

**Instruction on Marriage Banns
Circular 2011-18**

To: All Parish Priests and Parish Secretaries:

Marriage Banns are part of the important requirements in preparation for marriage that must not be overlooked. They are necessary to determine the legal capacity of the couples to enter into marriage. But it was brought to my attention by the Presbyteral Council that the usual process for dispensation for Sunday Banns, sending the couples to the Chancery office, has been inconvenient especially to our poor parishioners. This process could be simplified. As resolved during the meeting of the same Council last August 11, 2011 and upon the recommendation of parish priests, mindful of the benefits this may have especially to the poor, I wish to give proper instruction for dispensation of Marriage Banns, namely:

- The Parish Priests may dispense couples, personally prepared by them, from one (1) Sunday Banns only, provided that there is just reason for doing so;
- The Vicar Forane may dispense couples having their weddings in the parishes for two (2) Sunday Banns only, provided that it is properly recommended by the Parish Priest mentioning the just reason for doing so;
- Only the Bishop or his delegate may dispense couples from three (3) Sunday Banns. However, these cases are always unlikely since it has been our diocesan policy (cf. Circular 2005-17) to allow reasonable period of at least a month for preparation for weddings. It follows that there must be serious reason for the dispensation, and the Parish Priest recommends it to the bishop.

On top of this provision, the dispensation form (MF 2) should be properly accomplished, signed and included in the documents for marriage. There is no need to report the dispensations given, as long as the conditions are fulfilled.

Please be guided accordingly.

Given in the Chancery in Fairview, Quezon City, 5 September 2011.

Most Rev. Antonio R. Tobias, DD
Bishop

Attested by:

Rev. Fr. Jerome U. Rosalinda
Chancellor