

DIOCESE OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Diocesan Archives Research Request Policy

The Archives for the Diocese of Corpus Christi is the central repository for historical materials relating to the diocese. It is tasked with collecting, preserving, and making available records of enduring value which document the history of the diocese and the Catholic faithful in the geographic borders of the Diocese of Corpus Christi. Its primary responsibility is to serve the administrative needs of the Bishop and the diocese. Archives staff is also able to provide limited research services for scholarly and genealogical research. Access and research policies are explained below:

SACRAMENTAL RECORDS REQUESTS (for personal use)

- 1.1 Sacramental records document the sacramental life of individuals and their status within the Church. Sacrament certificates are issued as documentary evidence of the reception of a sacrament and are most often required before the reception of another sacrament or prior to an individual's serving as a sponsor.
- 1.2 All requests for sacramental certificates should be first made directly to the parish in which the sacrament was received. A directory of parishes and missions is available on the diocesan website. Archives staff can assist if the parish is unknown or uncertain, but cannot issue certificates for records located in parish registers.
- 1.3 For privacy and security reasons, all sacraments recorded on or after **January 1, 1930** are closed to all persons except authorized recipients as explained in item 4.1 below.
- 1.4 The Diocese of Corpus Christi does not hold sacramental records for any parish or mission currently located in the Brownsville, Laredo, or Victoria Dioceses. Although portions of these dioceses were once under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, all sacramental registers remained with the parishes and missions. All requests for sacramental certificates from any parish located outside of the current boundaries of the Diocese of Corpus Christi should be made directly to that parish or to that diocese. This is true of all sacramental records regardless of the dates.

GENEALOGY RESEARCH

- 2.1 The Diocese of Corpus Christi recognizes that sacramental records provide useful information for genealogists and family historians. We will assist requestors in locating these records in accordance with diocesan policies. Priority is given to individuals seeking their own records for sacramental purposes. The following restrictions and policies apply:
 - 2.1.1 Only records created before January 1, 1930 are open for genealogy research. Records dated January 1, 1930 through the present are sealed and can only be accessed by authorized persons as explained in item 4.1 below.

- 2.1.2 Due to confidentiality concerns and limited resources, genealogy research can only be done by Archives staff. On the parish level, again due to confidentiality concerns and limited resources, genealogy research in parishes should be forwarded to the Diocesan Archives and not be done by parish staff.
- 2.1.3 All genealogy questions and research must be directed to the Diocesan Archives. Parishes do NOT conduct genealogy research and should only be contacted by individuals seeking their own records.

PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING GENEALOGY RESEARCH

3.1 Please follow the procedures detailed below when requesting genealogy research

- 3.1.1 All genealogy requests must be made in writing using the Genealogy Request Form (see appendix A). The form must be filled out as completely as possible and mailed to the Diocesan Archives.
- 3.1.2 A fee of \$20 per name and/or per sacrament is required before research can begin. The fee is non-refundable even should no record be located. The request must be mailed with the fee before research can begin.
- 3.1.3 Once the request is received, Archives staff will begin research. They may contact the requestor if additional information is needed to complete the research.
- 3.1.4 Please allow 4-6 weeks for a reply
- 3.1.5 Sacramental certificates are not issued for genealogy research. If a record is found, an abstract of the original record will be provided.

3.2 Other policies and useful information

- 3.2.1 Archives staff cannot conduct general genealogical research. The Archives does not maintain a central index of individuals who have received sacraments prior to 1929. Consequently, records must be researched book by book, parish by parish. As a result, staff can only search for specific sacraments for specific individuals.
- 3.2.2 Requests by individuals seeking their own records for sacramental purposes receive first priority. All other requests are taken on a first come, first serve basis. All effort is made to respond in a quick and timely fashion. Delays may occur due to other higher priority diocesan requests and obligations. Please be patient.
- 3.2.3 Research requests are limited to the sacraments of baptism, marriage, and death.
- 3.2.4 Staff can only conduct up to one hour of research per genealogy request

3.2.5 Genealogy requests are limited to 4 names/sacraments per requestor per 30-day period.

3.2.6 The Diocesan Archives only holds those records of the Diocese of Corpus Christi. It does not hold civil or legal records (e.g. birth certificates) or sacramental records from other dioceses.

AUTHORIZED RECIPIENTS

4.1 For Closed Records (those dated January 1, 1930 – Present)

- The individual named in the record
- The parents or legal guardian of a minor child
- Next of kin or heirs may request the sacramental record of a deceased individual. They must first provide Archives staff with an official copy of the deceased person's death certificate and an official birth or marriage certificate showing that the requestor is the next of kin. Notarized copies are acceptable.
- Officials of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, other dioceses, or parishes
- Persons to whom the individual named in the record has given express permission (authorization to release information form is required, see Appendix D)
- Other parties as designated by court order, subpoena, summons, or statute

4.2 For records dated December 29, 1929 or earlier

4.2.1 Records dated December 29, 1929 or earlier are open.

STUDENT TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS

5.1 The Diocesan Archives holds records of the following closed schools

- Archbishop Oscar Romero Junior High School (Corpus Christi, TX)
- Christ the King School (Corpus Christi, TX)
- Corpus Christi College Academy (Corpus Christi, TX)
*** The diocese only holds records of the school through the 1980s. For students who attended CCA in the 1990s, please contact the registrar at St. John Paul II High School.*
- Corpus Christi Academy (Corpus Christi, TX)
- Corpus Christi Minor Seminary (Corpus Christi, TX)
- Immaculate Conception School (Goliad, TX)
- Holy Redeemer School, Laredo
- Our Lady of Refuge School (Refugio, TX)
- Our Lady of Victory School (Beeville, TX)
- Sacred Heart School (Sinton, TX)
- St. Martin School (Kingsville, TX)
- St. Mary's School (Beeville, TX)

- St. John Nepomucene Elementary School (Robstown, TX)
- St. John Nepomucene High School (Robstown, TX)
- St. Joseph School (Beeville, TX)
- St. Joseph Junior High School (Corpus Christi, TX)
- St. Theresa School (Corpus Christi, TX)

5.2 Requests for student transcripts must be made in writing using the Student Transcript Request and Authorization to Release Student Transcript forms and mailed to the Diocesan Archives. Requests made by phone, fax, or email will not be accepted. (See Appendix B and C)

5.3 All requests for student records must be accompanied by a non-refundable \$10.00 fee per request.

5.4 Transcripts are made available ONLY to the following authorized recipients:

- The individual named in the record
- The parent or guardian of a minor child
- Persons or organizations authorized by the individual named in the record or by the parent/guardian of a minor child (authorization to release information form is required, see appendix B)
- Officials from the Diocese of Corpus Christi Office of Catholic Schools
- Other parties as designated by court order, subpoena, summons, or statute

5.5 No information will be provided over the phone.

SCHOLARLY RESEARCH

6.1 The Diocese of Corpus Christi is dedicated to preserving the history of the diocese and the Catholic faithful in the geographic borders of the Diocese of Corpus Christi. The primary responsibility of the Diocesan Archives is to serve the administrative needs of the Bishop and the diocese.

6.2 The diocesan archives is closed to all researchers. However, as time permits staff can perform a limited amount of historical research.

6.3 Unfortunately, limited staff and resources limits the amount research requests we can accept and the time we can devote to this research. Please contact diocesan staff for more information and to discuss the scope of your research.

6.4 All scholarly research must first be approved by the Chancellor. Please mail a typed letter addressed to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Corpus Christi which briefly describes your research project and credentials. Requestors will be contacted as soon as the request has been reviewed.

6.5 Scholarly research is subject to a \$20 per hour fee.

6.6 Duplication or copy of archival materials in any form is not permitted without written permission from the Chancellor.

FEE SCHEDULE

7.1 There is no fee for individuals seeking their own sacramental records.

7.2 All fees are non-refundable even should no record be located.

7.3 Genealogy requests are subject to a \$20 fee. The fee must be received before research can begin.

7.4 Transcript requests are subject to a \$10 fee. The fee must be received before a transcript can be released.

7.5 Requests for historical or scholarly research are subject to a \$20 per hour fee. Please contact Archives staff to discuss parameters of your research. The fee must be received before a transcript or an abstract can be released.

OTHER INFORMATION

8.1 Archives staff can assist individuals in locating the parish or mission in which a sacrament was received if the location is unknown.

8.2 The Archives of the Diocese of Corpus Christi only has sacramental records for parishes and missions within the counties of Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, Kleberg, Kenedy, Live Oak, Nueces, Refugio and San Patricio. It does not hold sacramental records for the Diocese of Brownsville, Laredo, or Victoria. It does not hold civil records such as birth certificates, marriage licenses, or death certificates.

8.3 The Archives does not hold records or information regarding marriage annulments issued through the Diocese of Corpus Christi. Requests for this information should be made to the Judicial Vicar and the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal office.

8.4 The Archives does not hold any burial records or cemetery records. Please contact the parish or the Cemetery Association regarding such records.

APPENDIX A

**DIOCESE OF CORPUS CHRISTI
Genealogy Request Form**

Please print and fill out this form and return with a copy of government issued photo ID and research fee via **surface mail only** to: *Diocese of Corpus, Attn: Archives/Records, PO Box 2620, Corpus Christi, TX 78403.* Staff will process transcript requests only after receiving the above material.

Make checks payable to Diocese of Corpus Christi. The fee is \$20 per sacrament requested and is non-refundable even should no record be located

TYPE OF RECORD REQUESTED: BAPTISMAL MARRIAGE DEATH
(Please circle all that apply)

NAME OF PERSON AT TIME SACRAMENT RECEIVED: _____

NAME OF SPOUSE: _____
(only if requesting marriage record)

FATHER'S FULL NAME: _____

MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME _____

PARISH AND/OR CITY WHERE
SACRAMENT MOST LIKELY OCCURRED: _____

PLACE OF BIRTH or CLOSE
APPROXIMATION: _____

DATE(S) OF BIRTH, MARRIAGE or DEATH (SPECIFY):

Please include any additional information that may assist in locating the record. Use the back of this form for additional space.

REQUESTED BY: NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ E-MAIL: _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Form of Identification / Driver's License (State & #) or Other _____

APPENDIX B

DIOCESE OF CORPUS CHRISTI
Authorization to Release Student Transcript/Records from
Closed Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Corpus Christi

Please return this form signed and notarized with the research fee via **surface mail only** to: *Diocese of Corpus, Attn: Archives/Records, PO Box 2620, Corpus Christi, TX 78403*. Staff will process transcript requests only after receiving the above material.

NOTE: *A signature, along with a copy of a government issued photo ID, is required to process your request.* The requested records (if available) will be mailed within six (6) weeks after receipt of this completed form.

Authorization to Release Information

I, _____, hereby authorize the Roman Catholic Diocese
(Name)
of Corpus Christi to release a copy of the school records for _____
(Name on Transcript)
to _____.
(self or name of other person/institution)

I agree to hold harmless the Diocese of Corpus Christi, the Roman Catholic Church, its subordinate Parishes, Bishops, clergy, and their successors in office, and all other persons and institutions connected with them from any liability for releasing this information pursuant to my request.

Authorization Signature (Required) _____
Date

*Note: The person authorizing release must be the person named in the record, the parent of a minor child, or the spouse or adult child if the person is deceased. Anyone else must show proof of power-of-attorney.

NOTARIZATION: I, _____, Notary, do hereby certify
(print name of Notary)

that the above named individual seeking the release of confidential information did appear before me in person with sufficient identification.

(Notary Signature and Seal)

Forwarding Information

Send Records To:
Name/Institution: _____
Street: _____
City/State/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

<i>For Office Use Only</i>		
Received By: _____	Date: _____	Records Mailed: _____

APPENDIX C

DIOCESE OF CORPUS CHRISTI
Request for Student Transcript/Records from Closed Catholic Schools

Please use this form to request transcripts for students that have attended or graduated from closed Catholic schools in the Diocese of Corpus Christi. All other requests should be sent directly to the current/last school the student attends/attended.

Please print and fill out this form and return with a copy of government issued photo ID, research fee, and notarized Authorization to Release Student Transcripts/Records via **surface mail only** to: *Diocese of Corpus, Attn: Archives/Records, PO Box 2620, Corpus Christi, TX 78403*. Staff will process transcript requests only after receiving the above material.

The requested records (if available) will be mailed within six (6) weeks after receipt of this completed form.

Name While Attending School: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Father's Name: _____

Mother's Name: _____

School Attended: _____
School Name, City

Last Year of Attendance/Graduation: _____

REQUESTED BY: NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ **E-MAIL:** _____

Form of Identification / Driver's License (State & #) or Other: _____

Please include a copy of driver's license/government issue photo ID

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

APPENDIX D

DIOCESE OF CORPUS CHRISTI
Authorization for Release of Information

Please print and fill out this form and return with a copy of government issued photo ID of both persons to Diocesan Archives staff. Electronic copies will not be accepted. Staff will release certificates after receipt of properly completed Authorization form.

I, _____,
(name)

hereby authorize the Catholic Diocese of Corpus Christi and _____,
(parish name)

located in _____, Texas, to release a copy of the
(city)

_____ of _____
(type of record/sacrament) (name on certificate,
must be person listed above or their minor child)

to _____ .
(self or name of other person/institution)

I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Roman Catholic Diocese of Corpus Christi, its Bishop and successors in office, the aforesaid parish and all other persons connected with them from any liability for releasing this information pursuant to my request.

(Authorization Signature)

(Date)

(Driver's License, State and #)

NOTE: The person authorizing release must be the **person named** in the certificate or the **parent of a minor child**; the **spouse** or **adult child** if the named person is deceased.

Mailing Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Email

NOTARIZATION: I, _____, Notary, do hereby certify
(print name of Notary)

that the above named individual seeking the release of confidential information did appear before me in person with sufficient identification.

(Notary Signature and Seal)