RITE OF ELECTION AND CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION

GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT IS IT?

The Rite of Election celebrates the Lord's choosing of men, women and children of catechetical age who, with the help of the Church, acknowledge God's election of them for the Easter Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. The Rite of Election marks the beginning of the final period of intensive preparation for initiation through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

The Call to Continuing Conversion marks the final period of preparation for those preparing to be received into full communion or for those Catholics completing their initiation through Confirmation and First Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

A clear distinction between the unbaptized and baptized will be made in order to respect the baptismal status of those being received into full communion.

The diocesan celebration of the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion is celebrated within the context of evening prayer in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

DISCERNMENT FOR THE RITE

RCIA coordinators, by delegation of their pastor, should discern with godparents/sponsors, other team members, and those seeking the Easter Sacraments their readiness to take this next step towards initiation or reception into full communion. Catechumens are expected to have experienced a conversion of mind and morals, a sense of faith and charity, and be judged by those involved in their preparation to be worthy to receive the Easter Sacraments. (cf. RCIA, #120) Those seeking full communion into the Church and those Catholics preparing to complete their initiation are to have listened faithfully to the Gospels, developed a deeper appreciation of their baptism, reflected upon the tradition of the Church, and have advanced in a life of love. (cf. RCIA, #453)

WHAT ABOUT CELEBRATION IN THE PARISH?

While this Rite takes place in a larger diocesan setting with the Archbishop/Auxiliary Bishop, local parishes should celebrate a Rite of Sending. In this parish celebration the catechumens are presented to the community, godparents give testimony on their behalf, and the catechumens inscribe their names in the Book of the Elect. Baptized candidates for full communion and Catholics preparing for the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist may also be presented to the parish at this time. Since those who are baptized already have their names enrolled in the baptismal registers, they do not inscribe their names in the Book of the Elect. (cf. RCIA #530 - #546)
Parishes are to bring their signed Book of Elect to the Rite of Election. A catechist who has played a significant role in the formation of the catechumens is to present the Book of the Elect during the celebration of the Rite of Election. The designee, carrying the Book of the Elect, will lead the catechumens and their godparents to the sanctuary as the name of the parish is called. An MC will direct catechumens and their godparents into the sanctuary, while the catechist remains outside the sanctuary until directed to process forward. Once all parish names have been called and the catechumens and godparents are in the sanctuary, the (Arch)bishop will ask the godparents to give testimony on behalf of the catechumens by asking them a series of questions, which they should answer out loud. Then, he will question the catechumens of their desire to receive the Easter sacraments. Once the (Arch)bishop has declared them Elect, the designated catechist with the Book of the Elect will proceed to a prominent place (as directed by an MC) and will remain there until the conclusion of the Rite, at which time the books will be blessed with incense. After the incensation, catechists with the Books of the Elect will return to their places.

Please note once again, only the names of the catechumens are inscribed in the Book of the Elect. It will be brought forward only during the presentation of catechumens.

This book should be of good quality and will be kept among the official books of the parish. However, during the season of Lent, it is appropriate to display the Book of the Elect in an appropriate place in the church.

Baptized candidates will be called forward to the sanctuary (after the Rite of Election). Once again, parish names will be called by deanery, and baptized candidates will be invited to come forward with their sponsors. They will not follow the Book of the Elect. The (Arch)bishop will question the sponsors about the readiness of the candidates to enter fully into the sacramental life of the Church.

A seating chart for each location will be posted on our website by early February. Once the seating charts are posted, the link will be emailed to the RCIA Coordinator. It is vital that you return the information form by the deadline of January 15, 2018 so that you are assured the appropriate number of seats. Seating will be reserved only for catechumens and godparents, candidates and sponsors, children who are catechumens or candidates, their parents and godparents, three team members and the pastor. Other family members may be seated in the non-reserved sections.
WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

1) Fill out and return the information form (embedded in 2018 Letter) by January 15, 2018 to the Office for Divine Worship and Sacraments. If you do not receive a confirmation within 24 hours of sending your form, please contact the ODWS at kschmidt@catholiccincinnati.org or (513) 421-3131 ext. 6609. We cannot guarantee seating assignments or that the names of your parish's catechumens and candidates will be included in the program if your information sheet is returned after January 15.

2) Designate the person to present the parish Book of the Elect during the celebration. Prior to the celebration of the Rite of Election, that person will need instructions for presenting the Book of the Elect during the Rite of Election. (Refer to the section above.)

3) The Rite of Sending, which may be used in the parish prior to the Rite of Election, is found in The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. One of the following is used:

   a) "Sending the Catechumens for Election" (RCIA, #106)

   b) "Rite of Sending the Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop...", (RCIA, #434)

   OR

   c) the combined rite "Sending of Catechumens for Election and Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop", (RCIA, #530)

Please be certain to have your catechumens sign the Book of the Elect at this parish celebration, as they will not sign the book at the Rite of Election.

4) After the celebration of the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, it is appropriate that the Book of the Elect be displayed in a place of honor in your church during the remainder of the Lenten season.