

Memorandum

To: Pastors, Parochial Administrators and All Directors of Catholic Institutions in the Diocese of Beaumont

From: Most Reverend Curtis J. Guillory, S.V.D., D.D., Bishop of Beaumont

Re: ***Certification of Good Standing***

Date: March 13, 2002

In his excellent Statement of February 19, 2002, Bishop Wilton D. Gregory, President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, wrote:

“Bishops have developed procedures whereby priests moving from one diocese to another must have certification of their good standing.”

When an extern priest or extern deacon comes to the Diocese of Beaumont for long-term ministry, I require a current letter of endorsement from his diocesan bishop or religious superior, and a professional check is made of that person’s past re criminal background (including sex offenses), credit worthiness, and driving records.

Effective immediately, I also require the following:

For A Planned Ministry: an extern priest or deacon who is to offer any planned (e.g., parish mission, retreat, workshop) public ministry, even if only once, must provide a copy of his *celebret* (or letter of certification), which has been issued within the last twelve months, prior to final arrangements for the event (to avoid embarrassment if he should not have the approval of his superior).

For A Visit: a priest or deacon who simply visits the diocese and wishes to offer any public ministry, even if only once, must present, at the time of his request, a *celebret* (or letter of certification), which has been issued within the last twelve months. The *celebret* must be requested by you, or your delegate, even if the priest or deacon is known to you. If, after examining the *celebret* (or letter of certification), you have any questions, please call my office or the office of the vicar general or you may call the chancery or religious community which issued the *celebret*.

Please continue to pay attention to the *Warnings* issued by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and reported in our UPDATE. A permanent file of such *Warnings* is at the chancery.

Thank you for your collaboration in this service to the faithful of Southeast Texas.

-end-

Further Clarification given at the Sept. 26, 2007 Clergy Day:

--Certification of Good Standing of extern clergy: A) Any extern priest or deacon whom **you invite into the diocese for a single, planned ministry event** (e.g. a Mass, a wedding, a

parish mission, a retreat, a workshop) must present to you in advance his *celebret* or a letter from his Bishop/Superior that he is in good standing (issued within the last 12 mos). Make a copy of it for your files, even if you know the priest or deacon.

B) If you are **inviting a priest to cover your parish while you are away** for e.g. vacation, medical leave, religious community general chapters, then a more extensive verification has to be done by the Vicar General or Chancellor's office (a "Statement of Suitability" from the cleric's Ordinary/Superior and verification of good standing). *In advance*, submit to the V.G. or Chancellor the name of the priest, his diocese or religious order, the name & mailing address and fax number of his bishop or major superior, the purpose for his presence in this diocese, and the dates he will be in your parish. If the priest is "cleared", you can finalize arrangements with the priest to cover you parish.

C) If **you are invited to another diocese** to exercise ministry (e.g. a wedding, baptism, give a retreat, etc.), ask what type of certification of good standing that diocese requires. For some, a copy of your *celebret* may be adequate. For others, a Statement of Suitability and verification of good standing from the Ordinary may be required. In that case, contact the V.G. or Chancellor well in advance of the planned event so the requested verification can be submitted to the other diocese.