

The Pastoral Companion: A Canon Law Handbook for Catholic Ministry, third edition. Huels, John M. J.C.D. (Juris Canonici Doctor). Edited by canonist Amy Jill Strickland, (Judge on the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Boston). IL: Franciscan Press, 2002.

“When no priest or deacon is available, anyone with the proper intention may baptize using water and the Trinitarian formula” (**Canon 861**, p.57). “In necessity, baptism need not be celebrated in a church...the minister may administer baptism even outside his territory” (p.56). “If baptism was administered by neither the pastor nor in his presence, the minister of baptism, whoever that may be, must notify the pastor of the parish in which baptism was administered so that it may be recorded in accord with the norm of **canon 877**” (p. 59).

“The pastor, or any presbyter, may confirm someone in danger of death (**Canon 883.3**). This includes presbyters who are laicized or suspended” (p. 68).

“All priests, even if they lack the faculty, may hear the confessions of those in danger of death, absolving from all sins and censures, even if an approved priest is present” (**Canon 976**, p. 126). “Any priest, even one who has been excommunicated, interdicted, suspended, laicized, or in any other way has lost the faculty, may hear the confession of a Christian in danger of death, the law itself grants the faculty (**Canon 844, 976**, p. 131). Even “if a local ordinary denies an outside priest the faculty in a particular case,” that priest may “validly absolve in that territory in danger of death” (p.125).

Persons are excused from observing usual procedures when there is physical or moral impossibility. “Physical impossibility exists when compliance with the law is simply beyond human capability; such impossibility excuses from the observance of law, since no one can be obliged to do what is impossible. Moral impossibility arises when the observance of the law is rendered very difficult due to grave fear, serious harm, or inconvenience” (p.13).