

Simplified Rites

RITE OF ELECTION OR ENROLMENT OF NAMES

Celebrated in the parish

This rite is the second step in Christian Initiation and opens a period of intense preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation.

Ideally the Rite of Election takes place in the Cathedral. Where circumstances prevent this happening, it may be held in the parish church.

It is usually celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent. If for sound pastoral reasons the rite is celebrated on another day, the texts and readings of the ritual Mass "Christian Initiation: Election/Enrolment of Names" are used.

Before the rite is celebrated, the church discerns the conversion of the catechumens, judges their readiness for the sacraments and thus makes its election. The rite may only be celebrated when there is no impediment to baptism, such as irregular marriage.

This is the rite when godparents replace sponsors. They may be the same person.

The key symbol is the signing of the Book of the Elect which is kept in the parish.

The rite takes place after the homily, which should address not just the catechumens but also encourage the entire community of the faithful to give good example and to accompany the elect along the path of the paschal mystery.

After the homily, the presider calls forward and introduces the RCIA co-ordinator. From a position of prominence other than the ambo, he or she presents the catechumens.

PRESENTATION

Co-ordinator: Reverend Father, Easter is drawing near, and so these catechumens, whom I now present to you, are completing their period of preparation. They have found strength in God's grace and support in our community's prayers and example.

Now they ask that after the celebration of the scrutinies, they be allowed to participate in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist.

Celebrant: Those who are to be chosen in Christ, come forward, together with your godparents.

Co-ordinator calls the catechumens and godparents by name. They come forward and stand before the celebrant. The godparent stands behind the catechumen.

AFFIRMATION BY GODPARENTS

The celebrant addresses the assembly.

Celebrant: My dear friends, these catechumens have asked to be initiated into the sacramental life of the Church this Easter. Those who know them have judged them to be sincere in their desire. During the period of their preparation they have listened to the word of Christ and endeavoured to follow his commands; they have shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined with them in prayer.

And so I announce to all of you here that our community has decided to call them to the sacraments. Therefore, I ask their godparents to state their opinion once again, so that all of you may hear.

He addresses the godparents:

As God is your witness, do you consider these candidates worthy to be admitted to the sacraments of Christian initiation?

Godparents: We do.

INVITATION AND ENROLMENT OF NAMES

Celebrant: And now, my dear catechumens, I address you. Your godparents (and teachers/the entire community) have spoken in your favour. The Church in the name of Christ accepts their judgement and calls you to the Easter sacraments.

Since you have already heard the call of Christ, you must now express your response to that call clearly and in the presence of the whole Church.

So I ask you, do you wish to enter fully into the life of the Church through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist?

Catechumens: We do.

Celebrant: Then offer your names for enrolment.

The catechumens sign their names in the parish Book of the Elect.

During the signing, the assembly sings an appropriate refrain (e.g. "Who calls you by name" by David Haas).

ACT OF ELECTION OR ADMISSION

The celebrant may give a brief explanation of what has happened. He addresses the catechumens.

Celebrant: N, N, 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

Celebrant: 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.

Godparents, you have spoken in favour of these elect. Godparents, you have spoken in favour of these catechumens: 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.

Let us all now join in welcoming these Elect to the Easter sacraments.

All stand and applaud and remain standing for the prayer.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Celebrant: My brothers and sisters, these elect, whom we bring with us to the Easter sacraments, will look to us for an example of Christian renewal. Let us pray to the Lord for them and for ourselves, that we may be renewed by one another's efforts and together come to share the joys of Easter.

That together we may fruitfully employ this Lenten season to renew ourselves through self-denial and works of holiness, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That our catechumens may always remember this day of their election and be grateful for the blessings they have received from heaven, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That their teachers may always convey the beauty of God's word to those who search for it, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That their godparents may be living examples of the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That their families, far from placing any obstacles in the way of these catechumens, may help them to follow the promptings of the Spirit, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That our community, during this Lenten period, may grow in charity and be constant in prayer, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

That those who have not yet overcome their hesitation may trust in Christ and come to join our community as our brothers and sisters, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

If Mass follows, intentions for the Church and world are added here.

Celebrant: I now invite you, the Godparents, to place your hand on the shoulder of the Elect entrusted to your care, and you, the gathered assembly, to raise your hands in prayer:

Celebrant:

Father of love and power,
It is your will to establish everything in Christ
And to draw us into his ever embracing love.
Guide the elect of your Church:
Strengthen them in their vocation,
build them into the kingdom of your Son,
And seal them with the Spirit of your promise.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

DISMISSAL

If the Eucharist is to be celebrated, the celebrant dismisses the elect in these or similar words:

Celebrant: My dear elect, you have set out with us on the road that leads to the glory of Easter. Christ will be your way, your truth, and your life. Until we meet again for the scrutinies, walk always in his peace.

Elect: Amen.

If the elect are to stay for the celebration of the Eucharist, the celebrant says:

Celebrant: Although you cannot yet participate fully in the Lord's Eucharist, stay with us as a sign of our hope that all God's children will eat and drink with the Lord and work with his Spirit to re-create the face of the earth.

If the Eucharist is not to be celebrated, the celebrant dismisses all present, using these or similar words:

Celebrant: Go in peace, and may the Lord remain with you always.

All: Thanks be to God.

An appropriate song concludes the celebration.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Liturgy of the Eucharist then begins with the Preparation of the Gifts.