

Baptismal/Reception Into Full Communion Certificates

Pursuant to canon 899§1, each *Confirmand* must submit a valid Certificate of Baptism or Certificate of Reception into Full Communion to the diocesan offices.

For a certificate to be valid, it must:

- Be signed by the pastor (a signature stamp or proxy signature from someone other than the pastor is not permitted)
- Include the parish seal
- Include any notations in the baptismal register - if there are no notations in the baptismal register, the certificate should indicate “no notations”
- Be issued within six months

Certificates must come from the parish in which baptism or reception into full communion was recorded. Certificates may not be issued by chapels, Newman Centers, hospitals, or other non-parish entities. Commemorative certificates issued on the day of baptism do not meet the criteria noted above and should not be submitted.

Military

For those baptized on a U.S. military base, the certificate is issued by the Archdiocese for Military Services in Washington DC. See <https://www.milarch.org/> for details.

International

For those who were baptized in another country, an official record of baptism is still needed. It may take some time to obtain a baptismal certificate. And it may also take some time to have certificates from another country translated once received by the diocesan offices. Please be sure to include an accurate mailing address so the parish of baptism can receive official notice of your Confirmation.

Parish of Baptism is Closed

If a parish where a baptism is recorded has been closed, contact the archives office for the (arch)diocese in which that parish was located.

Non-Catholic Baptism

If a Certificate of Baptism is from a non-Catholic ecclesial community, it must first be determined if that baptism is recognized by the Catholic Church. If the baptism is recognized, the *Confirmand* will be officially received into the Catholic Church through the Rite of Reception at the Confirmation Mass.

Careful research needs to be done to determine if the *Confirmand* has already been officially received, such as through their parents' wishes when the parents joined the Church. If it is determined that the *Confirmand* has already been received into the Catholic Church, a Certificate of Reception into Full Communion from the parish in which the *Confirmand* was received should be submitted instead of the baptismal information from a non-Catholic ecclesial community.

If no Reception into Full Communion can be documented, Bishop Paprocki will be happy to receive you into the Catholic Church at the Confirmation Mass. Reception into the Church is accomplished through the Rite of Reception and is included in the order of worship immediately following the homily. A copy of the rite will be sent to you prior to the Confirmation Mass so the *Confirmand* can be familiarized with the rite. Reception into Full Communion will be recorded in the baptismal registry of the Cathedral parish since that is the parish in which you will be received into the Church.

If your Baptism is determined to not be valid or if you have never been baptized, your path to joining the Church is through the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. Your local pastor can assist you with this process.

Missing Records

If a record of baptism cannot be obtained but your family is sure that you were baptized, an Affidavit for Witness to a Baptism form with accompanying evidence can be submitted. This affidavit can be found in appendix A of the Care and Management of Sacramental Records procedures available from the Office for Archives and Record Management for the diocese.

Evidence of the baptism can be documented in several ways:

- An affidavit that includes information about the event (place and date, etc.) from a parent, godparent, sponsor, presiding cleric, or witness
- Church bulletins that record the event
- Photographs and/or video of the event

In the absence of these, a conditional baptism should be sought.

<https://archives.dio.org/>