

THE CELEBRATION OF THE RITE OF ELECTION OF CATECHUMENS 2023

(WITHIN MASS)



DIOCESE OF MEATH

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RCIA, 116-124

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LITURGY OF THE WORD

HOMILY

116. AFTER THE READINGS (SEE RCIA 115), THE BISHOP, OR THE CELEBRANT WHO ACTS AS DELEGATE OF THE BISHOP, GIVES THE HOMILY. THIS SHOULD BE SUITED TO THE ACTUAL SITUATION AND SHOULD ADDRESS NOT JUST THE CATECHUMENS AND THE CANDIDATES, BUT THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY OF THE FAITHFUL, SO THAT ALL WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO GIVE GOOD EXAMPLE AND TO ACCOMPANY THE CATECHUMENS AND CANDIDATES DURING THE TIME OF THEIR LENTEN PREPARATION FOR CELEBRATING THE EASTER SACRAMENTS.

PRESENTATION OF THE CATECHUMENS

117. After the homily, the priest in charge of the catechumens' initiation, or a deacon, a catechist, or a representative of the community, presents the catechumens to the Bishop, using the following or similar words.

Most 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 the eucharist.

The celebrant replies:

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

One by one, the catechumens are called by name. Each catechumen, accompanied by a godparent (or godparents), comes forward and stands before the celebrant.

[If there are a great many catechumens, all are presented in groups, for example, each group by its own catechist. But in this case, the catechists should be advised to have a special celebration beforehand in which they call each catechumen forward by name.]

AFFIRMATION BY THE GODPARENTS [AND THE ASSEMBLY]

118. Then the celebrant addresses the assembly.

God's holy Church wishes to know whether these catechumens are sufficiently prepared to be enrolled among the elect for the coming celebration of Easter.

Addressing the godparents, the Celebrant continues...

And so I speak first of all to you their godparents.

Have they faithfully listened to God's word proclaimed by the Church?

Godparents: They have.

Celebrant: Have they responded to that word and begun to walk in God's presence?

Godparents: They have.

Celebrant: Have they shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined with them in prayer?

Godparents: They have.

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

Celebrant: And now I speak to you, my brothers and sisters in this assembly:

Are you willing to affirm the testimony expressed about these catechumens and support them in faith, prayer and example as we prepare to celebrate the Easter sacraments?

All: We are.]

INVITATION AND ENROLMENT OF NAMES

119. Then addressing the catechumens in the following or similar words, the celebrant advises them of their acceptance and asks them to declare their own intention.

Celebrant: **And now, my dear catechumens, I address you. Your own godparents and teachers and this entire community have spoken in your favour. The Church in the name of Christ accepts their judgment 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.**

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

Catechumens: **We do.**

Celebrant: **Then offer your names for enrolment.**

The catechumens give their names, either going with their godparents to the celebrant or while remaining in place, and the actual inscription of the names may be carried out in various ways. The catechumens may inscribe their names themselves or they may call out their names, which are inscribed by the godparents or by the minister who presented the catechumens (RCIA 130). As the enrolment is taking place, an appropriate song, for example, Psalm 16 or Psalm 33 with a refrain such as, "Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own" may be sung.

[If there are a great many candidates, the enrolment may simply consist in the presentation of a list of the names to the celebrant, with such words as: "These are the names of the candidates" or, when the bishop is celebrant and candidates from several parishes have been presented to him: "These are the names of the candidates from the parish of N."]

ACT OF ADMISSION OR ELECTION

120. The celebrant briefly explains the significance of the enrolment that has just taken place. Then, turning to the catechumens, he says the following or similar words.

Celebrant: **Since it is your intention to enter fully into the life of the Church, I now declare you to be members of the elect, to be initiated into the sacred mysteries at the next Easter Vigil.**

Newly 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.**

Then the celebrant turns to the godparents and instructs them in the following or similar words.

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

He invites them to place their hand on the shoulder of the candidate whom they are receiving into their care, or to make some other gesture to indicate the same intent.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE ELECT AND THE CANDIDATES

121. The community may use either the following formulary or a similar formulary to pray for the elect and the candidates. The celebrant may adapt the introduction and the intentions to fit various circumstances.

Addressing the assembly, the Celebrant continues...

Celebrant: **And now, the assembly stands to offer our prayers for the elect and the candidates.**

My brothers and sisters, in beginning this period of Lent, we look forward to celebrating at Easter the life-giving mysteries of our Lord's suffering, death, and resurrection. These elect and candidates, 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.

The celebrant will select an appropriate number of intercessions.

For the Church on its synodal pathway: attentive to the Holy Spirit and faithful to the Gospel, may we participate more fully in the mission of Jesus Christ. **Lord, hear us.**

We pray for the work of Trócaire and its Lenten Campaign. May our practical generosity, our genuine solidarity and Christian charity alleviate suffering, hunger and poverty. **Lord, hear us.**

'Filled with the Holy Spirit', Jesus was 'led by the Spirit'; we pray for all preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Open their hearts to Your Spirit, that planted in faith and grounded in love, they may bear witness to Christ by the manner of their lives. **Lord, hear us.**

For those who govern the nations and kingdoms of our world; guide them by the Spirit in the decisions they make. May they use their power wisely in defence of the vulnerable, the poor, the marginalised, and the pursuit of peace. **Lord, hear us.**

For those who hunger for the Word of God and the Bread of Life; in their Lenten preparation, reveal to them the mystery of the word made flesh, living among us. **Lord, hear us.**

'Jesus understands our weakness, he was tempted in every way that we are, but he did not sin' (Heb 4:15). Through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving deepen within us a spirit of self-denial that we may grow stronger in holiness and more loving towards others. **Lord, hear us.**

For Catechumens preparing for Baptism, Confirmation and Communion at the Easter Vigil. May they continue to grow in their knowledge and love of God, and acknowledge Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. **Lord, hear us.**

For Candidates preparing for the gift of the Holy Spirit and to take their place at Christ's Eucharistic table. May they hear the Lord's call to conversion and be ever faithful to their baptismal covenant. **Lord, hear us.**

For advances in medical research: inspired by the beauty of human life, may researchers seek to be co-workers with God in alleviating the suffering and pain of those who are sick. **Lord, hear us.**

For those who have died; may they know the perfection and fulfilment of God's love in heaven. **Lord, hear us.**

PRAYER OVER THE ELECT AND THE CANDIDATES

122. After the intercessions, the Celebrant, with hands outstretched over the elect and the candidates, says one of the following prayers:

A **Lord God,**
You created the human race
and are the author of its renewal.
Bless all your adopted children
and add these chosen ones
to the harvest of your new covenant.
As true children of the promise,
may they rejoice in eternal life,
won, not by the power of nature,
but through the mystery of your grace.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

B **Father of love and power,**
it is your will to establish everything in Christ
and to draw us into his all-embracing love.

Guide these chosen ones:
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 OF THE ELECT

123. If the eucharist is to be celebrated, the elect are normally dismissed at this point by use of option A or B; if the elect are to stay for the celebration of the eucharist, option C is used.

The celebrant dismisses the elect in these or similar words.

A 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.

The Elect: **Amen.**

B As an optional formulary for dismissing the elect, the celebrant may use these or similar words.

My dear friends, this community now sends you forth to reflect more deeply upon the word of God which you have shared with us today. Be assured of our loving support and prayers for you. We look forward to the day when you will share fully in the Lord's Table.

C If for serious reasons the elect cannot leave (RCIA 75.3) and must remain with the rest of the liturgical assembly, they, along with the candidates, are to be instructed that though they are present at the eucharist, they cannot take part in it as the Catholic faithful do. They may be reminded of this by the celebrant in these or similar words.

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.

The celebrant dismisses those present, using these or similar words.

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

All: **Thanks be to God.**

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

124. When this rite is celebrated with the bishop, the liturgy of the eucharist is usually omitted. However, when the eucharist is to follow, intercessory prayer is resumed with the usual general intercessions for the needs of the Church and the whole world; then, if required the profession of faith is said. But for pastoral reasons these general intercessions and the profession of faith may be omitted. The liturgy of the eucharist then begins as usual with the preparation of the gifts.