

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

The Easter Vigil is the most important liturgy of the year. It is the prime time for baptism. It is best to separate the Rite of Reception from the Vigil. This allows validly baptised Christians to be received into full communion when they are ready. Use big, rich symbols (water, oil, candle, etc) for the liturgy. Baptism by immersion is preferred. Baptism takes place after the Homily.

CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

Someone from the RCIA team calls the Elect by name. They come forward with Godparents. Minister carrying paschal candle leads procession to font while Litany of Saints is sung. At conclusion of litany extend hands and pray:

Almighty ever-living God,
be present by the mysteries of your great love
and send forth the spirit of adoption
to create the new peoples
brought to birth for you in the font of Baptism,
so that what is to be carried out by our humble service
may be brought to fulfilment by your mighty power.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

BLESSING OF THE WATER

*See Roman Missal p. 411 – p. 412
At the conclusion of this the acclamation the people sing:
“Springs of water bless the Lord; praise and exalt him above all forever”*

RENUNCIATION OF SIN

The questions may be asked individually, or collectively if there is a crowd.

Do you reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God’s children?
Elect: I do.
Do you reject the glamour of evil and refuse to be mastered by sin?
Elect: I do.
Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?
Elect: I do.

If the elect have NOT been anointed with the oil of Catechumens at the Preparation Rites, this occurs here. Be generous with the oil.

We anoint you with the oil of salvation in the name of Christ our Saviour.
May he strengthen you with his power,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
AMEN

PROFESSION OF FAITH

This may be done individually or as a group but it is preferable to hear each person make a personal confession of faith.

N, do you believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

Elect: I do

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was born of the Virgin Mary,
was crucified and was buried,
rose from the dead
and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

Elect: I do

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting?

Elect: I do.

BAPTISM

Baptism by Immersion is preferred. If baptism is by pouring, the godparent has her/his hand on the shoulder of the elect.

If baptism is by immersion the godparent could be the first to receive the newly baptised with a towel, after he/she emerges from the pool.

Each baptism may be followed by a short acclamation. Applause is appropriate.

Immerse the person three times or pour water over them, whilst saying the Trinitarian formula

I baptise you in the name of the Father,
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

Where necessary, newly baptised immediately retire to suitable room to dry themselves and dress.

During this time, the candles of the assembly are relit, the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is celebrated and the people are sprinkled with baptismal water.

EXPLANATORY RITES

CLOTHING WITH A BAPTISMAL GARMENT

The white garment should be something which can be put over the newly baptised's clothes and which they will keep, e.g. a white shirt, blouse, dress, shawl, scarf (do not use stoles, which identify clergy)

N. and N., you have become a new creation and have clothed yourselves in Christ.
Receive this baptismal garment (*Godparents place the garment on the newly baptised*)
and bring it unstained to the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ,
so that you may have everlasting life.

Newly baptised:

Amen.

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDLE

Use stately candles. They may be made or supplied by the godparent.

Celebrant to godparents:

Godparents, come forward to give the newly baptised the light of Christ.

Celebrant says to the newly baptised:

N, you have been enlightened by Christ.
Walk always as children of the light
and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts.
When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet him
with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

Newly baptised:

Amen.

CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION

Make a brief introduction to the newly baptised in these or similar words:

My dear newly baptised, born again in Christ by baptism, you now have become members of Christ and of his priestly people. Now you are to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us, the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost and given to them and their successors to the baptised.

The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be witnesses to his suffering, death and resurrection. It will strengthen you to be active members of the Church and to build up the Body of Christ in faith and love.

Celebrant addresses the people.

My dear friends, let us pray to God our Father, that he will pour out the Holy Spirit on these newly baptised to strengthen them with his gifts and anoint them to be more like Christ, the Son of God.

LAYING ON OF HANDS

Then, stretch out your hands over the entire group to be confirmed whilst saying:

All- powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
By water and the Holy Spirit
You freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life.
Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide.
Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of right judgement and courage,
The spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

ANOINTING WITH CHRISM

A member of the RCIA Team can bring you the chrism.

Have the godparent hold the candle. At the same time the godparent needs to have his/her right hand on the shoulder of the candidate.

You should know the name of the candidate; otherwise the godparent tells you.

Note that you are using their commonly recognised name; the name you used at their baptism.

Use the oil sensitively and richly.

As you trace the sign of the cross on the forehead you say:

N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Newly confirmed:

Amen.

The minister of the sacrament adds:

Peace be with you.

Newly confirmed:

And with your spirit.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The neophytes may be included in the Procession of Gifts.

With Eucharistic Prayers I, II, or III the special interpolations given in the Roman Missal, the ritual Masses, 'Christian Initiation: Baptism' are used.

Communion under both kinds should be offered to the newly baptised, the godparents, families and catechists. Moreover, (at least for Easter) it should be offered to the whole congregation.

Before the "Lamb of God" the newly baptised may be reminded of the pre-eminence of the Eucharist, the climax of their initiation.