

VI. GENERAL NORMS-CHANGES TO ENTRIES

A. Caution about Changes

Once entered into a sacramental register, data are considered official and permanent. They may not be modified except under special conditions, as detailed below. Original data should never be scratched out, erased, “whited out” or otherwise destroyed or obliterated.

B. Style for Minor Changes

Minor changes (e.g., correcting a misspelling) may be made directly to the original entry. Such changes are to be made by drawing a straight, simple line through the word, number or letter to be changed and printing the change immediately above or below it.

C. Authorization for Insubstantial Changes

An insubstantial error (e.g., misspelling) may be corrected upon request of those persons who have a right to a certificate, as mentioned in the CERTIFICATES section above.

D. Authorization for Substantial Changes

More significant errors and other changes require authentic supporting documentation. Such documentation will ordinarily consist of an original, “raised-seal” certificate from a civil or ecclesiastical office, court, agency, etc. The issuing agency, date of the certificate and any protocol number should be printed in the “Notations” column of the register. When an error involves data pertaining directly to the celebration of a sacrament or rite of Christian burial (e.g., date, identity or godparent) such that no external verifying documentation exists, the written or oral testimony of a reputable witness will suffice.

E. Permitted Changes

Some permitted changes:

- Correct name
- Correct date
- Correct spelling
- New legal name
- Adoptive parent(s)

F. Non-Permitted Changes

Some non-permitted changes:

- New godparents or sponsors⁵
- Non-adopting stepparents
- Customary name or nickname

G. Data on Certificates after Changes

Once specific data has been changed in the sacramental register, the original data are not transcribed onto certificates (e.g., the natural parent's name after adoption).

⁵ The names of godparents or sponsors are not to be changed because they have died or because parents feel they are no longer suitable. In these situations, parents can ask someone else to serve in this role without making a change in the permanent record or on certificates.