



Memo

Date: December 17, 2018

To: Priests and Deacons

From: Rev. Daniel P. Ketter, J.C.L., J.V., Judicial Vicar, Metropolitan Tribunal

Re: Permissions, Dispensations, *Nihil Obstats & Visums*

For the past year, Fr. Paul Burke, J.C.L. (Promoter of Justice) and Dalia Barrios, Notary, have been processing all permissions, dispensations, *nihil obstats* and *visums*. In our ongoing efforts to serve you in a timely manner, I asked Fr. Paul and Dalia to review the process for suggestions of improvement or concern. Please see the compiled list based on their findings.

1. Given the period of preparation for marriages is six months in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, please complete the dispensation/permission request at the first meeting with the couple and submit it promptly rather than holding it until closer to the wedding date. We will process the request and issue the rescript in a timely manner. This will avoid any last minute concerns for you, the wedding party and the Tribunal.
2. When requesting a dispensation/permission, the Catholic party must be domiciled in the Archdiocese of Atlanta. We do not have jurisdiction to grant the dispensation/permission if the applicant does not live in our archdiocese.
3. When completing a form, please type or clearly print the information. All forms are available electronically on the Tribunal webpage. Please submit the original form, never a scanned copy or fax.
4. Please include your cell phone number and email address. Your cell phone number will enable us to reach you directly and promptly to clarify any issues. Your email address will allow us to send you a scanned copy of the rescript when the wedding is imminent. Your contact information will be kept confidential.
5. Make sure the form is completed in full before submitting it to the Tribunal. For all requests, the form must be signed by the cleric

requesting the dispensation/permission, dated and SEALED with the parish seal. The SEAL authenticates the document.

6. When a dispensation/permission is for a local wedding all that is required is the request form. However, given that this is the only paperwork submitted it is imperative that it be complete.
7. Requests for *Nihil Obstats* and *Visums* must be submitted 60 days prior to the wedding date. For overseas requests, it is imperative that all information is complete and accurate. Given the high cost of shipping overseas, we want to avoid resending documents due to errors.
8. For *Nihil Obstats* and *Visums*, provide the following information in a typed format:
 - a. Letter from the Pastor giving permission for the couple to marry outside the parish.
 - i. Name, address, telephone number & email address of the wedding location.
 - ii. Name, address, telephone number & email address of the diocese where the wedding will take place.
 - iii. Name, address, telephone number & email address of the Officiant.
 - b. Witness Affidavit Forms (2 for each party).
 - c. Pre-Marital Investigation Forms (Bride and Groom).
 - d. Baptismal Certificates (with notations) for all Catholic parties. These certificates (originals and never copies) should be issued within six months of the wedding.
 - e. Pre-Cana Certificate or other proof that the parties have been prepared for Catholic marriage.
 - f. If a Catholic intends to marry an unbaptized person or a non-Catholic, the dispensation/permission form. If the dispensation/permission was already granted, please include the rescript with the other documents.
 - g. If you are requesting a convalidation of a civil marriage, please include a copy of the parties' civil marriage certificate.
 - h. As already mentioned, the cleric who prepared the file should provide his contact information should any questions arise.

The Chancery will be closed for Christmas from December 24, 2018 through January 1, 2019. Please check your marriage files and submit requests in a timely manner to avoid any emergencies. For questions or concerns, contact Fr. Burke or myself at 404-920-7506.