



OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP

Archdiocese of Philadelphia

TO: Parish Coordinators of Christian Initiation
FROM: Rev. Dennis G. Gill, Director
DATE: December 15, 2025
RE: **Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion**
Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul
Saturday, February 21 & 22, 2026 (3:00 PM)

This significant celebration marks a pivotal moment in the journey to full initiation in the Church. For the unbaptized — the catechumens — it is a public recognition that they are chosen by God and the Church to receive the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. For the baptized — the candidates — it is a call to deepen their conversion and their communion with Christ and the Church. Together, they enter a final season of preparation, prayer, and renewal as Lent begins, supported by the community and strengthened by faith.

Below please find the schedule and information for the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of the Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion for 2026. Please take some time to read through this information carefully, as some modifications have been made regarding logistics. **This will be the only electronic communication prior to registration.**

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

**IN 2026 THERE WILL BE TWO OCCASIONS FOR THE
RITE OF ELECTION OF CATECHUMENS AND OF
CALLING THE CANDIDATES TO CONTINUING CONVERSION**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2026 @ 3:00 PM
BUCKS COUNTY
CHESTER COUNTY
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2026 @ 3:00PM
DELAWARE COUNTY
PHILADELPHIA NORTH
PHILADELPHIA SOUTH

TO REGISTER CATECHUMENS AND CANDIDATES

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

(scroll down to #4. Second Step: Election or Enrollment of Names)

(all three forms are required)

To register your parish [CATECHUMENS](#), please [CLICK HERE](#)

To register your parish [CANDIDATES](#), please [CLICK HERE](#)

To register your parish [PARTICIPATION](#), please [CLICK HERE](#)

All forms must be submitted electronically by Monday, February 2, 2026.

All registration information regarding the 2026 Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion will handle electronically.

- On the Office for Divine Worship, Christian Initiation website, <https://www.odwphiladelphia.org/christian-initiation/>, (scroll down to #4 – Second Step: Election or Enrollment of Names complete and submit the Catechumens and/or Candidate Registration Forms.

Name Tags:

a) Please click on the link to download Catechumens/Godparents Tags.

Please have name tags on upon entry into the Cathedral for seating purposes.

b) Please click on the link to download Candidates/Sponsors Tags.

Please have name tags on upon entry into the Cathedral for seating purposes.

- After submitting the forms, expect to receive an email confirming that the Office for Divine Worship has received your forms. If you do not receive such an email within one week of registering, please contact our office.
- This email will direct you to the Christian Initiation website, to download a sample Name Tag for Presenter of the Book of the Elect. Please be sure to **include Parish Name on the tag**. Please have your tag clipped on upon entry into the Cathedral. All Presenter of the Book of the Elect will be seated in a **RESERVED** section. Instructions will be in the pews for review.
- The Christian Initiation Coordinator is asked to check with the parish religious education and school offices and ethnic communities, involved in the formation of adults and children for the sacraments of Christian Initiation, to provide a complete listing for the Celebration of the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion.

If you are unable to participate at the time designated for your county, please register to the Rite that work best for your parish. If you are unable to attend any of the Rites we offered, please complete the forms, and choose **“Not Attending.”**

LENTEN RETREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR THE ELECT AND CANDIDATES

An Archdiocesan Retreat for Adults in Sacramental Formation is scheduled for **March 28, 2026**. Please click on the link below to register: <https://www.malvernretreat.com/events/ocia-2026/>

Christian Initiation Coordinators are encouraged to take advantage of this retreat opportunity, which is specifically designated for men and women elect and candidates, godparents, sponsors, and Christian Initiation Teams.

RITE OF ELECTION OF CATECHUMENS

All Pastors are expected to send Adult Catechumens, those who have completed their 18th year and older, to the Cathedral for the *Rite of Election*. Participation in the Rite of Election by those 18 years of age and younger is optional (see OCIA, 277).

- Each parish is encouraged to provide the ***Rite of Sending*** for catechumens and candidates prior to the *Celebration of the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion*.
- *Catechumens, Godparents and Presenters of the Book of the Elect should arrive **45 minutes** before the start of the celebration. A review of the Rite will take place 30 minutes before the start of the celebration.*

BOOK OF THE ELECT

- The signing of the Book of the Elect is indicative of Election for Baptism; therefore, the already baptized do not sign it.
- The signing of the Book of the Elect by catechumens only should take place prior to the Rite of Election. This may take place during the ***Rite of Sending*** or during a catechetical session.
- **The name of the presenter of the Book of the Elect should be designated on the catechumen registration form.**
- **The parish priests do not present the Book of the Elect.**
- **The parish needs to send the Book of the Elect with their parish group. We do not provide the book on the date of the Rite.**

CALLING OF NAMES

Each catechumen's name will be announced if registration form is received before **Monday, February 2, 2026**.

- A space will be provided on the catechumen registration form for phonetic pronunciation. Please use your best judgment when filling out the form.
- **Presenters of the catechumens are no longer needed.**
- After the **catechumens** name is announced, they will remain in their pews until the ***Act of Election*** is completed.

PROCEDURE FOR PRESENTER OF THE BOOK OF THE ELECT

After the Affirmation by the Godparents and the Assembly, (see program)

1. **The usher will ask you to stand and exit two pews at a time to form a double line in the center aisle.**
2. **Hold the Book of the elect open to the current list of names of catechumens. The names should be facing out.**
3. **The usher will lead you up the center aisle and into the sanctuary.**
4. **This is a procession. Keep moving slowly (not too slowly) without gaps.**
5. **Go up the steps, together with your partner. Walk up to the bottom step of the Cathedra (Archbishop's chair).**

6. **Pause in front of the Archbishop.** Slightly elevate the Book of the Elect as the Archbishop will touch the book as a sign of his election for these persons to be received into the Church at the Easter Vigil.
7. **Turn toward your right, towards the usher, leaving the book open.** At the direction of the ushers, proceed out of the sanctuary via left side altar gate (Assumption side) and line up in front of the altar rail, facing the Archbishop, with the book open, until the Act of Election is completed. Return to your seat via the center aisle.

SEATING

Catechumens and godparents will be seated in a **RESERVED SECTION** on the left side of the main aisle. Please be sure to have tags on for quicker and easier seating.

Candidates and sponsors will be seated in a **RESERVED SECTION** on the right side of the main aisle. Please be sure to have tags on for quicker and easier seating.

There will be reserved seating for wheelchair users and deaf catechumens.

PLEASE INDICATE SPECIAL NEEDS ON THE CATECHUMEN/CANDIDATE REGISTRATION FORM.

A very **limited** amount of unreserved seating is available for additional family, friends and parishioners.

CALLING THE CANDIDATES TO CONTINUING CONVERSION

Adults Candidates for Confirmation and Communion who have been engaged in an extended period of formation alongside catechumens are welcome to participate in the *Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion*. **Baptized Children do not participate in the Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion.**

- Each parish is encouraged to provide the Rite of Sending for catechumens and candidates prior to the Celebration of the *Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion*.
- *Catechumens, Godparents, Presenters of the Book of the Elect, Candidates and Sponsors should arrive **45 minutes** before the start of the celebration. A review of the Rite will take place 30 minutes before the start of the celebration.*

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE CONFIRMATION OF BAPTIZED CATHOLIC ADULTS ON PENTECOST SUNDAY, MAY 24, 2026

Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez will confer the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Cathedral Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on **Pentecost Sunday, May 24, 2026, at the 11:00 AM Solemn Mass**. All priests are invited to concelebrate. Please vest with archdiocesan vestments in the Neumann Room.

- 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). This delegation is required for the validity of the Sacrament in the case of a Roman Catholic candidate. Please send this request for delegation to the Office for Divine Worship.
- The Archbishop gives this faculty to all priests of the Archdiocese to confirm adult baptized Roman Catholics, 16 years of age and older, on any occasion from Palm Sunday through Pentecost Sunday. 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 this period specified by the Archbishop. Priests are reminded that only the 2016 revised The Order of Confirmation may be used to celebrate the Sacrament.**
- Please use this form to register each baptized Catholic adult for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, <https://form.jotform.com/ODWPhila/confirmation-registration>. All registrations are handled electronically. **Deadline April 24, 2026.**

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office for Divine Worship at Worship@archphila.org

222 N. 17th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

Worship@archphila.org | 215.587.3537 | <https://www.odwphiladelphia.org/>