

**OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP  
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA  
Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Director**

**CHRISTIAN INITIATION INFORMATION  
PERIODIC MAILING  
JANUARY 2012**

**CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS**

The Office for Divine Worship now has the responsibility for direction, guidance and support of pastors and those who collaborate with them in the formation of adults for Christian Initiation. Additional information on Christian Initiation of adults can be found on the website for the Office for Divine Worship, under the heading *Christian Initiation*:

<http://archphila.org/evangelization/worship/worship.htm>

Please contact the Office for Divine Worship at 215-587-3537 or [worship@adphila.org](mailto:worship@adphila.org) with any questions.

*This first Periodic Mailing, published electronically, begins the principal way for communicating important information, programs, policies and celebrations with regard to the Christian Initiation for adults from the Office for Divine Worship. Please share this Periodic Mailing with anyone who may benefit from it on the parish staff.*

**INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN INITIATION**

The Office for Divine Worship, in conjunction with the Office for the Formation of the Laity, is currently sponsoring its second Institute for Christian Initiation. This program includes five six-hour Saturday sessions providing a comprehensive presentation on the liturgical, theological and pastoral dimensions of Christian Initiation for adults. One hundred fifty-five people from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia have participated in this Institute. The Institute is designed to assist parishes with the full implementation of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) with the involvement of the pastor, priests, deacons and catechists, along with the faithful in the periods and steps of the RCIA.

The chief purposes of the Institute are to assist parishes to provide:

1. **A more faithful application of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*** as found in Part One of the ritual book according to the described periods and steps; and
2. **A greater regard and distinction for those who are already baptized.**

The Institute for Christian Initiation is already scheduled for 2012-2013. The dates are Saturdays, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center, September 22 and October 20, 2012, January 19, February 16 and March 16, 2013. More information on next year's Institute will be forthcoming. Plan now to participate. Priests and deacons are especially encouraged to participate.

**GUIDANCE FOR PARISHES FOR CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS**

*Please Note: New Archdiocesan Policy and Practice which are contained in the shaded boxes below.*

**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.*

An Inquirer's Interview/Information Form can be found on-line at the above address in English and Spanish for one of the initial meetings with someone seeking Baptism.

All marriage irregularities must be resolved before someone can be accepted into the Order of Catechumens. Any marriage questions are to be directed to Monsignor Paul A. DiGiralomo of the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese at 215-587-3750. Inquirers should be informed that the resolution of marriage irregularities requires time and should be addressed without delay.

### **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.*

*Before the rite is celebrated, therefore, sufficient and necessary time, as required in each case, should be set aside to evaluate and, if necessary, to purify the candidates' motives and dispositions. [...] Because of the effect of baptism once validly received, it is the duty of parish priests (pastors) to see to it that no baptized person seeks for any reason whatever to be baptized a second time (RCIA, no. 43).*

Only Catechumens are dismissed from the celebration of the Eucharist with the use of forms given in the ritual book (RCIA, nos. 67 A or B).

### **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.*

*The period of catechumenate, beginning at acceptance into the order of catechumens and including both the catechumenate proper and the period of purification and enlightenment after election or enrollment of names, should extend for at least one year of formation, instruction, and probation. Ordinarily this period should go from at least the Easter season of one year until the next; preferably it should begin before Lent in one year and extend until Easter of the following year (National Statutes for the Catechumenate, no. 6).*

*Resources for catechesis:* The *Lectionary for Mass* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* are foundation sources for the catechetical formation of catechumens. See the website of the Office for Divine Worship for a listing of additional resources for Christian Formation.

Special attention should be given to the use of the minor exorcisms, blessings and anointing of catechumens during the Period of the Catechumenate.

### **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.*

The *Celebration of the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates* will take place in two sessions during the weekend of the First Sunday of Lent, at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, Philadelphia:

*Saturday, February 25, 2012 at 6:30 PM*  
Delaware County  
Montgomery County  
Philadelphia North

*Sunday, February 26, 2012 at 2:30 PM*  
Bucks County  
Chester County  
Philadelphia South

Please click [here](#) for **Important Parish Information and Directives** for the *Celebration of the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates* which include the necessary forms to be completed on-line by **27 January 2012**.

Parishes are encouraged to observe the *Sending of Catechumens for Election* (cf. RCIA, nos. 106-117) or the *Parish Celebration for Sending Catechumens for Election and Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop* (RCIA, nos. 530-546) the week or so before the *Celebration of the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates*.

### **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.*

Special attention should be given to the celebration of the Scrutinies and Presentations during the Period of Purification and Enlightenment as well as the Preparation Rites on Holy Saturday.

Click [here](#) for information on the **Archdiocesan Retreat for Adults in Sacramental Formation**. This retreat takes place at the Malvern Retreat House on Saturday, 31 March 2012.

### **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.*

In accord with the US National Statutes for the Catechumenate (11 November 86) no. 33, Archbishop Chaput asks that you note:

Only the adult elect, that is, the unbaptized catechumens elected at the Rite of Election, are to be fully initiated with Baptism, Confirmation and reception of the Body and Blood of the Lord at the Easter Vigil, according to the rites outlined in the *Roman Missal*. Children may also be baptized at the Easter Vigil.

Baptized non-Catholic Christians are to be received into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church on Palm Sunday or Easter Sunday or any Sunday of Easter Time. In fact, this reception can take place almost any time during the Church Year according to the rite outlined in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (cf. RCIA, nos. 473-504).

For many parishes, this represents an innovation that will require catechesis on the dignity of Baptism and the avoidance of any confusion between candidates for Baptism and baptized Christians.

### **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.*

This period should not be overlooked. Plans should be made to assemble the neophytes, their godparents and others associated with their Christian Initiation for the celebration of Mass, with a particular celebration near Pentecost (cf. RCIA, no. 249). Neophytes should be given the opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation in the weeks following their Christian Initiation.

## RECEPTION OF BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS INTO THE FULL COMMUNION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults allows for people baptized in another Church or ecclesial community, although never treated as catechumens, to benefit from the doctrinal and spiritual formation of the unbaptized. Additionally, the use of the Combined Rites for catechumens and candidates gives the candidates an important sense of the Sacred Liturgy and participation with the Church leading to Confirmation and Communion. However, many candidates do not require a full program parallel to the catechumenate. Therefore, the directives provided in the US National Statutes for the Catechumenate for Reception into Full Communion (nos. 30-37) should be increasingly observed.

### Valid Baptism and Conditional Baptism

All non-Catholic Christians seeking full communion must be validly baptized. The following norm is to be observed in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia with regard to the reception of candidates into the full communion of the Catholic Church:

Baptism is the doorway to all of the Sacraments. Therefore, the sacred minister needs moral certitude that a person was baptized with the Trinitarian formula and the triple water pouring/immersion before other Sacraments are celebrated. This moral certitude requires more than the evidence of a baptismal certificate and must be the case in each individual circumstance. Such moral certitude can often be readily obtained through inquiry with the candidate. When moral certitude is lacking, a conditional Baptism is necessary (see Canon 869 and National Statutes for the Catechumenate 37).

Additional information on valid baptism and conditional baptism can be found on the website for the Office for Divine Worship.

### CONFIRMATION FOR ROMAN CATHOLIC ADULTS

The ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation for baptized Roman Catholics is the Bishop. Typically, this occurs during the pastoral visit of the Bishop to the parish. Every effort should be made to prepare Catholic Adults for Confirmation to participate in the parish celebration with the Bishop.

Additionally, Archbishop Chaput will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation on Pentecost Sunday, 27 May 2012 during the 6:30 PM Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul. The candidates for this sacramental celebration are baptized Roman Catholics who have been properly catechized for Confirmation (and if needed, for the reception of First Communion). Information about this celebration for pastors and those who assist with the formation and reception of the Sacraments of Initiation can be found on the website for the Office for Divine Worship.

A pastor who foresees the genuine pastoral need to confirm an adult baptized Roman Catholic can do so only with the specific delegation of the Bishop (see Canon 882 and National Statutes for the Catechumenate, nos. 28-29). Archbishop Chaput gives this faculty to all priests of the Archdiocese to confirm Roman Catholic Adults on any occasion from Palm Sunday through Pentecost Sunday. This delegation is required for the validity of the Sacrament in the case of a Roman Catholic candidate.

### RECORD KEEPING

The following registers are to be maintained diligently with regard to required information and record keeping:

*Register of Catechumens*, after the Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens (see RCIA, no. 46);

*Book of Elect*, prior to the Rite of Election (see RCIA, no. 132);

*Register for Baptism*, after the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (see Christian Initiation, General Introduction, no. 29);

*Register for Full Communion of the Catholic Church* (see RCIA, no. 486).