

GENERAL

Evangelization Policies

400 Parishes should promote a process of evangelization which is sensitive to people of every race and nation, of every language and culture, rich and poor alike (See *General Plan: Unity in Communion and Mission*, pages 1-2). Evangelization “means bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself. Its essence is the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ and the response of a person in faith, both being the work of the Spirit of God.” (*Go and Make Disciples*, Study Edition, page 10.)

Guidelines for Implementation:

- An evangelizing parish recognizes the individual as well as groups and organizations and fosters their integration into the life and mission of the Church.
 - An evangelizing parish provides family oriented and intergenerational programs which will hand on the faith from one generation to another.
 - An evangelizing parish has a structure and atmosphere that will draw new members into becoming involved, nurtured and strengthened, thus becoming evangelizers themselves.
- 401** Evangelization is understood as a life long commitment by all who claim Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Goals for evangelization include:
- a. To bring about in all Catholics such an enthusiasm for their faith that, in living their faith in Jesus, they freely share it with others (*Go and Make Disciples*, page 17).
 - b. To invite all people...whatever their social or cultural background to hear the message of salvation in Jesus Christ, so they may come to join us in the fullness of the Catholic faith (*Go and Make Disciples*, page 18).
 - c. To foster Gospel values in our society, promoting the dignity of the human person, the importance of the family, and the common good of our society, so that [we] may continued to be transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ (*Go and Make Disciples*, page 18).

- d. To provide programs which are inclusive of persons with special needs and which respect the language, cultural diversity, popular piety, and spirituality of its members.

402 Where it would serve the good of the Church, parishes should develop small church/Christian communities to empower people and provide opportunities for them to connect faith and life on a regular basis, to build up the parish community and to strengthen the life and mission of the Church. To be authentic, small communities must remain in union with the local and universal Church and not become isolated or self serving (See *General Directory for Catechesis*, #263).

Guidelines for Implementation:

- Small communities meet on a regular basis for prayer and support, for reflection on the Sunday Scriptures in light of their own life experience, and for ongoing catechesis leading to service and outreach.
- Small communities are comprised of approximately 8-12 adults who mirror the diversity of the larger parish community. They build families of faith which foster a sense of belonging, nurturing, and ongoing conversion in a safe environment.
- Facilitators of small communities should be chosen for their pastoral qualities and should participate in initial and ongoing formation. Facilitators meet regularly as a group with the pastor and/or pastoral staff to ensure unity with the vision and mission of the parish.

CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN OF CATECHETICAL AGE

410 In accord with the 1972 Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship, every parish shall have a process for the Order of Christian Initiation for Adults and for Children of Catechetical Age, based on the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (hereafter *RCIA*). This process is normative for the Christian Initiation of everyone including all cultural groups and persons with disabilities.

411 The Order of Christian Initiation **is to be used** for all unbaptized persons (Catechumens) and baptized Christians but not Catholics (Candidates) seeking reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church who have reached the age of reason.

Children of catechetical age, both Catechumens and Candidates, must follow in the complete adult process of initiation with adaptations to suit their age and level of understanding.

[See *RCIA*, Part II, Chapter 1.]

The Order of Christian Initiation **may be used** for baptized uncatechized Catholic adults and children preparing for Confirmation and the Eucharist, preceded by First Penance. These, however, may be otherwise catechized for the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation.

[For adults, see *RCIA*, Part II, Chapter 4.]

Modifications of the Order of Christian Initiation are used for persons in particular circumstances:

1. catechumens in exceptional circumstances; and

[See *RCIA*, Part II, Chapter 2.]

2. persons who have reached the age of reason, whether catechumens or not, who are in danger of death but are not at the point of death.

[See *RCIA*, Part II, Chapter 3.]

Note: The distinction must be made between the unbaptized who become catechumens and baptized Christians but not Catholics who become candidates for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

412 (Amended to be in accord with *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*)

The process for Christian Initiation, including the periods of Precatechumenate, Catechumenate, Purification and Enlightenment, and Mystagogy, should be situated within the life of the parish community. The period of the Catechumenate should extend for at least one year of formation and instruction and should include a thoroughly comprehensive catechesis on the truths of Catholic doctrine and moral life and a profound sense of the mystery of salvation.

[See *RCIA*, 75, *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 6 and 7.]

Guidelines for Implementation:

- The parish may celebrate a Rite of Acceptance more than once in a liturgical year when the readiness of the inquirers is discerned, however, each catechumen should understand that the Catechumenate period is at least a year long, not counting the period of inquiry.
- Lent is the proper time for the intense preparation of the elect.

413 The rites of the Order of Christian Initiation—to be celebrated in the context of the Sunday assembly except where the *RCIA* indicates otherwise — are the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome, the Scrutinies and the Sacraments of Initiation.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- It is strongly recommended that the Rite of Sending be celebrated in the parish on a Sunday prior to or on the day of the Rite of Election, which is celebrated by the bishop in a diocesan liturgy.

414 The pastor is responsible for the formation of a parish team to implement the Christian Initiation process.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- The Christian Initiation team should reflect the cultural and other diversity in the parish and respond to special catechetical needs.

415 The Easter Vigil is the proper time for the celebration of the sacraments of initiation. Catechumens, including children of catechetical age, are to receive the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil.

[See *RCIA*, 8 and 17; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 14 and 18.]

416 When a child who has reached the age of reason (seven years or older) is baptized, the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist are to be conferred within the same celebration.

[See *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 18.]

1. Canon 852.1 states that what is prescribed in the canons on the baptism of an adult applies to all who have attained the use of reason.
2. Canon 97.2 states that with the completion of the seventh year a person is presumed to have the use of reason.
3. Canon 866 states that unless there is a grave reason to the contrary, an adult who is baptized is to be confirmed immediately after baptism and participate in the celebration of the Eucharist, also receiving Communion.
4. Therefore, children seven years or older who are baptized are to be confirmed and receive Communion within the same liturgical celebration.
5. Furthermore, Canon 883.2 states that a priest who baptizes a child seven years or older has the faculty of administering confirmation by the law itself. Canon 885.2 states that a priest who has this faculty must use it for those in whose favor the faculty was granted. Therefore, neither the priest nor the parents have the option to delay confirmation for a child who is baptized at age seven years or older.

PARTICIPATION IN RITE OF ELECTION AND CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION

417 All parishes with catechumens who will be fully initiated and/or candidates who will be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church should participate in the Diocesan Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- All adult catechumens and candidates and any of their children who will be initiated or received into full communion should participate in the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion preceded by the Rite of Sending at the parish.
- Pastors and chaplains are delegated to celebrate the Rite of Election in their own parish or faith community for children and youth, under the age of eighteen, who are catechumens or candidates.
- Catholic children, baptized as infants and celebrating only the sacrament of Eucharist for the first time, are not considered candidates and should not participate in the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion.

418 Every effort should be made to assist persons in situating the process of the annulment or declaration of freedom to marry in the context of their ongoing conversion to the Catholic Faith.

Persons who have broken marriages in their backgrounds may be enrolled and admitted as catechumens and candidates, but they should have already submitted their petitions to the Tribunal before taking these steps.

These persons may not participate in the Rite of Election unless their previous marital status has been resolved by the Tribunal.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- Cases of persons in need of rectifying their marital situation and hoping to be initiated at the Easter Vigil should be submitted to the Tribunal in the early fall preceding the Vigil.
- The Tribunal will attempt to indicate by Ash Wednesday if the case is headed toward a favorable completion before the Easter Celebration. This is not a guarantee since some cases experience unusual difficulties.
- Persons should not be led along with false or unreasonable expectations.

419 In accord with the National Statutes for the Catechumenate, it is preferable that reception into full communion be celebrated at a time other than the Easter Vigil. However, pastoral reasons may suggest the use of the combined rites at the Easter Vigil as found in Appendix I of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. A clear distinction should be made in the celebration between persons who are being initiated and those who are being received into full communion.

[See *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 33 and 34.]

Guidelines for Ecumenical Sensitivity in the Catechumenal Process

Issued by Bishop Robert Brom, 6/2/97

1. Only if, after serious investigation, there is doubt whether someone was baptized, or whether Baptism was conferred validly, should Baptism be administered conditionally.
2. In their initiation process, Candidates, that is those who have already been baptized, particularly those who exhibit some degree of Christian formation, should not be placed in the same classification as Catechumens, that is, those who have not been baptized. However, for pastoral reasons, candidates may benefit from the same sessions offered to the catechumens in the initiation process.
3. Candidates are invited to participate in the Liturgy of the Word and may choose to stay for the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass, provided they do not receive Communion until they are fully initiated into the Roman Catholic Church. The choice to remain for the entire Mass belongs to the candidates. However, for pastoral reasons, pastors and catechists may wish to invite candidates, along with catechumens, to participate in dismissal after the liturgy of the Word in order to continue breaking open the Word.
4. Candidates should not be referred to as “converts”. Catechumens, after their Baptism, are converts to the Faith.

Infant Baptism Preparation Policies

420 Pastors and/or clergy, with the assistance of a baptismal team, should prepare parents for the baptism of their child (See *Decree on Christian Initiation*, General Introduction, #13). In addition to the initial interview, at least one formal session of baptismal preparation should be provided by the parish community.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- The baptism of a child offers a key moment in the evangelization of parents. Every effort should be made to ensure that the initial contact with the parish, the interview process, and the baptismal preparation are occasions of welcome,

invitation and hospitality. This process of preparation can begin even before the birth of the child.

- The initial interview provides a time to discern the commitment of at least one parent or the person who lawfully takes the place of the parent to raise the child in the faith (*Code of Canon Law*, canon 868). It is also a time to guide parents in the selection of suitable godparents.
- The preparation process should assist parents in assuming their role as parents and primary catechists of their child (canon 851, §2). This occasion should be viewed as an opportunity for evangelization, helping parents to grow in their spiritual life from their current level of faith commitment.
- The baptismal team should be comprised of catechists and other qualified lay persons.

421 In preparing for the baptism of their infant, parents are expected to participate in the parish process of baptismal catechesis before their infant will be baptized (canon 851, §2). An infant in danger of death is to be baptized without delay (canon 867, §2).

Guidelines for Implementation:

- Baptismal catechesis is to be based on the Rite itself and assists parents in understanding the meaning of the sacrament and the obligations which are attached to it (*Rite of Baptism*, Introduction #5.1).
- Parents who have recently participated in baptismal catechesis (within 2-3 years) are not required to attend again, but could be encouraged to attend as an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the sacrament.

422 Following the long standing tradition, infants are baptized into the faith of the Church and should not be deprived of the Sacrament of Baptism (*Rite of Baptism*, Introduction, #2).

- a. Infants are considered those who have not yet reached the age of reason, i.e. seven years of age and those who are not responsible for themselves (canon 852).
- b. Baptism of infants should be celebrated within a few weeks of birth (canon 867, §1).
- c. While it is not customary to refuse baptism, the sacrament is to be delayed if there is not a founded hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic religion. Parents should be advised of the reason for the delay (canon 868, §1, 2°).

- d. In the case of single parents or parents in irregular marriages, baptism should not be delayed if there is a founded hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic religion.
- e. In cases of pending adoption, baptism should be delayed until the adoption is finalized.

423 Godparents, together with parents, present the infant to the Church for baptism. The selection of two godparents is customary, but only one, either male or female, is required for baptism. If two godparents are chosen, one should be male and one female (canon 873).

- a. A godparent must be a fully initiated Catholic (have received Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) and should have completed his/her sixteenth year unless the pastor makes an exception for a just cause (canon 874, §1, 2° and 3°).
- b. A godparent must be a practicing Catholic leading a life in harmony with the Catholic faith and the role of godparent (canon 874, §1, 3° and 4°).
- c. A godparent cannot be the parent of the infant (canon 874, §1, 5°).
- d. Godparents are to be encouraged to participate in a parish baptismal preparation process.

A Christian, baptized in another faith tradition, may not serve as godparent, but may serve as a witness along with the Catholic godparent and should be recorded accordingly (canon 874, §2).

Guidelines for Implementation:

- Parents take responsibility for choosing a godparent or godparents who will serve as good examples for living the Catholic way of life. As a mark of the continuity between baptism and confirmation, a godparent may later serve as the sponsor of the child when he or she is confirmed (canon 893, §2). A Christian witness may not serve as a sponsor for confirmation.
- Where there is a cultural practice of multiple godparents, pastors may allow the family to involve a number of people in the celebration. However, only one set of godparents is recorded (canon 873).

424 Following baptism, it is the responsibility of the parents to raise the child in the faith and ensure the child's formal religious education. It is the responsibility of the parish to provide support and assistance to parents in raising their children in the faith (*Rite of Baptism*, Introduction, #5.5).

FORMATION, CERTIFICATION AND RENEWAL OF EVANGELIZATION PERSONNEL

430 All active catechists of Christian Initiation shall be certified or in the process of certification through the California Catechist Certification programs offered by the diocese. All certification is issued for three years, renewable

1. Parish catechists of Christian Initiation shall obtain California Catechist Certification by completing one of the following:
 - a. the Basic Catechist Formation Course offered through the diocese;
 - b. the certification courses (totaling 45 hours) offered through the San Diego Diocesan Institute for Adult Education and Ministry Formation; or
 - c. those specific courses or workshops identified by means of an individual catechist profile evaluation.
2. Catechists for Christian Initiation of adults and children of catechetical age shall obtain specialized certification in addition to California Catechist Certification by completing the appropriate diocesan specialization workshops or courses (such as Mini-Beginnings, Liturgies of Initiation, and others).

431 Catechists of Christian Initiation of adults and children of catechetical age shall renew their California Catechist Certification every three years. Renewal of certification is earned by completing 30 hours of diocesan designated or approved courses before the date of expiration of their certification.

Note: In-service conducted at the local parish level, though valued for enrichment, does not ordinarily qualify for renewal credit. See Educational Ministry-2, policy 231.2 of this Handbook for the approval process of parish in-service toward renewal credit.

432 All persons who do visitation for evangelization as "Visitadores por Cristo" shall be trained according to the Guidelines for the Formation and Certification of "Visitadores por Cristo." Certification is issued for three years and is renewable.

[See Attachment 432a.]

433 All persons who are facilitators for the program "Visitadores por Cristo" shall be trained according to the Guidelines for the Formation and Certification of Facilitators for the Program "Visitadores por Cristo." Certification is issued for three years and is renewable.

[See Attachment 433a.1