

## **Summary Regarding Emergency Baptism and Confirmation of Infants and Adults**

When a Catholic priest performs an emergency Baptism, he should also confer the Sacrament of Confirmation. See Canon 883, granting faculties to any presbyter to baptize and confirm when there is danger of death, noting that death may not be *imminent*, but nevertheless there is danger. A possible exception could be made, for pastoral reasons, in the case of a presbyter administering Baptism to an infant who is likely to recover. The exception would be that the Sacrament of Confirmation does not follow directly, but is delayed until the typical diocesan mandated grade for receiving Confirmation.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to a priest, an emergency Baptism may be administered by a deacon, a chaplain, or a lay person, meaning anyone who is baptized and properly catechized. That person should be sent immediately when there is danger of death (infant or adult). Only a priest may confer the Sacrament of Confirmation, though, and should be sent for if death is imminent.<sup>2</sup> In the case of a Catholic person who has already been baptized but not yet confirmed, and who is in danger of death, the Sacrament of Confirmation should be conferred by a priest.

All emergency Baptisms and/or emergency Confirmations that are administered must be recorded in the *territorial parish* in which the emergency sacrament occurred (meaning the parish where the hospital, hospice, clinic was located). This location for recording the sacrament is not the parish of the minister or the parish of the parents, but rather the parish within which the facility (place where Baptism or Confirmation happened) is located.

Lastly, following the conferral of emergency Baptism and/or Confirmation, the (ordained or lay) minister provides a completed record to the one who was Baptized and/or confirmed, ex. the parents (in case of an infant or young child), or a responsible family member (in the case of an adult).

A final note to a parish: if the ceremonies are supplied at a later date,<sup>3</sup> the parish where the ceremonies are supplied should notify *the parish that holds the baptismal record* so that a notation can be made regarding these ceremonies, in the person's baptismal record.

If there are questions, please contact Deacon Charlie Stump, Director of Pastoral Services, [cstump@cathdal.org](mailto:cstump@cathdal.org) or Margaret Gillett at the Diocesan Tribunal, [mgillett@cathdal.org](mailto:mgillett@cathdal.org).

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<sup>1</sup> See *Sacramental Policy Handbook*, Diocese of Dallas (2012), p. 3, A-1.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Canon 842 §1

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *The Rite of Baptism for Children*, (2002) n. 21, 1.