

Celebrating the Rites and Rituals of the RCIA during the Pandemic

This document is in response to the many questions we have received from so many of you. These are recommendations that may assist you in planning these important rites and rituals in a manner that promotes their sanctity, while addressing the concerns for safety during the pandemic.

THE RITE OF ACCEPTANCE/RITE OF WELCOMING

A document on this rite was sent in Advent 2020. You can find a copy of it here <https://columbuscatholic.org/parish-resources-1>

THE RITE OF SENDING

The Rite of Sending may be done in the usual manner at the parish prior to the Rite of Election for the catechumens. The candidates should not participate in this rite as it is done as a preface to a diocesan gathering with the bishop.

At the appropriate time in the rite, you can have the catechumens sign the page for the Book of the Elect that will be presented to the Bishop at the Rite of Election (#113).

THE RITE OF CALLING THE CANDIDATES TO CONTINUED CONVERSION

The “Call” can be celebrated during a regularly scheduled weekend Mass, at a Mass during the week, or in a Liturgy of the Word service either on Sunday or during the week. This liturgy should take place the second week of Lent.

If it is decided to celebrate this rite during one of the weekend Masses, it would be most prudent to advise parishioners in advance so they may choose to attend another liturgy if they are concerned about an increase of people in the congregation. You may want to schedule this during the week if this a concern in your parish.

SCRUTINIES (INCLUDING THE PENITENTIAL RITE SCRUTINY FOR CANDIDATES)

It is most appropriate to do the scrutinies as indicated in the *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* with the following considerations:

- Traditionally, the Second Sunday of Lent has been the time to do the Penitential Rite Scrutiny for the candidates. With the “Call” now taking place that week, it would be most appropriate to celebrate the Penitential Rite on the Third Week of Lent along with the Scrutinies for the elect. The rite is fluid on this and allows this to be done “at a most suitable time” (#462).
- For the blessings-instead of laying on hands, place them over the head in blessing. The rubrics allow for this by indicating “convenience” is a reason to omit touching during the exorcism.
- Instead of the sponsors placing their hand on the shoulder of the elect during the Intercessions, they can stand behind them and place their hand above the shoulder.

- Do not have them come up individually or as a group, instead consider having them remain in their pews and stand (or kneel). If you decide to do this, have the sponsors sit behind them to facilitate the ease of the second point.

PRESENTATION OF THE CREED/PRESENTATION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

No changes or accommodations are needed.

CELEBRATING THE RITES OF INITIATION

At this time, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments has not made any decisions or declarations about Holy Week 2021 as they continue to monitor the status of the pandemic. Information will be shared when/if it arrives and how it might affect the celebration of the Easter Sacraments.



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