



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MEMPHIS

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DECREE

Preservation of Matrimonial Causes in the Tribunal Archive

Since its erection by the first Bishop of Memphis and due to the hard work of the Rev. Msgr. Peter P. Buchignani, P.A., and his successors who have served as Judicial Vicars, the tribunal of the Diocese of Memphis has provided a great service to the people of the Diocese. So many processes have been completed over the nearly fifty years of the tribunal's functioning that the tribunal archives are now filled with many records of completed processes and no additional room is available. There are now many technologies available for the secure electronic storage of documents. These technologies can provide an alternative to maintaining the physical copies of the judicial acts of the archive.

Since the tribunal archive no longer has room for additional records due to decades of cases, the acts of which are held therein, I, therefore, issue the following norms for the preservation of the acts of matrimonial cases, in accord with the decree of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura of 20 July 2011 (prot. no. 42027/08 VT, in *AAS*, 103 (2011), 626-628):

1. The acts of all completed matrimonial nullity processes are to be uploaded to a secure electronic database after ten years from the completion of the process or earlier, if possible.
2. When twenty years have elapsed since the conclusion of the judicial process, the acts of all completed matrimonial nullity processes, having been scanned and uploaded to the electronic database, are to be destroyed, except for the original texts or authentic copies of the definitive sentences, decrees of confirmation, decisions having the force of a definitive sentence, and any interlocutory pronouncements.

These norms take effect immediately upon their promulgation on the diocesan website.

Given at the Chancery in Memphis on the 21st day of January 2021

+ D. P. T.
Most Reverend David P. Talley, M.S.W., J.C.D.
Bishop of Memphis in Tennessee

Fr. James Clark
Very Reverend James M. Clark, J.C.L., J.V.
Chancellor



