



RITE OF ELECTION AND CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION

2015 Resource Booklet



Saint Benedict Cathedral
Sunday, February 22, 2015
2:00 PM
1st Sunday of Lent

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“Once again Lent comes to make its prophetic appeal, to remind us that it is possible to create something new within ourselves and around us, simply because God is faithful, always faithful, for he cannot deny himself, he continues to be rich in goodness and mercy, and he is always ready to forgive and start afresh. With this filial confidence, let us set out on the journey!” - Pope Francis, Homily for Ash Wednesday, 5 March 2014

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 and Call to Continuing Conversion, “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). In addition, 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 Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion stands 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 this liturgy 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.

This liturgy also 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 this 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.

MAKING DISTINCTIONS

Catechumens

- ✦ **Unbaptized**
- ✦ **No or little faith**
- ✦ **True “converts”**

Candidates

- ✦ **Validly baptized**
- ✦ **No Confirmation or Eucharist, but are Christian**
- ✦ **Need to develop the effects they received in Baptism**

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.

CLARIFICATIONS REGARDING THE BAPTIZED AND RCIA

There have been some 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 Catechuminate*, 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 the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, to Kay Beard, Secretary for the Office of Catechesis, no later than February 6 (see page 11 of this booklet for more details).
- ✧ There will be reserved seating by parish. A tag identifying the parish will be on the end of the pew. Everyone from your parish is welcome to sit together.
- ✧ Prepare the godparents and sponsors according to the ritual outline 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.
- ✧ Prepare the parish representative who will carry the Book of the Elect. Share with them the instructional sheet found in this booklet.
- ✧ The parish celebration for sending catechumens for election (RCIA nos. 106-117) and candidates for recognition by the bishop (RCIA nos. 438-445) is to 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 at the parish celebration prior to the Rite of Election at the cathedral. 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.
- ✧ Please invite all of your parishioners to join the catechumens, candidates, godparents and sponsors at the reception following the liturgy.

**RITE OF ELECTION
AND
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 cathedral while the Entrance is sung.

GREETING

The Bishop then welcomes all who are present and briefly explains the significance of the liturgy.

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, who is seated in front of the altar.

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 are led by another parish representative carrying the Book of the Elect to come and stand on the steps of the sanctuary in their parish group (facing the Bishop) .

AFFIRMATION BY THE GODPARENTS AND THE ASSEMBLY

The Bishop then questions the godparents as to the readiness of the catechumens. The godparents respond, **“They have.”**

The Bishop then questions the assembly as to their willingness to support and pray for the catechumen. The assembly responds, **“We are.”**

INVITATION AND ENROLLMENT OF NAMES

The Bishop then addresses the catechumens and invites them to present their names for enrollment. The catechumens respond, **“I do.”**

Led by the “book holder,” each parish group comes to the Bishop (on cue from the master of ceremonies). The “book holder” presents the Book of the Elect to the Bishop and says:

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

Holding the Book of the Elect, the Bishop acknowledges them in these or similar words:

Bishop: May God who has begun the good work in [all of] you bring it to fulfillment.

Taking the Book of the Elect with them, the group returns to their seats and remain standing.

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. Godparents exchange a sign of greeting and peace with the Elect.

CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

The candidates are then presented to the Bishop, who remains seated in front of the altar.

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 (without sponsors) come and stand on the steps of the sanctuary in their parish group (facing the Bishop). [If the number of candidates is too great, they may fill in on the floor level.]

AFFIRMATION BY THE SPONSORS AND THE ASSEMBLY

The Bishop then questions the sponsors as to the readiness of the candidates. The sponsors respond, **“They have.”**

The Bishop then questions the assembly as to their willingness to support and pray for the candidates. The assembly responds, **“We are.”**

ACT OF RECOGNITION

The Bishop recognizes the candidates’ desire for full Communion. The candidates respond, **“Thanks be to God.”**

At the invitation of the Deacon, the candidates return to their seats.

Once the candidates have returned to their places, the Bishop then addresses the sponsors. Then the sponsors exchange a sign of greeting and peace with the candidates.

All present give their assent to the Elect and candidates.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE ELECT AND THE CANDIDATES

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

PRAYER OVER THE ELECT AND CANDIDATES

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

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The Bishop and other ministers reverence the altar and process from the cathedral.

RECEPTION

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 and Call to Continuing Conversion. If you have any questions, ask one of the RCIA Diocesan Committee members when you arrive. They will have a name tag to identify themselves.

Committee Members are Matt Atkinson; Kathy Evans; Lisa Foster; Greg Hauger; Deacon William Keller; Deacon Tom Kempf; Larry Kluemper; Bill Noll; Martha Schmitt; Mike Vogel; Shelley Weiss; Kathy Gallo, Director, Office of Catechesis; and Matt Miller, Director, Office of Worship.

PROCEDURE

- ✘ 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 Book of the Elect and approach the sanctuary.
- ✘ As the names of the catechumens of your parish are read, you will lead them forward.
- ✘ Once you reach the steps of the sanctuary, the master of ceremonies will direct you and your catechumens 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 lead your catechumens to the bishop, who will be seated in front of the altar. Hand him your Book of the Elect and say, **“These are the names of the catechumens from N. parish.”**
- ✘ After the bishop responds, he will hand the Book back to you. At the direction of the MC, lead your catechumens back to their seats. All should remain standing once you arrive back at your seat.
- ✘ The Book of the Elect is not carried forward when the candidates for full Communion are called.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES

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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 of the candidates of your parish are read, you will come forward to the sanctuary.
- ✘ Because of the number of candidates in attendance, candidates only should come forward—sponsors should remain at the seats.
- ✘ The master of ceremonies will direct you where to stand once you reach the steps of the sanctuary. Please stand facing the bishop while the candidates are being presented.
- ✘ Please remain in place in the sanctuary while the bishop addresses the sponsors and the rest of the assembly.
- ✘ After the bishop has recognized the all candidates, the deacon will invite you to return to your places. Candidates should remain standing once they are back at their seats.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PARISH PRESENTERS OF CATECHUMENS AND/OR CANDIDATES

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PROCEDURE

- ✘ Please make sure you can pronounce the names correctly.
- ✘ Arrive at the cathedral at least 15 minutes early for instructions. Please gather in the sanctuary. You will also be seated in the sanctuary.
- ✘ A list of your catechumens and/or 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.

- ✘ Catechumens are presented first.
- ✘ When the bishop says, **“Those who are to be chosen in Christ, come forward, together with your god-parents, 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 each catechumen 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.
- ✘ If you do not have catechumens, you may just remain in your seat.
- ✘ Once you have finished reading the names for your parish, you may return to your place in the sanctuary.

- ✘ Candidates are presented after catechumens.
- ✘ When the bishop says, **“Those who desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church, come forward as your names are read,”** 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 wait for each candidate 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.
- ✘ If you do not have candidates, you may remain in your seat.
- ✘ Once you have finished reading the names for your parish, you may return to your place in the sanctuary.
- ✘ **When the liturgy is concluded, please leave your listing in your seat.**

