

THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA): “Sorting Fish”

I: CATECUMENS (the Unbaptized Who are at Least Seven Years of Age or Older):

• INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Each must receive the Rite of Acceptance according to the RCIA (see #48 and following) before the Rite of Election at the Cathedral on the 1st Sunday of Lent.
2. If any of the above cannot attend the Rite of Acceptance, they cannot attend the Rite of Election. Therefore, this would postpone their reception of any sacraments until after Easter.
3. Each must receive the Rite of Election according to the RCIA (see #118 and following) by the Bishop (or his delegate) on the 1st Sunday of Lent. If any of the above cannot attend the Rite of Election, they are ineligible to receive the Sacraments of Initiation this Easter.
4. With the parish catechumens – who will become the “Elect” following the Rite of Election – the parish must use the Cycle A readings on the 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays of Lent in order to celebrate the Scrutinies (see RCIA #141 and following). Ideally, the “Elect” celebrate all three Scrutinies; however, if for some reason, they cannot celebrate all three Scrutinies; this will not impede their full initiation into the Roman Catholic Church.
5. While each catechumen is to receive instruction as to how to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance, they are not permitted to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance prior to their reception of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.
6. Ideally, the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) are celebrated at the Easter Vigil immediately following the Rite of Election on the 1st Sunday of Lent. However, with special permission from the Bishop, these Sacraments may be postponed for pastoral reasons until a requested, designated time within the Easter Season.

II: CANDIDATES (the Baptized in Another Recognized Christian Denomination at Least Seven Years of Age or Older):

• INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Each may receive the Rite of Welcome according to the RCIA (see #48 and following) before the Rite of the Call to Continuing Conversion at the Cathedral on the 1st Sunday of Lent.
2. If any of the above cannot attend the Rite of Welcome, they may attend the Rite of the Call to Continuing Conversion (as it is optional).
3. Each may receive the Rite of the Call to Continuing Conversion according to the RCIA (see #434 and following) by the Bishop (or his delegate) on the 1st Sunday of Lent.
4. With the parish candidates – for full reception into the Catholic Church, the parish must celebrate the Penitential Rite on the 2nd Sunday of Lent according to the RCIA (see #459 and following).

5. Each candidate is to receive instruction as to how to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and must celebrate the Rite of Penance prior to their reception into the Church.
6. The Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church (RCIA #473 and following) of your parish candidates may be celebrated at the Easter Vigil, Easter Sunday, or anytime throughout the Easter Season (preferably on a Sunday). Therefore, your Pastor or Sacramental Minister, will not need any permission and/or delegation as he already has faculties to do so.

III: Completion of Initiation Sacraments by Baptized Catholics Who Are Children or Adults:

- **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Each individual is to receive instruction as to how to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and must celebrate the Rite of Penance prior to their completion of the Sacraments of Initiation – Confirmation and Eucharist.
2. These individuals may receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist with the Bishop (or his delegate) when he is present at the Cathedral anytime throughout the Easter Season. However, if you desire for pastoral reasons to have your Pastor or your Sacramental Minister confer the Sacrament of Confirmation, he will require special permission and delegation from the Bishop to do so.
3. These individuals **DO NOT** attend either the Rite of Election or the Call to Continuing Conversion on the 1st Sunday of Lent.

IV: Regular Sacramental Preparation for Baptized Catholic Children:

- **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. These children should be attending regular, parish faith formation classes.
2. In addition, they should be participating in special sacramental preparation sessions with their parents for the reception of Penance, Confirmation and Eucharist.
3. 1st Penance must be celebrated prior to their reception of Confirmation and Eucharist.
4. Confirmation (because they are baptized Catholic) is to be received prior to 1st Eucharist by Bishop Cistone (or his delegate).
5. Ideally, these children would also receive 1st Eucharist at the same Mass they celebrate the Rite of Confirmation with the Bishop (or his delegate).
6. In order for your Pastor or Sacramental Minister to administer the Rite of Confirmation for pastoral reasons, he will require the permission and delegation of Bishop Cistone to do so.
7. These individuals **DO NOT** attend the Rite of Election or the Call to Continuing Conversion on the 1st Sunday of Lent.

Additional General Points of Pastoral Concern:

1. It is very important that parishes try as best you can to follow the prescribed rites and rituals of the RCIA – which applies to all your Catechumens and Candidates. In other words, please do not omit or skip any of the Scrutinies or the Penitential Rite.
2. There is no such thing as the RCIC – please do not use the term when referencing children who are either Catechumens or Candidates. It is the “official” Church teaching that it is the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). Moreover, according to RCIA, Part II: Rites for Particular Circumstances - 1: Christian Initiation of Children Who Have Reached Catechetical Age. The rites are simply “adapted” for children and are not a separate or different process or rite of the Church.
3. Therefore, please do not refer to it as a program! It is a process of conversion or on-going conversion (depending upon the individual’s baptismal status) based on ancient Catholic tradition. We create catechetical programs for the already baptized and catechized. However, the RCIA is entirely grounded on the RCIA’s beautiful rites, rituals and prayers supported by faith formation (based on the RCIA #75 – “Period of the Catechumenate” - and following).