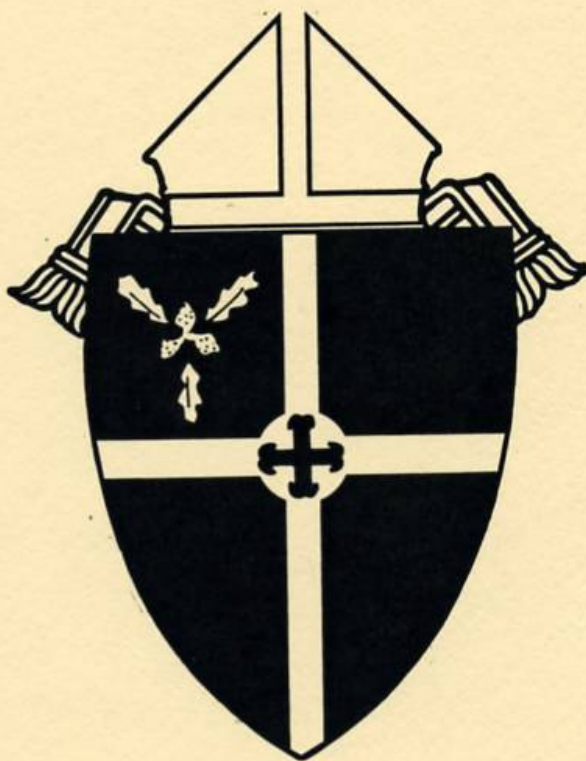


DIOCESAN POLICIES FOR SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION



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Preface and Acknowledgments

Priests and deacons are encouraged to consult their letters of faculties and the Diocesan Canonical Manual for further information beyond these policies.

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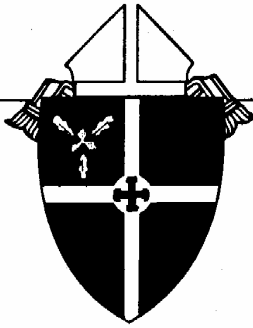
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Abbreviations

CCC	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>
CIC	<i>Code of Canon Law, Latin-English Edition, New English Translation</i>
DRE	<i>Director of Religious Education</i>
NDC	<i>National Directory for Catechesis</i>
RCIA	<i>Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults</i>
RCIC	<i>Rite of Christian Initiation of Children</i>



Diocese of Bismarck

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My dear Sisters and Brothers in the Lord:

“Jesus Christ’s death and Resurrection becomes present to us and effective for us in the liturgical life of the Church. It is the Holy Spirit, the source of the Church’s life, who draws us together through liturgical actions, the chief of which are the Sacraments.” (USCCA)¹

Our Office of Faith Formation has made this booklet on the Sacraments available for two reasons: 1) as a resource to assist us in preparing our people for the proper reception of these holy signs of grace and 2) to guide us in the appropriate ways in which they are to be administered.

Although many of our priests and deacons have been administering the Sacraments for years and preparing our people for their reception, I would ask that you please read through this booklet carefully. You will notice that there are many references to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Code of Canon Law as well as some local customs that are specific to the practice in our diocese. Our people have a right to accurate catechesis in this important area of our encounter with Christ.

With every good wish, I remain

Sincerely in Christ,

+ *Paul A. Zipfel*

Most Reverend Paul A. Zipfel
Bishop of Bismarck

(USCCA)¹ United States Catholic Catechism for Adults

Worship and Sacraments

CCC 1113-1134

CIC cc. 840-848

The church fulfills its sanctifying function in a particular way through the sacred liturgy, which is an exercise of the priestly function of Jesus Christ. (CIC c. 834)

The whole liturgical life of the church revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments (CCC 1113).

The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace [it is Christ himself who is present in them and acting through them], instituted by Christ and entrusted to the church, by which divine life is dispensed to us by the work of the Holy Spirit. (CCC 1131)

Sacraments of Christian Initiation

The sacraments of Christian initiation—**Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist**—lay the foundation of every Christian life. “The sharing in the divine nature given to men [and women] through the grace of Christ bears a certain likeness to the origin, development, and nourishing of natural life. The faithful are born anew by baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of confirmation, and receive in the Eucharist the food of eternal life. By means of these sacraments of Christian initiation, they thus receive in increasing measure the treasures of the divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity.” (CCC 1212)

- ◆ A person who has not received baptism cannot be admitted validly to the other sacraments. (CIC c. 842)
- ◆ The sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist are interrelated in such a way that they are required for full Christian initiation. (CIC c. 842 §2)
- ◆ Since the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and orders imprint a character, they cannot be repeated. (CIC c. 845)
- ◆ At all times, canonical norms and liturgical directives of the church are to be observed. No priest or other minister shall introduce innovations not approved by appropriate church authority. (CIC c. 846)

Baptism

CCC 1213-1284

CIC cc. 849-878

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”(Mt 28:19-20)

- ◆ Baptism, the gateway to the sacraments and necessary for salvation by actual reception or at least by desire, is validly conferred only by a washing of true water with the proper form of words. Through baptism men and women are freed from sin, are reborn as children of God, and, configured to Christ by an indelible character, are incorporated into the Church. (CIC c. 849)

- ◆ Baptism imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual sign which consecrates the baptized person for Christian worship. Because of the “imprinted” character, baptism cannot be repeated. (CCC 1280)

Infant Baptism

1. Since the earliest times, baptism has been administered to children, for it is a grace and a gift of God that does not presuppose any human merit; children are baptized in the faith of the church. Entry into Christian life gives access to true freedom. (CCC 1282)
2. Parents of an infant to be baptized and those who are to undertake the function of sponsor (godparent) are to be instructed properly on the meaning of this sacrament and the obligations attached to it. (CIC c. 851, §2)
3. An infant in danger of death is to be baptized without delay. (CIC c. 867, §2)
4. Although baptism may be celebrated on any day, it is recommended that ordinarily it be celebrated on a Sunday or if possible at the Easter Vigil. (CIC c. 856)
5. Infants are considered those who have not reached the age of reason, (7 years of age) and those who are not responsible for themselves. (CIC c. 852)
6. Baptism of infants should be celebrated within the first few weeks of birth. (CIC c. 867, §1)
7. While it is not customary to refuse baptism, the sacrament is to be delayed if there is not a founded hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic religion. Parents should be advised of the reason for the delay. (CIC c. 868, §1)
8. In the case of single parents or parents in an irregular marriage, baptism should not be delayed if there is a founded hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic religion.
9. In cases of pending adoption, baptism should be delayed until the adoption is finalized.
10. Care must be taken that a name foreign to Christian sensibility is not given. (CIC c. 855)
11. The pastor (or delegate) of the place where the baptism is celebrated must record the names of the baptized, the minister, parents, godparents, place and date of baptism and place and date of birth. (CIC c. 877, §1)

Godparent

1. Godparents along with the parents present the child for baptism.
2. Parents take responsibility for choosing a godparent or godparents who will serve as good examples for living the Catholic way of life. As a mark of the continuity between baptism and confirmation, a godparent may later serve as the sponsor of the child when he or she is confirmed. (CIC c. 893, §2)
3. The selection of two godparents is customary, but only one, either male or female, is required for baptism. If two godparents are chosen, one should be male and one female. (CIC c. 873)
4. A godparent must be a fully initiated Catholic (have received baptism, confirmation and Eucharist) and completed his/her sixteenth year unless the pastor makes an exception for a just cause. (CIC c. 874, §1, 2° and 3°)
5. A godparent must be a practicing Catholic leading a life in harmony with the Catholic faith and the role of godparent. (CIC c. 874, §1, 3° and 4°)
6. A godparent cannot be the parent of the infant. (CIC c. 874, §1, 5°)
7. Godparents are encouraged to participate in a parish baptismal preparation process.
8. A Christian, baptized in another faith tradition, may not serve as godparent, but may serve as a witness along with the Catholic godparent and should be recorded accordingly. (CIC c. 874, §2)
9. Pastors may allow the family to involve a number of people in the celebration. However, only one set of godparents (or godparent and witness) is recorded.

Following Baptism

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

Policy Regarding Baptismal Certificates

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in accord with the prescription of Canon 877 §3, has decreed that:

I. For children baptized after their adoption is finalized, the following information shall be entered in the parish register the:

- a) Christian name(s) of the child as designated by the adoptive parent(s).
- b) Name(s) of the adoptive parent(s).
- c) Date and place of birth.
- d) Names of the sponsor(s) [godparent(s)] selected by the adoptive parent(s);
- e) Place and date of the baptism.
- f) Name of the minister performing the baptism; and
- g) Fact of adoption but not the names of the natural parents.

A notation shall also be made in the register stating simply that the child is adopted. **The notation of adoption in the baptismal register shall not be entered in any baptismal certificate that is issued. Baptismal certificates issued by the parish for adopted children are to be no different than other baptismal certificates.**

II. For children baptized before their adoption is finalized, the following notations shall be added to the baptismal register, but only after the Adoption has been finalized:

- a) Parentheses shall be placed around the names of the natural parent(s).
- b) Name(s) of the adoptive parent(s) shall be added.
- c) Child's former surname shall also be parenthesized and the new surname added.
- d) Notation shall be made that the child was legally adopted.

A baptismal certificate issued by the parish for this child shall give only the name(s) of the adoptive parent(s), the child's new legal surname, the date and place of Baptism and the name of the minister who conferred the baptism. The name(s) of the sponsor(s) and/or witness shall not be given and **the notation of adoption in the register shall not be entered on any baptismal certificate.**

Reconciliation

CCC 1422-1498

CIC cc. 959-997

“On the evening of that day, the first day of the week,” Jesus showed himself to the apostles. “He breathed on them, and said to them: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

(John 20:19, 22, 23)

- ◆ In the sacrament of penance the faithful who confess their sins to a legitimate minister, are sorry for them and intend to reform themselves obtain from God through the absolution imparted by the same minister forgiveness for the sins they have committed after baptism and, at the same time, are reconciled with the church which they have wounded by sinning. (CIC c. 959)
- ◆ After having attained the age of discretion (age 7), each of the faithful is obliged to confess in kind and in number all serious sins at least once a year. (CIC c. 988, 989)
- ◆ To return to communion with God after having lost it through sin is a process born of the grace of God who is rich in mercy and solicitous for the salvation of all. One must ask for this precious gift for oneself and for others. (CCC 1489)
- ◆ The movement of return to God, called conversion and repentance, entails sorrow for and abhorrence of sins committed, and the firm purpose of sinning no more in the future. Conversion touches the past and the future and is nourished by hope in God’s mercy. (CCC 1490)
- ◆ The sacrament of reconciliation is a whole consisting in three actions of the penitent and the priest’s absolution. The penitent’s acts are repentance, confession or disclosure of sins to the priest, and the intention to make reparation and do works of reparation. (CCC, 1491)
- ◆ Individual and integral confession of grave sins followed by absolution remains the only ordinary means of reconciliation with God and with the church. (CCC 1497)

First Reconciliation

1. Catechesis (and celebration) for the sacrament of reconciliation is to precede First Communion and must be kept distinct by a clear and unhurried separation. This is done so that the specific identity of each sacrament is apparent and so that the child will be familiar with the Rite of Reconciliation and will be at ease with its celebration.
2. It is the responsibility of the parish community to provide catechetical formation and support for parents in the preparation of their children for first reconciliation.
3. Parents have the responsibility to participate in their own catechetical formation so that they will be able to prepare their child for this sacrament in collaboration with the parish community.
4. Parents, in consultation with the pastor and/or catechetical staff, discern the readiness of their child for the sacrament of first reconciliation.
5. Since children are celebrating this sacrament for the first time, it is imperative that they have a positive experience. Priests need to be gentle and compassionate realizing the sensitivity of the child and/or the person with special needs.
6. Sacramental notation in parish register is not necessary.

After First Reconciliation

Because continuing, lifelong conversion is part of what it means to grow in faith, catechesis for the sacrament of reconciliation is ongoing. Both children and adults have a right to continuing catechesis concerning the sacrament.

Eucharist

CCC 1322-1419

CIC cc. 897-958

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever...he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and...abides in me, and I in him.” (John 6:51, 54, 56)

- ◆ The Eucharist is the heart and the summit of the church’s life, for in it Christ associates his church and all her members with his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all on the cross to his Father; by this sacrifice he pours out the graces of salvation on his body which is the church.
- ◆ The essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper: “This is my body which will be given up for you...This the cup of my blood....” (CCC 1412)
- ◆ Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant’s union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the church as the Mystical Body of Christ. (CCC 1416)
- ◆ One who is to receive the Holy Eucharist is to abstain from any food or drink, with the exception of water and medicine for at least one hour before Holy Communion. (CIC c. 919)
- ◆ Those of advanced age or who suffer from any infirmity, as well as those who take care of them, can receive Holy Communion even if they have taken something during the previous hour. (CIC c. 919 §3)
- ◆ The church warmly recommends that the faithful receive Holy Communion when they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist; she obliges them to do so at least once a year. (CCC 1417)

First Communion

1. Every child, whether enrolled in a Catholic school, participating in a religious education program, or being home schooled, upon coming to the age of reason (age 7) will be catechized for the sacrament of the Eucharist. It is required that the child first be catechized and receive the sacrament of reconciliation before receiving the sacrament of the Eucharist.
2. It is the responsibility of the parents and those who take the place of parents, as well as the pastor, to see that children who have reached the age of reason are correctly prepared for the sacrament of the Eucharist. (CIC c. 913)
3. The Eucharist can be given to children who are in danger of death, if they are able to distinguish the Body of Christ from ordinary food and to receive Holy Communion reverently. (CIC c. 913, §2)
4. Parents are to attend a program of preparation for First Eucharist to assist them in their role as primary educators.
5. The decision as to the child's readiness to celebrate this sacrament in consultation with the pastor rests primarily with the parents, the catechist, and the parish catechetical leader.
6. The parish community should be a part of the preparation and celebration of First Eucharist.
7. Ideally First Eucharist is to be received at Sunday liturgy.
8. If First Eucharist is to be celebrated in a parish other than that of baptism, the parent must provide a certificate of baptism from the parish where the child was baptized.
9. When a child with Celiac Sprue disease makes his/her First Eucharist, the pastor must be notified so that the child may be offered a "gluten free" host (which is, in fact, low gluten) or the Eucharist only under the species of wine. (CIC c. 924)

Reception of Reconciliation and Eucharist for Persons with Developmental Disabilities

- ◆ Catholics with disabilities have the basic right to participate in the sacraments as members of the local ecclesial community. (CIC c. 213) All forms of the liturgy should be completely accessible to persons with disabilities, since these forms are the essence of the spiritual tie that binds the Christian community together. As much as possible they should also be invited to play a more active role in the liturgy and should be provided with proper training and aids to do so. In some situations, special liturgies for persons with disabilities may be appropriate.
- ◆ It is the responsibility of the pastor and parish lay leaders to make sure that the door to participation in the life of the church is always open for persons with disabilities. (CIC c. 777, §4) To that end, the physical design of parish buildings must include easy accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- ◆ The National Conference of Catholic Bishops pastoral statement: *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* provides general catechetical guidelines for the celebration of the sacraments, including the Eucharist, with persons with a variety of disabilities. Special liturgies for persons with disabilities, however, should never replace their inclusion in the larger worshiping community. Rather these liturgies should always orient the participants back to the parish celebration of the Eucharist where the fundamental encounter between Christ and his people unfolds. Parishes should provide the means for inclusion of persons with disabilities, for example, sign language interpreters, hearing devices, Braille texts, etc.

Guidelines for the Reception of Communion

For Catholics

As Catholics, we fully participate in the celebration of the Eucharist when we receive Holy Communion. We are encouraged to receive Holy Communion devoutly and frequently. In order to be properly disposed to receive Holy Communion, participants should be conscious of no grave sin and normally should have fasted for one hour. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord without prior sacramental confession except for a grave reason where there is no opportunity for confession. In this case the person is to be mindful of the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition, including the intention of confessing as soon as possible. (CIC c. 916) A frequent reception of the sacrament of reconciliation is encouraged for all.

For Our Fellow Christians

We welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Eucharist as our brothers and sisters. We pray that our common baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions which separate us. We pray that these will lessen and finally disappear, in keeping with Christ's prayer for us "that they all may be one." (John 17:21)

Because Catholics believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a sign of the reality of the oneness of faith, life and worship, members of those churches with whom we are not yet fully united are ordinarily not admitted to Holy Communion. Eucharistic sharing in exceptional circumstances by other Christians requires permission according to the diocesan bishop and the provisions of canon law. (CIC c. 844, §4)

For Those Not Receiving Holy Communion

All who are not receiving Holy Communion are encouraged to express in their hearts a prayerful desire for unity with the Lord Jesus and with one another.

For Non-Christians

We also welcome to this celebration those who do not share our faith in Jesus Christ. While we cannot admit them to Holy Communion, we ask them to offer their prayers for the peace and unity of the human family.

Home Schooling

NDC 259-60

CIC cc. 761, 779, 780

1. Since the passing on of the faith tradition is the responsibility of the whole parish community, pastors, parents and catechists must collaborate to insure that the children/young people are appropriately catechized and prepared for the reception of the sacraments.
2. Catechetical formation is the right of children and young people and can best be served when pastors, parents, and catechists offer formation appropriate to the level, development and disposition of the young person.
3. In situations where families choose to “home school” their children, it must be understood that all religious education be carried out in a way that builds unity within the church. Being a Christian is not a private matter of individual choice but rather a personal vocation within the context of the church lived out in the experience of the parish community.
4. Parents who “home school” in religion have the responsibility to participate in catechetical formation, through their parish and/or diocese, so that they will be able to prepare their child/young person for the sacraments.
5. With regard to the sacraments of reconciliation, Eucharist and confirmation “home schooling” parents are responsible for the participation of their child/young person in the immediate sacramental preparation as required or approved by the parish, through interviews for sacramental readiness, practice for sacramental celebration, appropriate initiation rites and retreats.
6. “Home schooling” parents are expected to participate in parish parent meetings and parent preparation programs for the sacraments.
7. The parish catechetical leader is to serve as a resource to parents.
8. USCCB list of recommended textbooks and other materials in compliance with the Catechism of the Catholic church are to be used in all sessions. The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, and the National Directory for Catechesis are also excellent resources for parents and catechists.

Confirmation

CCC 1285-1321

CIC cc. 879-896

The apostles in Jerusalem heard that the people of Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for the believers... Then Peter and John placed their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8:14-17)

- ◆ The sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist are so interrelated that they are required for full Christian initiation. (CIC c. 843)
- ◆ The faithful are obliged to receive this sacrament at the appropriate time; their parents and pastors are to see to it that the faithful are properly instructed to receive it and approach the sacrament at the appropriate time. (CIC c. 890)
- ◆ Confirmation, like baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian's soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once in one's life. (CCC 1317)
- ◆ A candidate for confirmation who has attained the age of reason (age 7) must profess the faith, be in the state of grace, have the intention of receiving the sacrament, and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial community and in temporal affairs. (CCC 1319)
- ◆ If confirmation is celebrated in a parish other than that of baptism, the candidate must obtain a certificate of baptism from the parish where he/she was baptized. (CIC c. 895)
- ◆ The names of those confirmed with name of minister, parents, sponsors, and place and date of conferral of confirmation are recorded in the parish register and a notation made in the baptismal register. (CIC c. 895)
- ◆ The pastor must inform the pastor of the place of baptism about the conferral of confirmation so that a notation is made in the baptismal register according to the norm of Canon 535, §2.

Confirmation Preparation

1. As the primary educators of their children, parents, as well as sponsors are to participate in the catechesis of their children for confirmation.
2. Preparation of confirmands is centered in the parish community; therefore, ideally students in Parish Religious Education Programs and Catholic school students are to be catechized together and celebrate the sacrament together.
3. According to diocesan policy the conferral of the sacrament of confirmation is between the ages of 13 and 18 years.
4. Age appropriate catechesis for confirmands to include:
 - a. the theology of confirmation
 - - as a sacrament of initiation intimately related to baptism and Eucharist;
 - - as a renewal and strengthening of one's baptismal call to bear witness to Christ and to share in the mission of the church;
 - - as a sacrament of being signed with the fullness of the Spirit;
 - b. the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian;
 - c. the role of service in the Christian life;
 - d. the rite of confirmation;
 - e. the role of sponsor;
 - f. the importance of the confirmation name.
5. Preparation of candidate for the sacrament of confirmation can include:
 - a. service projects that foster an attitude of life-long service;
 - b. an opportunity to receive the sacrament of reconciliation prior to being confirmed;
 - c. a time of retreat during which candidates may prayerfully reflect on and discern their desire to celebrate the sacrament of confirmation;
 - d. an opportunity for candidates to meet with the pastor/pastoral leader, or a member of the parish staff to discern their readiness and desire to be confirmed.
6. It is preferable that the baptismal name be chosen for confirmation or a new name be selected.
7. Those to be confirmed are to be modestly dressed for the occasion. Since the stole is a vestment and sign of ordained ministry "confirmation stoles" are not to be used.

Confirmation Sponsor

1. As far as possible a sponsor for the one to be confirmed should be present. It is for the sponsor to see that the confirmed person acts as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations connected with this sacrament. (CIC c. 892)
2. To be admitted to the role of sponsor, a person:
 - a. must be designated by the one to be confirmed, by the parents, or in their absence, by the pastor;
 - b. must be at least sixteen years old;
 - c. be a Catholic who has been confirmed;
 - d. has received Eucharist;
 - e. leads a life in harmony with the faith;
 - f. is not bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed;
 - g. and not the father or mother of the one to be confirmed. (CIC c.874)
3. It is highly recommended that the baptismal godparent be the of the sponsor for confirmation.
4. The sponsors give personal witness to the faith of the church and guidance to their candidates both before and after reception of the sacrament. Sponsors are for life.

RCIA

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

"There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, the Father of all." (Eph 4:5)

- ◆ In accord with the 1972 Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship, every parish shall have a process for the Order of Christian Initiation for Adults and for children of catechetical age, based on the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA). This process is normative for the Christian initiation of everyone including all cultural groups and persons with disabilities.

NOTE: RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults includes all information, instructions, rites and the Celebration at the Easter Vigil of the Sacraments of Initiation and of the Rite of Reception into Full Communion of the Catholic Church.

Reception into Full Communion

"Be imitators of God as his dear children. Follow the way of love, even as Christ loved you." (Eph 5:1-2)

NOTE: RCIA: Rite of Initiation of Adults, Appendix III: National Statutes for the Catechumenate: #30-37 The distinction must be made between the unbaptized who become catechumens and baptized non-Catholics who become candidates for reception into the full communion of the Catholic church.

1. Candidates (those who have already been baptized in another ecclesial community) should not be treated as catechumens.
2. Reception of candidates into the full communion should ordinarily take place at the Sunday Eucharist rather than at the Easter Vigil to avoid confusion and/or misunderstanding.
3. If celebrated at the Easter Vigil the distinction must be made between the catechumens and candidates.
4. Celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation with candidates is to be carried out prior to the celebration of the rite of reception.

RCIC

Rite of Christian Initiation of Children

“Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” (Luke 18:16)

- ◆ The Order of Christian Initiation **is to be used** for all unbaptized persons (catechumens) and baptized Christians but not Catholics (candidates) seeking reception into the full communion of the Catholic church who have reached the age of reason.
- ◆ Children of catechetical age (7 years of age or older), both catechumens and candidates, must follow in the complete adult process of initiation with adaptations to suit their age and level of understanding. (RCIA, Part II, Chapter 4)
- ◆ Those who catechize unbaptized children who are no longer infants and who have attained catechetical age should follow #252-330 from the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. This section is entitled “Christian Initiation of Children Who Have Reached Catechetical Age.”
- ◆ Since unbaptized children who have reached catechetical age are considered, for purposes of Christian initiation, to be adults (Can. 852), their formation should follow the general pattern of the ordinary catechumenate as far as possible, with the appropriate adaptations permitted by the ritual. They should receive the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil, together with other catechumens.
- ◆ Modifications of the Order of Christian Initiation are used for persons in particular circumstances:
 1. catechumens in exceptional circumstances; (RCIA, Part II, Chapter 2)
 2. persons who have reached the age of reason, whether catechumens or not, who are in danger of death but are not at the point of death. (RCIA, Part II, Chapter 3)

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

Anointing of the Sick

CCC 1499-1532

CIC cc. 998-1007

“Is any among you sick? Let him call for the presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be Forgiven.”(James 5:14-15)

- ◆ The sacrament of anointing of the sick has as its purpose the conferral of a special grace on the Christian experiencing the difficulties inherent in the condition of grave illness or old age. (CCC 1527)
- ◆ The proper time for receiving this holy anointing has certainly arrived when the believer begins to be in danger of death because of illness or old age. (CCC 1528)
- ◆ Only priests or bishops can give the sacrament of the anointing of the sick, using oil blessed by the bishop, or if necessary by the celebrating presbyter himself. (CCC 1530)
- ◆ The celebration of the anointing of the sick consists essentially in the anointing of the forehead and hands of the sick person, the anointing being accompanied by the liturgical prayer of the celebrant asking for the special grace of this sacrament. (CCC 1531)
- ◆ The special grace of the sacrament of the anointing of the sick has as its effects the:
 - a. uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole church;
 - b. strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age;
 - c. forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Reconciliation;
 - d. restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul;
 - e. preparation for passing over to eternal life. (CCC 1532)

Marriage

CCC 1601-1666

CIC cc. 1055-1165

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church... This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the Church.”(Eph 5:25, 32)

- ◆ The marriage covenant, by which a man and a woman form with each other an intimate communion of life and love, has been founded and endowed with its own special laws by the Creator. By its very nature it is ordered to the good of the couple, as well as to the generation and education of children. Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of a sacrament. (CCC 1660)
- ◆ The sacrament of matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life. (CCC 1661)
- ◆ Marriage is based on the consent of the contracting parties, that is, on their will to give themselves, each to the other, mutually and definitively, in order to live a covenant of faithful and fruitful love. (CCC 1662)
- ◆ Since marriage establishes the couple in a public state of life in the church, it is fitting that its celebration be public, in the framework of a liturgical celebration, before the priest (or a witness authorized by the church), the witnesses, and the assembly of the faithful. (CCC 1663)
- ◆ The Christian home is the place where children receive the first proclamation of the faith. For this reason the family home is rightly called “the domestic church,” a community of grace and prayer, a school of human virtues and of Christian charity. (CCC 1666)

Catholics who are preparing for marriage should contact their local parish well in advance in order to enter the parish’s preparation program.

NOTE: Each parish is to have a copy of the **“*Preparing for Marriage in the Catholic Church*”** from the Diocese of Bismarck, which provides more details for the marriage preparation process.

Holy Orders

CCC 1536–1600

CIC cc. 1008-1054

“I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands.” (2 Tim 1:6) “If any one aspires to the office of bishop, he desires a noble task.” (1 Tim 3:1) “This is why I left you [Titus] in Crete, that you amend what was defective, and appoint presbyters in every town, as I directed you.” (Titus 1:5)

- ◆ The whole church is a priestly people. Through baptism all the faithful share in the priesthood of Christ. This participation is called the “common priesthood of the faithful.” Based on this common priesthood and ordered to its service, there exists another participation in the mission of Christ the ministry conferred by the sacrament of holy orders, where the task is to serve in the name and in the person of Christ the Head in the midst of the community. (CCC 1591)
- ◆ Since the beginning, the ordained ministry has been conferred and exercised in three degrees: that of bishops, that of presbyters, and that of deacons. (CCC 1593)
- ◆ The bishop receives the fullness of the sacrament of holy orders, which integrates him into the episcopal college and makes him the visible head of the particular church entrusted to him. As successors of the apostles and members of the college of bishops, the bishops share in the apostolic responsibility and mission of the whole church under the authority of the Pope, successor of Peter. (CCC 1594)
- ◆ Priests are united with the bishops in sacerdotal dignity and at the same time depend on them in the exercise of their pastoral functions; they are called to be the bishops’ prudent co-workers. They receive from the bishop the charge of a parish community or a determinate ecclesial office. (CCC 1595)
- ◆ Deacons are ministers ordained for tasks of service of the Church; they do not receive the ministerial priesthood, but ordination confers on them important functions in the ministry of the word, divine worship, pastoral governance, and the service of charity, tasks which they must carry out under the pastoral authority of their bishop. (CCC 1596)

Those who are interested in holy orders should contact the Vocations Office.

Resources

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition, revised in accordance with the official Latin text promulgated by Pope John Paul II, USCCB, Washington, D.C., 1997.

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 1995

National Directory for Catechesis, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2005.

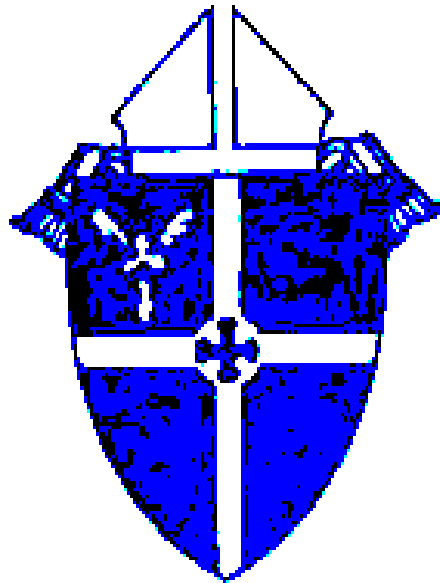
New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law, Edited by John P. Beal, James A. Coriden, Thomas J. Green. New York, N.Y., 2000.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: Study Guide, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1988.

The Rites of the Catholic Church: Volume One and Two, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1976.

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2006.

**DIOCESAN POLICIES
FOR
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