

FACULTIES FOR DEACONS

Baptism

1. To administer the Sacrament of Baptism at the direction of the pastor.

Eucharist

1. To exercise the functions of Deacon in liturgical celebrations (with proper liturgical attire).
2. To proclaim the Gospel at Mass.
3. To distribute Holy Communion at Mass, to bring Holy Communion to the sick and administer Viaticum to the dying.
4. To conduct the rite of the administration of Holy Communion outside of Mass.
5. To serve as minister of Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.
6. To conduct non-Eucharistic liturgical services according to approved liturgical books.

Preaching

1. To preach the Word of God everywhere with at least the presumed consent of the pastor or rector of the church, unless the faculty has been restricted by the competent authority or unless permission is required by particular law.

Marriage

1. To assist at any marriage that you have been properly delegated; such delegation must be explicitly given by the proper pastor.
2. To administer the Nuptial Blessing outside of Mass; however, when the marriage is celebrated within Mass, the Nuptial Blessing is always given by the celebrant of the Mass, even if the deacon witnesses the exchange of vows.
3. To dispense **in urgent danger of death** both from canonical form and from all impediments of ecclesiastical law (except the impediment arising from sacred order of presbyterate), provided the local ordinary cannot be reached (c. 1079 §2). (See Appendix)
4. **When an impediment is discovered after everything has been prepared for the wedding**, to dispense those about to be married (or the marriage convalidated) from all impediments of ecclesiastical law (except those arising from sacred orders or public perpetual vow of chastity in a religious institute of pontifical right), provided the marriage cannot be deferred without probable danger of grave harm until a dispensation can be obtained from the competent authority, and **the case is an occult one** (c. 1080). [The case must be occult but not necessarily the impediment itself.]
5. To administer the oath and complete the prenuptial investigation.
6. To initiate the process for the convalidation of marriage, for declarations of nullity and/or dissolutions of the bond.

Funerals

1. To officiate at funeral and burial services according to approved liturgical rites at the direction of the pastor.

Blessings

1. To impart blessings which are expressly permitted by law, as well as to administer those blessings proper to a deacon as found in *The Book of Blessings*.

APPENDIX

IMPEDIMENTS TO MARRIAGE

A diriment impediment renders a person unqualified to contract marriage validly (c. 1073).

Canonical tradition has used various distinctions to classify impediments, the most important of which are those considered to be founded in divine law and those established by positive ecclesiastical law alone. The implications of this distinction are two-fold:

- 1) to the extent that impediments derive from divine law, they bind all persons, whether baptized or not, whether they marry Catholics or not; ecclesiastical law impediments bind only Catholics and non-Catholics who marry them.
- 2) In principle, ecclesiastical law impediments are subject to dispensation; impediments said to be of divine law are not.

An impediment is considered occult when it is not provable in the external forum (i.e., through written documents or testimony of witnesses) (c. 1074).

Impediments of Ecclesiastical Law/Dispensed by Local Ordinary

1. Insufficient Age (c. 1083 §2) (man before completing 16th year, woman before completing 14th year). [*No ecclesiastical authority below the level of the episcopal conference may establish an age for marriage higher than the one established in universal law; however, local ordinaries can prohibit the celebration of particular marriages until the young people give evidence of the required maturity (c. 1077).*]
2. Disparity of Cult (c. 1086 §1)
3. Public Perpetual Vow of Chastity (c. 1089) in a religious institute of diocesan right.
4. Abduction (c. 1089) of a woman by a man with a view of contracting marriage.
5. Consanguinity (c. 1091) in the third degree (uncle-niece) and fourth degree (first cousins) of the collateral line.
6. Affinity (c. 1092) in the direct line (e.g., wife's mother or daughter). [*Affinity arises from a valid marriage between the man and the blood relatives of the woman and between the woman and the blood relatives of the man.*]
7. Public Propriety (c. 1093) in the first degree of the direct line (e.g. partner's parent or child). [*Public propriety arises from an invalid marriage after common life has been established or from notorious public concubinage.*]
8. Adoptive relationship (c. 1094) in the direct line or in the second degree of the collateral line (i.e. adopted persons cannot validly marry their adoptive parents and grandparents or their adoptive siblings. The adoption, however, must be recognized in civil law for the impediment to be established.)

Impediments of Ecclesiastical Law/Dispensation reserved to Apostolic See

1. Holy Orders (c. 1087)
2. Public Perpetual Vow of Chastity (c. 1088) in a religious institute of pontifical right.
3. Crime (c. 1090) (murder or conspiracy to murder with a view to enter marriage).

Impediments founded in Divine Law/No Dispensation

1. Impotence (c. 1084 §1) (antecedent and perpetual)
2. Bond of prior marriage (c. 1085 §1) [*The prenuptial documents must include a declaration of nullity or a certificate of death for any prior or attempted marriage, even civil.*]
3. Consanguinity (c. 1091) in the direct line (ancestor-descendent) and second degree in the collateral line (brother-sister).