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rCIA News

Catholic Archdiocese of Perth

An Easter Blessing from the Director

I pray that the blessings of Holy Week burst forth in the joy of the resurrected life for you and your loved ones this Easter.



Ongoing Faith Formation Opportunities

Due to the Covid-19 guidelines for social isolation, all courses have been suspended until further notice. Efforts are being made to have some courses online.



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A LITTLE BIT OF ABOUT MYSELF...

One of my greatest passions is sharing my faith with others and learning from other people's experience. Coordinating RCIA in my parish for fifteen years has been a truly rewarding experience for me; one which has deepened and enriched my faith. As Director, I am looking forward to sharing my learnings and experiences with you and in turn, learning from your knowledge and experiences.

I am married and my husband and I have two daughters and a son and one grandson whom is my greatest joy. In the little spare time that I have, I enjoy reading, cooking, gardening, going to the football (Dockers will win a flag – one day), knitting and listening to music.

In my professional life, I began my career as a primary school teacher. With further studies, I moved into adult faith education as a consultant with the Catechist Service Team at Catholic Education Western Australia. I have been a sessional lecturer in Religious Education at Edith Cowan University and a Doctoral student and sessional lecturer at the University of Notre Dame Australia.

While these experiences have allowed me to share the knowledge and traditions of the Catholic faith, I have always felt that most rewarding in my own faith journey has been my involvement in RCIA as I have had the

privilege of walking side by side with people of all ages and cultural backgrounds.

My hope as Director is that I can continue to build on the good work of assisting parishes by providing the necessary training, formation and resources so that you may guide your enquirers more confidently on their conversion journey. My aim is for all parishes to work collaboratively, assisting one another to become welcoming parishes who open their doors when those who are seeking to find God knock. I believe that such a parish is truly blessed because it understands its' mission of evangelisation.

I am also look forward working with you all and to to have conversations on how best to support one another within our roles.

God bless
Carmel

For Liturgies and other valuable prayer resources to help in this time of crisis go to liturgy@perthcatholic.org.au



tholic faith tradition.

Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus,
I believe that You are
present in the Most Holy
Sacrament.

I love You above all
things, and I desire to
receive You into my
soul.

Since I cannot at this
moment receive You
sacramentally,
come at least spiritually
into my heart.

I embrace You as if You
were already there
and unite myself wholly
to You.

Never permit me to be
separated from You.

Amen.



Archdiocese has received
from the Prime Minister and
the State Government have
led to the closure of our
churches, due to the Covid 19
crisis.

As well, we have received
directions from Pope Francis
on how the ceremonies of
Holy Week must be
conducted in the countries
where religious celebrations
have been suspended. It has
been with sadness that these
measures have had to be
taken as the Archdiocese is
also committed to working
with the authorities to limit the
impact of the virus on the
people of our nation.

In this time of crisis, our Elect
and Candidates might be
feeling anxious about their full
initiation into the Church.
Please help put them at ease.

As described in the RCIA
document while the Rite
names Easter as ideal
/preferred time for full
initiation of the Elect and
candidates (RCIA 8,17)) it
also states that “for pastoral
reasons needs of a more
serious nature, it is lawful to
arrange the schedule for the
entire rite of initiation
differently (RCIA 26-30).

of
the diocese decide whether
and when, as circumstances
warrant, the entire rite of
Christian initiation be
celebrated outside the usual
times” (RCIA 26,34).

For the sake of public health,
the Easter Vigil and the rites
of Initiation for the Elect and
the Reception into the
Catholic Church have to be
suspended, until the crisis
abates. The Archbishop will
determine, in time, the most
appropriate Sunday later in
the year for these rites to be
celebrated as near to the end
of the crisis as possible.

*Taken from advice given by
Bishop Don Sproston
Auxiliary Bishop of Perth*

What should I do now that I can't go to Mass?

In this time when we are
unable to gather as a
community to celebrate the
Eucharist, how can we keep
Sunday holy?.

Here are some ideas for you
and your family.

Reception into the Church suspended at Easter

...the covid 19 crisis

- ❖ Participate in Mass online.
- ❖ Set a dedicated time aside in personal and family prayer.
- ❖ Reflect on and pray with the Sunday Readings.
- ❖ Pray that all communities work together to eradicate Covid 19.
- ❖ Pray for the efforts of medical teams, for those caring for the victims of the virus, and for those who have died.
- ❖ Pray the Rosary.
- ❖ Make an Act of Spiritual Communion (see prayer)



What do RCIA teams do with the elect now that baptisms are postponed?

In this time of physical isolation, we continue to form the seekers not with more classes but with a true training, an apprenticeship, in how Christians live when faced with adversity.

The social distancing guidelines for Covid-19 have disrupted the initiation of the Elect and the full initiation of candidates at Easter. And now, we're feeling a little panicked. What in the world are we going to do with our elect as we await the time when we can initiate them?

What's most pressing on your mind at this time about your Elect? What are you trusting them to do in the coming weeks and months? How will you help them do it?

TeamRCIA online resource suggests ...

This is the time to look at the formation principles of ongoing initiation process and apply those principles to this unique situation.

Do not to simply schedule more classes to be delivered digitally.

Instead, let's ask ourselves the purpose of formation in the Christian life and how the church envisions a process for that formation. So in this time of physical isolation, we continue to form the seekers in how Christians live when faced with adversity.

What does the Christian life look like for the Elect?

The RCIA tells us that we are supposed to provide "pastoral formation and guidance aimed at training [the seekers] in the Christian life" (RCIA 76). The rite then goes on to tell us what the Christian life looks like. Disciples of Jesus practice four types of Christian behavior.

Here are some examples of ways you can pastorally form and guide your elect, your catechumens, candidates, and, indeed, your whole parish community at this time.

1. Word

Reflect on and ponder the teaching of the church as revealed by the God's incarnate Word over the course of the liturgical year (RCIA 75.1).

~ Reflect on the Sunday readings together as a household.

~ Read messages from popes.

2. Community

Because we support one another and serve one another, we are able to keep our hopes set on Christ during difficult times. We do this together through faith in the power of the Holy Spirit. We continuously reconcile with one another by asking and offering forgiveness. The rite says that when we do this, and when the seekers follow our example, "they also taste the joy that God gives without measure (RCIA 75.2).

~ Practice forgiveness

Because we are all forced to stay at home during the pandemic, tensions can rise. Suggest ways they can practice forgiveness in their households.

~ Examination of Conscience

Teach or remind the elect how to examine their conscience.

~ Tour the Vatican Museums

Encourage your elect and candidates to explore one or more of the free virtual tours of the Vatican Museums.

~ Set up a Netflix watch party

Watch a spiritually uplifting movie and discuss elements of the values highlighted. Some movies to watch include:

- *The Pursuit of Happyness*
- *My Life as a Zucchini*
- *Mary Poppins Returns*
- *The King's Speech*
- *Miracle*
- *Same Kind of Different*

3. Worship

The most powerful means of formation that we have is the liturgical life of the church. While we cannot form our seekers through Sunday Eucharist in communities that are under quarantine, we can still worship. Our buildings are closed, but the church is open. Our households are small churches where we can continue to pray and worship as we do in community on Sundays. (RCIA 75.3).

~ Plan a household foot washing for Holy Thursday

Plan for domestic church (home) worship for all of Holy Week. See Liturgy.perthcatholic.org.au for adapted rites and liturgies.

~ Pray the Liturgy of the Hours

A simple way for households to mark the hours of the day is the pray the Lord's Prayer at morning, at noon, and in the evening

~ Set up a home altar

Guide your elect and candidates about how to set up a prayer space.

4. Witness

We never cease to spread the Gospel, even if we cannot physically connect with one another. Through digital communication, financial support, and even volunteering for safe activities, we can continue to serve those most in need, bringing them the good news. they desperately long for.

~Donate

Give to organisations that help those who are more drastically impacted by the shutdown.

~ Reach out to those on the peripheries
Volunteer to a group who put together carepacks for families and individuals impacted by the shutdown. For example St Vincent de Paul.

How will you help your Elect and candidates do this?

SOME USEFUL ARTICLES

RCIA Process

TeamRCIA

teamrcia.com

Six steps to move your RCIA process from good to great
<http://www.cam.org.au/Portals/52/RCIA/Presenters%20Notes%20-%20Wagner%20-%20RCIA%20Process.pdf>

Theology Library RCIA

<http://theolibrary.shc.edu/rcia.htm>

Holy Week

Essential Guide to the Triduum

<https://bustedhalo.com/ministry-resources/walking-through-the-triduum>

Mystagogy

Mystagogia when there have been no Baptisms

<https://teamrcia.com/2020/03/rcia-mystagogy-when-there-have-been-no-baptisms>

Mystagogy-in-the-rcia-is-easier-than-you-think-and-more-challenging

<https://teamrcia.com/2018/04/mystagogy-in-the-rcia-is-easier-than-you-think-and-more-challenging/>

A step by step guide to Mystagogy

<https://teamrcia.com/2007/10/a-step-by-step-guide-to-mystagogy/>

Parish Practice: Help with the first steps! Paul Turner!

<http://paulturner.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Tablet-mystagogy.pdf>

Successful Mysytagogy

<https://paulturner.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/mystagogy.htm>



The Rite of Election

The Church believes that no-one comes to faith without being called by God – God initiates, God calls and God converts.

On Thursday 5 March the annual Rite of Election was celebrated at St Mary's Cathedral. This year saw 65 Catechumens received as Elect, as well as 34 Candidates be formally recognised.

The Liturgy of the Word ceremony was celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Donald Sproxton, who was joined by Vicar General Fr Peter Whitely, Episcopal Vicar for

Clergy Fr Brian McKenna, Cathedral Dean Rev Dr Sean Fernandez and assisted by Permanent Deacon Trevor Lyra.

Addressing the catechumens and candidates, Bishop Sproxton spoke of the uniqueness that makes every person's journey of faith so special and inspiring. He said, "It is through the hearing of those stories that we come to know and love God at work within us."

He went on to say that there are some beautiful moments ahead as the catechumens and candidates progress

towards the Easter Vigil when they will celebrate their Baptism and will be fully initiation into the Church.

"We rejoice with you", he said, "and we pray earnestly for you as you come near to the great celebration of the victory of Christ over sin and death in the Easter Vigil."

"We are your brothers and sisters in the faith – my prayer is that we grow in faith together," Bishop Sproxton concluded.

Taken from the Record. March 29/20

