

# 101 Rite Of Christian Initiation Of Adults

## 101 RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

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*The process of Christian initiation as outlined in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, with its vision for fostering a mature Christian life, is essential to every parish's wellbeing. The baptismal catechumenate is the model for all catechesis. "The baptismal catechumenate is the source of inspiration of all catechesis" (National Directory for Catechesis, pp. 115; General Directory for Catechesis, nos. 90-91).*

*The RCIA is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful, who renew their own conversion as they reflect anew on the paschal mystery, and as they witness with their lives to the unbaptized (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, no. 4), conversion of mind and heart, a sufficient acquaintance with Christian teaching, as well as a spirit of faith and charity, obviously take time to achieve.*

*The formation envisioned in the order of initiation must be spread over a time frame that allows for a consistent hearing and reflection on the word of God, spiritual counsel or direction, a thorough catechesis, learning to pray with the Church, sharing in the Church's apostolic work and through association with the faithful learning from them the values, morals and spirit of the Catholic community.*

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### 101.1. RCIA IS THE NORMATIVE PROCESS FOR CHRISTIAN

# INITIATION

*The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, as approved for the dioceses of the United States by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on November 11, 1986 and confirmed by the Apostolic See on February 19, 1987 became the normative and mandatory process for sacramental initiation of new adult disciples of Christ as of September 1, 1988. *Decree*, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1988

## 101.1.1. Policy:

In accordance with the Decree promulgated by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops,<sup>1</sup> the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, is the normative process for sacramental initiation of all new adult disciples, in all parishes of the Archdiocese. The rite applies to all individuals seeking initiation who have attained the age of reason. The rite is to be adapted for particular circumstances as provided in the Rite.

### Procedures:

1. **a. Pastors, at the delegation of their bishop, along with the pastoral staff, will implement the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* effectively**, and integrate this process of conversion toward discipleship into the life of the parish. *Christus Dominus*, 14, *Presbyterorum ordinis*, nos. 5 and 6
2. **Individual parishes may collaborate with another parish or other parishes to provide a well-developed process of initiation for the region**, particularly if they lack sufficient resources to establish such a process on their own. This is especially helpful either when first implementing the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults or in smaller parishes or when language, cultural or disability situations dictate the need. If these circumstances necessitate that formation takes place in a non-parochial setting such a school, or other institution, the catechumens should nevertheless be introduced to the life of the parish and the rites should be in the catechumen's parish.

## *National Statutes for the Catechumenate 4*

**The parish, or group of parishes, will offer a formative process of Christian initiation that follows the guidelines set by the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, which includes the gradual journey of conversion marked by distinct required periods and rituals:**

1. Period of Inquiry ending with the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens.
2. Period of Catechumenate ending with the Rite of Election.
3. Period of Purification and Enlightenment culminating with the celebration of the sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.
4. Period of Mystagogy or post-baptismal catechesis marked by the new experience of the sacraments and the community.

*(Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, nos. 6-7)*

### **101.1.2. Policy:**

The sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist are required for full Christian initiation. *CIC* 842§2 and *CCC* no. 1212

### **Procedures:**

1. The process of Christian initiation is primarily journey of interior conversion leading the seeker to participation in the Paschal Mystery, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. *Ad gentes* 13§2 and 14§2
2. This process should not be modeled as an academic year and is not to be equated with completion of an academic certificate, rather this process varies from individual to individual according to God's grace and the individual's disposition and cooperation (*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 5) Parishes are encouraged to look to establish a year round process that allows those seeking to enter the church to begin their process at any time.

3. The pastoral and catechetical leaders should be mindful of the catechesis required for each Sacrament of Initiation, such that the essential aspects of the effects of the sacrament are clearly communicated, as outlined below:
4. **Baptism** effects forgiveness of all sin and brings one into a new life in Christ. *Christian Initiation, General Introduction, 2§1, CCC no. 126*
5. Confirmation conforms the person more closely to Christ and grants them the gift of the Holy Spirit in order to become witnesses of God's love. *Christian Initiation, General Introduction, 2§2, CCC no. 1296*
6. **Eucharist** completes Christian initiation. It nourishes the person with the Risen Christ's body and blood. In partaking of the Eucharist, the individual offers himself or herself together with Christ as a gift to the Father. *Christian Initiation, General Introduction, 2§3, CCC no. 1322*

## 101.2. MINISTERS OF INITIATION

Christian initiation is the responsibility of all the baptized, each according to specific gifts and offices. It is a gradual process that takes place in the midst of the community and in accordance with the Church's liturgical year (Ad gentes no. 14 and Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, nos. 4 and 14). Pastors and pastoral leaders need to remind the faithful of their responsibility in the initiation process.

### 101.2.1. Community

#### Policy:

**The community of baptized needs to be formed to fulfill their baptismal vocation to discipleship and their apostolic vocation to give witness to the Gospel and lead others to Christ.** They join initiation process by reflecting on the paschal mystery, renewing their own conversion and thus providing them evidence of the spirit of the Christian community. "The entire community must help the candidates and catechumens throughout the process of initiation." *Rite of Christian*

**Procedures:**

1. **During the evangelization and inquiry period**, the community's mission is to proclaim God's message in word and in deed. They welcome the inquirers and listen to their stories.
2. **During the catechumenate period**, the community continues to participate through witnessing the Gospel messages, being present in the ritual celebrations, praying, and at the Rite of Election, they give testimony of the conversion of those to be initiated.
3. **During the period of purification and enlightenment**, the community participates with prayer, by being present in the rites of the scrutinies and presentations, and giving example of a spirit of conversion and penance.
4. **At the Easter Vigil**, they renew their baptismal promises.
5. **During the period of Mystagogy**, the community welcome the neophytes into the community of the baptized and celebrates the Sunday Eucharist with the newly initiated.
6. **By living lives of charity and justice and by taking an active part in the mission of the Church and its worship**, members of the faithful give a convincing witness to all who are preparing for Christian initiation.

### **101.2.2. Sponsors and Godparents**

**The following policies apply to sponsors and godparents of unbaptized adults, including children older than 7 years old, and to sponsors of baptized candidates, who were baptized in the Catholic faith but are uncatechized or who were baptized in different Christian tradition.**

Although the Code of Canon Law uses the term sponsor exclusively, the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults makes a distinction between sponsor

and godparent of the unbaptized:

**A sponsor** accompanies the person seeking (inquirer) to be admitted to the Order of Catechumens and during the period of the catechumenate. He or she is witness to the inquirer/catechumen's moral character, faith, and intention and also witnesses the Gospel to those on the RCIA process.

**A godparent** accompanies the catechumen on the day of the Rite of Election, during the period of purification and enlightenment, at the celebration of the Sacraments at the Easter Vigil, and during the period of Mystagogy. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, 10, 11, 45, 46, 119, 122, 123, 244, 404

### **101.2.2.1 Policy:**

**In order to be a sponsor or godparent, the person:**

Must have completed his or her 16th year unless, for just cause, the pastor or minister of the sacrament in consultation with the Chancellor makes an exception.

Must be a confirmed Catholic who has also received first communion and is leading a life in harmony with the Catholic faith and the role of a sponsor.

Must not be bound by any canonical penalty .

Must not be the parent of the catechumen .

The spouse/fiancé of the catechumen **may** serve as sponsor/godparent.

A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic Christian ecclesial community can only serve as a **witness** of the Baptism. CIC, Canon 874

The godparent should be chosen by the catechumen and /or the team and approved by the **pastor**. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, 10, 11, 123, 404

**For the baptized**, but uncatechized adult who is seeking to complete Christian initiation with Confirmation and Eucharist, the baptismal godparent could be chosen again as godparent, provided that they can carry out the responsibilities of godparents, and that no canonical impediment exists. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, 404

### **101.2.2.2. Policy:**

In addition to the explicit canonical requirements listed in *CIC*, Canon 874, sponsors and godparents should be ready to commit the time and personal care necessary to nurture and support the candidate, whether a child or an adult. Ideally, they should be willing and available to participate in the catechumenate with their candidate or in the special preparations designed for the parents and family of an infant. One's godparents can never be changed since they were the historical witnesses to the baptism and have entered a permanent spiritual relationship with the baptized.

### **101.2.3. RCIA Director/Coordinator**

#### **101.2.3.1. Policy:**

The RCIA Director/Coordinator is to be a faithful Catholic well formed in the theology of Christian initiation and in the process of RCIA, including RCIA adapted for children and for teenagers, so that in collaboration with the pastor, pastoral leaders, catechists, and the assembly, a pastoral and evangelizing implementation of the process is offered in the Parish. Additionally, the RCIA Director/Coordinator should collaborate with the sacramental formation ministers/catechists to insure that the parish implements and lives a consistent pastoral theology of Christian initiation.

1. All RCIA Directors/Coordinators should take the RCIA course through University of Dayton Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation.
2. [https://vlcff.udayton.edu/courses/course\\_details.php?course=165](https://vlcff.udayton.edu/courses/course_details.php?course=165)
3. This is the minimum competency required for all RCIA directors/coordinators, whether, they are paid employees or volunteers.

4. The RCIA Director/Coordinator will offer yearly formation sessions for the team. These sessions can be outsourced or offered by the Director/Coordinator if he or she has already taken the University of Dayton course.

## **101.2.4. Catechists/RCIA team**

### **101.2.4.1. Policy**

All those who are involved in the ministry of Christian initiation should be faithful Catholics formed in the theology of Christian initiation and the structure of the process of the baptismal catechumenate. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 16. Respectful of the different stages in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, and mindful of the diversity of gifts among God's people, it is possible that some of the RCIA team might be most involved in one or two periods of the process than in the entire process. The formation of the team should take into consideration spiritual, human, intellectual, and pastoral formation.

## **101.2.5. Pastoral Ministers (Pastors, Associate Pastors, Deacons, Pastoral Life Directors, Pastoral Associates)**

### **101.2.5.1. Policy:**

Pastors and associate pastors have the ultimate responsibility to oversee the RCIA process, to preside at the liturgical rites proper of the process, and to delegate, as necessary, the preparation of the catechumens and candidates during the distinct stages of the RCIA journey. Additionally, they have the responsibility of providing pastoral care to the catechumens and candidates, as well as approve the selection of godparents. This would be the responsibility of the Pastoral Life Director if a given parish has such a minister. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 13

### **101.2.5.2 Policy:**

Pastors and associate pastors in the Archdiocese of Baltimore have the authority to depute properly prepared catechists to preside at the minor

exorcisms and blessings as long as they are properly prepared to act in this way. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 12, 16, 34.5, 91, 96; the *Book of Blessings*, nos. 519-521 and at celebrations of the Word of God. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 81-89

### **101.2.5.3. Policy:**

In parishes where diaconal ministry is present, deacons should be ready to assist in the ministry to catechumens and candidates. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 15

## **When appropriate, deacons may preside over certain rites at the request of the pastor.**

### **Procedures:**

1. It is the responsibility of the pastor or his designee to ensure that deacons who participate in the RCIA process are formed in the theology of Christian initiation,
2. Deacons may collaborate with the priest, catechists, and community to form the catechumens and candidates throughout the process of Christian initiation.

## **101.3 THOSE WHO ARE TO RECEIVE THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION**

Adults, children, and adolescents who are responding to a prompting of the Holy Spirit to begin a journey towards Christian discipleship are welcomed to Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process.

### **101.3.1 Policy :**

The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* is the normative process for sacramental initiation for adults and for children older than 7 years old.

The Rite provides norms and guidelines for liturgical rites to be celebrated with the following groups:

1. **Unbaptized Adults**; *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Part I
2. **Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age**; *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Part II, chapter 2
3. **Baptized but Uncatechized Adults** (Catholic or Non-Catholic) seeking Confirmation and Eucharist; *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Part II, chapter 4
4. **Baptized non-Catholic Christians** – Rite of Reception. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Part II, chapter 5

### **Procedures:**

1. **Year Round Process: The spiritual journey of those entering this process varies from person to person**, and thus requires that the pastoral ministers do not limit the process to a school year calendar paradigm of September to May.
2. Although pastorally it can be more challenging to offer a year around process, this offers a more authentic experience of Christian initiation.

**It is important to assist the catechumens and candidates with discernment and assess readiness *throughout* the process of initiation.**

### **101.3.2. Policy:**

Pastors, in consultation with the director of the parish catechumenate, catechists, other appropriate ministers, and parents, as appropriate, are to determine with the catechumen/candidate, their readiness to receive any sacrament of initiation in keeping with the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and the norms of the *National Directory of Catechesis*, Chapter 5.35.B. This readiness must include a sufficient familiarity with the nature of each sacrament, in order for the candidate to participate actively and with awareness.

## **Procedures:**

1. A person with developmental disabilities within a small community of faith can indicate readiness by the following: relationships with people who share faith and prayer, a sense of the sacred as manifested in behavior, and desire for communion. If those with disabilities cannot use words to express their understanding, they can show their awareness by their manner, the expression in their eyes, their gestures, and the quality of their silence. *Access to the Sacraments of Initiation*, p. 9

### **2. Unbaptized Adults (RCIA, Part I)**

Unbaptized adults are welcomed into the RCIA process which consists of distinct periods of formation and liturgical rites which mark the transition from one period to another as indicated in **101.1.1.c**.

### **2. Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age (RCIA, Part II, chapter 2)**

Part II, section 1 of *The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* offers guidelines to adapt the process for children of catechetical age. The rite provides the adaptations for children who “have attained the age of reason and are of catechetical age.” *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 252

The law prescribes that a child older than seven years is presumed to have the use of reason (*CIC*, Canon 97 §2). However, the law does not give an upper age limit on those who are considered children of catechetical age, but the age of fourteen is recommended as the standard upper age because anyone “who has completed the fourteenth year of age can freely choose to be baptized in the Latin Church or in another ritual Church *sui iuris*” *CIC*, Canon 111 §2.

While the law prescribes that “The baptism of adults, at least of those who have completed their fourteenth year, is to be deferred to the diocesan bishop”, the faculty to fully initiate an unbaptized adult or child or to

confirm a baptized non-Catholic has been delegated to all priests who possess the habitual faculties within the Archdiocese of Baltimore. *CIC*, Canon 863

### 101.3.3 Policy:

In accordance to the archdiocesan procedures concerning the protection of minors, children older than 7 years and younger than 18 years **should not** participate in the same formation gatherings as adults who are part of the Rite of Christian Initiation process. Nevertheless, these children and/or adolescents shall participate in the liturgical rites of the process together with the adult catechumens and candidates.

#### 3. **Baptized but Uncatechized Adults (Catholic or Non-Catholic) seeking Confirmation and Eucharist (RCIA, Part II, chapter 4)**

### 101.3.4 Policy:

Adults who were baptized, before their 7<sup>th</sup> birthday, *in the Catholic faith or in another Christian community*, and who have not received catechetical formation, nor have received Confirmation or Eucharist are welcomed to the RCIA process with some adaptations as specified by the Rite, Part II, chapter 4. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 400-472

### 101.3.5 Policy:

**Although, they have not heard the proclamation of the Good News and have not been catechized, these adults, by virtue of their baptism are different from the catechumens, since they have already become members of the Church.** According to the rite, these adults are referred to as 'candidates' not catechumens. Additionally, the term 'convert' should be reserved strictly for those converted from unbelief to Christian belief (the unbaptized) and should never be used to refer to those baptized Christians who are received into full communion of the Catholic Church. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 2

## Procedures:

1. The length of formation and preparation might be lengthy. The aim of the catechetical formation for these candidates corresponds to that of the catechumenate period of the unbaptized. Some elements of the catechumenal formation are appropriate for their formation. They may participate in as much of the catechumenal formation as necessary, but should not take part in the rites intended exclusively for the catechumens (such as the rite of acceptance, the scrutinies, dismissal of the catechumens, etc.). Nevertheless, they may participate in celebrations of the Word together with catechumens.

*National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 25

2. The community should be involved in the process of completion of initiation of these candidates by witnessing the Gospel and by sustaining them with prayers.
3. Sponsors present the candidates to the community during the liturgical rites and accompany the candidates during their formation. The baptismal sponsors may be selected as sponsors at this time, provided they still meet the requirements for a sponsor (See above policy no. 101.2.2.1).

## **4. Baptized non-Catholic Christians - Rite of Reception (RCIA, Part II, chapter 5)**

### **101.3.6 Policy:**

A person baptized in a separated ecclesial Christian community is received according to the Latin rite into full communion with the Catholic Church. The rite of reception is arranged so that “No burden greater than necessary (Acts 15:28) is required for the establishment of communion.” *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 473-504; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 30

## Procedures:

1. **Baptism in a non-Catholic Christian community is considered**

**valid** when the ritual includes use of water, by pouring or immersion, and pronouncement of the Trinitarian formula are used:

2. "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
3. Refer to Appendix A of this document for a list of Christian ecclesial communities whose baptisms are recognized as valid as well as those whose baptisms are not considered valid.
4. These candidates will follow the preparation process as outlined in the Rite, part II, chapter 4.

## **101.3.1 The Initiation Process for the Unbaptized Adult (RCIA, Part I)**

### **101.3.1.1. Policy:**

The unbaptized adult who seeks Christian initiation will be welcomed into the gradual journey that includes distinct stages and liturgical rites that mark the transitions from one period to another as outlined below:

#### **Procedures:**

##### **1. Period of Pre-Catechumenate, Inquiry and Evangelization:**

During this period those desiring the sacraments inquire about the Christian life and the Church (ministers and assembly) evangelizes with words and actions. This period ends with the Rite of Acceptance. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 6, 7, 9.1, 36-40

**Focus:** the focal point of ministry for this period is evangelization. It is in the proclamation of the Good News that the inquirers will be introduced to an encounter with God and the invitation to follow Christ.

#### **Sponsors:**

A sponsor accompanies the person seeking (inquirer) during the evangelization and pre-catechumenate period and presents the inquirer to be admitted to the Order of Catechumens during the Rite of Acceptance.

## **Rite of Acceptance:**

**Discernment** The criteria for discerning readiness to participate in the Rite of Acceptance are stated as, “There must be evidence of first faith...and of an initial conversion and intention to change their lives and to enter into a relationship with God....” *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 42

## **Meaning of the Rite:**

The inquirers, having heard the proclamation of the Good News, will gather with the assembly to celebrate the *Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens*. At the conclusion of the period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate, the unbaptized adults declare their intention to begin their period of catechetical instruction to the Church and the Church accepts them as catechumens.

## **Time of Celebration:**

This liturgical rite should be celebrated two or three different times during the year, preferably in Ordinary Time. Celebrating this Rite at the beginning of Advent is a common misconception that has no theological or historical foundation. The Rite of Acceptance may be celebrated within Mass or outside of Mass, so long as this is not a private ceremony for the RCIA group only. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 6, 7, 18, 28, 41-74

**Period of Catechumenate:** This is an extended period of time when the catechumens receive catechesis, with the intended “aim to put the people [catechumens] not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity.” (*Catechesi Tradendae*, 5, §3). This period may last a few months or several years, depending on the individual.

**Focus:** During the catechumenate, the initial faith that the catechumens expressed at the Rite of Acceptance is nurtured in four ways: catechesis,

immersion in the Christian way of life [ongoing conversion lived within the community], liturgical rites, and apostolic works. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 75, 78

### **Liturgy of the Word / Dismissal / Catechesis:**

Additionally, during this period, the catechumens are to participate in the liturgy of the Word at Sunday Mass. After the homily, catechumens are dismissed to reflect on God's word. Catechetical sessions can be offered after the reflection time or at another time during the week, depending on the needs of the group. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 81-89

### **Sponsors & Godparents:**

It is during the time of the catechumenate, that the catechumens, with the guidance of the pastoral ministers, choose their godparents to present them to the Church on the day of the Rite of Election. The godparent may or may not be the same person who has served as the catechumen's sponsor thus far. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 6, 7, 80

### **Non-parochial Settings:**

If the catechumenal preparation takes place in non-parochial setting, such as a university's campus ministry, the catechumens should be introduced into the Christian life of a parish from the beginning of the catechumenate, in order that the sacraments of initiation and Mystagogy be celebrated and lived in the context of a parish community. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 4

### **Minor Rites:**

there are several optional minor rites that could be celebrated during the catechumenate; these include celebrations of the Word of God, minor exorcisms, blessings, and anointings. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 79, 81-103

Catechists who are properly deputed by their pastors may preside at the

minor exorcisms and blessings.

### **Rite of Sending – optional rite**

This rite is to be celebrated at the parish at a suitable time prior to the Rite of Election by the Bishop. During this rite, the community witnesses to the progress in the formation of the catechumens and gives its approval to send them forth for election. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 106-117

### **Rite of Election:**

#### **Discernment:**

The criteria for discerning readiness to participate in the Rite of Election are stated as, “The catechumens are expected to have undergone a conversion in mind and in action and to have developed a sufficient acquaintance with Christian teaching as well as a spirit of faith and charity.” *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 120

#### **Meaning of the Rite:**

At this Rite, the Church, with the counsel of the pastoral team and catechists, considers the catechumens ready to participate in the next period of formation, and thus **elects** them, in God’s name, to enter the final period of preparation for the Easter Sacraments. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 119

#### **Time of Celebration:**

This liturgical rite marks the beginning of the period of purification and enlightenment. It is celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent and presided by the bishop or his delegate. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 6, 7, 9.3, 12, 19, 29, 118-137; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 4.

## **101.3.1.2. Policy:**

In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Rite of Election is celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent in two sites: the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, and

additional site to serve the communities that would have to travel a great distance. The additional site will be announced when the registration is made available. The Office of Worship will send to pastoral ministers (priests, deacons, pastoral associates, pastoral life directors, and RCIA coordinators), via email and the archdiocesan bulletin, a registration packet, containing information about the celebration and deadlines for registration. Pastors should encourage parishioners to attend this event as a sign of welcome to the catechumens.

**Registration for the Rite of Election does not obligate the catechumen to receive the sacraments at the Eater Vigil;** discernment continues throughout the Lent period.

### **101.3.1.3. Policy:**

When it is not possible for one or several catechumens to attend the Archdiocesan celebration of the Rite of Election, delegation for a pastor to celebrate the rite in a catechumen's parish must be obtained from the Office of the Chancellor.

### **101.3.1.4. Policy:**

A record of the catechumens' election should be kept at the parish, listing their name, their godparent's name, the presider and the date of the celebration. This record is kept at the parish of the elect.

- 3. Period of Purification and Enlightenment:** This shorter period begins after the Rite of Election and ends at the Easter Vigil with the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation.

**Focus:** During this time the elect enter a reflective time of spiritual preparation characterized by the celebration of the scrutinies and the presentations. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 6, 7, 138-140

### **Scrutinies**

**Meaning of the Rites:** Catechumens preparing for baptism (both children

and adults) do not celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to baptism. Rather, they celebrate the scrutinies, to help them understand the reality of sin, appreciate the message of God's pardon and mercy, and their desire for conversion.

### **Time of Celebration:**

They are to be celebrated at any of the parish Masses on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent using the lectionary readings for year A; the gospel readings for those Sundays in year A present the catechumens with three narratives of encounter with Christ, which will provide them with the essence of their reflection. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 9.4, 20, 30, 141-146, 150-156; 164-177

### **Presentations**

#### **Meaning of the Presentations:**

The Church entrusts to the elect the Creed and the Lord's Prayer as expressions of the Church's faith and prayer.

#### **Time of the Presentations:**

Both presentations take place at a weekday Mass or a Liturgy of the Word.

The presentation of the **Creed** takes place during the week following the first scrutiny, namely, during the **third week of Lent**.

The presentation of the **Lord's Prayer** takes place during the week following the third scrutiny, namely, the **fifth week of Lent**; the Lord's Prayer can also be presented on Holy Saturday as part of the preparation rites.

For pastoral reasons, the presentations may be presented during the end of the catechumenate period. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 9.4, 21-22, 147-148, 157-163; 178-184

## **Preparation Rites**

The elect should be instructed to refrain from work and spend time in prayer and reflection on Holy Saturday, and if possible to fast. It is an option to gather with the elect on the late morning of Holy Saturday and celebrate some of the suggested rituals as presented on the Rite.

*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 185-205

## **Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation**

### **101.3.1.5. Policy :**

“Baptism by immersion is the fuller and more expressive sign of the sacrament and, therefore, provision should be made for its more frequent use in the baptism of adults. The provision of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for partial immersion, namely, immersion of the candidate’s head, should be taken into account.” *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 17

### **101.3.1.6. Policy:**

1. Any bishop or priest who baptizes an adult or a child of catechetical age should also confer confirmation. The celebration of confirmation and reception of Eucharist should not be deferred. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 14; *CIC*, Canon 885 2
2. Any exception from this policy requires consultation with the Chancery Office. Proper delegation for confirmation should be sought. (See table below following 101.6.2.5.)

This is the summit of the liturgical rites celebrated during the process of initiation. This celebration marks the sacramental initiation of the catechumens; however, it does not complete the RCIA process.

**Focus of the Celebration:** the elect receive pardon for their sins, are

strengthened by the Holy Spirit, and share in Christ's sacrifice.

### **Time of Celebration:**

The elect receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. For pastoral reasons, the celebration might take place outside the Easter Vigil, preferably Easter Sunday or during a Mass of one of the Easter Sundays.

If Christian initiation is celebrated outside the usual times indicated in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, the texts for the Sunday Masses of the Easter Season, including the readings from the Easter Vigil may be used. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 6, 23-24, 26-27, 206-243, 247

4. **Period of Mystagogy or Post-Baptismal Catechesis:** This period extends through the entire Easter Season and beyond. This is the time to deepen the commitment to Christian discipleship, spiritual growth, a deeper understanding and participation in the sacraments. The neophytes, those just initiated, continue their journey to become missionary disciples, as they integrate to the community that has nurtured their faith thus far. Pastors and parish communities should be especially mindful of this important time as an opportunity to further engage the neophytes in the engaging work of the parish. All efforts should be made to accompany the neophyte through prayer and personal involvement in the parish itself. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 6, 7, 25, 244-251

## **101.3.2 Adaptations in the Initiation Process for Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age (RCIA, Part II, chapter 2)**

Part II, section 1 of the *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* offers guidelines to adapt the process for children of catechetical age. The rite provides the adaptations for children who "have attained the age of reason and are of catechetical age." *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 252

The law prescribes that a child older than seven years is presumed to have the use of reason. *CIC*, Canon 97 §2. However, the law does not give an upper age limit on those who are considered children of catechetical age, but the age of fourteen is recommended as the standard upper age because anyone “who has completed the fourteenth year of age can freely choose to be baptized in the Latin Church or in another ritual Church *sui iuris*.” *CIC*, Canon 111 §2.

Additionally, the law prescribes that “The baptism of adults, at least of those who have completed their fourteenth year, is to be deferred to the diocesan bishop” *CIC*, Canon 863.

The initiation of children must be understood within the larger context of the parish community. The parish staff will want to work closely with parents to provide a healthy and effective environment within which young children can grow in age, wisdom, and grace. Parish efforts in children’s faith formation, youth and family ministry and liturgical catechesis need to be coordinated in order to provide a consistent and well-integrated vision and pastoral approach.

### **101.3.2.1 Policy:**

In accordance to the archdiocesan procedures concerning the protection of minors, children older than 7 years and younger than 14 years should not participate in the same formation gatherings as adults who are part of the Rite of Christian Initiation process. Nevertheless, these children and/or adolescents shall participate in the liturgical rites of the process together with the adult catechumens and candidates.

### **101.3.2.2. Policy:**

The permission of at least one parent (or legal guardian) is **required** before a child is accepted into the catechumenate and before the child is initiated into the Church. Pastoral caution should be used and the Chancery should be consulted if the parents disagree. When the child is over the age of 7 years, the parents are strongly encouraged to participate in the process of

formation to whatever extent they are able and to offer the support and example the children need. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 254

**1. Unbaptized children older than 7 years and younger than 14 years. (children catechumens)**

Children of catechetical age are old enough to hear God's call and to respond to it with faith proper to their age. Their Christian initiation requires conversion that is personal, yet congruent with their age.

### **101.3.2.1.1 Policy:**

**Unbaptized children older than 7 years and younger than 14 years will be welcomed to the RCIA process**, with adaptations as indicated in Part II, chapter 1 of the rite. Since they have attained the age of reason, they are able to respond with faith proper to their age. Therefore, their initiation is not based, as is the case with infants, entirely on the commitment of the parents and the faith of the Church, rather it requires an authentic desire to be apprenticed into Christian discipleship. They will receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil with the older catechumens. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no.252-253; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no.18

#### **Procedures:**

- 1. As is the case with anyone on the journey towards Christian initiation, children older than seven and adolescents younger than fourteen**, need the community to mentor them and support them. The journey is gradual and takes place within the community of the faithful, who renew their own conversion as they reflect anew on the paschal mystery, and as they witness with their lives to the unbaptized children.
- 2. Parents support the children**, not only with their consent, but also with their involvement. The example and prayers of peers play a very

important role in the process.

3. **The process should be adapted to their spiritual progress** and not be limited to a school year calendar paradigm of September to May. Although pastorally it can be more challenging to offer a year around process, this model offers the children and/or adolescent a more authentic experience of Christian initiation.
4. **The process is marked by distinct periods of time and liturgical rites**, which are to be observed as follows:
5. **Period of Pre-Catechumenate, Inquiry and Evangelization:** During this period the children and/or adolescents desiring the sacraments inquire about the Christian life and the Church (ministers and assembly) evangelize with words and actions. After initial conversion, and the desire to enter into a relationship with God, this stage ends with the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens.

### **Rite of Acceptance**

This liturgical rite should be celebrated two or three different times during the year, preferably in Ordinary Time. They can celebrate the Rite of Acceptance at the same time as the adult seekers or at a ceremony with a smaller congregation outside of Mass.

*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 257; 260-276

2. **Period of Catechumenate:** This is an extended period of time when the children catechumens receive catechetical instruction. Parish sacramental preparation of children being fully initiated should be distinct from and complementary to faith formation received in the parish faith formation offerings, youth ministry or the Catholic school.

The length of this period varies according to the needs of the individual. Some elements presented in the catechesis of baptized children could be used with children catechumens. During this period the children participate in the liturgy of the Word at Sunday Mass and, with the help of pastoral ministers, choose their godparents to present them to the Church

on the day of the Rite of Election.

It is often the case that unbaptized children attending Catholic schools receive the catechumenal preparation in the school setting. Nevertheless, they should be introduced into the Christian life of a parish from the beginning of the catechumenate, so that the sacraments of initiation and Mystagogy be celebrated and lived in the context of a parish community. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 254; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 4, 19.

### **Rite of Election - optional rite**

This optional rite may be celebrated with children catechumens, especially after an extended catechumenate. The Rite of Election, presided by the bishop or his delegate, is celebrated on the First Sunday of Lent. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 6, 7, 9.3, 12, 19, 29, 277-290.

3. **Period of Purification and Enlightenment:** This a shorter period begins after the Rite of Election and ends at the Easter Vigil with the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation. During this time the children and/or adolescents enter a time of reflection and spiritual preparation, which is characterized by the celebration of the scrutinies and the presentations, both adapted to their age. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 6, 7, 138-140

### **Scrutinies**

The scrutinies are to be celebrated on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent using the lectionary readings for year A; the gospel readings for those Sundays in year A present the catechumens with three narratives of encounter with Christ, which will provide them with the essence of their reflection. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 20, 30, 141-146, 150-156; 164-177; 258; 291-302

### **Presentations**

The presentation of the Creed takes place during the week following the

first scrutiny, third week of Lent, and the presentation of the Lord's Prayer takes place during the week following the third scrutiny, fifth week of Lent; the Lord's Prayer can also be presented on Holy Saturday as part of the preparation rites. The prayers should be adapted to the level of understanding of the catechumen. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 21-22, 147-148, 157-163; 178-184; 258

### **101.3.2.1.2 Policy:**

Unbaptized children older than 7 years and younger than 14 years shall receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. They receive these sacraments in the same sequence as the adult catechumens. Confirmation shall not be omitted in catechumens of this age group. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 215, 304-329; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 18-19; *CIC*, Canon 842 §2

### **Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation**

#### **Procedures:**

1. Baptism by immersion is the fuller and more expressive sign of the sacrament (see policy 101.3.1.5). *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 17; *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 213
2. Children and adolescents shall receive **Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist at the same celebration**, preferably at the Easter Vigil. After being sacramentally initiated, these young neophytes will continue their journey of faith formation with their peers. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 304-329; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 18-19.
3. The bishop or priest who baptizes these younger catechumens will also be the minister of Confirmation.
4. **Period of Mystagogy or Post-Baptismal Catechesis:**

This period extends through the entire Easter Season and beyond. This is the time to deepen the commitment to Christian discipleship, spiritual growth, a deeper understanding and participation in the sacraments. The

guidelines for this period will be the same as for adults with adaptations necessary for the age of the neophytes.

Parish faith formation or youth ministry, depending on the age of the neophyte, will be instrumental in the period of Mystagogy.

They should be invited to attend the Confirmation of their peers, and should asked to renew their baptismal promises along with the entire congregation.

- 2. Children older than 7 years and younger than 14 years, who have been baptized Catholic, have not been catechized, and who are seeking First Eucharist (Catholic children candidates)**

#### **101.3.2.2.1 Policy:**

Candidates older than 7 years and younger than 14 years, who have been baptized in the Catholic faith as infants, but are not catechized and who are seeking First Eucharist shall be welcomed into the RCIA process so that they may complete their Christian initiation with Confirmation and Eucharist.

#### **101.3.2.2.2 Policy:**

The needs of children preparing for reception into the full communion of the Roman Catholic Church may be similar to children who are catechumens. Consequently, their formation and preparation for confirmation and Eucharist may be accomplished together with children who are catechumens.

#### **Procedure:**

1. These candidates shall be welcomed into the RCIA process as outlined in section 101.3.3. – Ministry to Baptized but Uncatechized Catholic Adults, with the adaptations indicated in policy 101.3.3.2 below.

2. Since these candidates are uncatechized, the length of formation corresponds to that of the catechumenate period of the unbaptized. (See procedure c. 2 under policy 101.3.1.1.) They may be catechized by attending formation sessions with their peers in the parish faith formation program; however additional sessions might be necessary.
3. The community should be involved in the process of completion of initiation of these candidates by witnessing the Gospel and by sustaining them with prayers. The parents in particular have a unique role as they will continue to nurture the candidates' faith after initiation is completed.
4. Sponsors present the candidates to the community during the liturgical rites and accompany the candidates during their formation. The baptismal sponsors may be selected as sponsors at this time, provided they still meet the requirements for a sponsor (See policy 101.2.2.1).
5. The following liturgical rites should be celebrated with these candidates:

### **1. Rite of Welcoming - optional rite**

The adaptations for children do not include a rite of welcoming; however it could be celebrated for pastoral reasons. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 411-433

### **2. Rite of Sending - optional rite**

The adaptations for children do not include a rite of sending; however it could be celebrated for pastoral reasons. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 434-445;

Combined Rite - *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* nos. 530-546

### **3. Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion**

This rite is intended for celebration in communities where there are no catechumens. The adaptations for children do not include a rite of calling

the candidates to continuing conversion; however it could be celebrated for pastoral reasons. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 446-458; Combined Rite - *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* nos. 547-561

#### 4. **Penitential Rite (Scrutiny for the Candidates)**

This rite is intended to mark the Lenten period of spiritual reflection and purification. Although this rite is similar to the scrutinies of the unbaptized, it is a separate and distinct rite. It is to be celebrated on the second **Sunday of Lent** and for the candidates only. **The scrutinies for the catechumens and the penitential rite for the candidates should not be combined.** *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 459-472, 303

5. **Sacrament of Reconciliation:** the candidates should make a sacramental confession prior to receiving Confirmation and Eucharist. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 27

### 101.3.2.2.3 **Policy:**

These candidates (baptized, uncatechized Catholic children older than 7 years and younger than 14 years) **shall complete their sacramental initiation maintaining the traditional sequence of Confirmation before Eucharist.** See *CIC*, Canon 842 §2 They shall receive Confirmation at the same liturgy in which they receive the Eucharist. Any exception from this policy requires consultation with the Chancery Office. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* nos. 308, 409; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 19, 35

#### **Procedures:**

#### **Completion of Sacramental Initiation:**

1. The candidates who are older than 7 years and younger than 14 years **will complete their sacramental initiation by receiving Confirmation and Eucharist during the same liturgy**, preferably the Easter Vigil.
2. It is also possible for these baptized, but uncatechized Catholic young

candidates to complete their sacramental initiation during one of the Easter Sunday Masses. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 308, 409

3. The USCCB has provided a combined rite for initiation when catechumens and candidates are present, provided that a clear distinction is made during the celebration between the catechumens and the candidates.

#### **101.3.2.2.4 Policy:**

If the Bishop cannot be the celebrant, the parish pastor must obtain a special delegation to confirm these Catholic candidates from the Chancery. *CIC*, Canon 884 §1

#### **Procedures:**

1. The Bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation for these candidates –baptized, uncatechized Catholics. See *CIC*, Canon 884. For reasonable pastoral circumstances, a delegation of faculty to confirm can be requested from the Chancellor by the priest. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 562-565; 566-594; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 26 and 28.
2. Children older than 7 years and younger than 14 years, who have been baptized in a non-Catholic Christian faith, and who are seeking Reception into Full Communion with the Catholic Church. (Non-Catholic Christian children candidates)

#### **101.3.3.3.1 Policy:**

Children older than 7 years old and younger than 14 years who were baptized in a non-Catholic Christian ecclesial community, whose baptism is considered valid, are welcomed to the RCIA process so that “no greater burden than necessary is required for the establishment of communion and unity.” *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 473.

According to the rite, these children and adolescents are referred to as **candidates**. Additionally, the term ‘**convert**’ should be reserved strictly

for those converted from unbelief to Christian belief (the unbaptized) and should never be used to refer to those baptized Christians who are received into full communion of the Catholic Church.

*National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 2.

### **101.3.3.3.2 Policy:**

1. Baptism in a non-Catholic Christian community is considered valid when the ritual includes use of water, by pouring or immersion, and pronouncement of the Trinitarian formula are used: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
2. Refer to this list of Christian ecclesial communities whose baptisms are recognized as valid as well as those whose baptisms are not considered valid. (on-line link)

### **101.3.3.3.2 Policy:**

The RCIA process is adapted for the baptized Christian children and/or adolescent candidate as prescribed in Part II, nos. 1, 4, and 5 of the rite. As the rite states, "No burden greater than necessary (Acts 15:28) is required for the establishment of communion.," *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 400-504; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 30

#### **Procedures:**

Refer to section §101.3.3 of this document - **Adaptations in the Initiation Process for the Baptized but Uncatechized Adults (Catholic or Non-Catholic) seeking Confirmation and Eucharist (RCIA, Part II, Ch. 4)**

1. By virtue of their baptism, these candidates already are in relationship with the Church in a unique manner, one which sets them apart from the unbaptized. The rite clearly expresses that, "Anything that would equate candidates for reception [into full communion with the Catholic church] with those who are catechumens is to be absolutely avoided." *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 483, 565

**Therefore, the length of catechetical formation and preparation for these candidates will vary and should be determined according to their needs.**

1. If the children/adolescents have received minimal Christian upbringing, they may participate in as much of the catechumenal formation as necessary, but should not take part in the rites intended exclusively for the catechumens (such as the rite of acceptance, the scrutinies, etc.). They may receive catechetical formation with their peer.
2. If the children/adolescents have had Christian upbringing, they only need formation in the Catholic tradition and should not take part in a catechumenate parallel to that of the unbaptized. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 30 and 31.
3. The community should be involved in the process of reception of these children/adolescents into full communion with the Catholic Church by witnessing the Gospel and by sustaining them with prayers.
4. Sponsors (See policy no. 101.2.2.1) present the children/adolescents candidates to the community during the liturgical rites and accompany the candidates during their formation. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 483
5. For pastoral reasons, and depending on the extent of the catechesis previously received by these candidates, one or more of the optional rites may be celebrated as outlined in Part II, no. 4 of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and with the adaptations for children provided in no. 2.
6. The following liturgical rites should be celebrated with these candidates:

**1. Rite of Welcoming - optional rite**

The adaptations for children do not include a rite of welcoming; however it could be celebrated for pastoral reasons. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 411-433

**2. Rite of Sending - optional rite**

The adaptations for children do not include a rite of sending; however it could be celebrated for pastoral reasons. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 434-445; Combined Rite – *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*,

### 3. **Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion**

This rite is intended for celebration in communities where there are no catechumens. The adaptations for children do not include a rite of calling the candidates to continuing conversion; however it could be celebrated for pastoral reasons. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 446-458; Combined Rite – *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 547-561

### 4. **Penitential Rite (Scrutiny for the Candidates)**

This rite is intended to mark the Lenten period of spiritual reflection and purification. Although this rite is similar to the scrutinies of the unbaptized, it is a separate and distinct rite. It is to be celebrated on the second **Sunday of Lent** and for the candidates only. **The scrutinies for the catechumens and the penitential rite for the candidates should not be combined.** *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 459-472, 303

### 5. **Sacrament of Reconciliation:** the candidates should make a sacramental confession prior to receiving Confirmation and Eucharist. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 36

### 6. **Rite of Reception**

The reception of children older than 7 years old, who have been baptized in non-Catholic Christian denomination, into full communion with the Catholic Church follows the same guidelines that are found in section §101.3.4 of this document, which corresponds to Reception of Baptized Christians into full communion. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. part II, chapter 5

#### **101.3.3.3.3 Policy:**

The Rite of Reception can be celebrated within Mass or outside Mass. The sequence of Confirmation before Eucharist (*CIC*, Canon 842 §2) shall be observed as these candidates are received into full communion with the Catholic Church. **Any exception from this policy requires consultation with the Chancery Office.** *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 409;

## **Procedures:**

33. **Reception within Mass:** The reception of candidates into full communion should normally take place during Mass, preferably a Sunday Mass with the parish community. The rite instructs that a Mass other than the Easter Vigil is the preferred time for the Rite of Reception. This is the case in order to avoid any confusion between these baptized Christian candidates and the catechumens and to avoid any perceived triumphalism in the welcoming of these candidates into the Catholic Eucharistic community. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 475; 487-498; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 32, 33.

### **Combined Rite Celebration at the Easter Vigil of the Sacraments of Initiation for the Catechumens and the Rite of Reception into Full Communion of the Catholic Church:**

If for pastoral reasons, there are catechumens to be baptized, and candidates to be received into full communion at the Easter Vigil, the USCCB has provided a combined rite for initiation, provided that a clear distinction is made during the celebration between the catechumens and the Christian candidates. Combined Rite – *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 562-594; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 34.

The candidate to be received should always be consulted about the preferred form of reception, during the Vigil, or at a Sunday Mass. In any case, when the Rite of Reception takes place within Mass, the candidates make a profession of faith, are confirmed, and receive the Eucharist during the same Mass. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 475.2, 564

1. **Profession of Faith:** those baptized in a non-Catholic Christian faith are not required to make an abjuration of heresy, but simply a profession of faith by reciting the Nicene Creed with the assembly and then affirming to believing in all the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 479, 491

2. **Confirmation:** Although the Bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation, a priest receives faculties at the time of his ordination, to confirm baptized Christians within the Rite of Reception. The confirmation of these candidates should not be delayed. *CIC*, Canon 885 2; *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 481; 493-494; 588; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 35.
3. **Eucharist:** The Rite of Reception into Full Communion respects the traditional sequence of the sacraments of initiation of Confirmation before Eucharist. Therefore, the candidates should not be admitted to the Eucharist until they are confirmed. The newly received, and if possible all present, should receive Holy communion under both species. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 483, 498; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 35.
4. **Reception outside of Mass:** if for pastoral reasons, the rite of reception is celebrated outside Mass, a Liturgy of the Word should be celebrated. In order to emphasize the connection between reception into the Catholic Church and Eucharistic communion, it is important that the newly received have the opportunity to participate in a Mass as soon as possible after the rite of reception. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 476; 499-504

### **Children younger than 7 years old whose Parents are Received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church**

1. **Baptized children younger than the catechetical age become members of the Church at the same time as their parents do.** The child's original baptism is recorded in the parish baptismal register with a note of their being joined to the Catholic Church through the act of their parents' initiation. (See *Archdiocese of Baltimore Handbook for Sacramental Records*, p. 13)
2. **Children of parents being received into the full communion of the Catholic Church are ordinarily received into the Church with their parents.** The reception of children and adults into full communion needs to be recorded both in the baptismal and the confirmation registers.

### **101.3.3 Adaptations in the Initiation Process for the Baptized but Uncatechized Adults (Catholic or Non-Catholic) seeking Confirmation and Eucharist (RCIA, Part II, chapter 4)**

#### **101.3.3.1. Policy:**

Adults who were baptized, before their 7<sup>th</sup> birthday, in the Catholic faith or in another Christian community, but have not received catechetical formation, and seek the sacraments of Confirmation or Eucharist shall participate in some of the elements of the catechumenal process for the unbaptized. The preparation and liturgical rites are outlined in part II, chapter 4 of the Rite. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 400-472

##### **1. Period of Evangelization**

##### **Rite of Welcoming - optional rite**

Meaning of the Rite: Those who have been baptized but are not catechized and who seek to complete their Christian initiation or be received into full communion with the Catholic Church are welcomed by the Church as candidates for Confirmation and Eucharist. The candidates acknowledge themselves “to be part of the community because they have already been marked with the seal of baptism”

*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 405

**Time of Celebration:** This liturgical rite should be celebrated two or three different times during the year, preferably in Ordinary Time. As is the case with the Rite of Acceptance, celebrating this Rite at the beginning of advent is a common misconception that has no theological or historical foundation. The Rite of Welcoming may be celebrated within Mass or outside of Mass, so long as this is not a private ceremony for the RCIA group only.

**Combined Rite:** For pastoral reasons, this rite may be combined with the Rite of Acceptance into the order of Catechumens, provided a distinction is made between the baptized candidates and the unbaptized. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 411-433; Combined Rite - *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 505-529

## **2. Period of Catechesis**

Although many of the elements of the catechumenal process are valuable to the candidates, they do hold a unique status as having been baptized, and therefore some of the rites shall not be celebrated with the candidates.

### **Focus:**

This period of time corresponds to the catechumenate of the unbaptized. The catechetical preparation can take considerable time and should be adapted to the needs of the candidates. Solid catechesis, immersion in the Christian life, participation in certain liturgical rites [not the same as for the catechumens], and apostolic works are the focus of this period. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 400-403, 408

### **NO DISMISSAL / Catechesis:**

During this period, the candidates participate in Sunday Mass. Through baptism they already share in the priestly office of Christ and as such should not be dismissed after the homily. Catechetical sessions can include reflection on the Sunday readings. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 81-89.

**Non-parochial Settings:** If the catechetical formation takes place in non-parochial setting, such as a school's campus ministry, the candidates should be introduced into the parish community life as soon as possible, in order that the sacraments of initiation and Mystagogy be celebrated and lived in the context of a parish family.

### **Rite of Sending - optional rite**

This rite is to be celebrated at the parish at a suitable time prior to the Rite of Recognition by the Bishop and for the Call to Continuing Conversion (see below). It may be celebrated as a Combined Rite with the Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 434-445; Combined Rite – *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 530-546.

### **Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion**

This rite is intended for celebration in communities where there are no catechumens. It is celebrated at the beginning of Lent and the presider is the pastor of the parish. It can also be celebrated as Combined Rite with the Rite of Election of the Catechumens having the Bishop as celebrant. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 446-458;

Combined Rite – *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 547-561

3. **Period of Purification and Enlightenment:** This shorter period coincides with Lent ends at the Easter Vigil with the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation.

**Focus:** During this time the candidates enter a reflective time of spiritual preparation characterized by penitential services. Preparation for the sacrament of Reconciliation also takes place during this period. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 408

### **Penitential Rite (Scrutiny for the Candidates)**

This rite is intended to mark the Lenten period of spiritual reflection and purification as the candidates enter the last stage of preparation prior to receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. Although this rite is similar to the scrutinies of the unbaptized, it is a separate and distinct rite. It is to be celebrated on the second Sunday of Lent and for the candidates only. ***The scrutinies for the catechumens and the penitential rite for the candidates should not be combined.*** *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 459-472

Sacrament of Reconciliation: the candidates should make a sacramental confession prior to receiving Confirmation and Eucharist. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 27, 36

Completion of Sacramental Initiation:

### **101.3.3.2 Policy:**

These candidates (baptized, uncatechized Catholic adults) shall complete their sacramental initiation maintaining the traditional sequence of Confirmation before Eucharist. *CIC*, Canon 842 §2. Any exception from this policy requires consultation with the Chancery Office.

*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 409; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 2, 35

**Focus of the Celebration:** This constitutes the high point of the liturgical rites celebrated with the candidates.

**Baptized in the Catholic faith:** These persons will make a profession of the faith into which they were baptized.

**Baptized in non-Catholic Christian traditions:** These persons are not required to make an abjuration of heresy, but simply a profession of faith by reciting the Nicene Creed with the assembly and then and then affirming to believing in all the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims.

This celebration marks the completion sacramental initiation of the baptized Catholic candidates or the reception into full communion with the Catholic Church for those baptized in other Christian traditions; however, **it does not complete the RCIA process.**

**Time of Celebration:** The candidates shall receive Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. For pastoral reasons, the celebration might take place outside the Easter Vigil, preferably Easter Sunday or during a

Mass of one of the Easter Sundays. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 409

**Combined Rite:** The USCCB has provided a combined rite for initiation when catechumens and candidates are present, provided that a clear distinction is made during the celebration between the catechumens and the candidates.

### **Minister of Confirmation**

**For baptized, uncatechized Catholic:** the Bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. For reasonable pastoral circumstances, a delegation of faculty to confirm can be requested to the Chancellor by the priest. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 562-565; 566-594; *CIC*, Canon 884 §1; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 26 and 28.

**For those baptized in non-Catholic Christian Faiths,** priests in the Archdiocese of Baltimore are granted faculties from the Archbishop to be the ministers of Confirmation for these candidates, including children older than 7 years. Those with faculties to confirm are bound to exercise it.

*CIC*, Canons 883§2; 885§2; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 35

## **101.3.4. Reception of Baptized non-Catholic Christians into Full Communion with the Catholic Church (RCIA, Part II, chapter 4)**

### **101.3.3.1 Policy:**

Adults and children older than 7 years old who were baptized in a non-Catholic Christian ecclesial community, whose baptism is considered valid, are welcomed to the RCIA process so that “no greater burden than necessary is required for the establishment of communion and unity.” *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 473.

According to the rite, these adults are referred to as **candidates**. Additionally, the term ‘**convert**’ should be reserved strictly for those

converted from unbelief to Christian belief (the unbaptized) and should never be used to refer to those baptized Christians who are received into full communion of the Catholic Church; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 2.

**Procedures:**

1. Baptism in a non-Catholic Christian community is considered valid when the ritual includes use of water, by pouring or immersion, and pronouncement of the Trinitarian formula are used: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
2. Refer to Appendix A for a list of Christian ecclesial communities whose baptisms are recognized as valid as well as those whose baptisms are not considered valid.

### **101.3.3.3 Policy:**

The Rite of Reception can be celebrated within Mass or outside Mass. The sequence of Confirmation before Eucharist (*CIC*, Canon 842 §2) shall be observed as these candidates are received into full communion with the Catholic Church. Any exception from this policy requires consultation with the Chancery Office. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* nos. 409; 473-504;

*National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 35

**Procedures:**

1. **Reception within Mass:** The reception of candidates into full communion should normally take place during Mass, preferably a Sunday Mass with the parish community. The rite instructs that a Mass other than the Easter Vigil is the preferred time for the Rite of Reception. This is the case in order to avoid any confusion between these baptized Christian candidates and the catechumens and to avoid any perceived triumphalism in the welcoming of these candidates into the Catholic Eucharistic community. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 475; 487-498; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 32, 33

## **Combined Rite Celebration at the Easter Vigil of the Sacraments of Initiation for the Catechumens and the Rite of Reception into Full Communion of the Catholic Church:**

If for pastoral reasons, there are catechumens to be baptized, and candidates to be received into full communion at the Easter Vigil, the USCCB has provided a combined rite for initiation, provided that a clear distinction is made during the celebration between the catechumens and the Christian candidates. Combined Rite – *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 562-594; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 34

The candidate to be received should always be consulted about the preferred form of reception, during the Vigil, or at a Sunday Mass. In any case, when the Rite of Reception takes place within Mass, the candidates make a profession of faith, are confirmed, and receive the Eucharist during the same Mass. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 475.2, 564

1. **Profession of Faith:** those baptized in a non-Catholic Christian faith are not required to make an abjuration of heresy, but simply a profession of faith by reciting the Nicene Creed with the assembly and then affirming to believing in all the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 479, 491
2. **Confirmation:** Although the Bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation, a priest receives faculties at the time of his ordination, to confirm baptized Christians within the Rite of Reception. The confirmation of these candidates should not be delayed. *CIC* 885 §2; *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, nos. 481; 493-494; 588; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 35
3. **Eucharist:** The Rite of Reception into Full Communion respects the traditional sequence of the sacraments of initiation of Confirmation before Eucharist. Therefore, the candidates should not be admitted to the Eucharist until they are confirmed. The newly received, and if possible all present, should receive Holy communion under both species. *Rite of Christian Initiation of*

*Adults*, 483, 498; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 35

4. **Reception outside of Mass:** if for pastoral reasons, the rite of reception is celebrated outside Mass, a liturgy of the Word should be celebrated. In order to emphasize the connection between reception into the Catholic Church and Eucharistic communion, it is important that the newly received have the opportunity to participate in a Mass as soon as possible after the rite of reception.  
*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, 476; 499-504

### **101.3.5 Adaptations in the Initiation Process for Baptized Eastern Catholics seeking Reception into Full Communion with the Catholic Church (section within RCIA Part II, chapter 4)**

In the Catholic Church there are different liturgical traditions or rites, which differ in liturgy, ecclesiastical discipline, and spiritual heritage. There are six families of liturgical traditions in the Catholic Church, one family is in the Western Church and five in the Eastern. In the Western Catholic Church, the Latin or Roman rite is the most common, and in the Eastern Catholic Church there are twenty-three rites which belong to one of the following five families: [the *CCEO* lists five traditions, while the *CCC* lists them as six]

#### **Western Catholic Church**

1. Roman (Latin)
2. Ambrosian (Milanese)
3. Mozarabic
4. Bragan
5. Catholic Orders Rites

#### **Eastern Catholic Church**

1. Alexandrian (Coptic)
2. Antiochian (West Syriac or Maronite)
3. Armenian

4. Chaldean (East Syriac) and
5. Constantinopolitan (Byzantine)

*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, nos. 2-3

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1203

*Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium [CCEO]*, no. 28

### **101.3.5.1. Policy:**

**For** Christians baptized in the Eastern Church who wish to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church, **NO liturgical rite is required, but simply a profession of faith.** *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 474

### **101.3.5.2. Policy:**

Eastern Catholic Churches are self-governing particular churches *-sui iuris-* in union with the Bishop of Rome; therefore those who have been baptized in an Eastern Catholic Church listed below are not candidates for reception into the Latin (Roman) Western Catholic Church. They are already Catholic and should retain their own rite. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, no. 4 §3

### **Eastern Catholic Churches Grouped According to Liturgical Tradition**

#### **Alexandrian (Coptic)**

1. Coptic Catholic Church
2. Ethiopian Catholic Church
3. Eritrean Catholic Church [established Jan. 2015]

#### **Antiochian (West Syrian)**

1. Maronite Catholic Church
2. Syriac Catholic Church
3. Syro-Malankara Catholic Church

#### **Armenian**

1. Armenian Catholic Church

### **Chaldean (East Syrian)**

1. Chaldean Catholic Church
2. Syro-Malabar Catholic Church

### **Constantinopolitan (Byzantine)**

1. Albanian Catholic Church
2. Belarusian Catholic Church
3. Bulgarian Greek Catholic Church
4. Byzantine Church of Croatia, Serbia & Montenegro
5. Greek Byzantine Catholic Church
6. Hungarian Greek Catholic Church
7. Italo-Albanian Catholic Church
8. Macedonian Catholic Church
9. Melkite Greek Catholic Church
10. Romanian Church United with Rome
11. Russian Catholic Church
12. Ruthenian Catholic Church
13. Slovak Byzantine Catholic Church
14. Ukrainian Catholic Church

### **101.3.5.3. Policy:**

A baptized Eastern Catholic cannot transfer to the Latin Catholic rite simply by virtue of having received sacraments in the Latin Church frequently or for a prolonged period of time. *CIC*, Canon 112 §2

### **101.3.5.4. Policy:**

A transfer of enrollment from an Eastern Catholic Church to the Latin Western Church can take place in special circumstances or with permission from the Apostolic See. However, such a transfer is not considered under any circumstances part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. No liturgical rite is necessary. *CIC*, c. 112 §1

## **Procedures:**

### **Transfer from an Eastern Catholic Church to the Latin Western Catholic Church is possible when:**

1. The baptized Eastern Catholic has obtained permission from the Apostolic See
2. The baptized Eastern Catholic marries a Latin rite Catholic and desires to transfer to the Latin rite.
3. Children under the age of fourteen baptized in an Eastern Catholic Church, whose parent legitimately transferred to the Latin rite.

### **101.3.6 Adaptations in the Initiation Process for Baptized Eastern Orthodox Christians (non-Catholics) seeking Reception into Full Communion with the Catholic Church (section within RCIA Part II, chapter 4)**

There are several groups of non-Catholic Eastern Churches. The most common among them is the Orthodox Church. The non-Chalcedonian Church, the Syrian Jacobite, and the Assyrian Church of the East are also Eastern Churches which are not in communion with Rome.

#### **101.3.6.1. Policy:**

When a baptized Eastern non-Catholic Christian seeks reception into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, “no liturgical rite is required, but simply a profession of faith.” Confirmation **is not** celebrated because the Catholic Church believes that the Chrismation given at the time of Baptism in the Eastern Orthodox churches is a sacrament. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 474; *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, no. 25; *CIC*, Canon 864; *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium [CCEO]*, no. 897

## **Procedures:**

1. A baptized catechized Eastern Orthodox adult or child over the age of 7 years is received into communion with the Catholic Church by making a profession of faith. **Confirmation is omitted.**

2. Eastern Orthodox Christians who enter into full communion with the Catholic Church should only receive minimal formation.  
*National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 30

### **101.3.6.2. Policy:**

When a baptized Eastern Orthodox non-Catholic) becomes Catholic, he or she is received into the parallel Eastern Catholic Church, not into the Latin/Roman (Western) Church. In special circumstances, a request can be made to the Apostolic See requesting a transfer of rite from an Eastern Catholic to a Roman Catholic; *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 474; *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, no. 25; *CIC*, Canon 864; *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium [CCEO]*, no. 35, 36

#### **Procedures:**

1. For example if a Coptic Orthodox person wants to become Catholic, he or she is received into the Coptic Catholic Church. Ideally the ceremony of reception would take place in the Coptic Catholic Church. Even if the ceremony takes place in a Roman Catholic Church, the person is still enrolled in the corresponding Eastern Catholic Church.
2. If a request for transfer to the Roman Catholic Church is requested, refer to section 101.3.4.2 of this policy. Such a transfer is possible when:
  1. The newly received Eastern Catholic has obtained permission from the Apostolic See;
  2. The newly received Eastern Catholic marries a Latin rite Catholic and desires to transfer to the Latin rite; or
  3. Children under the age of fourteen baptized in the Orthodox (Eastern non-Catholic) Church, whose parent legitimately transferred to the Latin rite.

### **101.3.6.3. Policy:**

Eastern Orthodox Christians who are received into an Eastern Catholic Church can receive the Eucharist at a Roman Catholic Church without requesting a transfer of rites.

*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 474; *Unitatis Redintegratio* no. 15.3

## **101.4 PROPER PASTORAL TERMS**

### **101.4.1. Policy:**

The term “*catechumen*” is only to be used for the unbaptized who have been admitted into the Order of Catechumens. Baptized Christians being received into full communion of the Roman Catholic Church are referred to as “candidates.” *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 2 The term “elect” refers to catechumens that have celebrated the Rite of Election.

## **101.5. SPECIAL PASTORAL CONCERNS FOR CATECHUMENS AND CANDIDATES**

**There are a number of pastoral issues that arise in the ministry of Christian initiation of Adults. The following policies and procedures are intended to assist pastoral ministers in resolving some of the most common issues.**

101.5 Policy:

Catechumens are in union with the Church in a unique way, and as such they receive certain prerogatives proper to Christians, in particular concerning marriage and burial. *CIC*, Canon 206; *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 47; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 8

### **101.5.1. Christian Marriages Involving Catechumens**

#### **101.5.1.1 Catechumens Desiring / Requesting Marriage in**

## the Church

### 101.5.1.1.1 Policy:

Provided there are no impediments to marriage, catechumens are invited to celebrate their marriage in the Church. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 47; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 10, *CIC*, Canon 1058, *CCEO* 778; See also Archdiocesan policies on the Sacrament of Marriage, 400, XXX on-line link.

### 101.5.1.1.2. Policy:

When a catechumen marries a Catholic, the Catholic party is required by Church law to request a dispensation (disparity of cult). *CIC*, Canon 1124; see also the policy on the Sacrament of Marriage for the Archdiocese of Baltimore 402.7.5

#### Procedures:

1. If two catechumens marry or a catechumen marries a non-Catholic Christian or unbaptized person, **no dispensation needs to be granted for the catechumen**. However the prenuptial questionnaire should still be completed and filed with other parish marriage records. It should be noted on the prenuptial questionnaire that the marriage involved a catechumen. Where there is doubt about the proper procedure, consult the Judicial Vicar.
2. The same kind of pastoral care should be provided for catechumens preparing for marriage as for baptized Christians who marry in the Church.
3. The marriage should be celebrated at a Liturgy of the Word, not at the Eucharistic Liturgy. Chapter III of the *Rite of Marriage* is to be used.
4. The marriage should be properly recorded in the parish marriage record book and in the parish book of catechumens.

## **101.5.1.2. Catechumens or Candidates who are previously married**

### **101.5.1.2.1. Policy:**

1. Unbaptized adults who need a declaration of nullity from a previous marriage, are free to participate in the Rite of Acceptance and enter the Order of Catechumens;
2. Previously married catechumens cannot, however, be accepted for the Rite of Election until the declaration of nullity is granted;
3. Previously married candidates who need a declaration of nullity cannot be accepted for the Rite of Calling candidates to Continuing Conversion;
4. During initial interviews, pastoral staff should be diligent in procuring information necessary pertaining to any previous marriage in order to determine if a declaration of nullity is needed; and
5. It is of utmost importance that pastoral staff communicates clearly with catechumens or candidates who need of a declaration of nullity, concerning the delay in receiving the Sacraments of Initiation until the declaration of nullity has been received.

### **101.5.1.2.2. Policy:**

1. A catechumen or a candidate who is divorced and not remarried, and does not intend to remarry, does not need a declaration of nullity to be accepted for the Rite of Election, the Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion, or, consequently, to celebrate the sacraments of initiation.
2. However, it is important for pastoral staff to communicate clearly to the catechumens or candidates that a future marriage in the Church, without a declaration of nullity is not possible.
3. Consultation on this matter and presentation of marriage cases should be made to the Archdiocesan Tribunal which is prepared to give special attention to these cases.

### **101.5.1.3. Married Catechumens or Candidates Who Need Validation of Marriages**

#### **101.5.1.3.1. Policy:**

When a marriage must be validated in the Church, the validation ceremony shall take place prior to celebrating the initiation sacraments. One cannot enter the full sacramental life of the Church unless one is completely free to receive the sacraments. It is pastorally advisable to validate the marriage in the church as early in the process as possible. The only exception involves the Pauline Privilege case and the Judicial Vicar or Chancellor must be consulted for the proper procedure.

### **101.5.1.4. Marriage Preparation for Catechumens or Candidates**

#### **101.5.4.1. Policy:**

When a catechumen or candidate is engaged to be married, the initiation process shall not be rushed merely to allow for initiation before the marriage is celebrated.

#### **Procedures:**

1. Because Christian marriage is a serious vocation, its preparation should not be neglected or weakened because of one's participation in the catechumenate. It may be more appropriate to concentrate on the preparation for Christian marriage and extend the catechumenate.
2. It is always pastorally prudent and wise to refer the newly married couple to their respective pastoral leader who can then assume the responsibility for seeing that the non-baptized person, catechumen, or candidate has the opportunity to complete their initiation.
3. Pastoral ministers are reminded that candidates do not need to participate in an entire catechumenal process, as would catechumens. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, 30

## 101.5.2. Christian Burial of Catechumens and Candidates

### 101.5.2.1 Policy:

Christian burial can be granted catechumens and candidates. *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, no. 47; *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 8, 9; *CIC* 1183§1, §3; See also the Funeral Rites Policy of the Archdiocese of Baltimore 201.5

#### Procedures:

The funeral liturgy, including the funeral Mass, should be celebrated as usual, omitting only language referring directly to the sacraments which the catechumen or candidate has not received in the Catholic Church. In view of the sensibilities of the immediate family of the deceased catechumen or candidate, the funeral liturgy outside Mass may be celebrated. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate* 9

## 101.5.2. Abbreviated Form of the Order of Initiation

### 101.1.3. Policy:

The integrity of the Church's rites is to be maintained. When extraordinary circumstances prevent the catechumen from completing all the steps of the catechumenate; when the catechumen has reached a depth of Christian conversion and a degree of religious maturity; or when it is a question of disability, advanced age or serious illness (RCIA nos. 381-389); the parish may receive the Archbishop's permission to use the abbreviated form of the order of initiation as given in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, Part II, no. 2, by contacting the Office of Worship or the Chancery Office.

## ***The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults for Unbaptized Adults and Children older than 7 years old (See section §101.3.1)***

Rite or Celebration (References are from the RCIA ritual text)	Who Presides	When	Where
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<b>Rite of Acceptance</b> adults <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 18, 28, 41-74 children <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 260-276	priest  or deacon (if outside of Mass)	As many times as needed (preferably on Ordinary Time) throughout the year at a Sunday Mass or celebration of the Word	Parish Church
<b>Celebrations of the Word of God</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 81-89* At Mass with dismissal <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , no. 67	priest, deacon or designated lay minister	Throughout the Period of the Catechumenate	Church, chapel or meeting place for the catechumenate
<b>Minor Exorcisms</b> [optional] <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 90-94*	priest, deacon or designated lay minister	During the Period of the Catechumenate (beginning or end of a meeting, or when a special need arises for an individual)	Church, chapel or meeting place for the catechumenate
<b>Blessing of the Catechumens</b> [optional] <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 95-97*	priest, deacon or designated lay minister	During the Period of the Catechumenate (end of a celebration of the Word or catechetical meeting, or when a special need arises for an individual)	Church, chapel , meeting place for the catechumenate or other appropriate place

<b>Anointing of the Catechumens</b> [optional] <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 98-103* [Oil of Catechumens]	priest or deacon	After the homily during a celebration of the Word, Could be celebrated privately for pastoral reasons	Church, chapel or meeting place for the catechumenate
<b>Rite of Sending of the Catechumens for Election</b> [optional] <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 106-117	priest	At a suitable time prior to the Rite of Election during a Mass or celebration of the Word	Parish church
<b>Rite of Election</b> Adults <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 19, 29, 118-137 children <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 277-290	bishop or his delegate	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent during Mass or If outside of Mass, readings for 1 <sup>st</sup> Sun of Lent are used	Cathedral church or a parish church, or, as indicated by the bishop

<p><b>Scrutinies</b></p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 20, 30, 141-146,</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Scrutiny <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 150-156</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Scrutiny <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 164-170</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Scrutiny <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 171-177</p> <p>children <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 291-302</p>	<p>priest or deacon</p>	<p>*using readings Year A</p> <p>1<sup>st</sup> Scrutiny -3<sup>rd</sup> Lent Sunday</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Scrutiny- 4<sup>th</sup> Lent Sunday</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Scrutiny - 5<sup>th</sup> Lent Sunday or during the corresponding weeks preferably during Mass</p>	<p>Parish church</p>
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<p><b>Presentations</b></p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 21, 147 / children (<i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, no. 258</p> <p>Creed [Apostles or Nicene]</p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 148, 157-163</p> <p>Lord's Prayer</p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 149, 178-184</p>	<p>priest, deacon or designated lay minister</p>	<p><b>*Creed</b> presented during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of Lent &amp;</p> <p><b>*The Lord's Prayer</b> presented during the 5<sup>th</sup> week of Lent. (May be transferred to the Period of Catechumenate)</p>	<p>Parish church, chapel or meeting place for the catechumenate</p>
<p><b>Preparation Rites</b></p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 22, 185-205</p>	<p>priest or deacon</p>	<p>Morning of Holy Saturday</p>	<p>Parish church, chapel or meeting place for the catechumenate</p>

<p><b>Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation</b></p> <p><b>Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist adults</b></p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 23, 206-243</p> <p><b>Children</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 304-329</p> <p>*children should be fully initiated at the Vigil, i.e. receive all 3 sacraments</p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, no. 18</p>	<p>bishop or priest</p> <p>**the same minister baptizes and confirms, therefore a deacon may not baptize at the Vigil</p>	<p>Easter Vigil normative</p> <p>(if necessary, Easter Sunday, or the Easter Octave or Season, or on an appropriate Sunday)</p>	<p>Parish church</p>
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***Rites for Adults Baptized Catholic but Uncatechized seeking Confirmation & Eucharist and for Adults Baptized in other Christian Communities seeking Full Communion with the Catholic Church.(See also Policy 101.3.2)***

<b>Rite or Celebration (References are from the RCIA ritual text)</b>	<b>Who Presides</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>
<p><b>Rite of Welcoming</b></p> <p>[optional]</p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 411-433</p>	<p>priest or deacon</p>	<p>As many times as needed (preferably on Ordinary Time) throughout the year at a Sunday Mass or celebration of the Word</p>	<p>Parish church</p>

<p><b>Celebrations of the Word of God</b>  <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 81-89  NO Dismissal during Mass</p>	<p>priest, deacon  or  designated lay minister</p>	<p>Throughout the Period of the Catechumenate</p>	<p>Church, chapel or meeting place for the catechumenate</p>
<p><b>Presentations</b>  <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 21, 147 / children <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, no. 258  Creed [Apostles or Nicene]  <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos.148, 157-163  Lord's Prayer  <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 149, 178-184</p>	<p>priest, deacon  or designated lay minister</p>	<p><b>*Creed</b> presented during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of Lent &amp;  <b>*The Lord's Prayer</b> presented during the 5<sup>th</sup> week of Lent.  (May be transferred to the Period of Catechumenate)</p>	<p>Parish church, chapel or meeting place for the catechumenate</p>
<p><b>Rite of Sending of the Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop and for the Call to Continuing Conversion</b>  [optional]  <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 434-445</p>	<p>priest</p>	<p>At a suitable time prior to the Call to Continuing Conversion during a Mass or celebration of the Word</p>	<p>Parish church</p>

<b>Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 446-458	Pastor of the parish or the properly designated priest	Beginning of Lent or six weeks before the Rite of Reception	Parish church
<b>Penitential Rite</b> (Scrutiny) <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 459-472 DISTINCT from the Scrutinies for the Catechumens	Priest	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent (or during that week)	Parish church
<b>Sacrament of Reconciliation</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i> , nos. 27, 36	Priest	Sometime before the candidate receives Confirmation and Eucharist	Parish church

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 28, 29, 35</p> <p><b>For baptized Catholics:</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 409, 491, 493- 498</p> <p><b>For those baptized in other Christian faiths:</b> (see reception into full communion) <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 481-484; 487-503</p> <p><b>Baptized Children</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 309; 322-329</p> <p>They must complete their initiation at the same celebration (Confirmation and Eucharist) <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, no. 308</p>	<p>Priest with appropriate faculties to confirm</p> <p><b>For baptized Catholics:</b> -priest must obtain permission from the Chancery</p> <p><b>For those baptized in other Christian faiths:</b> In Archdiocese of Baltimore faculties to confirm candidates baptized in other Christian faiths, are granted through diocesan faculties</p>	<p><b>For Baptized Catholics</b> Easter Vigil</p> <p><b>For those baptized in other Christian faiths:</b> At the Sunday Eucharist throughout the year, preferably NOT at the Easter Vigil, <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 32-33; Or outside Mass for serious reason.</p>	<p>Parish church</p>
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## ***Rite of Reception of Baptized Christian Candidates seeking Full Communion with the Catholic Church***

<b>Rite or Celebration (References are from the RCIA ritual text)</b>	<b>Who Presides</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>
<p><b>Rite of Reception of Baptized Christians into Full Communion of the Catholic Church</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, no. 473-504</p> <p>*profession of faith *Confirmation *Eucharist</p> <p><b>Children baptized in other Christian faiths.</b> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, no. 309; 322-329</p> <p>They must complete their initiation at the same celebration (Confirmation and Eucharist) <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, no. 308</p>	<p>priest</p> <p>In Archdiocese of Baltimore faculties to confirm candidates baptized in other Christian faiths, are granted through diocesan faculties</p>	<p>At the Sunday Eucharist throughout the year, preferably NOT at the Easter Vigil, <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 32-33 Or outside Mass for serious reason.</p>	<p>Parish church</p>
<p>Those baptized in an <b>Eastern Catholic Church</b> <b>DO NOT</b> participate in the Rite of Reception They are already Catholic</p>			

<p>Those baptized in an Eastern non-Catholic Church</p> <p>*Confirmation IS OMITTED</p> <p>*They are received into the parallel Eastern Catholic Church</p> <p>NOT into the Latin Rite</p>			
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### ***Combined Rites for the Unbaptized Catechumens and for the Baptized Catholic and Non-Catholic Candidates***

<b>Rite or Celebration (References are from the RCIA ritual text)</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>
<p>Combined Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumenate and Rite of Welcoming of Candidates</p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 505-529</p>	priest or deacon	<p>As many times as needed (preferably on Ordinary Time) throughout the year at a Sunday Mass or celebration of the Word</p>	Parish Church
<p>Combined Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election &amp; Candidates for Recognition [optional]</p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 530-546</p>	priest	<p>At a suitable time prior to the Rite of Election / Call to Continuing Conversion during a Mass or celebration of the Word</p>	Parish church

<p>Combined Rite of Election of Catechumens and Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion [Baptized Catholics and non-Catholics Candidates] <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 547-561)</p>	<p>bishop or his delegate</p>	<p>Normally takes place on First Sunday of Lent</p>	<p>Cathedral church or a parish church, or, if necessary, in some other suitable and fitting place</p>
<p><b>Scrutinies for Catechumens and Candidates MUST NOT BE COMBINED</b>  <b>Catechumens celebrated three scrutinies, on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent</b>  <b>Candidates celebrate one Scrutiny on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent</b></p>			

<p>Sacraments of Initiation</p> <p>*Baptism, Confirmation &amp; Eucharist for Catechumens</p> <p>*Confirmation &amp; Eucharist for Baptized Catholic Candidates</p> <p>and</p> <p>the Rite of Reception into Full Communion with the Catholic Church for non-Catholic Candidates [profession of faith, Confirmation &amp; Eucharist]</p> <p><i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate</i>, nos. 562-594</p>	<p>bishop or priest</p> <p>**the same minister baptizes and confirms, therefore a deacon may not baptize at the Vigil</p> <p>**priest with appropriate faculties to confirm</p> <p><i>For baptized Catholics:</i> priest must obtain permission from the Chancery</p> <p><i>For those baptized in other Christian faiths:</i> The faculty to confirm candidates baptized in other Christian faiths is granted through priestly faculties from the Archdiocese of Baltimore</p>	<p>Easter Vigil (if necessary, Easter Sunday, during the Easter Octave or Season, or on an appropriate Sunday)</p>	<p>Parish church</p>
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## 101.6.2. Minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation

### 101.6.2.4. Policy:

When a priest receives a Christian of catechetical age into full communion with the Catholic Church, he receives from the law itself (*CIC*, Canon 883 §2) the faculty to confirm the candidate for reception and is obliged to use it for the sake of the candidate. (*CIC*, Canon 885 §2) The confirmation of such candidates for reception should not be deferred, nor should they be admitted to the Eucharist until they are confirmed. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, no. 35 Any exception from this policy requires consultation with the Chancery Office. See Faculties 802.1., herein; See table below following 101.6.2.5.

### 101.6.2.5. Policy:

According to the norms issued by the Holy See, a priest must obtain special delegation in order to validly confirm a baptized Catholic, even if the candidate was uncatechized and participated in the catechumenate. In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, this is obtained from the Office of the Chancellor. *National Statutes for the Catechumenate*, nos. 28 and 29; *CIC*, Canon 883 §2; See table below

### Confirmation Delegation Chart

Minister	Confirmation Candidate	Episcopal delegation to Confirm needed?	Authority
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<b>Priest</b>	Unbaptized adult or unbaptized child over the age of 7 seeking initiation into the Roman Catholic Church	NO As long as confirmation takes place during the same liturgy as baptism	<i>CIC, Canons 861 §1, 867</i> <i>National Statutes for the Catechumenate, no. 13</i> Faculties for priests of The Archdiocese of Baltimore
	Baptized Non-Catholic seeking full communion with the Roman Catholic Church	NO	

*CIC, Canons 861 §1, 883*

*National Statutes for the Catechumenate, no. 35*

Archdiocesan faculties for priests in the Archdiocese of Baltimore  
Baptized Catholic

seeking to complete sacramental initiation YES

Archbishop,

Auxiliary Bishops or Vicars General

may grant delegation *CIC, Canon 882*

*National Statutes for the Catechumenate, nos. 28-29*

1 The National Conference of Catholic Bishops NCCB adopted the name United States Conference of Catholic Bishops USCCB in July 2001.