

DIOCESE OF DALLAS

Emergency Baptism

Emergency Confirmation



Emergency Baptism

(September 22, 2015)

When a Catholic priest performs an emergency Baptism, it is expected that he also will Confirm at the same time. Note the following canons and possible EXCEPTION:

Can. 882: The ordinary minister of confirmation is a bishop; a presbyter provided with this faculty in virtue of universal law or the special grant of the competent authority also confers this sacrament validly.

Can. 883, 3^o: The following possess the faculty of administering confirmation by the law itself as regards those who are in danger of death, the pastor or indeed any presbyter.

Can. 885, 1^o: The diocesan bishop is obliged to take care that the sacrament of confirmation is conferred on subjects who properly and reasonably seek it.

Can. 885, 2^o: A presbyter who possesses this faculty must use it for the sake of those in whose favor the faculty was granted. [The Commentary on the Code of Canon Law also speaks to this issue: “The canons on ministers point out that any priest has the faculty by virtue of the law in a danger of death situation and even must use it for the benefit of someone in virtue of whose need they have received the faculty.”]

Can. 889, 1^o: Every baptized person not yet confirmed and only such a person is capable of receiving confirmation.

Can. 889, 2^o: To receive Confirmation licitly outside the danger of death requires that a person who has the use of reason be suitably instructed, properly disposed, and able to renew the baptismal promises.

Can. 891: The sacrament of Confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful at about the age of discretion unless the Conference of Bishops has determined another age, or there is danger of death, or in the judgment of the minister a grave cause suggests otherwise.

Not only should those who have not been baptized receive emergency Baptism and Confirmation but also any baptized Catholic, not yet confirmed, who is in danger of death, should receive emergency Confirmation. When a priest is called to administer Baptism in an emergency situation, he should proceed with emergency Confirmation UNLESS, as an EXCEPTION, prudence would indicate, perhaps in consultation with the parents, that the infant likely will survive, and Confirmation can be delayed until the usual Diocesan age of Confirmation.

When a priest is not readily available for an emergency Baptism, a deacon or properly catechized layperson should be sent immediately. A priest can later administer emergency Confirmation if

warranted.

The emergency Confirmation is recorded in the same parish in which the emergency Baptism is recorded. See the [Handbook for Sacramental Records](#) and Pastoral Services' [Baptismal Record Policy](#) on the website for recording instructions.

Should there be questions, contact:

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