

**SUGGESTED SCRIPT FOR A PARISH CELEBRATION OF
THE RITE OF ELECTION OF CATECHUMENS AND OF THE
CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION OF CANDIDATES
WHO ARE PREPARING FOR
RECEPTION INTO THE FULL COMMUNION OF THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

WITHIN MASS



DIOCESE OF SAN DIEGO

Copyrights:

RCIA, 550-561

English translation of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*,
c 1985, International Commission on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL).
All rights reserved.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

HOMILY

550 AFTER THE READINGS (SEE RCIA 128), THE BISHOP, OR THE CELEBRANT WHO ACTS AS DELEGATE OF THE BISHOP, GIVES THE HOMILY. THIS SHOULD BE SUITED TO THE ACTUAL SITUATION AND SHOULD ADDRESS NOT JUST THE CATECHUMENS AND THE CANDIDATES, BUT THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY OF THE FAITHFUL, SO THAT ALL WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO GIVE GOOD EXAMPLE AND TO ACCOMPANY THE CATECHUMENS AND CANDIDATES DURING THE TIME OF THEIR LENTEN PREPARATION FOR CELEBRATING THE EASTER SACRAMENTS.

CELEBRATION OF ELECTION

PRESENTATION OF THE CATECHUMENS

551 After the homily, the priest in charge of the catechumens' initiation, or a deacon, a catechist, or a representative of the community, presents the catechumens, using the following or similar words.

Reverend Father, Easter is drawing near, and so these catechumens, whom I now present to you, are completing their period of preparation. They have found strength in God's grace and support in our community's prayers and example.

Now they ask that after the celebration of the scrutinies, they be allowed to participate in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist.

The celebrant replies:

Those who are to be chosen in Christ, come forward, together with your godparents.

One by one, the catechumens are called by name. Each catechumen, accompanied by a godparent (or godparents), comes forward and stands before the celebrant.

[If there are a great many catechumens, all are presented in groups, for example, each group by its own catechist. But in this case, the catechists should be advised to have a special celebration beforehand in which they call each catechumen forward by name.]

AFFIRMATION BY THE GODPARENTS [AND THE ASSEMBLY]

552 Then the celebrant addresses the assembly. If he has taken part in the earlier deliberation on the catechumen's suitability, (see RCIA 122), he may use either option A or Option B or similar words; if he has not taken part in the earlier deliberation, he uses option B or similar words.

A My dear friends, these catechumens have asked to be initiated into the sacramental life of the Church this Easter. Those who know them have judged them to be sincere in their desire. During the period of their preparation they have listened to the word of Christ and endeavored to follow his commands; they have shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined them in prayer.

And so I announce to all of you here that our community has decided to call them to the sacraments. Therefore, I ask their godparents to state their opinion once again, so that all of you may hear.

He addresses the godparents:

As God is your witness, do you consider these catechumens worthy to be admitted to the sacraments of Christian initiation?

Godparents: We do.

[When appropriate in the circumstances, the celebrant may also ask the entire assembly to express its approval of the catechumens in these or similar words:

Celebrant: Now I ask you, the members of this community: are you willing to affirm the testimony expressed about these catechumens and support them in faith, prayer, and example as we prepare to celebrate the Easter sacraments?

All: We are.]

B God's holy Church wishes to know whether these catechumens are sufficiently prepared to be enrolled among the elect for the coming celebration of Easter.

Addressing the godparents, the Celebrant continues...

And so I speak first of all to you their godparents.

Have they faithfully listened to God's word proclaimed by the Church?

Godparents: They have.

Celebrant: Have they responded to that word and begun to walk in God's presence?

Godparents: They have.

Celebrant: Have they shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined with them in prayer?

Godparents: They have.

[When appropriate in the circumstances, the celebrant may also ask the entire assembly to express its approval of the catechumens in these or similar words:

Celebrant: And now I speak to you, my brothers and sisters in this assembly:

Are you ready to support the testimony expressed about these catechumens and include them in your prayer and affection as we move toward Easter?

All: We are.]

INVITATION AND ENROLLMENT OF NAMES

553 Then addressing the catechumens in the following or similar words, the celebrant advises them of their acceptance and asks them to declare their own intention.

Celebrant: **And now, my dear catechumens, I address you. Your own godparents and teachers and this entire community have spoken in your favor. The Church in the name of Christ accepts their judgment and calls you to the Easter sacraments.**

Since you have already heard the call of Christ, you must now express your response to that call clearly and in the presence of the whole Church.

Therefore, do you wish to enter fully into the life of the Church through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist?

Catechumens: **We do.**

Celebrant: **Then offer your names for enrollment.**

The catechumens give their names, either going with their godparents to the celebrant or while remaining in place, and the actual inscription of the names may be carried out in various ways. The catechumens may inscribe their names themselves or they may call out their names, which are inscribed by the godparents or by the minister who presented the catechumens (RCIA 117). As the enrollment is taking place, an appropriate song, for example, Psalm 16 or Psalm 33 with a refrain such as, "Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own" may be sung.

[If there are a great many candidates, the enrollment may simply consist in the presentation of a list of the names to the celebrant, with such words as: "These are the names of the candidates" or, when the bishop is celebrant and candidates from several parishes have been presented to him: "These are the names of the candidates from the parish of N."]

ACT OF ADMISSION OR ELECTION

554. The celebrant briefly explains the significance of the enrollment that has just taken place. Then, turning to the catechumens, he says the following or similar words.

Celebrant: Since it is your intention to enter fully into the life of the Church, I now declare you to be members of the elect, to be initiated into the sacred mysteries at the next Easter Vigil.

Newly Elect: Thanks be to God.

Celebrant: God is always faithful to those he calls: now it is your duty, as it is ours, both to be faithful to him in return and to strive courageously to reach the fullness of truth, which your election opens up before you.

Then the celebrant turns to the godparents and instructs them in the following or similar words.

Godparents, you have spoken in favor of these elect: accept them now as chosen in the Lord and continue to sustain them through your loving care and example, until they come to share in the sacraments of God's life.

CELEBRATION OF THE CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

555 The priest in charge of the catechumens' initiation, or a deacon, a catechist, or a representative of the community, presents the candidates, using the following or similar words.

Reverend Father, I now present to you the candidates who are preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. They too have found strength in God's grace and support in our community's prayers and example.

Now they ask that after this Lenten season, they be admitted to full eucharistic sharing.

The celebrant replies:

Those who desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church, come forward, together with your sponsors.

One by one, the candidates are called by name. Each candidate, accompanied by a godparent (or godparents), comes forward and stands before the celebrant.

[If there are a great many candidates, all are presented in groups, for example, each group by its own catechist. But in this case, the catechists should be advised to have a special celebration beforehand in which they call each candidate forward by name.]

AFFIRMATION BY THE SPONSORS [AND THE ASSEMBLY]

556 Then the celebrant addresses the assembly. If he has taken part in the earlier deliberation on the candidates' suitability, (see RCIA 122), he may use either option A or Option B or similar words; if he has not taken part in the earlier deliberation, he uses option B or similar words.

A My dear friends, these candidates, our brothers and sisters, have asked to be able to participate fully in the sacramental life into the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. Those who know them have judged them to be sincere in their desire. During the period of their preparation they have reflected on the mystery of their baptism and have come to appreciate more deeply the presence of Christ in their lives. They have shared the company of their brothers and sisters, joined with them in prayer, and endeavored to follow Christ's commands more perfectly.

And so I am pleased to recognize their desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church. I ask their sponsors now to state their opinion once again, so that all of you may hear.

He addresses the sponsors:

Do you consider these candidates ready to receive the sacraments of confirmation and the eucharist?

Sponsors: We do.

[When appropriate in the circumstances, the celebrant may also ask the entire assembly to express its approval of the catechumens in these or similar words:

Celebrant: Now I ask you, the members of this community: are you willing to affirm the testimony expressed about these candidates and support them in faith, prayer, and example as they prepare to participate more fully in the Church's sacraments?

All: We are.]

B The Christian life and the demands that flow from the sacraments cannot be taken lightly. Therefore, before granting these candidates their request to share fully in the Church's sacraments, it is important that the Church hear the testimony of their sponsors about their readiness.

Addressing the sponsors, the Celebrant continues...

Celebrant: My dear sponsors, have these candidates faithfully listened to the apostles' instruction proclaimed by the Church?

Sponsors: They have.

Celebrant: Have they come to a deeper appreciation of their baptism, in which they were joined to Christ and his Church?

Sponsors: They have.

Celebrant: Have they reflected sufficiently on the tradition of the Church, which is their heritage, and joined their brothers and sisters in prayer?

Sponsors: They have.

Celebrant: Have they advanced in a life of love and service of others?

Sponsors: They have.

[When appropriate in the circumstances, the celebrant may also ask the entire assembly to express its approval of the catechumens in these or similar words:

Celebrant: And now, I speak to you, my brothers and sisters in this assembly:

Are you ready to support the testimony expressed about these candidates and include them in your prayer and affection as we move toward Easter?

All: We are.]

ACT OF RECOGNITION

Addressing the candidates, the Celebrant continues...

Celebrant: Beloved candidates, the Church recognizes your desire to be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and to have a place at Christ's Eucharistic table. Join with us this Lent in a spirit of repentance. Hear the Lord's call to conversion and be faithful to your baptismal covenant.

Candidates: Thanks be to God.

Then the celebrant turns to the sponsors and instructs them
In the following or similar words.

Sponsors, continue to support these candidates with your guidance and concern. May they see in you a love for the Church and a sincere desire for doing good. Lead them this Lent to the joys of the Easter mysteries.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE ELECT AND THE CANDIDATES

558. The community may use either the following formulary or a similar formulary to pray for the elect and the candidates. The celebrant may adapt the introduction and the intentions to fit various circumstances.

Addressing the assembly, the Celebrant continues...

Celebrant: And now, the assembly stands to offer our prayers for the elect and the candidates.

My brothers and sisters, in beginning this period of Lent, we look forward to celebrating at Easter the life-giving mysteries of our Lord's suffering, death, and resurrection. These elect and candidates, whom we bring with us to the Easter sacraments, will look to us for an example of Christian renewal. Let us pray to the Lord for them and for ourselves, that we may be renewed by one another's efforts and together come to share the joys of Easter.

Minister:

INTERCESSIONS

1. That these elect and candidates may find joy in daily prayer, we pray to the Lord...
2. That they may read your word and joyfully dwell on it in their hearts, we pray to the Lord...
3. That they may grow to love and seek virtue and holiness of life, we pray to the Lord...
4. That they may share with others the joy they have found in their faith, we pray to the Lord...
5. That our local Church, during this Lenten season, may grow in charity and be constant in prayer, we pray to the Lord...

PRAYER OVER THE ELECT AND THE CANDIDATES

After the intercessions, the Celebrant, with hands outstretched over the elect and the candidates, says one of the following prayers:

A **Lord God,
You created the human race
and are the author of its renewal.
Bless all your adopted children
and add these chosen ones
to the harvest of your new covenant.
As true children of the promise,
may they rejoice in eternal life,
won, not by the power of nature,
but through the mystery of your grace.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

B **Father of love and power,
it is your will to establish everything in Christ
and to draw us into his all-embracing love.**

**Guide these chosen ones:
Strengthen them in their vocation,
build them into the kingdom of your Son
and seal them with the Spirit of your promise.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

All: **Amen.**

DISMISSAL OF THE ELECT

560. If the eucharist is to be celebrated, the elect are normally dismissed at this point by use of option A or B; if the elect are to stay for the celebration of the eucharist, option C is used.

The celebrant dismisses the elect in these or similar words.

- A** **My dear children, you have set out with us on the road that leads to the glory of Easter. Christ will be your way, your truth, and your life. Until we meet again for the scrutinies, walk always in his peace.**

The Elect: **Amen.**

- B** As an optional formulary for dismissing the elect, the celebrant may use these or similar words.

My dear friends, this community now sends you forth to reflect more deeply upon the word of God which you have shared with us today. Be assured of our loving support and prayers for you. We look forward to the day when you will share fully in the Lord's Table.

- C** If for serious reasons the elect cannot leave (RCIA 75.3) and must remain with the rest of the liturgical assembly, they, along with the candidates, are to be instructed that though they are present at the eucharist, they cannot take part in it as the Catholic faithful do. They may be reminded of this by the celebrant in these or similar words.

Although you cannot yet participate fully in the Lord's eucharist, stay with us as a sign of our hope that all God's children will eat and drink with the Lord and work with his Spirit to re-create the face of the earth.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

561. When this rite is celebrated with the bishop, the liturgy of the eucharist is usually omitted. However, when the eucharist is to follow, intercessory prayer is resumed with the usual general intercessions for the needs of the Church and the whole world; then, if required the profession of faith is said. But for pastoral reasons these general intercessions and the profession of faith may be omitted. The liturgy of the eucharist then begins as usual with the preparation of the gifts.