BAPTISMAL REGISTER
The following notes are revised and adapted from the workshops I presented during October, 2016. The project gave me the opportunity to consider several technical issues related to the pastoral responsibility of maintaining sacramental registers. My presentation was limited to the Baptismal Register. Presentations on other registers, especially the Marriage Register, are being considered.

Much of what follows is known by those who regularly record information in the Baptismal Register or provide baptismal certificates. However, I call attention to a recent change in canon 535 concerning what is required to be included in the Baptismal Register. This change came into effect through the Motu Proprio, De Concordia inter Codices (On the harmony of the Codes) issued September 15, 2016. The text is not too long and can be read at:

http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=11370

The revised text of canon 535 states:

§2. In the baptismal register are also to be noted ascription to a Church sui iuris and/or any transfer [to another Church sui iuris], also confirmation, and those things which pertain to the canonical status of the Christian faithful by reason of marriage, without prejudice to the prescript of can. 1133, of adoption, of the reception of sacred orders, of perpetual profession made in a religious institute, and of change of rite. These notations are always to be noted on a baptismal certificate.

The change is that we are now to include a notation that the one who is baptized is “enrolled in the Latin Church.” (This is usually the case, but see infra.) I suggest that you place this notation in the Register’s column where the date of baptism is indicated. Thus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Date of Baptism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMITH, James Joseph</td>
<td>November 1, 2016</td>
<td>November 20, 2016 and enrolled in the Latin Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spokane, WA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If your Register does not have space in the “date of baptism” column, place the notation in the far right column where other notations about marriage et al. are made.

The following notes go into greater detail about this issue of ascription or enrollment and the meaning of a Church sui iuris. Briefly, a Church sui iuris means autonomous, or having one’s own law and hierarchy, but in communion with the Bishop of Rome. This issue can be confusing. The baptisms we celebrate almost always concern children of parents who belong the Latin Church (which is the technical name for the Roman Catholic Church sui iuris, cf. the Code of Canon Law, can. 1). But the Catholic Church is not only the Latin Church. There are also 20 Eastern Churches rooted in the ancient Churches of Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe.
Catholics belonging to various Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris* are among the recent flood of migrants from the mid-east. But apart from this humanitarian crisis, the United States already had substantial numbers of Eastern Catholics, whose Churches have hierarchies in the U.S. These Catholics do not lose their canonical ascription to their ancestral Church, and at baptism their children are ascribed to the proper Church *sui iuris*, even when we celebrate the sacrament according to the Roman *rite*. For the time being, let’s keep it simple, presume that we are baptizing Latin Church Catholics, and make the notation in the Register. But keep in mind that you may encounter Catholics belonging to an Eastern Church, and baptisms for such families will include a notation of enrollment in the proper Eastern Catholic Church *sui iuris*. The *Motu Proprio* and the following presentation provide further guidance on this issue. I will call attention to additional information that becomes available, and you are welcome to call my attention to articles you may find.
BAPTISMAL REGISTER

The Baptismal Register is the fundamental source for documenting a Catholic’s canonical status. The typical Register contains space for the following entries and notations.
## BAPTISMAL REGISTER

**Page of the Register**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY NAME</th>
<th>DATE/PLACE OF BIRTH</th>
<th>DATE OF BPATISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NO. 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO. 2</td>
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<td>NO. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NO. 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# BAPTISMAL REGISTER

Page of the Register

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FATHER’S NAME</th>
<th>MOTHER’S MAIDEN NAME</th>
<th>SPONSORS</th>
<th>DATE/PLACE OF CONFIRMATION</th>
<th>MARRIAGE/ORDINATION/RELIGIOUS PROFESSION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# BAPTISMAL REGISTER

Page of the Register

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTATIONS/REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We recommend that names and other notations in the Register be printed in block letters rather than writing in cursive. Who knows how long it will be before *no one can read cursive*?
Or your cursive
and we don’t want anyone to curse your cursive.
DATE OF BIRTH
PLACE OF BIRTH

January 1, 1985
Spokane, WA

It is preferable to print name of month rather than a numerical indication. This will avoid confusion of day and month. Many people are more accustomed to the day-month-year pattern. E.g. 9-10-85 is ambiguous. Is it September 10 or October 9?
DATE OF BAPTISM

Enter date of baptism

February 1, 1985
And now, something new!

Can. 535§2. In the baptismal register are also to be noted ascription to a Church *sui iuris* and/or any transfer, also confirmation, and those things which pertain to the canonical status of the Christian faithful by reason of marriage...

This canon has been revised in the recently issued *Motu Proprio*, “De Concordia inter Codices” You can find the MP and the revised canons at [http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=11370](http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=11370). Copy and paste this link into your browser to read the full text.
What is a Church Sui Iuris?

The Catholic Church includes

• The Latin Catholic Church *sui iuris*
• And Twenty-one Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*

*sui iuris*, literally “of its own law” is roughly translated *autonomous*. 
Enrolled in the Latin Church

We have presumed that every infant we baptize is the child of parents belonging to the Latin Church, and that every adult chooses to be baptized in the Latin Church (cf. can. 111 n.3)
Enrollment in the Latin Church

Until we have more definite instruction, this notation about inscription or enrollment in a Church *sui iuris* may be placed with the date of baptism, or in the “notations” column of the Register:

October 2, 2016
and enrolled in the Latin Church
What about the Eastern Catholic Churches?

We will add an appendix to this presentation and try to explain inscription or enrollment in an Eastern Catholic Church *sui iuris*.

Let’s move on now, presuming we are dealing with Latin Church Catholics.
FATHER’S NAME
MOTHER’S MAIDEN NAME

Enter the parents’ names

Smith, John (or John Smith)
Jones, Mary (or Mary Jones)
UNMARRIED MOTHER/PARENTS

Canon 877

Insert mother’s name if maternity established publicly or if she seeks it willingly (in writing).

Insert father’s name if contained in a public document (birth certificate) or he makes declaration before the pastor and two witnesses.

Otherwise, the father is not named, or neither parent is named. E.g. when an abandoned child is baptized.
SPONSORS

James Smith
Margaret Jones

Can. 873: There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each.

Can. 874: designated by the parents (on the one to be baptized)
at least 16 years old
fully initiated
Non-Catholic godparent?

Can. 874 §2 A baptized non-Catholic “together with a Catholic sponsor” may be included as a witness:

SPONSORS

James Smith (Christian witness)
Margaret Smith
What is a Sponsor?

Role of the sponsor: help the baptized person to lead a Christian life (can. 872)

Not a commitment to accept guardianship of a child.

A non-Christian witness? Is it worth it to struggle over this issue? One role of the witness is to provide testimony that a person was baptized. A non-baptized person can do this.
Sponsor by Proxy

SPONSORS

James Smith (proxy, Robert Jones)
Margaret Smith

Since a proxy is present at the baptism, he/she can testify to the fact of baptism, even though there is no ecclesial role. Witnesses of a baptism can sometimes be helpful to verify the fact of baptism. This is also why it is a good idea.
TO TAKE PICTURES
PRIEST (DEACON)

Rev. Mark Pautler
(Deacon [or Rev. Mr.] Brian Ernst)
From the Font to the Front Office

For most infant baptisms, this is all the information you need for the baptismal register. It is helpful to make a rough draft of the baptismal certificate with all this information beforehand. The priest/deacon dates and signs it after the baptism. He enters the information into the Register or entrusts it to the secretary.
As time goes by...

Additional information and notations will be added to the baptismal register indicating changes in the person’s ecclesial status.

In particular, regarding Confirmation, Marriage and Holy Orders or Religious profession.

This information comes to you from the parish or diocese where these rites or processes take place, and is entered into the baptismal record.
DATE OF CONFIRMATION
PLACE OF CONFIRMATION

May 1, 1993
Sacred Heart Parish, Spokane WA
RECORD OF MARRIAGE, ORDINATION
RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

Married Maria Gomez-Hernandez
July 1, 2010 at St. Patrick Parish, Pasco WA
RECORD OF MARRIAGE, ORDINATION RELIGIOUS PROFESSION

There may be another chapter to this story

Married Maria Gomez-Hernandez
July 1, 2010 at St. Patrick Parish, Pasco WA

Declaration of nullity
Tribunal of Spokane PN 90/2015
Married Maria Gomez-Hernandez
July 1, 2013 at St. Patrick Parish, Pasco WA

Declaration of nullity
Tribunal of Spokane PN 90/2015

Married Rosa Garcia-Mendoza
July 1, 2016 at St. Mary, Spokane Valley WA
Married Maria Gomez-Hernandez
July 1, 2013 at St. Patrick Parish, Pasco WA
(Maria died, December 1, 2014.)
How would you know this?
Married Rosa Garcia-Mendoza
July 1, 2016 at St. Mary Parish, Spokane Valley WA
SIDEBAR

When you send notification of marriage to the parish where a person was baptized, include significant information about prior marriages, viz., *death of a previous spouse* on a declaration of nullity.
Ordained a Transitional Deacon, Diocese of Spokane, Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral, May 1, 2012
Ordained a Transitional Deacon, Diocese of Spokane, Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral, May 1, 2012

Ordained a Priest, May 1, 2014
Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral, Spokane
Ordained Transitional Deacon, Diocese of Spokane, Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral, May 1, 2012

Ordained a Priest, May 1, 2014
Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral, Spokane

Dispensation from obligations of ordination
PN 050/2016 Congregation for Clergy
BAPTISMAL REGISTER

Because the notations can become so numerous, you might make it a practice to use TWO entry spaces for each person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO. 1</th>
<th>FAMILY NAME</th>
<th>DATE/PLACE OF BIRTH</th>
<th>DATE OF BAPTISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NO. 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO. 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO. 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Too Much Information

• Or you can add additional information in an empty line further on in the register.

(refer to #75 for additional notations)
Other situations for becoming Catholic

• Now, let’s look at a case involving someone who becomes a Catholic as an adult either through RCIA, or by reception into full communion.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>FAMILY NAME</th>
<th>BAPTISMAL NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Smith, Joseph Anthony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DATE OF BIRTH
January 1, 1985
PLACE OF BIRTH
Spokane, WA
DATE OF BAPTISM

April 7, 2012
(Now, you also include, “and enrolled in the Latin Church.”)

*Names of parents, sponsor(s) entered in the proper places.*
DATE OF CONFIRMATION
PLACE OF CONFIRMATION

April 7, 2012

(Happened in your parish, so no need to state it)
April 7, 2012
And First Communion

We assume that adults who are baptized and confirmed at the same time, also receive the Eucharist on that occasion, but this fact could be noted under the date of confirmation or in another space.
What about Reception into Full Communion?

Let’s suppose that our subject, Joseph Anthony Smith, was baptized in the Lutheran Church on February 1, 1985, and was received into Full Communion of the Catholic Church on April 7, 2012.
Baptismal Register or Register for Reception?

• If you have a *Register for Reception* into full communion of the Catholic Church, the baptized non-Catholic’s reception and subsequent sacraments will be recorded there. However, this means a parish must have TWO primary source registers for Catholics. It is permissible to record RFC in the baptismal register. How do you record it?
DATE OF BAPTISM

In this column of the Baptismal register, you insert:

Received into Full Communion,
April 7, 2012
(Now, you also include “and enrolled in the Latin Church”)

Normally, an adult is confirmed at the time of reception into full communion, so you make a notation in the Confirmation column

April 7, 2012
And First Communion

Happened in your parish, so no need to state it, but you may add the notation about Holy Communion.
NOTATIONS/REMARKS

In the column of the Register on the far right you can insert the non-Catholic baptism of one who is received into full communion.

Baptized at St. Mark Lutheran Church, Spokane, February 1, 1985

Baptism should be verified by a certificate, letter from the church, or by witness testimony.
Additional Notations

• Are we done now? Does Joseph Anthony Smith, who was baptized or received into full communion now have a complete ecclesiastical record of his reception of the sacraments?
Additional Notations

• Did Joseph contract marriage before he was baptized or entered into full communion?
Are we done now?

Let’s suppose that Joseph had contracted marriage with Maria Gomez-Hernandez, who was a Catholic. The marriage is already noted in her baptismal record.
Now, it is incorporated into his baptismal record.

Married Maria Gomez-Hernandez
July 1, 2010 at St. Patrick Parish, Pasco WA
Recording of Marriage

But what if Joseph’s spouse, (let’s call her Andrea Mitchell) is a non-Catholic. Now, do they have to get married ‘in the Church’?
No. We recognize a marriage contracted by two non-Catholics as valid, so the marriage of Joseph and Andrea is entered into his sacramental record.

Married Andrea Mitchell (a non-Catholic)
July 1, 2010 in Pasco WA

This marriage may have been celebrated in a civil ceremony or in a non-Catholic church. This does not need to be noted.
Are we done yet?

At a later date, Andrea also enters the Church. What will her baptismal record look like?
Using a married woman’s maiden name for her sacramental record is preferred, but you should make provision for her present name. So, you could use: Smith, Andrea Marie (born Andrea Mitchell)
DATE OF BIRTH
PLACE OF BIRTH

Entry in Baptismal register

June 1, 1986
Pasco, WA
DATE OF BAPTISM

April 19, 2014
(Yes, you will now also state, “and enrolled in the Latin Church”)

If this is Reception into full communion, make the notation of RFC. Make the notation about Confirmation and Holy Communion (usually received at the same time as baptism/reception.)
FATHER’S NAME
George Mitchell

MOTHER’S MAIDEN NAME
Louise Colombo
SPONSORS

Joseph Smith

Yes, a spouse can be the sponsor
In order for confirmation to be celebrated on the occasion of an adult’s baptism or reception into full communion, the minister must be a priest (or bishop).
Are we done yet?

Further considerations
Of course not!

And just like we did for Joseph, we also record Andrea’s marriage in her sacramental record. We do not convalidate this marriage or renew the vows; we recognize the marriage contracted by two non-Catholics as a valid marriage.
Married Joseph Smith (then a non-Catholic)
July 1, 2010 in Pasco WA
Children of parents who become Catholic

Joseph and Andrea have two children:

• Melissa, age 4
• Michael, age 2

When non-Catholic parents enter the church, what happens to their non-Catholic children?
Children of parents who become Catholic

If they are not baptized, they may be presented for baptism as infants and baptized according to the Rite for Baptism of Children, and a record of baptism is created.
Children of Parents who become Catholic

If they had been baptized in a non-Catholic ecclesial community, children below the age of 7 are “infants” and are presumed to enter into communion of the Church along with their parents.

According to the desire of the parents, they may be received into the Church through the Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church, and a record of reception is created in the Register.
Children of Parents who become Catholic

But if the children are over the age of 7, they should not be baptized or received into full communion before participating in the RCIC or catechetical formation. And the desire of the child to become Catholic must be honored.
What about the index?

• The front of the Register contains a quasi-alphabetical index. After recording the reception of the sacrament(s), inscribe the person’s name in this index, and the entry number, or the page and entry number if your register is organized in this way. The names will only be quasi-alphabetical, because they are entered chronologically, and cannot be rearranged.
Smith, Joseph Anthony    No. 100
But if your Register is organized so that each year you begin to number the entries beginning with 1-2-3, etc. you also enter the page number.

Smith, Joseph Anthony  P. 25, No. 30
Under page “M” of the index

Mitchell, Andrea Marie  No. 150
Entry in the Index

• You receive a request for the baptismal certificate of Andrea Smith. “Andrea Smith was baptized as an adult at your parish. Could you please send us her baptismal certificate?”

• You look in your index, and find no entry for “Andrea Smith.”
Entry in the Index

• This is why, when you record the baptism of a person whose current name is not the same as the family name (maiden name), you might be well served to enter the current name in the index.

• Thus:
Entry in the Index

Smith, Andrea   See no. 150, Andrea Mitchell
Additional Notations

Other circumstances requiring a NOTATION in the baptismal register:
• Adoption
• Legal change of name
• Change of gender identity/assignment
• Change of Church *sui iuris*
If these situations come to the attention of the parish with the baptismal record, what do you do?
Additional Notations

• E.g. Joseph Smith’s father died when he was 7 years old. His mother remarried, and the step-father, Ronald McDonald, adopted him.
Additional Notations

• You do not change Joseph’s name in the baptismal register.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>FAMILY NAME</th>
<th>BAPTISMAL NAME</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Smith, Joseph Anthony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FATHER’S NAME
MOTHER’S MAIDEN NAME

Or the father’s name

Smith, John (or John Smith)
Jones, Mary (or Mary Jones)
Additional Notations

But under “Notations” you indicate the change of status.

Now known as Joseph McDonald, adopted by Ronald McDonald and name changed, Jan. 1, 1992.
ADOPTION

• May be the most common situation for a name change. It is best to refer to the “complementary norm” for canon 877 n. 3 on the USCCB website.


(You may have to copy and paste this link into your browser)
Adoption

The legislation will explain
• How to record a baptism before adoption
• How to record a baptism after adoption
• And what to include when a baptismal certificate is requested.
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

• An easy question.
• The answer is NO.
Another appendix to this presentation will consider the notations that could be added to the baptismal record in cases when a canonical penalty is declared or inflicted in the external forum:

Excommunication
Interdict
Suspension
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

But what about the person who writes to the parish or comes in person to renounce the Christian faith, an essential doctrine of faith or communion with the Catholic Church, or simply to say, “I want to leave the Catholic Church”? Wouldn’t this be an admission of schism? “Schism is the refusal of submission to the Supreme Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him” (can. 751).
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

We can
• Remove the person from the Parish registration list
• Remove the person from the Diocesan mailing list
• Remove the person from the “send envelops” list
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

We cannot
• Remove the person from the baptismal register
• But it may be possible to defect from the Catholic Church by a formal act, which is documented in the baptismal register. This issue is treated in Appendix II.
AND THAT BRINGS US TO SENDING/REQUESTING BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATES
SENDING/REQUESTING BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATES

Baptismal certificates are needed

- For Confirmation/First Communion
- For marriage
- For Marriage cases (annulment petitions, especially Lack of Form cases)
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• People are often unsure about the date of baptism.
• We hope they know the church of baptism
• They will know their date of birth, which can be a helpful guide for looking up a record.
• The father’s name and mother’s maiden name can be helpful.
Requesting a Baptismal Certificate

Include as much information as you know:

Dear Secretary:

Joseph Smith, born in Spokane on January 1, 1985, believes he was baptized as an infant at Sacred Heart Parish.
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

His parents are John Smith and Mary Jones.

I ask you to send an *annotated* baptismal certificate to St. Patrick Parish, Walla Walla, or advise me that you do not have this record.
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

When you send a baptismal certificate, the usual information included is:

• Name of the one baptized
• Parents’ names
• Date, place of birth
• Date, place of baptism
• Sponsors’ names
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

And as of Oct. 1, you make the notation about “enrolled in the Latin Church” for those who are baptized. This item is also included in these certificates—but you do not add “enrolled in the Latin Church” for older baptisms.
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• And the NOTATIONS, which may include:
  • Confirmation
  • Marriage (convalidation of marriage, sanation of marriage)
  • Annulments
  • Ordinations/Religious profession
  • And other information in the “remarks” column that are appropriate and can be divulged
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• E.g. Legal change of name
• Adoption
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• You may have a stock form where you just fill in the blanks:
  • __________________________________________
  • Son/daughter of _____________________________
  • And ______________________________________
  • Born on ____________________________ in ______________________
  • Was baptized at _________________________ Parish
  • And enrolled in the _____________ Church
  • By Rev. (Rev. Mr.) ____________________________
  • The sponsors being __________________________
  • And ______________________________________
  • According to the baptismal register of ___________________ Parish
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• On the back of these stock forms are places for Notations, usually

  Confirmation
  __________________

  Marriage
  __________________

  Ordination
  __________________
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• Include the notations you have in the baptismal record OR put

• NO NOTATIONS in the places provided.

• The person receiving the certificate will know for certain that you have sent a complete record, and have not failed to include notations.
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• This record has been transcribed on _______________________
  (This is the date on which you have made the certificate)
• By ______________________________
• The one who made the certificate signs it, even if the place below the signature line says “Pastor,”
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• If you do not use a stock form or one printed for the parish, use stationery with the parish letterhead that contains the baptismal register information.
Issuing Baptismal Certificates

• And stamp it with the Parish Seal.
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Multiple Parishes
If you are responsible for more than one parish/mission, you may maintain a register at each location

OR
Multiple Locations

Maintain one register at the principal parish.
But include in the “notations” Baptized at ......(name of the actual location of the baptism)
Multiple Locations

You may maintain a Register for each location, but with changing times and pastors, there may be a change in practices.

If a mission has a Register, but you wish to keep one register at the principal parish, make a notation in the mission’s Register:

E.g. As of July 1, 2016, baptisms celebrated at St. Joseph Parish, Rockford, are recorded at St. Mary Parish, Spokane Valley.
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

Other unusual circumstances include

• Baptism at a private home
• Or in a hospital or nursing home that may occur in danger of death.

Make the usual entry in the baptismal register, making a notation of the location and the circumstance.

If you want to show off, use the Latin, *in periculo mortis*. 
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

BUT remember, the actual location of a baptism may not be within the territorial limits of your parish. E.g.

A baptism at Sacred Heart Hospital should be reported to and recorded at Sacred Heart Parish.

A baptism at Holy Family Hospital should be recorded to and recorded at St. Francis Xavier Parish.

A baptism at Deaconess hospital is recorded at Our Lady of Lourdes Cathedral.
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

Even if an institution maintains a baptismal register, the baptism should be recorded in the territorial parish.

In the event that a person survives, the “Rite of Reception” should be celebrated at the proper parish.
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

The baptismal record will be maintained and annotated at the parish where the baptism is recorded.

It is unlikely that the hospital’s baptismal register will be maintained, and the institution is under no obligation to do this.
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

In the happy event that a child survives, the Rite of Reception of a Baptized Child should be celebrated at the parish.

This Rite, sometimes referred to as “supplying the ceremonies,” normally would take place at the family’s parish, which may not be the parish where the baptism is recorded.
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

An Example:

A non-baptized child of a family in St. Patrick Parish (Walla Walla) is taken to Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane and baptized there in *periculo mortis*.

The chaplain or priest who did the baptism is responsible for notifying the local parish, which happens to be Sacred Heart Parish. The baptism is recorded at that parish.
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

The child recovers.

It is then the responsibility of the parents to present the child for the Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church (Cpt. V of the Rite of Baptism for Children).

The celebration of this Rite should be recorded in the St. Patrick register.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Family Name</th>
<th>Baptismal Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Smith, Joseph</td>
<td>Anthony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DATE OF BIRTH
Walla Walla, WA
January 1, 2016
PLACE OF BIRTH
What appears in the St. Patrick Baptismal register is:

Date/Place of baptism
Sacred Heart Hospital, September 1, 2016
(Recorded at Sacred Heart Parish, Spokane)
Rite of bringing a baptized child to the Church,
enrollment in the Latin Church
November 29, 2016
Notification of the Rite of Reception

should be sent to Sacred Heart Parish, Spokane.

It is also possible that godparents will be designated at the Rite of Reception, and their names are also sent to the recording parish.
Where, then, is the “official” sacramental record?

I have been unable to find support for my personal position, that the parish where the Rite of Reception is celebrated should be the place where a person’s official sacramental record is maintained. The territorial parish where baptism was celebrated has the canonical responsibility for maintenance of the record.
Where, then, is the “official” sacramental record?

However, the record of the Rite of Reception in the St. Patrick Register may be vital for locating the person’s baptismal record.
Where, then, is the “official” sacramental record?

Years later, at the time of confirmation/communion or marriage, the person or even the parents may have no idea where the baptism is recorded. But they will know that “we have always belonged to St. Patrick Parish” or “back in 2016 my family lived in Walla Walla”. If the Rite of Reception was celebrated, the St. Patrick Register will contain the information about the location of the baptismal record at Sacred Heart Parish, Spokane.
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

Baptism and even full initiation may take place for an adult *in periculo mortis*, but in case of recovery, there needs to be formation for uncatechized adults.

Complete an entry in the baptismal register with the additional notations, which may include a valid marriage that had been celebrated, or the convalidation of a marriage.
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

As a diligent minister of the church, you want to make sure that this baptism is recorded, and you may also want to pad your statistics. There is nothing preventing you from making a notation in your parish’s baptismal register, e.g.

“Baptism confirmation and Holy Communion administered in periculo mortis at the Veterans’ Administration Hospital, Spokane. Official notification of initiation sent to St. Charles Parish for inclusion in the baptismal register.”

Your Dean will be impressed
Baptisms in Hospitals and Homes

These “extraordinary” baptisms are not always *in periculo mortis*. You may have a personal and pastoral relationship with an adult in a care facility who asks for baptism/reception into full communion. This ministry may be appropriate, but you should observe can. 862: Except in a case of necessity, no one is permitted to confer baptism in the territory of another without the required permission, not even upon his own subjects.
Illicit Baptisms

A grandparent or another person lacking parental rights may (without knowledge or consent of the parents) baptize a child that is not in danger of death. Such a baptism is illicit (can. 868) but is probably valid. We are presuming that correct matter and form have been used and that the one baptizing has the intention “to do what the Church does.”
Illicit Baptisms

If this baptism is reported to you, should you enter it into the Register?
Illicit Baptisms

Where was the baptism actually done? (And I don’t mean ‘in the bath tub’). If the baptism did not take place within the territory of your parish, you can make it someone else’s problem!
Illicit Baptisms

But if it is your problem, you may legitimately ask: is the one reporting the baptism reliable, i.e., he/she did the baptism, you know the person and believe the baptism actually took place. A second hand report is not sufficient proof of baptism.
Illicit Baptisms

You could suggest that the one who did the baptism informs the parents and urges them to present their child for the Rite of Reception of a baptized child. This rite could be preceded by catechesis of the parents.
Illicit Baptisms

But in reality, directly confronting the issue will be uncomfortable at best and possibly the occasion for anger and alienation. It will be counter-productive.
Illicit Baptisms

There is nothing forbidding you from recording the baptism with a notation such as “baptism, not celebrated in danger of death and without parental consent.”
Illicit Baptisms

If you do not record the baptism, you could issue a baptismal certificate and entrust it to the minister. But include a notation on the certificate: “Baptism administered illicitly and not in danger of death. Baptism will not be entered in the parish register unless or until the child is presented for the Rite of Reception.”
What have we accomplished?

• Recording baptism under ordinary circumstances, of children and adults.

• Recording reception into full communion

• Additional notations that may accompany baptism/reception, especially when married persons enter the church

• Issuing baptismal certificates

• Recording baptisms in special circumstances
Now, it’s your turn

• Questions
• Complications
• Criticisms
• Other considerations
Appendix I: What is the Right Church *Sui iuris*?

Now that we are to designate the Church *sui iuris* in which a person is enrolled or ascribed at baptism, how do we know which Church it is?
What is the Right Church Sui iuris?

Although we usually speak of the Latin Rite and the Eastern Rite Churches, the more correct terminology is the Latin Church *sui iuris* and the Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*. 
Church and Rite

A *church sui iuris* is a group of the faithful which is united by a hierarchy according to the norm of law and which is expressly or tacitly recognized as *sui iuris* by the supreme authority of the Church (can. 27, Code of Canon Law of the Eastern Churches, CCEO)
Church and Rite

A *rite* is the liturgical, theological, spiritual and disciplinary patrimony, which is distinguished by the culture and the historical circumstances of peoples and expressed in its own manner of living the faith by each church *sui iuris*. (CCEO, can. 28.1)
Eastern Catholic Churches sui iuris

(Reference: John Huels, *The Pastoral Companion*, pp. 430ff.)
The 21 Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris* are classified as follows:

**Patriarchal Churches**
There are six of these, each headed by a Patriarch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Rite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coptic</td>
<td>(Alexandrian Rite)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrian</td>
<td>(Antiochene Rite)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maronite</td>
<td>(Antiochene Rite)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenian</td>
<td>(Armenian Rite)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaldean</td>
<td>(Chaldean Rite)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Melkite</td>
<td>(Byzantine Rite)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*

There are four Major Archepiscopal Churches. The major archbishop presides over his church in the same way as a patriarch, but he lacks the patriarchal dignity. (Huels, p.431, but in Huels, *Liturgy and Law*, p. 61, * are not classified as Major Archeepiscopal)

- Ukrainian (Byzantine Rite)
- Syro-Malabar (Chaldean Rite)
- Syro-Malankara* (Antiochene Rite)
- Romanian* (Byzantine Rite)
Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*

There are two metropolitan churches. A metropolitan church is presided over by a metropolitan appointed by the pope. (Huels, *Pastoral Companion*, p.432)

Ethiopian (Alexandrian Rite)
Ruthenian (Byzantine Rite)
Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*

Other Eastern Catholic Churches:

have small groups of faithful and are headed by a hierarch appointed by the pope, namely, an eparch, an exarch, or an apostolic administrator; usually they are bishops. A few are so small that they have no hierarch, just some parishes. (Huels, p.432)
Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*

These Churches *sui iuris* are:

- Albanian (Byzantine Rite)
- Belarussian (Byzantine Rite)
- Bulgarian (Byzantine Rite)
- Greek Hellenic (Byzantine Rite)
- Hungarian (Byzantine Rite)
- Italo-Albanian (Byzantine Rite)
- Kreevei (Byzantine Rite)
- Russian (Byzantine Rite)
- Slovak (Byzantine Rite)
An Eastern Church *sui iuris*

In the Diocese of Spokane there is one Eastern Church (i.e. Parish), Sts. Cyril and Methodius of the Ruthenian Church *sui iuris*, that observes the Byzantine liturgy, and is under the jurisdiction of the Eparchy of the Holy Protection of Mary of the Ruthenians (located in Phoenix, formerly in Van Nuys CA).
Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris* with a hierarchy in the United States

- Chaldean
- Maronite
- Romanian
- Ruthenian
- Syro-Malabar
- Ukranian
Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*

In the Official Catholic Directory, the Dioceses or Eparchies of these Eastern Churches *sui iuris* can be found after the Latin Churches (Dioceses) in the U.S. You can read the following article [http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/the-other-catholics-a-short-guide-to-the-eastern-catholic-churches.html](http://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/the-other-catholics-a-short-guide-to-the-eastern-catholic-churches.html) for a summary treatment of the Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris*. There are a few inconsistencies in how these churches are identified and classified.
What is the Right Church Sui iuris?

For the most part, Catholics of the west belong the Latin Church. But due to migration, Catholics of Eastern Churches *sui iuris* have come west.

If you are dealing with the baptism of a family of an Eastern Catholic Church, the family probably will know this or you will figure it out.

If there is a problem, consult your canon lawyer and he will try to figure it out. Father Bill O’Brien of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Parish may also be helpful. (509-922-4527)
What is the Right Church Sui Iuris?

The Church *sui iuris* in which a child is enrolled is not determined by the Church of the minister of baptism or by the rite (ritual) he uses. **It is determined by the Church *sui iuris* to which the parents belong,**
What is the Right Church Sui Iuris?

or by the church of the father if the parents do not agree

or to the Church *sui iuris* of the Catholic parent, if it is a mixed marriage.
What is the Right Church Sui Iuris?

In the event that you baptize a child whose parents belong to an Eastern Church, the child is enrolled in that church, and this is duly noted in the baptismal register.

Date of Baptism
November 20, 2016
Enrolled in the Ukrainian Church, sui iuris
What is the Right Church Sui Iuris?

But there are occasions when a person may elect the Church *sui iuris* in which to be enrolled.

At baptism, a person age 14 or older may choose the church *sui iuris* in which he/she wishes to be enrolled.

At marriage, a spouse may transfer to the other’s church *sui iuris*
What is the Right Church Sui Iuris?

With permission of the Apostolic See, a person may transfer to another church *sui iuris*.

In the United States, the permission of the Ordinary of each Church is sufficient to transfer to another church *sui iuris*. 
What is the Right Church Sui Iuris?

When there is a change to another church *sui iuris*, the change is noted in the baptismal register.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>FAMILY NAME</th>
<th>BAPTISMAL NAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Smith, Joseph Anthony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
January 1, 1985
Spokane, WA
DATE OF BAPTISM

February 1, 1985
Married Ivana Solanika, July 1, 2010
at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Parish, Spokane Valley WA
Transferred to the Ruthenian Church *sui iuris*
Appendix II: How do you get Out of the Church?

Can you be removed from the baptismal register?
No.

Even a canonical process resulting in a person’s excommunication does not remove a person from the church. The person is prohibited from holding office in the church, ministering or receiving the sacraments, or receiving a pension (cf. can. 1331).
How do you get Out of the Church?

But this is referred to as a medicinal penalty (can. 1312), the purpose of which is to bring about the reform of the offender and his return to communion, not his expulsion from the Church.

But in point of fact, the judicial or administrative process to inflict or declare excommunication is almost never utilized.
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

• The most likely case, which is still unlikely, is the penalty of SUSPENSION, that only affects clerics. E.g. a priest who attempts marriage is automatically suspended, but the suspension must be canonically declared by a decree of the bishop before it would be noted in the baptismal register.

Suspended from sacred ministry by decree of Bishop Thomas Daly, Diocese of Spokane, October 1, 2016
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

But what about “leaving the Church by a formal act?”
From 1983 until Oct. 29, 2009, there was this possibility.
The specifics of this “formal act” and directions for noting it in the Baptismal Register can be found in

REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

One opinion is that this ‘formal act of defection’ is no longer recognized. References to it have been eliminated from the Code of Canon Law (of the Latin Church *sui iuris*). You can read about it in Pope Benedict’s *Motu Proprio, Omnium in Mentem*.

http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_letters/documents/hf_ben-xvi_apl_20091026_codex-iuris-canonici.html
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

However, as I read it, the *Motu proprio* does not disallow the formal act of defection from the Catholic Church. But the act of defection must fulfill the conditions outlined in

REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

If there is a formal act of defection from the Church, this should be noted in the baptismal register. So, using our example of Joseph Smith, the column of the Register where notations are made would state:

Defection from the Catholic Church by a formal act, November 1, 2016
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

This formal act of defection does not erase his record of baptism, but will be included as a notation when a baptismal certificate is issued. No canonical means of undoing this formal act of defection is provided.
To my way of thinking, should a person desire reconciliation with the Church, two acts would be required:

1) In the *internal forum*, sacramental confession that provides for the forgiveness of the sin of apostasy, heresy or schism; and for the remission of the canonical penalty of excommunication that was automatically incurred at the time of defection. A sincere confession would enable the person to return to the sacraments.
REMoviNG A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

2) But if the penitent desires reconciliation with the Church to be documented, he/she would need to fulfill a formal act of reconciliation in the external forum. This could be done more simply by, e.g. a personal note to the parish of baptism declaring one’s reconciliation to the Church.

Returned to full communion by a formal act, December 1, 2017
REMOVING A PERSON FROM THE REGISTER?

We have spent time on this because this may be a significant pastoral contact with a distressed person. What is the root of the anger and animosity that may be present?

Is there some way to extend mercy at a time when a person is “excommunicating the Church” from one’s life?