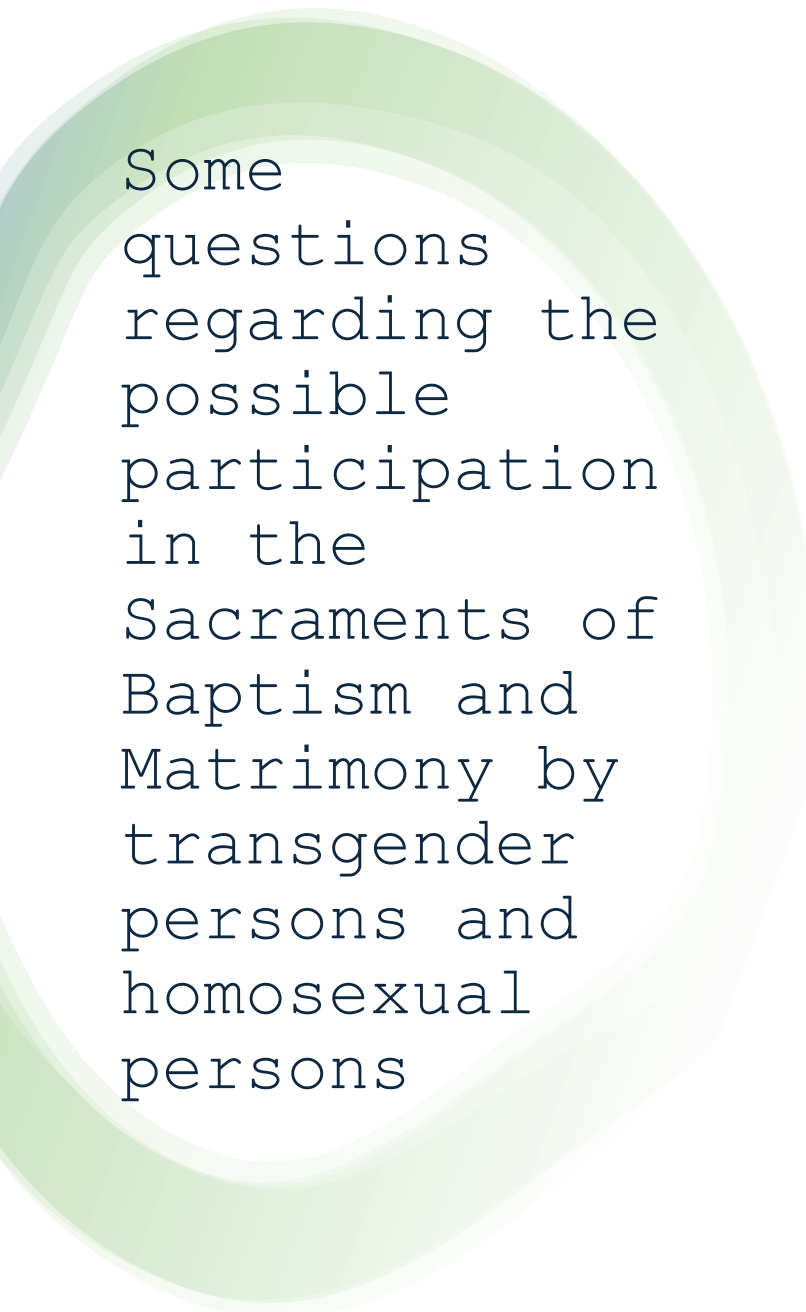


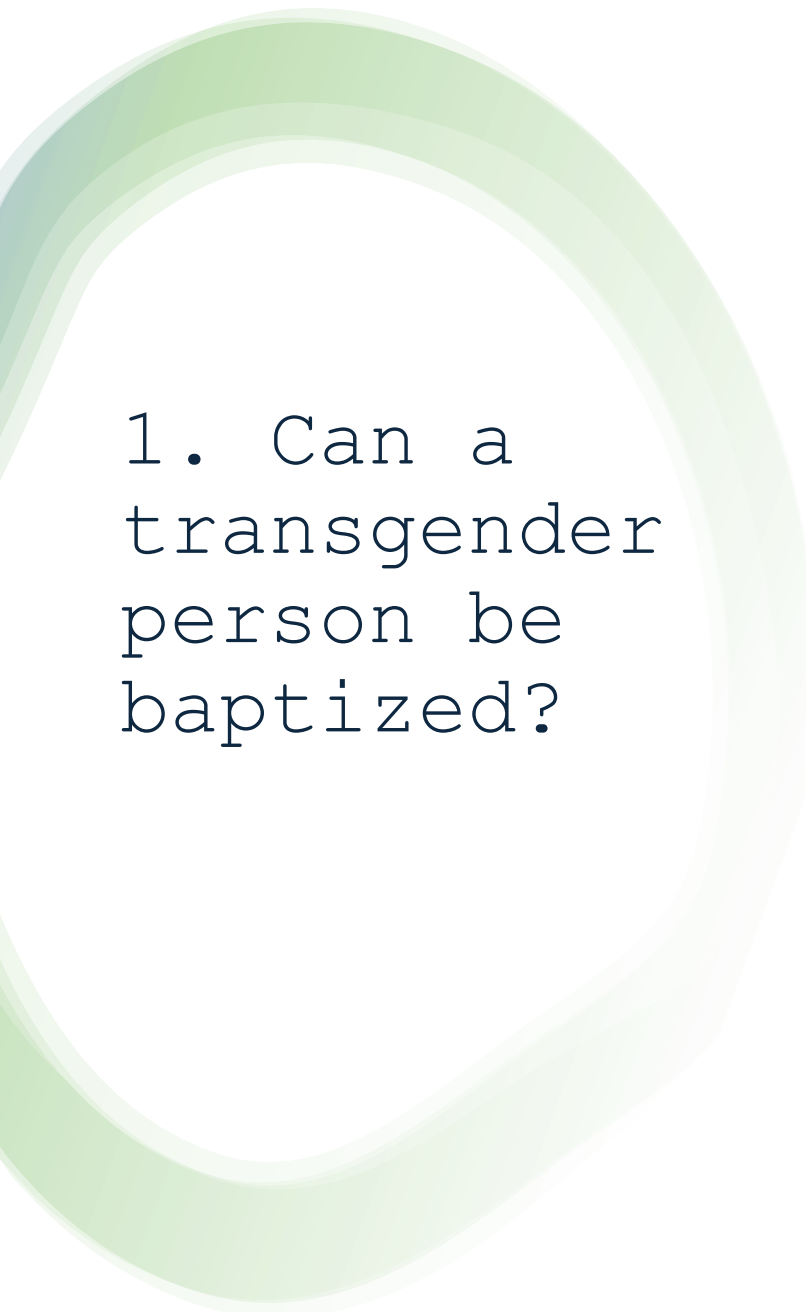
Canonical Updates

21 Jan 2026

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Some
questions
regarding the
possible
participation
in the
Sacraments of
Baptism and
Matrimony by
transgender
persons and
homosexual
persons

-On 14 July 2023, DDF received a letter from His Excellency, the Most Rev. José Negri, Bishop of Santo Amaro in Brazil concerning these questions



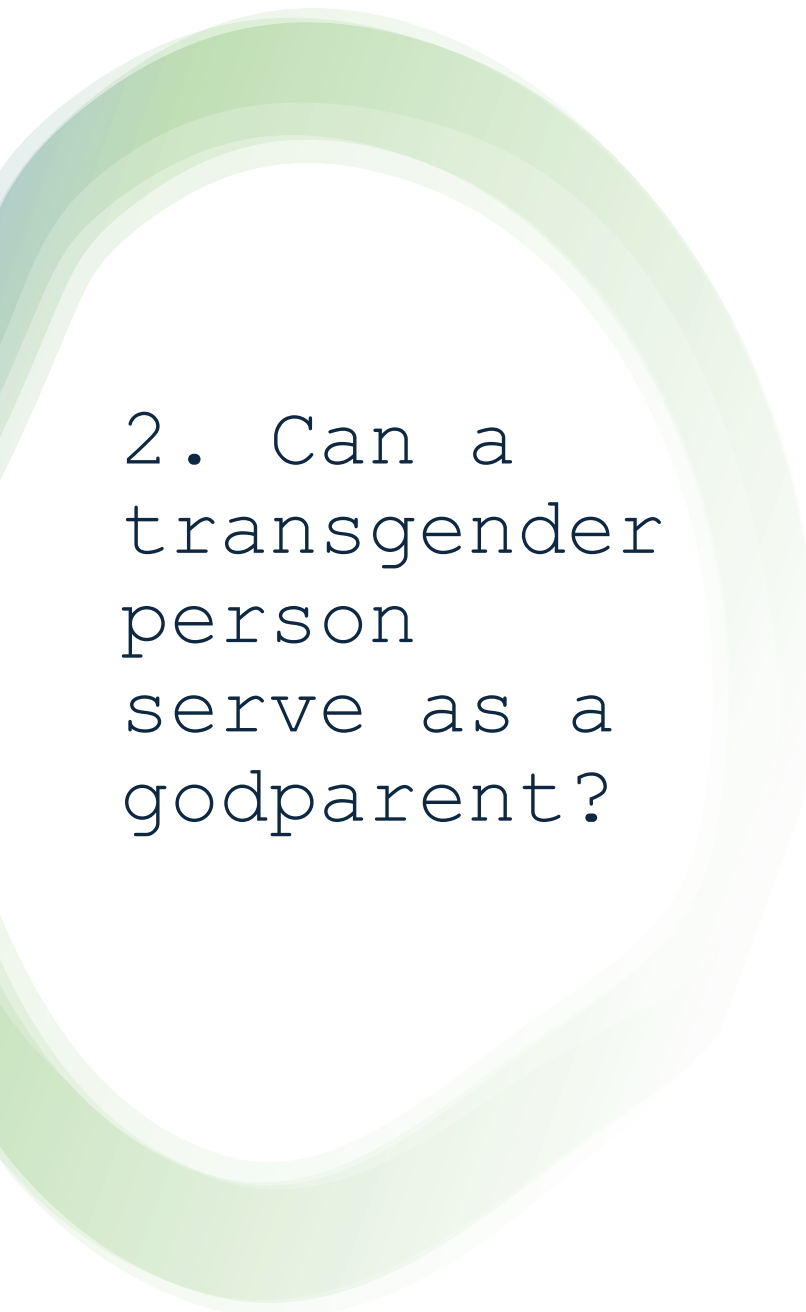
1. Can a transgender person be baptized?

-A transgender person-even after undergoing hormone treatment and sex-reassignment surgery-**can receive Baptism under the same conditions as other believers**, if there are no situations in which there is a risk of generating public scandal or disorientation among the faithful. In the case of children or adolescents with problems of a transgender nature, if they are well-prepared and have the right disposition, they also can receive Baptism.

-What about when there are doubts about the objective moral situation a person is in or about the person's subjective disposition toward grace?

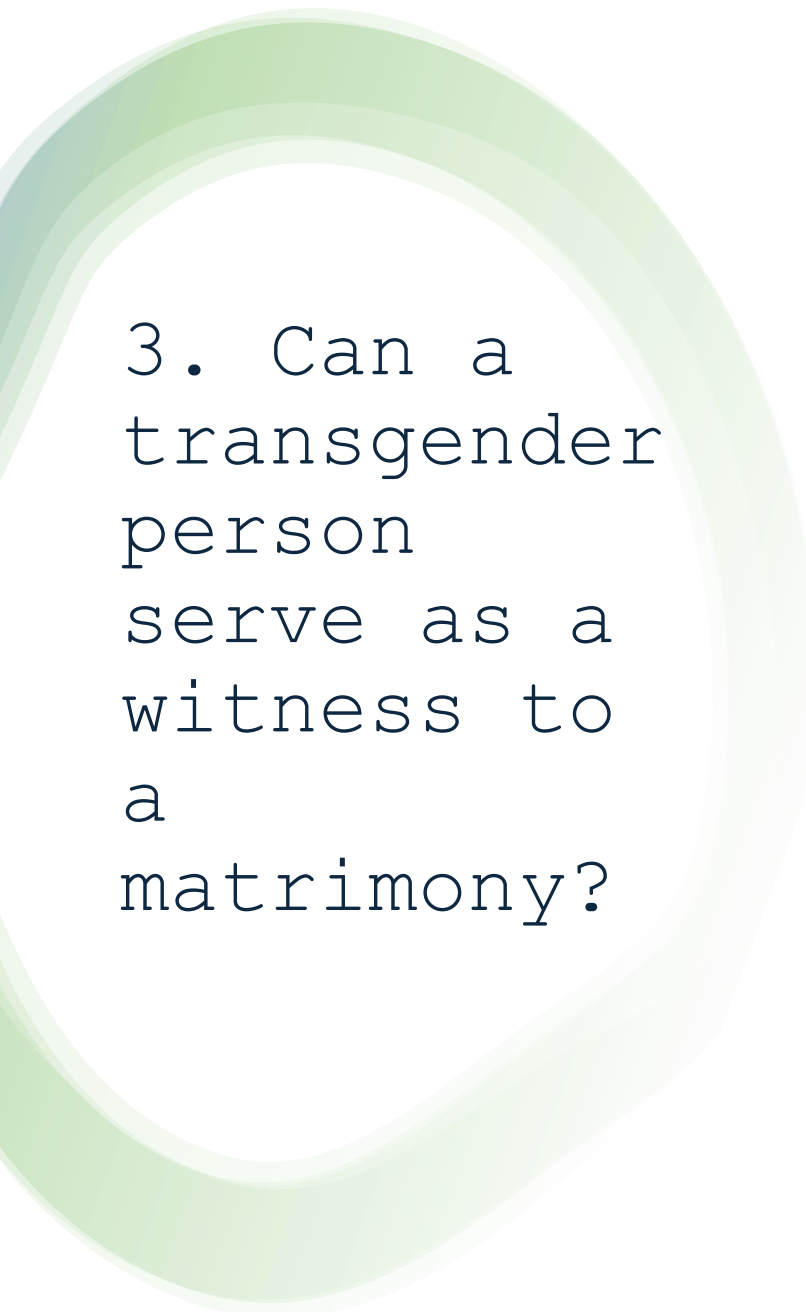
-when the Sacrament is received without repentance for grave sins, the individual does not receive sanctifying grace, even though he or she does receive the sacramental character.

-But it disposed one towards God's sanctifying grace!



2. Can a transgender person serve as a godparent?

- Under certain conditions, an adult transgender person—even after undergoing hormone treatment and sex reassignment surgery **may be admitted to the function of serving as a godparent.** However, since this task **does not constitute a right,** pastoral prudence demands that it should not be permitted if there is a danger of scandal, undue legitimization, or disorientation in the educational sphere of the ecclesial community.

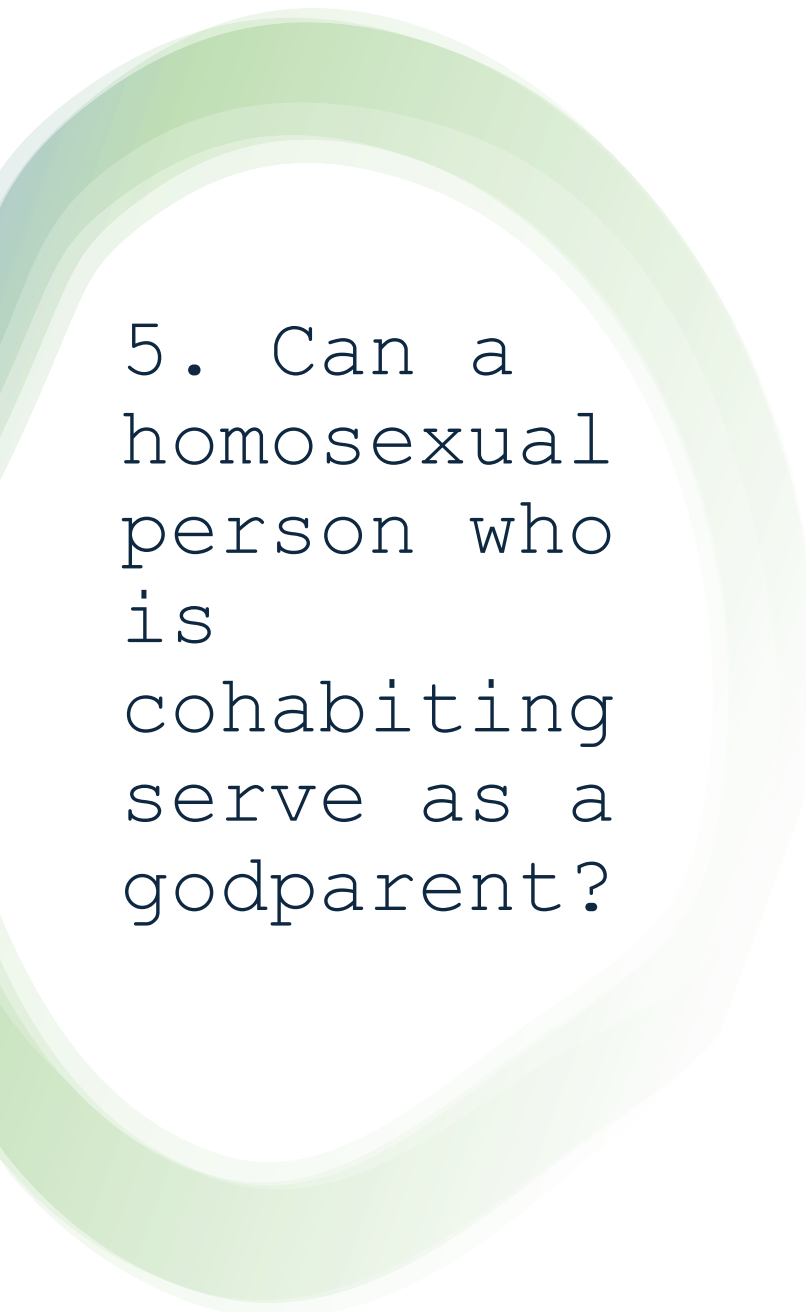


3. Can a transgender person serve as a witness to a matrimony?

- There is nothing in the current universal canonical legislation that prohibits a transgender person from serving as a witness to a matrimony.

4. Can two homosexual persons be regarded as the parents of a child who is to be baptized, and who was adopted or was received by other means, such as surrogacy?

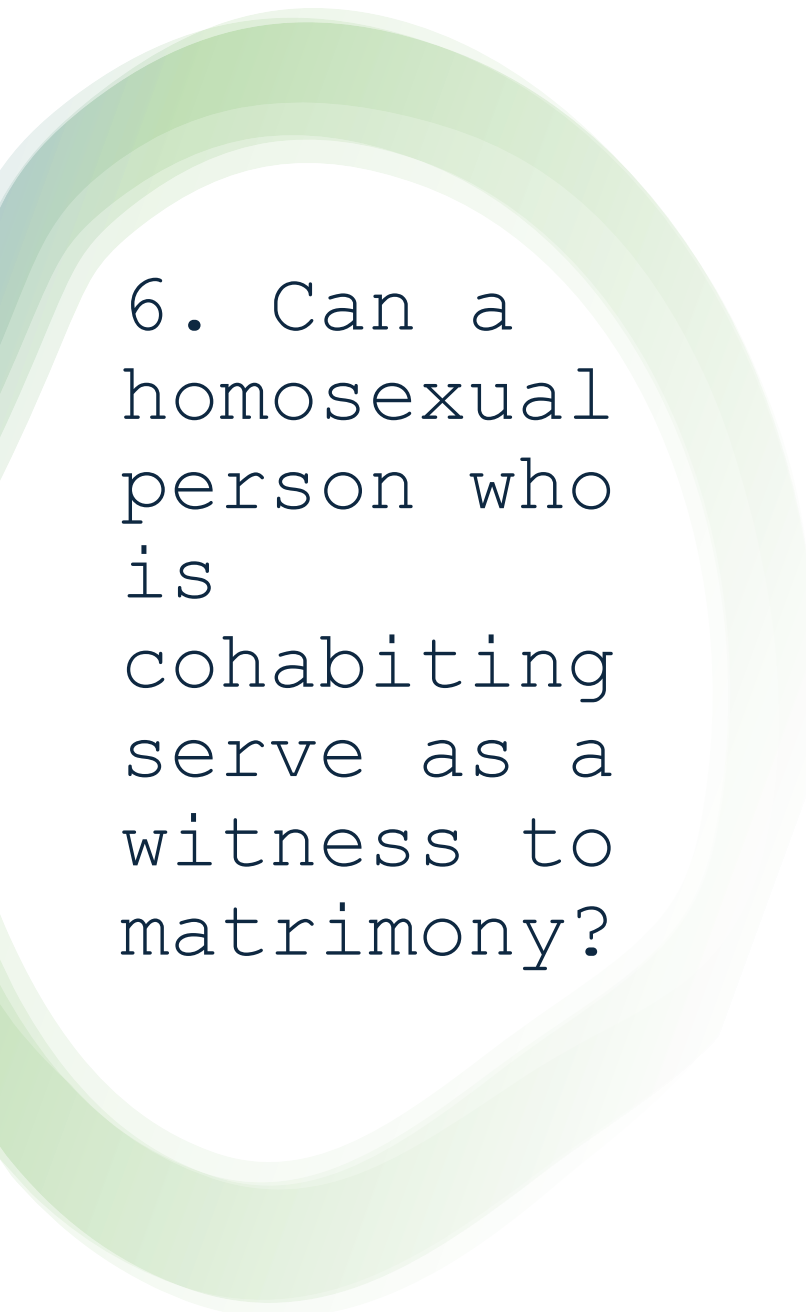
- In order for the child to be baptized, there must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion (cf. can. 868 § 1, 2° CIC; can. 681, § 1, 1° CCEO).



5. Can a homosexual person who is cohabiting serve as a godparent?

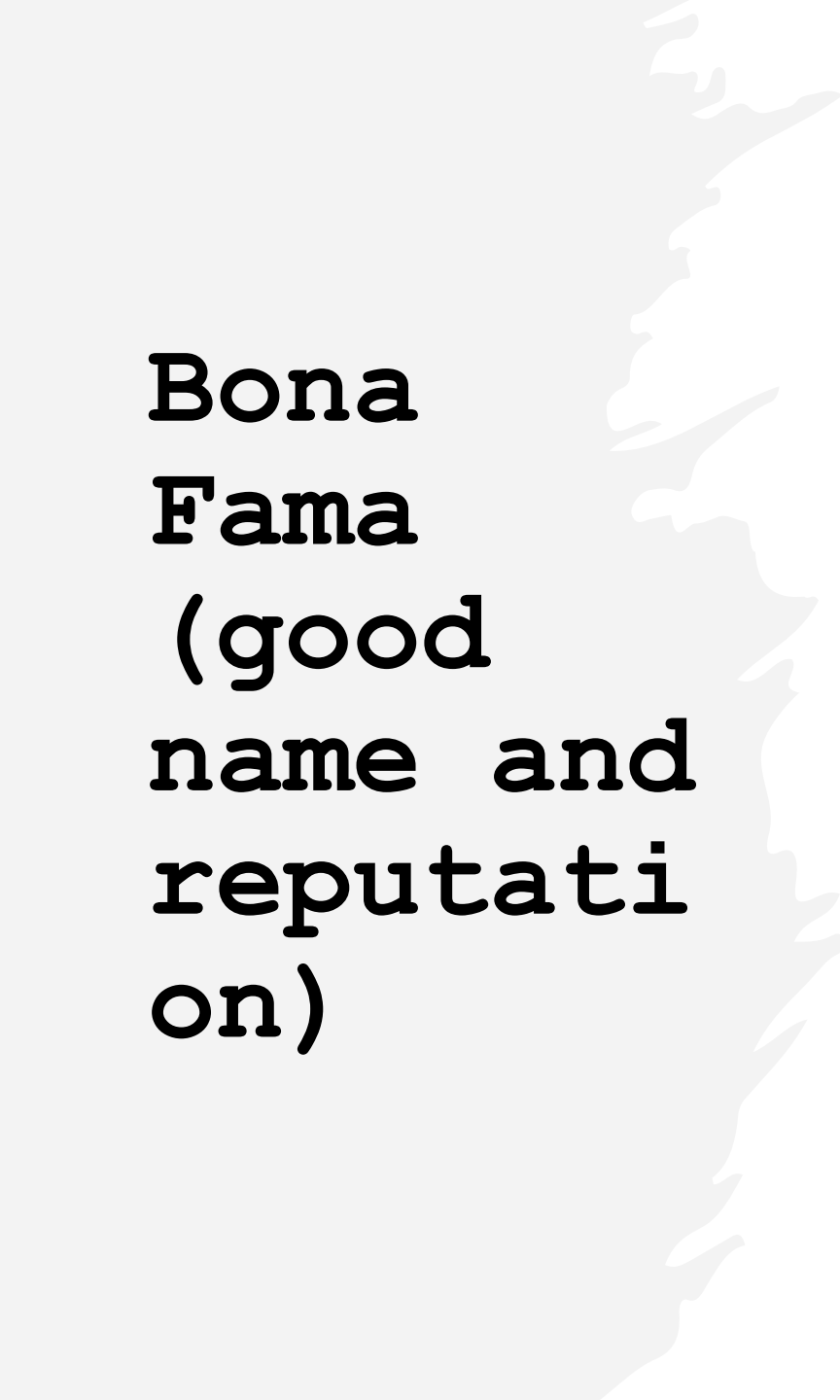
- According to Canon 874 § 1, 1° and 3° CIC, a person can serve as a godparent who possesses the proper **"aptitude"** (10) and who **"leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on"** (3°; cf. can. 685, § 2 CCEO). Different from this is the situation where the common life of two homosexual persons consists **not only in a simple sharing of accommodations, but rather, in a stable and declared relationship "more uxorio (in the manner of spouses)" that is well-known to the community.**
- **In any case, due pastoral prudence** demands that each situation be wisely considered to safeguard the Sacrament of Baptism and especially its reception, which is a precious good to be protected, since it is necessary for salvation.
- At the same time, one must consider the real value that the ecclesial community places on the duties of godparents, the role they have in the community, and the regard they show toward the teaching of the Church. Ultimately, the possibility that **there may be another person from the family circle** who can act as the guarantor of the proper handing on of the Catholic Faith to the individual being baptized should also be borne in mind, knowing that one can still assist during the Rite not only as a godparent, but also **as a witness** to the baptismal act.

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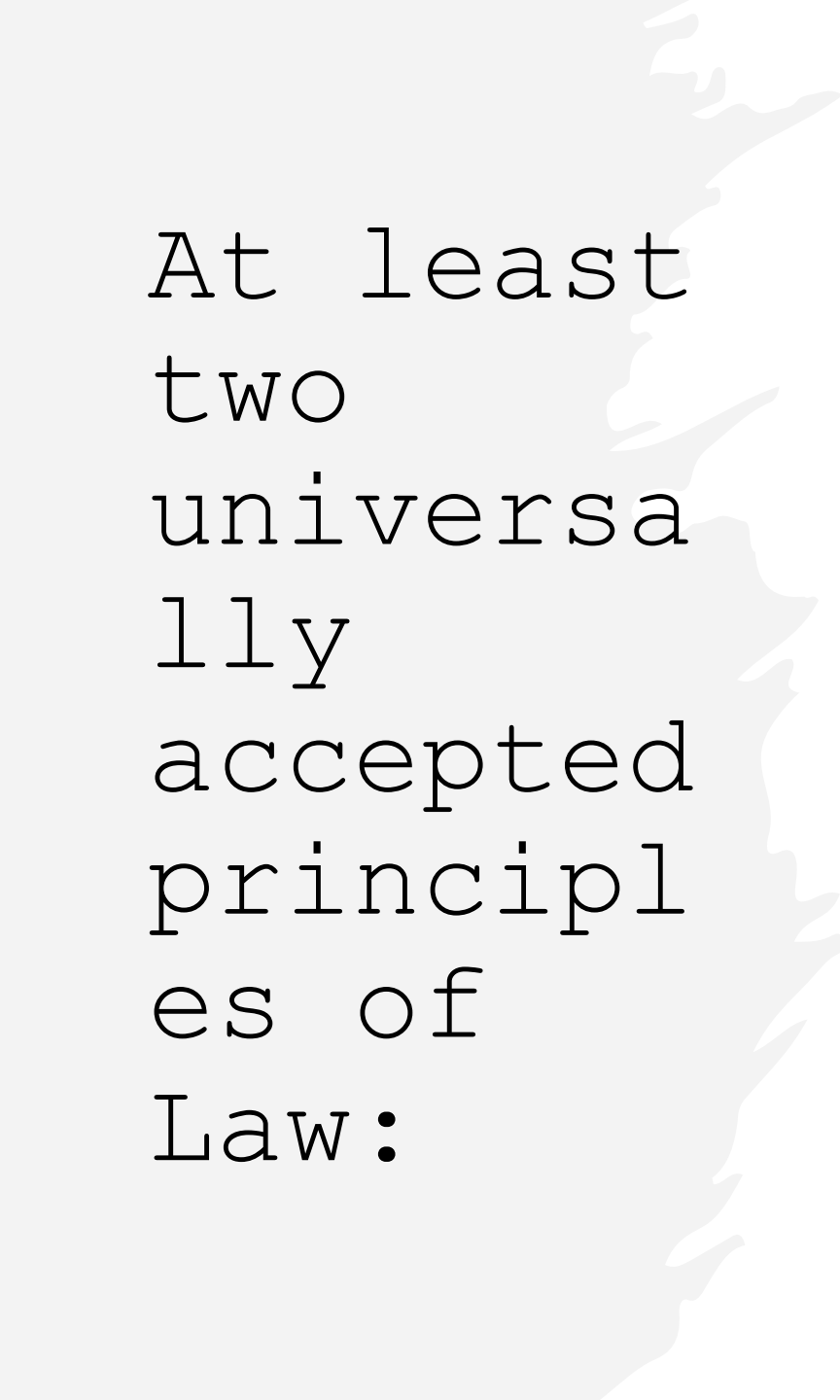
6. Can a homosexual person who is cohabiting serve as a witness to matrimony?

- There is nothing in the current universal canonical legislation that prohibits a homosexual person who is cohabiting from serving as a witness to a matrimony.




Bona Fama (good name and reputati on)

- On 5 September 2024, **official response from the Dicastery for Legislative Texts** clarifying the Church's **canonical position on the protection of the good name (*bona fama*) of deceased persons**, especially the deceased
- -there is neither legitimate nor proportionate reason for the injury to reputation.
- - the impossibility of the deceased of defending oneself against accusations



At least
two
universally
accepted
principles of
Law:

- Innocent until proven ((see also can. 1321 §1)
- the principle of *non-retroactivity of crime*, whereby one cannot be judged - and consequently not even charged - for conduct that at the time of its eventual commission did not constitute a crime from a formal point of view. Criminal norms apply only *pro futuro* (cf. cann. 9; 18; 1313) and cannot apply to acts and conduct that at the time of their realization constituted were neither illicit, nor crimes, nor offenses; for example, with regard to so-called omissions of general supervisory duties.

- 
- A generic “right to information” **cannot override fundamental legal and moral principles.**
 - It reaffirms **Pope Francis’s directive** against publishing lists or names of accused persons before a definitive canonical judgement (FRANCESCO PP, Incontro “La protezione dei minori nella Chiesa”. Punti di riflessione, 21 febbraio 2019, in URL: https://www.vatican.va/resources/resources_puntidiriflessione-protezioneminori_20190221_it.html)

Priests from another Diocese within England and Wales

a. For a single event or occasional supply

Celebret Requirement

A *celebret* is necessary. When a priest from another diocese within the territory of England and Wales wishes to undertake supervised or unsupervised ministry for a single event or occasional supply, he should ensure that he is in possession of a valid *celebret* issued by a diocesan bishop (or his legitimate ecclesiastical delegate) of the place where he usually ministers.

The *celebret* is the normal canonical means by which a priest can be identified as such, and by which he is to be recognised to be in good standing with his bishop. The *celebret* is issued for not longer than one calendar year (see CIC §903) and is issued by right to all priests who are judged to be in good standing by their bishop.

Celebrets may also be issued by the major superiors of religious orders for their clergy ministering in England and Wales. These *celebrets* should also be recognised in the same way as those of diocesan priests.

Testimonial of Suitability Requirement

A *Testimonial of Suitability* is not required for this mode of ministry by a priest who holds a valid *celebret* issued by another diocese in England and Wales or a major religious superior for their clergy ministering in England and Wales.

b. Extended placement or secondment

Celebret Requirement

A *celebret* is necessary but is not sufficient. If a priest has an extended placement or a secondment in a diocese not of his incardination, he should continue to use a *celebret* issued by the bishop of his diocese of incardination.

Testimonial of Suitability Requirement

A *Testimonial of Suitability* is necessary. If a priest is on extended placement or is seconded from one diocese to another and is given a legitimate ecclesiastical appointment by the receiving bishop, he should request a *Testimonial of Suitability* from the sending bishop which should be reviewed annually.

Priests from outside the Dioceses of England and Wales

Priests who desire to be in active ministry in any diocese within the territory of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, having come from outside that territory, will require the prior permission of their own bishop as well as that of the receiving Diocesan Bishop to undertake that ministry.

a. For a single event when the ministry is supervised

Celebret Requirement

If the request is for a single event and is supervised ministry, for example to concelebrate at an ordination or marriage, then a valid *celebret* will be sufficient for the priest to engage in such ministry.

Testimonial of Suitability Requirement

A *Testimonial of Suitability* is not required for this mode of ministry by a priest who holds a valid *celebret* issued by his diocesan bishop or a major religious superior for religious priests.

b. For a single event when the ministry is unsupervised

Celebret Requirement

A *celebret* is necessary but is not sufficient.

Testimonial of Suitability Requirement

If the request is for a single event and is unsupervised ministry, for example an overseas priest coming to celebrate Mass for a particular group within the Church (e.g. a migrant community group) then the receiving bishop should send the *Testimonial of Suitability* form to the bishop of the priest to ascertain that the priest is a cleric in good standing and that there are no concerns, allegations or criminal convictions relating to any maltreatment of and/or sexual misconduct with children or adults, and that he has undertaken safeguarding training for ministry. The *Testimonial of Suitability* may also be issued by the major religious superior for priests from religious life groups.

Visa Considerations

The Home Office have confirmed that priests coming to the UK for another reason (i.e. the visit to the migrant community is not the primary reason for the visit) are able to celebrate Mass and conduct other sacraments for which they are not receiving any stipend or payment from a UK source, other than reasonable expenses to cover the cost of their travel and subsistence, and they continue to be in employment overseas. They must have a valid visitor visa for the UK to do this.

c. For occasional supply or an extended placement

Celebret Requirement

A *celebret* is necessary but is not sufficient.

Testimonial of Suitability Requirement

If the request is for occasional supply or an extended placement (which implies that this would be unsupervised ministry), then the receiving bishop should send the *Testimonial of Suitability* form to the visiting priest's bishop for it to be completed and returned before the planned ministry takes place. The *Testimonial of Suitability* may also be issued by the major religious superior for priests from religious life groups.


Visa Considerations

In addition to the ecclesiastical requirements for extended placement, the visiting priest must also fulfil the requirements for immigration and have the appropriate T2 visa for work in the UK. Details of this can be found on the gov.uk website.

obligation
to attend
Mass when
a holyday
of
obligation
is
transfere
d because
of an
*occurrenti
a
festorum*,
23 January
2025

the coexistence, in the
liturgical year, of the
weekly cycle, of movable
feasts and weekdays (because
of their relationship with
Easter), and of days (feasts
and weekdays) with fixed
date celebrations, both in
the universal calendar and
in particular calendars,
gives rise to the phenomenon
of *occurrentia festorum*,
**i.e. the coincidence of two
feast days on the same
calendar date**

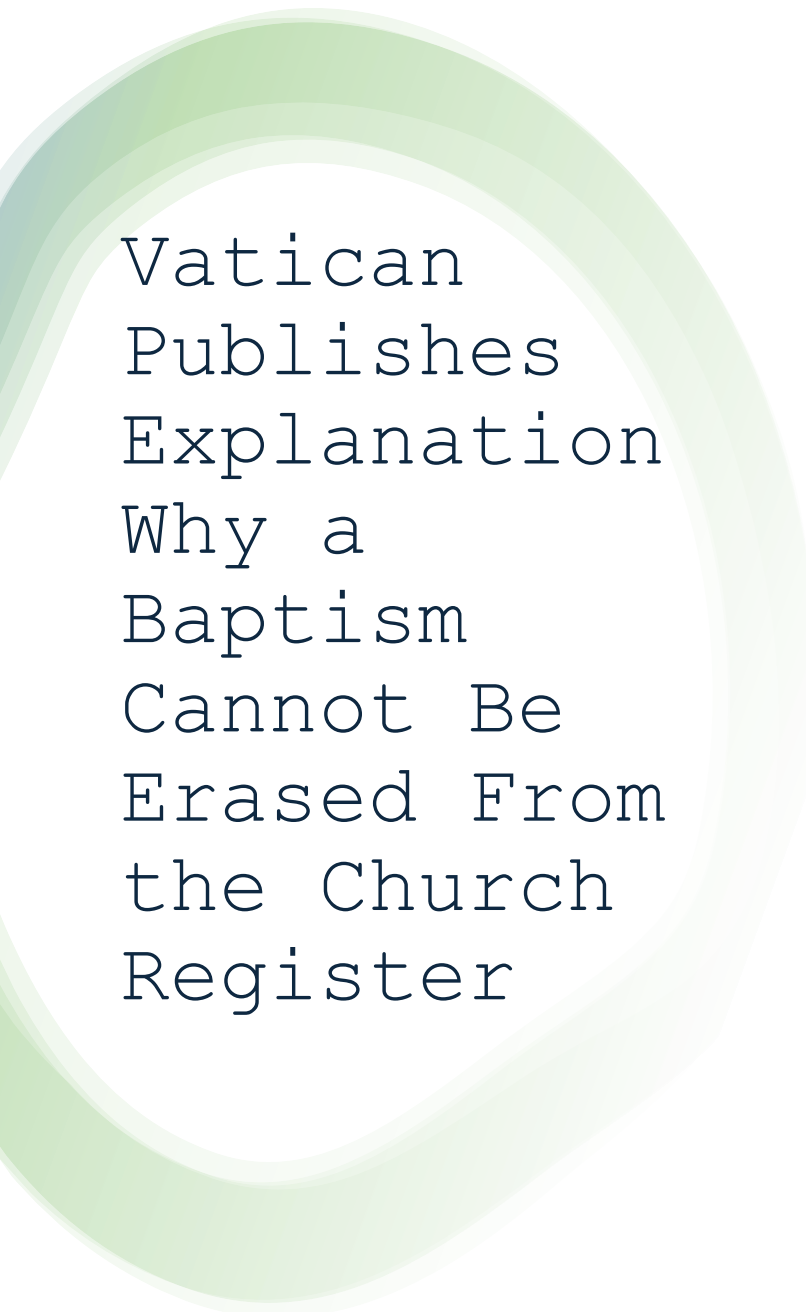
- Therefore, "if several
celebrations fall on the
same day, the one that holds
the highest rank according
to the Table of Liturgical
Days is observed. However, a
Solemnity impeded by a
liturgical day that takes
precedence over it should be
transferred to the closest
day not listed under nn. 1-8
in the Table of Precedence,
provided that what is laid
down in n. 5 is observed"
(Normae universales n. 60).

- 
- In this regard, the following dubium arises: in the case of the transfer of a holyday of obligation, is one bound on the day ad quem to observe the obligation to attend Mass? The answer was in the Negative!
 - e.g., If the Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8) falls on a Sunday, it's often moved to Monday, Dec. 9. The obligation to go to Mass is lifted for Monday, Dec. 9 (unless your local bishop has made other arrangements for your diocese, which is rare after this clarification), but you can still go if you wish.




Saint Teresa of Calcutta Virgin entered on the Universal Roman Calendar

- Decree on the inscription of the celebration of Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Virgin, in the General Roman Calendar, 11.02.2025
- has decreed that the name of Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Virgin, shall be inscribed in the General Roman Calendar and her Optional Memorial shall be celebrated by all on 5 September every year.
- **General Criteria**
 - Universality of veneration throughout the whole Church
 - Outstanding importance for the life and mission of the universal Church
 - Lasting theological, spiritual, or pastoral significance
 - Long-standing and stable tradition of celebration (especially for older saints)
 - Respect for the primacy of the mysteries of salvation and avoidance of calendar overcrowding

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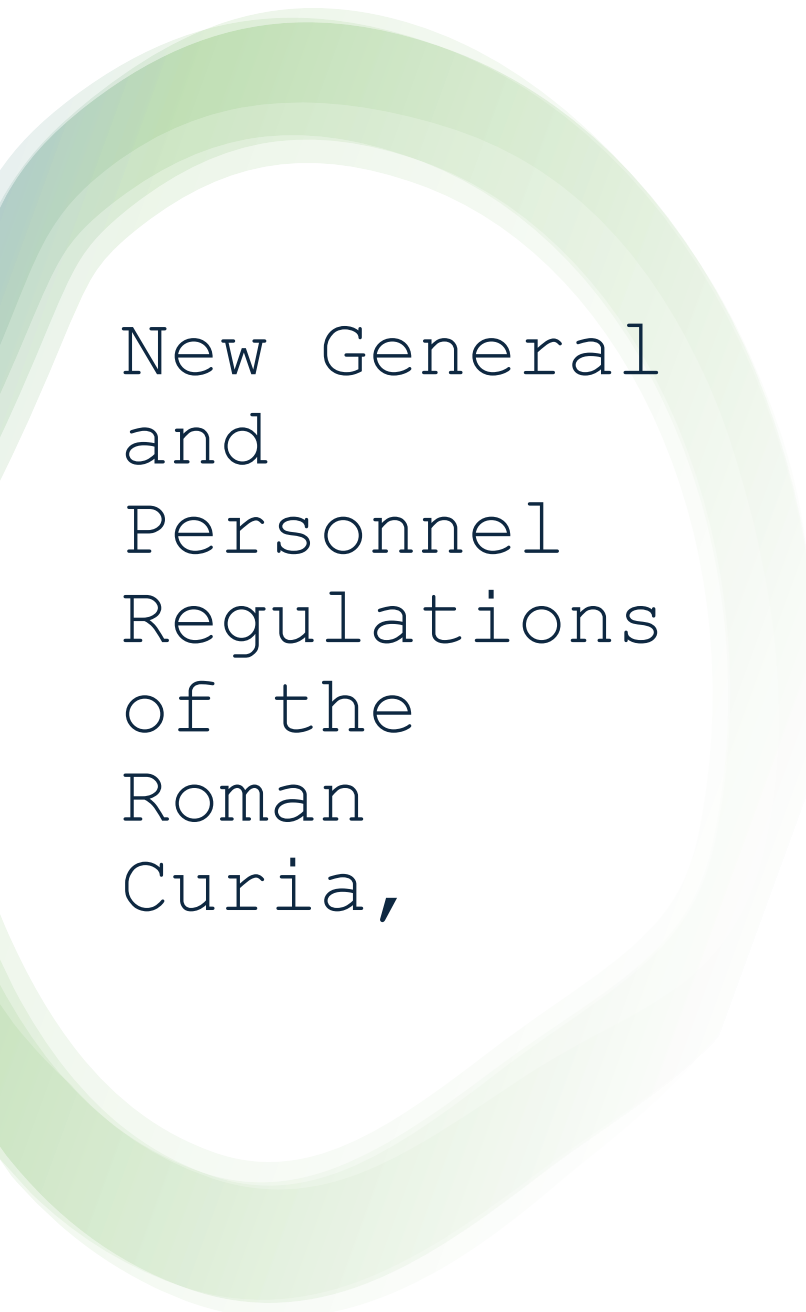
Vatican Publishes Explanation Why a Baptism Cannot Be Erased From the Church Register

On Thursday, April 17, a Note from the Dicastery for Legislative Texts was published, explaining why it's not possible to annul a Baptism from the Parish Register. Vatican Publishes Explanation Why a Baptism Cannot Be Erased From the Church Register



annulment of baptismal records: under canon 535 , entries in the Baptismal Register may only be modified to correct transcription errors, never erased or cancelled.

- The Baptismal Register is a juridical record of historical facts, not a membership list: it certifies that a baptism (and related sacramental or canonical acts) objectively took place, irrespective of a person's current faith or ecclesial affiliation.
- Baptism is the foundational sacrament: since it is received only once and is required for the valid reception of other sacraments, the Church must retain permanent and reliable proof of its celebration.
- Subsequent canonical acts must be added, not substituted: Confirmation, Holy Orders, Marriage, perpetual religious profession, change of rite, adoption, and formal defection from the Church are recorded as annotations, never as cancellations of baptism.
- the Register safeguards good administrative and pastoral order, protects the rights of the individual and third parties, and ensures the validity of future sacramental and canonical actions.
- a person may leave the Church or formally defect, and this intention can be noted in the Register, but the historical fact of Baptism itself cannot be suppressed or undone. (The note on *actus formalis defectionis ab Ecclesia Catholica* (the formal act of defection from the Catholic Church) itself was originally issued by the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts on 13 March 2006 and approved by



New General and Personnel Regulations of the Roman Curia,

- The pope has approved the new General and Personnel Regulations of the Roman Curia, which come into effect Jan. 1, 2026, and which adapt the internal functioning of the Vatican bodies to the apostolic constitution Praedicate Evangelium, promulgated by Pope Francis in 2022.
- The document, approved “ad experimentum” (for temporary or provisional use) for five years
- Replaces the previous general regulation from **15 April 1999** (effective 1 July 1999).



Art. 50


- §1. As a rule, the curial institutions shall draw up their acts in the Latin language or in another language.
- §2. An office for the Latin language is established within the Secretariat of State, at the service of the Roman Curia.
- §3. Care shall be taken that the principal documents intended for publication are translated into the languages most widely used today.

Whether it is permitted to expose the Most Precious Blood of Christ for eucharistic adoration.

Ṛ In the negative and with a rationale.

[Notitiae 43 \(2007\): 182-183](https://notitia.e.ipsissima-verba.org/)
<https://notitia.e.ipsissima-verba.org/>

- The rationale is: the exposition of the most holy Eucharist, according to the norms of the liturgical books, can be done with a ciborium or ostensory (*De sacra communione et de cultu mysterii Eucharistici extra Missam*, n. 82), in keeping with the doctrine of the Church which teaches that under either species alone the whole and complete Christ and the true sacrament is and is received.
- The norms currently in force altogether forbid the reservation of the Most Precious Blood of Christ after the celebration of Mass, as can be read in the Instruction *Inaestimabile donum* (1970), n. 14: « The consecrated wine, on the contrary, should be consumed immediately after communion and may not licitly be reserved. Care must be taken, however, that only enough wine is consecrated as is necessary for communion ». The same is also required by the *Institutio Generalis Missalis Romani* (*tertia editio typica*), nn. 163, 182, 247, 249, and by the Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum* (2004), n. 107.



necessity described by the Code of Canon Law (can. 925), it is permitted to give Communion under the species of wine alone to a sick person who on account of the infirmity cannot receive the Eucharist under the species of bread. In this case, either Mass is celebrated in the place, according to the norm of law, so that the priest can administer the Blood of Christ at once, or the Most Precious Blood is reserved in a properly sealed vessel in the tabernacle after Mass is celebrated in a church or oratory. Because this is a case of necessity, however, it should nowise be considered an ordinary occurrence. Moreover, so that the species of consecrated wine will not be corrupted, it is necessary that Communion be administered within a short time.

- The Church avoids reserving the Most Precious Blood especially because of the danger of the quick and unavoidable corruption of the species of wine and because of the difficulty of carrying transporting the Most Holy Sacrament under that species for the Communion of the sick without accident.
- All the more, therefore, is it not permissible to reserve or expose the Most Precious Blood of Christ for adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament, whether by itself or together with the sacred consecrated host. Moreover, the practice is reprobated of making or using ostensories in which a vessel for the Blood of Christ can be placed.

What, then, are the dispositions that pertain to the time for celebrating the sacrament of Penance (whether, for example, the Christian faithful can approach the sacrament of Penance while the celebration of Mass is ongoing)?

[Notitiae 37](https://notitiae.ipsissima-verba.org/)
[\(2001\): 259-260](https://notitiae.ipsissima-verba.org/)
<https://notitiae.ipsissima-verba.org/>

the time for celebrating the sacrament of Penance are found in the instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium* (May 25, 1967) where it is commended that "The faithful are to be constantly led to the practice of going to confession outside the celebration of Mass, and especially at the prescribed times, such that the administration [of the sacrament] **takes place calmly and with true benefit [to the faithful] and such that active participation in the Mass is not impeded**" (n. 35). This is also proposed anew in the praenotanda to the Rite of Penance (n. 13) where, nonetheless, it is declared that "the reconciliation of penitents may be celebrated **at any time and on any day**" (ibid.).

- -also seek the good of the faithful. this norm in no way prohibits priests, aside from the one celebrating the Holy Mass, from hearing the confessions of the faithful who desire it even at the time during which Mass is celebrated.
- -it is not licit to unite the sacrament of Penance with the Holy Mass such that a single liturgical celebration is taking plac


permissible for a Bishop to concelebrate on the occasion of the jubilee of a certain priest such that he takes a place among the presbyters and yields the place of principal celebrant to the presbyter who is celebrating his jubilee?

R. In the negative.

[Notitiae 46 \(2009\): 170](#)

<https://notitiae.ipsissima-verba.org/>

- The liturgical norm in force, which carries with it a theological principle rooted in the wisdom of the Fathers, confirms with all evidence the necessity that the Bishop preside at the celebration, whether he celebrates the Eucharist or not.
-
- It is most fitting, therefore, that when the Bishop is present at a particular liturgical action, where the people is gathered, that he, as the one signed with the fullness of the sacrament of Order, presides at the celebration.



presides at the Eucharist but does not celebrate it, he himself takes charge of the liturgy of the word and concludes the Mass with the rite of dismissal».

- Nevertheless, « for a just cause he may be present at a Mass but not celebrate it, it is preferable, unless another Bishop is to celebrate, that he preside at the celebration, at least by celebrating the liturgy of the word and blessing the people at the end. This counts especially with regard to those eucharistic celebrations in which some sacramental rite or rite of consecration or blessing is to take place » (n. 175). In this case, the Bishop participates at Mass « dressed in mozeta and rochet, not in the cathedra but in a more suitable place prepared for him » (n. 186).

**Pontifical Yearbook (Annuario Pontificio) now
available online with information on global
Church**

<https://www.annuariopontificio.catholic/welcome>

**Working
group
appointed
to explore
and find
out
whether
False
Mysticism
and
Spiritual
Abuse be
added as
abuse**

On 22 November 2024, Pope Francis approved the creation of a Working Group on Spiritual Abuse aimed at classifying it as a delict.

The term "false mysticism" appears in the regulations of the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith ([DDF](#)) within a very specific context: namely, issues related to spirituality and alleged supernatural phenomena, which now are handled by the Doctrinal Section. This includes "problems and behavior connected with the discipline of the faith, such as cases of pseudo-mysticism, alleged apparitions, visions, and messages attributed to supernatural origin..." (Art. 10, 2).

There is no delict in Canon Law classified by the name "false mysticism," even though canonists occasionally use the expression in a manner that is closely tied to crimes of abuse.

Proceeding in the Discernment of
Alleged Supernatural

Phenomena, the DDF specified that "the use of purported supernatural experiences or recognized mystical elements as a means of or a pretext for exerting control over people or carrying out abuses is to be considered of particular moral gravity" (Art. 16). This consideration allows the situation described here to be evaluated as an aggravating circumstance if it occurs together with delicts.

- At the same time, it is possible to classify a delict of "spiritual abuse," avoiding the overly broad and ambiguous expression of "false mysticism."
- It is proposed to entrust to the Dicastery for Legislative Texts and the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith the task of analyzing this possibility and presenting concrete proposals, forming a working group between them, chaired by the Prefect of the Dicastery for Legislative Texts.