



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

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MEMORANDUM

TO: All priests, deacons, RCIA coordinators, and liturgy coordinators
FROM: Joseph Milner
DATE: February 9, 2022
RE: Celebrating the Rite of Election in 2022

In January, Archbishop Rozanski gave permission for pastors to celebrate the Rite of Election in each parish this year. This memo offers guidelines for celebrating the Rite of Election this year. Sample ritual texts are also attached. The following guidelines apply to celebrating the Rite of Election, the Rite of Call to Continuing Conversion, and the combined Rites of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion

Since there will be no celebration at the Cathedral Basilica this year, the Rite of Sending is not celebrated this year.

Background information and pre-requisites for the Rite of Election (for the non-baptized) are presented in paragraphs #118 - 128 of the rite. The rite is normally celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent or if necessary on an adjacent day. The rite can be celebrated at mass or at a liturgy of the Word. Normally, the pastor would be the presider.

If it is celebrated at mass on the First Sunday of Lent, the mass texts and readings are from the First Sunday of Lent. If it is celebrated at mass on a different day, the mass texts are from "For the Election or Enrollment of Names" in the Ritual Mass section. The readings can be chosen from those for the First Sunday of Lent, the readings of the day, or other suitable readings. When it is celebrated at a Liturgy of the Word, the opening prayer is taken from the ritual mass "For the Election or Enrollment of Names" The readings may be chosen as noted above. (RCIA par 128)

In the Archdiocese of St. Louis, Deuteronomy 7: 6 - 9, 11, Psalm 95, and John 15: 9 - 17 have been regularly used at the celebrations at the Cathedral Basilica for the combined rites.

The choice of the appropriate parish setting for the celebration should be guided by the safety measures in place during the pandemic. If there are a large number of individuals, a parish may wish to celebrate with the catechumens (unbaptized) at one service and the candidates (previously baptized) at another. Another option if there are a large number of individuals would be to celebrate at a mass or liturgy of the Word on Saturday for the catechumens, candidates, godparents, sponsors and family members.

The outline of the rite may be found preceding paragraph #129 in the ritual book. After the homily, the deacon or the Christian Initiation leader presents those who are ready to receive the sacraments to the presider. The catechumens come forward with their godparents as their names are called. The presider addresses the godparents in either form A or B asking them about the readiness of the catechumens. He may also address the assembly and ask them to support the catechumens as they journey to Easter. The presider then addresses the catechumens and asks them to express their desire to receive the sacraments of initiation. After they have responded, he invites them to offer their names. This can be done in several ways as described in paragraph #132. For most parishes, the catechumens would now sign the Book of the Elect. If there is a large number, the Book of the Elect may be signed earlier and now presented to the presider. He then declares them Elect and addresses the godparents. The intercessions follow and conclude with a prayer over the Elect. If the rite has been celebrated during a mass, the Elect are then dismissed and the mass continues. If the rite has been celebrated at a liturgy of the word, the whole community is dismissed.

Background for the Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion (for the previously baptized) can be found in paragraphs #446 - 449 of the rite.

This rite is celebrated with either those who were baptized in another Christian tradition or who were baptized in the Catholic Church but have not received Confirmation and the Eucharist. Words in parenthesis are used when a Catholic is completing their Christian Initiation.

Like the Rite of Election, the deacon or the Christian Initiation minister, presents the candidates to the presider. He then addresses the sponsors for their affirmation of the candidates and then the assembly. He recognizes the candidates and calls them join the community in repentance during Lent. Intercessions are offered and a prayer is offered over them.

Background for the combined Rite of Election and Rite of Calling to Continuing Conversion of the Candidates who are preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist or Reception into Full Communion of the Catholic Church can be found in paragraphs #547 - 549 of the rite. The combined rite celebrates the Rite of Election first, then the Call to Continuing Conversion and then intercessions for the Elect and the Candidates.

Copies of the rites in pdf format can be found on the Office of Christian Initiation website: www.archstl.org/sacred-worship/liturgy-and-sacraments/rcia

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact Joe Milner at: joemilner@archstl.org.

