

OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
REVEREND GERALD DENNIS GILL, DIRECTOR

CHRISTIAN INITIATION INFORMATION
PERIODIC MAILING
FEBRUARY 2017

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 the Christian Initiation for adults can be found on the website for the Office for Divine Worship, under the heading *Christian Initiation*:

<http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/sacred-liturgy/christian-initiation/>

Please contact the Office for Divine Worship at 215-587-3537 or worship@archphila.org with any questions.

MARKING DATES AND PLANNING THE CHRISTIAN INITIATION CALENDAR

CELEBRATION OF THE RITE OF ELECTION
AND OF THE CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION
Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, PA

First Sunday of Lent, 2017

Saturday, March 4, 2017 ~ 11:00 AM – Montgomery and Philadelphia South

Saturday, March 4, 2017 ~ 3:00 PM ~ Chester and Philadelphia North

Sunday, March 5, 2017 ~ 3:00 PM ~ Bucks and Delaware

LENTEN RETREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE ELECT AND CANDIDATES

An Archdiocesan [RCIA Day of Reflection](#) for Adults in Sacramental Formation will take place at the *Malvern Retreat House*, Malvern, PA, on **April 8, 2017**. Christian Initiation Coordinators are encouraged to take advantage of this retreat opportunity. [Click here](#) for more information.

PLANNING FOR THE PERIOD OF PURIFICATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

For both the elect and the local community, therefore, the Lenten season is a time for spiritual recollection in preparation for the celebration of the paschal mystery. This is a period of more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction, and is intended to purify the minds and hearts of the elect as they search their own consciences and do penance. This period is intended as well to enlighten the minds and hearts of the elect with a deeper knowledge of Christ the Savior (RCIA, see nos. 138-139).

- **If catechumens were unable, for one reason or another, to participate in the Rite of Election** on the First Sunday of Lent, the pastor should elect them, keeping in mind numbers 127-128 of the ritual book, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*.
- The **scrutinies** for the elect during Lent are not optional and should be carried out with a proper explanation to the elect and to the faithful. The description of the scrutinies, as found in nos. 141-143 of the ritual book, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, can be helpful explanations for the elect and the faithful. Typically, the scrutinies are celebrated with the proper ritual Mass in the *Roman Missal, For the Celebration of the Scrutinies*, on the Third, Fourth and Fifth Sundays of Lent. The Year

A readings are always used for the scrutinies. If the scrutinies cannot be celebrated on the proper Sunday, then a weekday celebration is possible with the same ritual Mass and the proper Year A readings.

- The **penitential rites** (scrutinies) for children who have reached catechetical age, as described in numbers 291-303 of the ritual book, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, belongs to the Lenten journey of unbaptized children to be fully initiated at the Solemn Paschal Vigil.
- The *penitential rite* on the Second Sunday of Lent for baptized uncatechized adults preparing for the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist as described in numbers 459-472 in the ritual book, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, should be seriously considered in the plan for Lent.

- The **presentations** are very much tied into the scrutinies and follow their schedule. The presentations of the Creed and the Our Father aid in the enlightenment of the elect. The presentation of the Creed follows the First Scrutiny. The elect are to commit the Creed to memory and they will recite it publicly on Holy Saturday morning prior to their evening Baptism. The presentation of the Our Father with the proclamation of the Gospel follows the third scrutiny. The elect recite the Our Father publicly for the first time when they are assembled among the baptized at the Eucharist of the Easter Vigil. These weekday presentations should include the participation of some of the faithful. The handing out of parchments with these living expressions of the Faith is discouraged.

- A **retreat** should be arranged during Lent for the Elect. Also, the candidates for Full Communion and Catholic Adult candidates for Confirmation and Communion may also be part of this retreat. The retreat should include a presentation on Lent and its relationship to the celebration of the Easter Sacraments and the Christian Life, focused prayer and guided reflection sessions. The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation could be made available to the already baptized candidates. An archdiocesan **RCIA Day of Reflection** for the Elect and Candidates for the Easter Sacraments is scheduled for **April 8, 2017**, at the Malvern Retreat House. [Click here](#) for more details.

- The **preparation rites on Holy Saturday** should be observed, in some part, according to numbers 185 to 204 in the ritual book, *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. Most of all, the elect should be encouraged to participate in the paschal fast (see *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, article 110) all through Holy Saturday.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE EASTER VIGIL

In accord with the United States *National Statutes for the Catechumenate* (November 11, 1986) 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 Solemn Paschal 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* (see RCIA, nos. 473-504). No additional permission is required for this Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church.

For many parishes, this practice continues to represent an innovation that requires catechesis on the dignity of Baptism and the avoidance of any confusion between candidates for Baptism and baptized Christians.

Candidates for the *Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church* should be encouraged to participate in the Easter Vigil, especially with a distinct place to sit among the faithful and acknowledged by the priest celebrant.

Time of the Easter Vigil

The Easter Vigil should not begin before nightfall. It may be helpful to know that, according to the US Naval Observatory Astronomical Applications Department, sunset occurs at **7:39 PM on April 15, 2017**.

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 for 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 (see nos. 30-37) should be increasingly observed.

Preparation and celebration of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation for baptized non-Catholics are an essential element of their Reception (See RCLA, no. 482).

Reception of Candidates and 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 full communion with 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.

SPECIAL INVITATION

All the newly baptized adults at the Easter Vigil (Neophytes) are cordially invited to come to a Sunday evening Mass, at 6:30, in the Cathedral Basilica, on any Sunday during Easter Time.

CELEBRATION OF MASS WITH THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION FOR BAPTIZED CATHOLIC ADULTS (16 years of age and older)

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, June 4, 2017** during the 6:30 PM Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, Philadelphia. **Confessions from 5:30 to 6:15 PM**

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 is available in a "Coordinator Memo January 2016", on the website of the Office for Divine Worship, Christian Initiation Page.

If for some serious reason, a school age baptized Roman Catholic is unable to be confirmed by the Bishop during his pastoral visit to the parish, then this candidate, with the permission of the pastor, may be presented for the Sacrament of Confirmation on Pentecost Sunday. The pastor's permission is to be included with the registration forms to be sent to 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. If you have any questions about this faculty, please contact the Office for Divine Worship. There is no need for an additional letter requesting this faculty during the period specified by the Archbishop. **Priests are reminded that only the 2016 revised *The Order of Confirmation* may be used to celebrate the Sacrament.**

REMINDERS

- **Full Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation and the first reception of Communion—apart from the Solemn Paschal Vigil, outside the immediate danger of death, requires the permission of the Archbishop (see RCIA, no. 331).** Archbishop Chaput delegates the Office for Divine Worship to give this permission. Please contact the Office for Divine Worship for such circumstances.
- **All baptized non-Catholic children over the age of seven** whose parents/guardians wish for them to come into full communion with the Catholic Church do so with the rites for the *Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church* (see RCIA, nos. 473-504). So, children, baptized as non-Catholics, receive Confirmation and Communion in the same celebration when they are received into the Catholic Church. The *Profession of Faith* within the rite and the *Act of Reception* are essential elements of this rite.
- **Orthodox Christians** are received into full communion of the Catholic Church with a Profession of Faith (see RCIA, no. 474). 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>
- 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>
- **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.

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).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RESOURCES

Spanish Resources for Christian Initiation:

[Liturgical Press](#)

