

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

**CHRISTIAN INITIATION INFORMATION  
PERIODIC MAILING  
OCTOBER 2013**

**CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS**

The Office for Divine Worship 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 for 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@archphila.org](mailto:worship@archphila.org) with any questions. *All communication is electronic with the Christian Initiation Coordinator from the Office for Divine Worship. Presently, the electronic roster of coordinators for Christian Initiation is being updated.*

**MARKING DATES AND PLANNING THE CHRISTIAN INITIATION CALENDAR**

**Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion  
Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, PA  
First Sunday of Lent, 2014**

Saturday, March 8, 2014 2:30 PM  
Montgomery County and Philadelphia South

Saturday, March 8, 2014 6:30 PM  
Bucks County and Delaware County

Sunday, March 9, 2014 2:30 PM  
Chester and Philadelphia North

All correspondence and registration will be conducted electronically.

See the website of the Office for Divine Worship,

<http://archphila.org/evangelization/worship/pdf/CoordinatorMemoFebruary2013.pdf>,

for new information on the Rite of Election provided in February 2013.

*Parishes are free to choose another time than the one assigned if necessary to promote greater participation of catechumens and candidates. The Call to Continuing Conversion is meant for adults (and not children) who are baptized and will be received into Full Communion and/or Confirmation and/or Communion but also have distanced themselves from the Faith.*

**Lenten Retreat Opportunity for the Elect and Candidates**

An Archdiocesan Retreat for Adults in Sacramental Formation will take place at the *Malvern Retreat House*, Malvern, PA, on April 12, 2014, 9:00 AM—2:00 PM. Christian Initiation Coordinators are encouraged to take advantage of this retreat opportunity. Contact the *Malvern Retreat House* directly at 610-644-0400 or [Mail@MalvernRetreat.com](mailto:Mail@MalvernRetreat.com). The web address for the *Malvern Retreat House* is [Http://MalvernRetreat.com](http://MalvernRetreat.com).

*Living from the Cross and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus  
Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Retreat Director*

*The Sacrament of Penance will be available for Candidates.*

**CELEBRATION OF MASS WITH THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION  
FOR BAPTIZED CATHOLIC ADULTS 2014  
(16 years of age and older)  
Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, PA**

Pentecost Sunday, June 8, 2014 at 6:30 PM  
Confessions from 5:30 to 6:15 PM

All correspondence and registration will be conducted electronically.

*Every effort should be made for Roman Catholic adults to be confirmed during the parish celebration  
of the Sacrament or during the pastoral visit of the Bishop.*

**COORDINATION AND ORGANIZATION OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION MINISTRIES  
ACCORDING TO DEANERIES**

The Office for Divine Worship, in cooperation with the Coordinators of Christian Initiation, has coordinated and organized the Christian Initiation Ministries in our parishes and institutions according to Deaneries. While all liturgical celebrations are to take place in the proper parish, resources for planning, catechesis and instruction can be shared among parishes and institutions. This is an effort to both assist and strengthen the Christian Initiation ministries of each parish and institution throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Each Deanery will have a representative of the Office for Divine Worship to disseminate information from the Office and to pass on Christian Initiation ministry opportunities to the parishes and institutions within the Deanery. The cooperation of the of all is greatly appreciated.

**rites belonging to the period of the catechumenate  
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.

All throughout the course of the Period of the Catechumenate there should be scheduled **celebrations of the Word of God**. In addition to these celebrations, the **Minor Exorcisms** [RCIA, nos. 90-94], **Blessings of the Catechumens** [RCIA, nos. 95-97] and or **Anointing of the Catechumens** [RCIA, nos. 98-103] should also be scheduled frequently during the Period of the Catechumenate. The use of these rites belongs only to those who will be baptized. A **Model for the Celebration of the Word of God** [RCIA, nos. 85-89], found in the ritual book, provides the manner for the combination of these rites with the celebration of the Word.

**Sending of the Catechumens for Election (Optional) [RCIA nos. 106-117] or Parish Celebration for Sending Catechumens for Election and Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop (Optional) [RCIA, nos. 530-546]**

At the conclusion of the Period of the Catechumenate, the Rite of Sending is celebrated in the parish only for those going to the Cathedral Basilica for the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates. The Rite of Sending recognizes the role of the parish community to judge the state of formation of the catechumens and candidates and approves them for election for the Easter Sacraments and the completion of sacramental initiation. The Rite of Sending, whether as part of a celebration of the Word of God or at Mass, should be scheduled in the parish before the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates. *In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, this is the occasion for signing the Book of the Elect.*

## **AN OUTLINE OF THE SUNDAY AND WEEKLY CATECHETICAL SESSIONS**

The catechetical session is an indispensable component of the formation of catechumens and those already baptized but uncatechized to know the teachings of the Church as well as have a profound appreciation of the mystery of salvation revealed in God's Word and celebrated in the Sacraments. For a more complete presentation of the catechetical session, see the ritual book [RCIA, nos. 75-80].

What follows are sample patterns for the Sunday Session for the Catechumens and Elect after their dismissal from Mass and for the Weekly Catechetical Session:

### **SAMPLE SUNDAY SESSION FOR CATECUMENS AND ELECT**

- **Dismissal of the Catechumens (only) from Mass using formulas in the ritual book [RCIA, nos. 67, A and B]**
- **Brief recap of the biblical texts and homily**
- **Illustrate points associated with Church teaching, tradition and practice**
- **Response by the catechumens and elect**
- **Closing Prayer**

## SAMPLE WEEKLY CATECHETICAL SESSION APART FROM SUNDAY

- **Celebration of the Word of God (See RCIA, nos. 81-89)**

The celebration of the Word of God should conclude alternately with the Minor Exorcisms, Blessings of the Catechumens, and the Anointing of the Catechumens (See, RCIA, nos. 90-103). The parish priest or deacon should conduct the celebration of the Word of God with the concluding rites.

- **Catechesis**

A systematic sequential presentation of the truths of Catholic doctrine as laid out in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: The Profession of Faith, The Celebration of the Christian Mystery, Life in Christ, and Christian Prayer.

- **Reflection and Response to the Catechesis**
- **Night Prayer (Compline)**

Two excellent resources for year-round catechesis are the following:

[http://church.st-thomasmore.org/uscca\\_catechumenate.htm](http://church.st-thomasmore.org/uscca_catechumenate.htm)

<http://tinyurl.com/liturgyw-kidsRCIA>

### **OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS**

Before the Rite of Welcoming the Candidates, the baptisms should be determined as valid. For assistance in this regard, see Pastoral Guidance Regarding the Conditional Baptism of Those Seeking Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church

<http://archphila.org/evangelization/worship/pdf/ConditionalBaptism.pdf>

Orthodox Christians are Received into Full Communion of the Catholic Church with a Profession of Faith. For assistance in this regard, see Admission of an Orthodox Christian into the Catholic Church in Other than their Parallel Ritual Church

<http://archphila.org/evangelization/worship/pdf/AdmissionofOrthodoxChristian.pdf>

**Invalid Marriages:** Every effort should be made for all canonical impediments to the celebration of the Sacraments be resolved before someone is accepted into the Order of Catechumens or welcomed as a Candidate. Validation is to take place before the celebration of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation. For assistance in this regard, please contact the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, 215-587-3750

### **SIMPLIFICATION OF THE PERIODS AND STEPS OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

*Exceptional circumstances may arise in which the local Bishop, in individual cases, can allow the use of a form of Christian Initiation that is simpler than the usual, more complete Rite (no. 331, from the ritual book, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). This is sometimes the circumstance when an Elect cannot be present for the Easter Vigil. Permission for the use of this simpler form should be directed to Archbishop Chaput through the Office for Divine Worship.*

Numbers 331-367 in the ritual book, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, describe arrangements for an adapted form for Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.