

THE ROMAN RITUAL

Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council
and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

APPROVED FOR USE IN THE
DIOCESES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
AND CONFIRMED BY THE APOSTOLIC SEE

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OUTLINE FOR CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

PERIOD OF EVANGELIZATION AND PRECATECHUMENATE

This is a time, of no fixed duration or structure, for inquiry and introduction to Gospel values, an opportunity for the beginnings of faith.

FIRST STEP: ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ORDER OF CATECHUMENS

This is the liturgical rite, usually celebrated on some annual date or dates, marking the beginning of the catechumenate proper, as the candidates express and the Church accepts their intention to respond to God's call to follow the way of Christ.

PERIOD OF THE CATECHUMENATE

This is the time, in duration corresponding to the progress of the individual, for the nurturing and growth of the catechumens' faith and conversion to God; celebrations of the word and prayers of exorcism and blessing are meant to assist the process.

SECOND STEP: ELECTION OR ENROLLMENT OF NAMES

This is the liturgical rite, usually celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent, by which the Church formally ratifies the catechumens' readiness for the sacraments of initiation and the catechumens, now the elect, express the will to receive these sacraments.

PERIOD OF PURIFICATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

This is the time immediately preceding the elects' initiation, usually the Lenten season preceding the celebration of this initiation at the Easter Vigil; it is a time of reflection, intensely centered on conversion, marked by celebration of the scrutinies and presentations and of the preparation rites on Holy Saturday.

THIRD STEP: CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

This is the liturgical rite, usually integrated into the Easter Vigil, by which the elect are initiated through baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist.

PERIOD OF POSTBAPTISMAL CATECHESIS OR MYSTAGOGY

This is the time, usually the Easter season, following the celebration of initiation, during which the newly initiated experience being fully a part of the Christian community by means of pertinent catechesis and particularly by participation with all the faithful in the Sunday eucharistic celebration.

B

If there are a great many candidates, the celebrant speaks to them in these or similar words.*

84

Dear candidates, your answers mean that you wish to share our life and hope in Christ. To admit you as catechumens I now mark you with the sign of Christ's cross and call upon your catechists and sponsors to do the same. The whole community welcomes you with love and stands ready to help you.

Then the celebrant makes the sign of the cross over all together, as a cross is traced by a sponsor or catechist on the forehead of each candidate. The celebrant says:

Receive the cross on your forehead.
It is Christ himself who now strengthens you
with this sign of his love.**
Learn to know him and follow him.

All sing or say the following or another suitable acclamation.

86

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

SIGNING OF THE OTHER SENSES

56 The signing is carried out by the catechists or the sponsors. (If required by special circumstances, this may be done by assisting priests or deacons.) The signing of each sense may be followed by an acclamation in praise of Christ, for example, "Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!"

85
86

While the ears are being signed, the celebrant says:

Receive the sign of the cross on your ears,
that you may hear the voice of the Lord.

* In those exceptional cases when, at the discretion of the diocesan bishop, a renunciation of false worship (no. 72) has been included in the rite of acceptance: "Dear candidates, your answers mean that you have rejected false worship and wish to share our life and hope in Christ. . . ."

** In those exceptional cases when, at the discretion of the diocesan bishop, there has been a renunciation of false worship: "with this sign of his victory."

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Assisting minister:

That we too at Easter may again be confirmed in our hope of rising to life with Christ, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Assisting minister:

That the whole world, which God has created in love, may flower in faith and charity and so receive new life, let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

B

Assisting minister:

That these elect may be given the faith to acknowledge Christ as the resurrection and the life, we pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Assisting minister:

That they may be freed from sin and grow in the holiness that leads to eternal life, we pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Assisting minister:

That liberated by repentance from the shackles of sin they may become like Christ by baptism, dead to sin and alive for ever in God's sight, we pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Assisting minister:

That they may be filled with the hope of the life-giving Spirit and prepare themselves thoroughly for their birth to new life, we pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

INVITATION TO PRAYER

353 The candidate with the godparent or the godparents goes to the baptismal font with the celebrant, then the celebrant addresses the following or a similar invitation for the assembly to join in prayer for the candidate.

257

Dear friends, let us pray to almighty God for our brother/sister **N.** who is asking for baptism. He has called **N.** and brought him/her to this moment; may he grant **N.** light and strength to follow Christ with a resolute heart and to profess the faith of the Church. May he give **N.** the new life of the Holy Spirit, whom we are about to call down on this water.

PRAYER OVER THE WATER

354 Next, the celebrant blesses the water, using option A; he may also use one of the other blessing formularies given in no. 222 as options B and C.

258

But when baptism is celebrated during the Easter season and water already blessed at the Easter Vigil is available, the celebrant uses option B, so that this part of the celebration will retain the themes of thanksgiving and intercession; he may also use the second Easter-season thanksgiving formulary given in no. 222 as option E.

A

BLESSING OF THE WATER: Facing the font (or vessel) containing the water, the celebrant says the following (music, p. 146).

Father,
you give us grace through sacramental signs,
which tell us of the wonders of your unseen power.

In baptism we use your gift of water,
which you have made a rich symbol of the grace
you give us in this sacrament.

AFFIRMATION BY THE SPONSORS [AND THE ASSEMBLY]

452 Then the celebrant addresses the assembly. If he has taken part in the earlier deliberation on the candidates' suitability (see no. 122), he may use either option A or option B or similar words; if he has not taken part in the earlier deliberation, he uses option B or similar words.

A My dear friends, these candidates, our brothers and sisters, have asked to be able to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. Those who know them have judged them to be sincere in their desire. During the period of their preparation they have reflected on the mystery of their baptism and have come to appreciate more deeply the presence of Christ in their lives. They have shared the company of their brothers and sisters, joined with them in prayer, and endeavored to follow Christ's commands more perfectly.

And so I am prepared to recognize their desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church. I ask their sponsors now to state their opinion once again, so that all of you may hear.

He addresses the sponsors:

Do you consider these candidates ready to receive the sacraments of confirmation and the eucharist (*or*: to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church)?

Sponsors:

We do.

453 When appropriate in the circumstances, the celebrant may also ask the entire assembly to express its approval of the candidates in these or similar words:

Celebrant:

Now I ask you, the members of this community:

Are you willing to affirm the testimony expressed about these candidates and support them in faith, prayer, and

All:

I do.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

582 Then the celebrant continues:

**Do you believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth?**

All:

I do.

Celebrant:

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

All:

I do.

Celebrant:

**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?**

All:

I do.

SPRINKLING WITH BAPTISMAL WATER

583 The celebrant sprinkles all the people with the blessed baptismal water, while all sing the following song or any other that is baptismal in character.

I saw water flowing
from the right side of the temple, alleluia.
It brought God's life and his salvation,
and the people sang in joyful praise:
alleluia, alleluia. (See Ezekiel 47:1-2,9)