Canonical Form</td>
<td>$50.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ligament/Defect of Form</td>
<td>$100.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Case of Nullity</td>
<td>$550.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline Privilege</td>
<td>$200.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrine Privilege</td>
<td>$600. ($450 goes to Rome)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEMORANDUM

TO: All Priests / Principals / Ministry Directors / Parish Secretaries
FROM: Monsignor Daniel Whelton
DATE: February 5, 2008
RE: 1. Priests' Salary (remuneration) for 2008-2009

1. In order to assist you in the preparation of the parish budget for the fiscal year 2008-2009, I write to inform you that the Presbyteral Council in January 2003 directed that a salary increase is to be determined by using the consumer price index for the Bay Area. The percentage increase is determined by subtracting the annual wage average of the year 2006 from the year 2007 which for the Bay Area was 205.2 for 2006 and 211.4 for 2007, giving a percentage of 1.03. This means the increase is $47.00.

1. The monthly salary (remuneration) for priests is to increase from $1,539 to $1,586 per month for the fiscal year 2008-2009.

2. The reimbursed expenses (auto allowance) for priests remains at $550 per month for the fiscal year 2008-2009.

2. The Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, has set the 2008-2009 standard mileage rate at 50.5 cents a mile for all business miles driven. For our purpose this increase is effective as of July 1, 2008. This is applicable to the diocesan policy for Remuneration for a Supply Priest which became effective April 15, 2002. No.3 of the policy reads “The U.S. Government Annual Index Rate is to be applied to determine gasoline reimbursement.”
Effective January 1, 2009 the mileage reimbursement rate promulgated by the IRS and adopted by the Diocese is reduced from $0.585 cents per mile to $0.55 cents per mile. Please be governed accordingly.
MEMORANDUM

To: All Priests / Principals / Ministry Directors / Parish Secretaries
FROM: Monsignor Daniel Whelton
DATE: February 10, 2009
RE: 1. Priests’ Salary (remuneration) for 2009-2010
     2. Mileage Rate set by IRS for 2009-2010

1. To assist you in the preparation of the parish/institutions budget for the fiscal year 2009-2010, I write to inform you that the Presbyteral Council at its meeting January 14, 2009 directed that there not be a salary increase for the fiscal year 2009-2010 in view of the economic downturn and in solidarity with those affected during these difficult economic times.

   1. The monthly salary (remuneration) for priests remains the same as for the fiscal year 2008-2009, namely $1,586 per month for the fiscal year 2009-2010.

   2. The reimbursed expenses (auto allowance) for priests remains at $550 per month for the fiscal year 2009-2010.

2. The Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, has set the 2009-2010 standard mileage rate at 55 cents a mile for all business miles driven. For our purpose this increase is effective as of July 1, 2009. This is applicable to the diocesan policy for Remuneration for a Supply Priest which became effective April 15, 2002. No.3 of the policy reads “The U.S. Government Annual Index Rate is to be applied to determine gasoline reimbursement.”