Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion

2021 Resource Booklet

Saint Benedict Cathedral
Sunday, February 21, 2021
1st Sunday of Lent
2:00 PM CST (Election)
4:00 PM CST (Call)
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On the First Sunday of Lent, the people of the Diocese of Evansville gather with those seeking either Baptism or full Communion with the Church to celebrate another step on the journey. In the Rite of Election “the Church makes its ‘election,’ that is, the choice and admission of those catechumens who have the dispositions that make them fit to take part...in the sacraments of initiation” (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults [RCIA], 119). At the Call to Continuing Conversion, those baptized Christians who seek to “complete their Christian formation and become fully integrated into the community…” (RCIA, 410) come before the bishop who, on behalf of the Church, officially recognizes their “desire to have a place at Christ’s Eucharistic table” (RCIA, 454).

The rites will look different this year, as most things have over the past months. By separating the Call from the Rite of Election, we hope to be able to allow more family and friends to attend. The movements during the liturgies will have to account for social distancing and other restrictions. The Church will gather for these celebrations, but not in the way we have in past years.

In spite of all the challenges, the Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion continue to stand as not only as ratification of the catechumens’ and candidates’ readiness for the sacraments but most especially as a witness to everyone’s need and longing for communion with our God and the Church’s call to bring them into the fold. In these liturgies we find expressed in the questions posed by the bishop of those present what the Church is hoping of those seeking Baptism and full Communion and what the Church is asking of its members in bringing them along.

Separating these liturgies also helps recognizes the distinction the Church makes between a catechumen and a candidate. As a baptized Christian, a candidate is already a member of the Elect and, therefore, does not need to sign the Book of the Elect. The Church affirms this initial incorporation into the Body of Christ while acknowledging the need to be brought into full Communion. Catechumens, responding to the calling of God, seek to be numbered among the “Elect,” to become adopted sons and daughters of the Father. The same God calls them, but they are in different places on the journey. This difference is remembered in these rite as well as the other rites of the RCIA. Since the Church prays as she believes, it is important that the liturgy express what the Church holds to be true.

In preparing catechumens and candidates to celebrate the rites, it would be beneficial to look at the questions the bishop will ask of the godparents and sponsors, catechumens and candidates, and the faithful gathered for the celebration. Can these questions be answered affirmatively? Are the catechumens and candidates ready? Can others testify to their readiness? Are all prepared to assist them through prayer and action? This is another way to ensure that what is expressed in the liturgy is authentic.
There are often questions regarding the proper participation of the baptized in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. The following outline hopes to address some of the more common concerns.

* Baptized Christians (non-Catholic) are allowed to participate in the rites as outlined for them in the RCIA (Part II: Chapter 4):
  - Rite of Welcoming the Candidates
  - Rite of Sending the Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop
  - Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion
  - Penitential Rite (Scrutiny)

* Baptized Catholics (uncatechized) are allowed to participate in the rites as outlined in the RCIA (Part II: Chapter 4):
  - Rite of Welcoming the Candidates
  - Rite of Sending the Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop
  - Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion
  - Penitential Rite (Scrutiny)

* Catholics at the Easter Vigil
  - Baptized Catholics, be they catechized or uncatechized, are not to complete their sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil. This should happen at another time – another Sunday in the Easter Season, Pentecost, etc.

* Baptized Christians seeking Full Communion and the Easter Vigil
  - If a parish does not have Elect to be baptized at the Vigil and only has candidates seeking full Communion, then those seeking full Communion should do so at a time outside of the Vigil (another Sunday in the Easter Season, Pentecost, etc.)
    ◦ See National Statutes for the Catechumenate, 32-34
    ◦ The initiation rites of the Easter Vigil are primarily intended for the unbaptized, but a combined rite for both the Elect and candidates is provided in the RCIA (Appendix I: 4) and is permitted
    ◦ However, the stand-alone “Rite of Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church” (Part II: Chapter 5) is not intended to be celebrated at the Easter Vigil.
Please send in information regarding names of catechumens and candidates as well as numbers for both the Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion to Andie Gunter no later than February 7 (see pages 17-20 of this booklet for more details).

There will be reserved seating by parish for catechumens/candidates, godparents/sponsors, Book of the Elect holders, and some parish RCIA team representation. Others (family, parish friends) will be allowed to attend as space allows.

Prepare the godparents and sponsors according to the ritual outlines included in this booklet. Especially take time to review the questions that will be addressed to them.

Attendance by godparents and sponsors is of utmost importance. No catechumen or candidate should come alone.

Prepare the parish representative who will present the names of the catechumens and/or candidates. Share the list of names with them ahead of time, and give them a copy of the instructional sheet found in this booklet. Ask them to arrive at least fifteen minutes prior to the start of the rite.

Prepare the parish representative who will carry the Book of the Elect. Share with them the instructional sheet found in this booklet. Ask them to arrive at least fifteen minutes prior to the start of the rite.

The parish celebration for sending catechumens for election (RCIA nos. 106-117) and candidates for recognition by the bishop (RCIA nos. 438-445) may be celebrated earlier in the parish. (The combined rite for sending catechumens and candidates together can be found in RCIA nos. 536-546)

The catechumens should sign the Book of the Elect prior to the Rite of Election, either at the parish celebration of the Rite of Sending or another time.

Candidates do not sign the Book of the Elect.

The bishop does not sign the Book of the Elect as part of the Rite of Election.
Rite of Election
Outline of the Rite

Introductory Rites

Entrance

The Bishop and other ministers (Deacon, server with processional cross, servers for miter/crosier) enter the church while the Entrance is sung.

Greeting

Collect

Liturgy of the Word

All are seated.

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Gospel

Homily

Rite of Election

Presentation of the Catechumens

After the homily, the catechumens are presented to the Bishop.

One by one, the catechumens and godparents are called by name. A parish representative reads the names.

Representative: Bishop, we the parish of N. present to you the following catechumens for Election.

As names are read, catechumens/godparents stand at their places. A parish representative carrying the Book of the Elect comes forward and lines up across middle level of sanctuary at direction of the MC.

Affirmation by the Godparents and the Assembly

The Bishop then questions the godparents as to the readiness of the catechumens.

Bishop: God’s holy Church wishes to know whether these catechumens are sufficiently prepared to be enrolled among the Elect for the coming celebration of Easter. And so I speak first of all to you their godparents. Have they faithfully listened to God’s word proclaimed by the Church?

Godparents: They have.
Bishop: Have they responded to that word and begun to walk in God’s presence?

Godparents: They have.

Bishop: Have they shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined with them in prayer?

Godparents: They have.

[The Bishop then questions the assembly as to their willingness to support and pray for the catechumens.]

Bishop: And now I speak to you, my brothers and sisters in this assembly. Are you ready to support the testimony expressed about these catechumens and include them in your prayer and affection as we move toward Easter?

All: We are.]

INVITATION AND ENROLLMENT OF NAMES

The Bishop then addresses the catechumens and invites them to present their names for enrollment.

Bishop: And now, my dear catechumens, I address you. Your own godparents, teachers, and this entire community have spoken in your favor. The Church in the name of Christ accepts their judgment and calls you to the Easter sacraments. Since you have already heard the call of Christ, you may now express your response to that call clearly and in the presence of the whole Church.

Therefore, do you wish to enter fully into the life of the Church through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist?

Catechumens: I do.

Bishop: Then offer your names for enrollment.

While the catechumens/godparents stay in place, each parish representative carrying the Book of the Elect comes to the Bishop (on cue from the master of ceremonies). The “book holder” opens the book and shows it to the Bishop, saying:

Book Holder: These are the names of the catechumens from N. parish.

The Bishop acknowledges them in these or similar words:

Bishop: May God who has begun this good work bring it to fulfillment.

Taking the Book of the Elect with them, each “book holder” moves down to line up across the front aisle of the cathedral. Catechumens/godparents continue to remain in place.

ACT OF ADMISSION OR ELECTION

The Bishop briefly explains the significance of the enrollment that has just taken place. He then declares the catechumens to be members of the Elect.

Bishop: I now declare you to be members of the Elect, to be initiated into the sacred mysteries at the next Easter Vigil.

Elect: Thanks be to God.
Bishop: God is always faithful to those he calls: now it is your duty, as it is ours, both to be faithful to him in return and to strive courageously to reach the fullness of truth, which your election opens up before you.

The Bishop then addresses the godparents.

Bishop: Godparents, you have spoken in favor of these Elect; accept them now as chosen in the Lord and continue to sustain them through your loving care and example, until they come to share in the sacraments of God’s life. I now invite the godparents to extend a sign of welcome to the Elect under their care.

Godparents exchange an appropriate sign of greeting and peace with the Elect, and the “book holders” return to their seats. Then all present give their assent to the Elect.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE ELECT

All stand as the Bishop introduces the intercessions. The intercessions are proclaimed by the Deacon.

PRAYER OVER THE ELECT

The Bishop then extends hands over the Elect dates and prays.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The Bishop and other ministers reverence the altar and process from the church.
Call to Continuing Conversion
Outline of the Rite

Introductory Rites

Entrance

The Bishop and other ministers (Deacon, server with processional cross, servers for miter/crosier) enter the church while the Entrance is sung.

Greeting

Collect

Liturgy of the Word

All are seated.

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Gospel

Homily

Call to Continuing Conversion

Presentation of the Candidates

The candidates are presented to the Bishop, who remains seated.

A parish representative reads the names of the candidates of their parish.

Representative: Bishop, we the parish of N. present the following candidates for full communion with the Catholic Church.

As names are read, candidates/sponsors stand at their places.

Affirmation by the Sponsors and the Assembly

The Bishop then questions the sponsors as to the readiness of the candidates.

Bishop: The Christian life and the demands that flow from the sacraments cannot be taken lightly. Therefore, before granting these candidates their request to share fully in the Church’s sacraments, it is important that the Church hear the testimony of their sponsors about their readiness. Sponsors, have these candidates faithfully listened to the apostles’ instruction proclaimed by the Church?

Sponsors: They have.
Bishop: Have they come to a deeper appreciation of their baptism, in which they were joined to Christ and his Church?
Sponsors: They have.

Bishop: Have they reflected sufficiently on the tradition of the Church, which is their heritage, and joined their brothers and sisters in prayer?
Sponsors: They have.

Bishop: Have they advanced in a life of love and service of others?
Sponsors: They have.

[The Bishop then questions the assembly as to their willingness to support and pray for the candidates.

Bishop: And now I speak to you, my brothers and sisters in this assembly: are you ready to support the testimony expressed about these candidates and include them in your prayer and affection as we move toward Easter?

Assembly: We are.]

ACT OF RECOGNITION

The Bishop recognizes the candidates’ desire for full Communion.

Bishop: My dear candidates, the Church recognizes your desire to be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and to have a place at Christ’s Eucharistic table. Join with us this Lent in a spirit of repentance. Hear the Lord’s call to conversion and be faithful to your baptismal covenant.

Candidates: Thanks be to God.

Bishop: Sponsors, continue to support these candidates with your guidance and concern. May they see in you a love for the Church and a sincere desire for doing good. Lead them this Lent to the joys of the Easter mysteries. I now invite the sponsors to extend a sign of welcome to the candidates under their care.

The sponsors exchange an appropriate sign of greeting and peace with the candidates. Then all present give their assent to the candidates.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES

All stand as the Bishop introduces the intercessions. The intercessions are proclaimed by the Deacon.

PRAYER OVER THE CANDIDATES

The Bishop then extends hands over the candidates and prays.

Blessing and Dismissal

The Bishop and other ministers reverence the altar and process from the church.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BOOK OF THE ELECT PRESENTERS

This instruction sheet will be helpful for you to know your role in the Rite of Election.

**PROCEDEURE**

- There will be a meeting of those who will carry the *Book of the Elect* at 1:45 pm CDT. Please gather at the steps of the sanctuary.

- Please sit at the end of the pew so you may easily get out when your parish is called.

- When your parish representative says, “Bishop, we the parish of N. present to you the following catechumens for Election,” please stand with the *Book of the Elect* and approach the sanctuary.

- As the names of the catechumens of your parish are read, you will approach the sanctuary. Catechumens and godparents remain at their seats.

- Once you reach the steps of the sanctuary, the master of ceremonies will direct you where to stand. Please stand facing the bishop during the presentations.

- The bishop then questions the godparents and assembly, and then invites the catechumens to present their names for enrollment.

- At the direction of the MC, you will take your *Book of the Elect* to the bishop. Open the Book and show it to the bishop, saying, “These are the names of the catechumens from N. parish.”

- After the bishop responds, close your Book and move down to the front aisle of the cathedral, right at the steps to the sanctuary (at the direction of the MC).

- Remain in the front aisle until directed to return to your seats (just prior to the Intercessions).

- The *Book of the Elect* is not used for the Call to Continuing Conversion.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR CATECHUMENS AND GODPARENTS

This instruction sheet will be helpful for you to know your role in the Rite of Election.

PROCEDURE

* When your parish representative says, “Bishop, we the parish of N. present to you the following catechumens for Election,” please remain in your seat.

* As the names of the catechumens are read, catechumens and their godparents should stand. Do not follow the Book of the Elect forward.

* Remain standing at your place while the bishop questions the godparents and assembly.

* Please remain in your place when the Book of the Elect is presented to the bishop and for the Act of Election.

* After the bishop’s instructions to the godparents, please exchange an appropriate sign of greeting and peace. Remain standing for the Intercessions.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES/SPONSORS

This instruction sheet will be helpful for you to know your role in the Call to Continuing Conversion.

PROCEDURE

★ The *Book of the Elect* is **not** carried forward when the candidates for full Communion are called.

★ Your parish representative will say, "**Bishop, we the parish of N. present the following candidates for full Communion with the Catholic Church.**"

★ As the names from your parish are read, candidates and sponsors will stand in place.

★ Please stand facing the bishop while the other candidates are being presented.

★ Please remain in place while the bishop addresses the sponsors and the rest of the assembly.

★ After the bishop’s instructions to the sponsors, please exchange an appropriate sign of greeting and peace. Remain standing for the Intercessions.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PARISH PRESENTERS OF CATECHUMENS AND/OR CANDIDATES

This instruction sheet will be helpful for you to know your role in the Rite of Election or Call to Continuing Conversion.

PROCEDURE

>*</p>

Please make sure you can pronounce the names correctly.

* Arrive at the church at least 15 minutes early for instructions. Please gather in the sanctuary behind the altar.

* A list of your catechumens/candidates will be provided for you. This list is based off of the names submitted prior to the rite. You may need to make changes to list if someone is not in attendance or other circumstances have changed.

For Catechumens

* When the bishop says, “Those who are to be chosen in Christ, come forward, together with your godparents, as your names are called,” the first presenter should approach the microphone.

* The parish representative says, “Bishop, we the parish of N. present to you the following catechumens for Election.”

* When reading the list of names, there is no need to wait for the Book of the Elect to begin to move forward before moving to the next name. At the same time, there is no need to rush through the list of names, either. The list should be read deliberately, clearly, and forcefully.

* Once you have finished reading the names for your parish, return to your seat.

For Candidates

* When the bishop says, “Those who desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church, come forward with your sponsors as your names are called,” the first presenter should approach the microphone.

* The parish representative says, “Bishop, we the parish of N. present the following candidates for full communion with the Catholic Church.”

* When reading the list of names, there is no need to rush through the list of names. The list should be read deliberately, clearly, and forcefully.

* Once you have finished reading the names for your parish, return to your seat.

* When the liturgy is concluded, please leave your listing in your seat.
RITE OF ELECTION
2021 PARTICIPATION INFORMATION

Please submit this information to Andie Gunter, Office of Catechesis via email (agunter@evdio.org) or fax (812-421-1334) no later than February 7

Parish: ___________________________  Contact Person: ___________________________

City: ___________________________  Name Presenter: ___________________________

Telephone: ___________________________  Book Holder: ___________________________

Email: ___________________________

Please type (or print legibly) the names of your parish catechumens. This is the listing that will be used at the Rite as well as for publication in The Message. If there is someone whom you do not wish to be listed in The Message, please make a note of it. Please list additional names on the back.

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# of Catechumens attending: ________  Will anyone in your party require special assistance (wheelchair or walker seating)?
# of Godparents attending: ________  Yes ______  No ______  # ______
# of Parish Staff/RCIA Team attending: ________  What are the language needs of your group?

Seating

If you have members of the same household who will not need to social distance from one another, please list their names to the right.

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English ______  Spanish ______  Other ______
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Parish: ___________________________  Contact Person: ___________________________

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# of Parish Staff/RCIA Team attending: ________

What are the language needs of your group?
English ______  Spanish ______  Other ______

Seating
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