

Rite of Acceptance Into the Order of Catechumens and Rite of Welcome of Baptised Candidates

Assembling publicly for the first time, the candidates who have completed the period of the pre-catechumenate declare their intention to the Church and the Church in turn, carry out its apostolic mission, accept them as persons who intend to become its members.

[RCIA 41]



OFFICE OF
**CHRISTIAN
INITIATION**

Catholic Archdiocese of Perth

Structure of the Rite

1. Receiving the inquirers

- Greeting
- Opening Dialogue with Inquirers and Sponsors
- Opening dialogue with Candidates and Sponsors
- Inquirers First Acceptance of the Gospel
- Invitation to Candidates to Live the Baptismal Call
- Affirmation by Sponsors and Assembled Community
- Signing of The Cross; Signing of The Senses
- Invitation to Celebrate the Word of God

2. The Liturgy of the Word *incudes*

- Presentation of a Bible or Missal
- Intercessions for the Catechumens
- Prayer over Catechumens and Candidates
- Dismissal of Catechumens

3. Liturgy of The Eucharist

Bibliography

The Roman Ritual (2003)

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. St Pauls Publications, Strathfield N.S.W.

Terry Wade. Editor (2005)

The Parish Companion to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. James Goold House Publication, Melbourne.

INTRODUCTORY RITE

Suggested options for the Introductory Rite

- The **(unbaptised) catechumens**, with sponsors, and members of the Parish community gather in the **foyer or outside the Church**.
- The **(baptised) candidates**, with sponsors, and members of the Parish community, **sit in the front pews** of the Church. [RCIA 48]
- The celebrant with some members of the Parish community go to greet the group outside and lead them to the sanctuary steps.
- The celebrant may invite the group in the foyer to come forward.
- An appropriate hymn may be sung during this procession of the catechumens into the Church.

Greeting

Celebrant In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
All Amen.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
All And with your spirit.

RECEIVING THE INQUIRERS AND CANDIDATES¹

[RCIA 49]

Celebrant My brothers and sisters, this is truly a joyous day. Today, we welcome new inquirers into the catechumenate. These people are seeking full membership into the Catholic Church. These adults have not yet been baptised; they have begun their journey to full membership with the Church with our parish RCIA Team. Over the coming months, they will prepare for their initiation into the Christian faith by Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. Today they are making an initial commitment to continue this journey by becoming part of the Catechumenate process.

Celebrant Addresses Assembly

[The Parish Companion p.87]

Standing at the threshold of a new life in the Church, both the unbaptised catechumens and the baptised candidates will be welcomed within our Parish community.

And so my friends are you willing to pray for, encourage and welcome these candidates as they continue their journey of faith?

All We are.

¹

Choose one of the options on page 3 in which to bring forth the Catechumens and Candidates.

OPENING DIALOGUE WITH CATECHUMENS

[RCIA 50]

[The celebrant invites the Sponsor to introduce the Catechumen to the Parish community]

Celebrant Sponsors would you please introduce your candidate to those of the community gathered here this morning.

Sponsor: I have much pleasure in introducing [Name] to you, who is seeking acceptance into the Catechumenate.

Celebrant Welcome
What do you ask of God's Church?

Enquirers Faith

Celebrant What does faith offer you?

Enquirers Eternal life.

[Celebrant invites the Candidates and Sponsors to join the Catechumens and Sponsors on the Sanctuary Steps.]

OPENING DIALOGUE WITH CANDIDATES²

[The Parish Companion p.87]

Celebrant We also have seated in the front pews a number of Christians who by virtue of their Baptism, now wish to complete their Christian initiation to be received into full communion of the catholic Church.

[The celebrant invites the Sponsor to introduce the Candidates to the Parish community]

Celebrant Sponsors would you please introduce your candidate to those of the community gathered here this morning.

Sponsor I have much pleasure in introducing [Name].to you, who is seeking acceptance into the Catechumenate.

RCIA 35 The manner of acting or praying is intentionally left undetermined..., so that ministers, according to their prudent pastoral judgement, may accommodate the Rite to the circumstances of the candidates and others who are present.

Celebrant What do you ask of God's Church?

Candidate I ask your welcome and support so that I may know the Lord more deeply and live my baptism with you as a full member of the Catholic Church.

Celebrant What does this period of formation offer you?

Candidate A fuller share in the life of the Church.

CATECHUMENS' FIRST ACCEPTANCE OF THE GOSPEL³

[RCIA 52 Option A]

Celebrant God gives light to everyone who comes into this world; though unseen, he reveals himself through the works of his hands, so that all people may learn to give thanks to their creator.

You have followed God's light and the way of the Gospel now lies open before you. Set your feet firmly on that path and acknowledge the living God, who truly speaks to everyone. Walk in the light of Christ and learn to trust in his wisdom. Commit your lives daily to his care, so that you may come to believe in him with all your heart.

This is the way of faith along which Christ will lead you in love towards eternal life. Are you prepared to begin this journey today under the guidance of Christ?

Candidate I am.

³ RCIA 51 The Candidates' First Acceptance of the Gospel may be replaced by the Rite of Exorcism 70-72]

INVITATION TO CANDIDATES TO LIVE THEIR BAPTISMAL CALL WITH THE CHURCH

[The Parish Companion p. 8 8]

Celebrant Those who you who seek to complete your Christian initiation, are you prepared to listen to the apostles' instruction, gather with us for prayer, and join us in the love and service of others?

Candidates We are.

AFFIRMATION BY THE SPONSORS AND THE ASSEMBLY

[RCIA 53]

Celebrant Sponsors, you now present these candidates to us; are you, and all who are gathered here with us, ready to help these candidates find and follow Christ?

Sponsor We are.

Celebrant And I ask you members of the assembly: do you welcome our candidates and promise to be a support and living sign of Christian faith to them?

All We are.

With hands joined, the celebrant says:

[The Parish Companion p.88]

Celebrant Let us pray:
Gracious God, so many journeys of faith, all of them unfinished, begin to intertwine today. We thank you for the new life you bring us. As we walk our pilgrim way together make us a strength to each other and sign of faithfulness to all we meet.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All We Praise you, Lord, and we bless you.

SIGNING OF THE INQUIRERS WITH THE CROSS

[RCIA 54 -56; Option B, The Parish Companion p.89]

Celebrant Dear candidates, your answers mean that you wish to share our life and hope in Christ. To admit you as catechumens I now mark you with the sign of Christ's cross and call upon your sponsors to do the same. The whole community welcomes you with love and stands ready to help you.

[Celebrant and Sponsor trace a cross on the forehead of the catechumens]

SIGNING OF OTHER THE SENSES⁴

[RCIA 56]

Celebrant The Signing is a beautiful prayer and reminds the assembly to practice the graces they already receive.

The celebrant may invite Sponsors and to Sign the Senses following his instruction.

Or

The celebrant may prefer to Sign the Senses of the catechumens and candidates himself.

Celebrant Receive the sign of the cross on your ears, that you may hear the voice of the Lord.

Receive the sign of the cross on your eyes, that you may see the glory of God.

Receive the sign of the cross on your lips, that you may respond to the word of God.

Receive the sign of the cross over your heart, that Christ may dwell there by faith.

Receive the sign of the cross on your shoulders, that you may bear the gentle yoke of Christ.

⁴

Pastoral sensitivity must be shown for personal space, as people may not wish to be physically touched. Particular care should be taken for signing the heart. It is advisable to sign the shoulder area.

Receive the sign of the cross on your hands, that you may do the work of the Lord.

Receive the sign of the cross on your feet, that you may follow in the footsteps of Jesus our Shepherd.

I sign you with the sign of eternal life in the name of the Father, and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen.

SIGNING OF THE CANDIDATES WITH THE CROSS

Celebrant Candidates step forward now once again with your sponsors and receive once more the Sign of The Cross which first claimed you at your baptism.

[celebrant and Sponsor trace a cross on the forehead of the candidates]

Celebrant [Name] Receive this cross on your forehead as a reminder of your baptism into Christ's saving death and resurrection. May the Lord touch every part of your life so that His way may become your way for it is Christ Himself now who strengthens you with this sign of His love.

All Christ will be your strength. Learn to know Him and follow Him.

INVITATION TO THE CELEBRATION OF THE WORD⁵

[RCIA 61-63]

PRESENTATION OF A BIBLE OR MISSAL *(Optional)*

[RCIA 64; The Parish Companion p.90]

After the Homily celebrant offers the gift of a Bible or Missal to the Catechumens and Candidates

Celebrant [To the Catechumens]
Receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

⁵ At this point this includes, the first reading, psalm, the second reading, verse before to the Gospel, the Gospel and the homily.

Catechumen Amen or Thank you

Celebrant [To the Candidates]
Continue to grow in the life of the Gospel.

Candidate Amen or Thank you

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE CATECHUMENS AND CANDIDATES

[RCIA 65]

Celebrant These catechumens and candidates, who are our brothers and sisters, have already travelled a long road. We rejoice with them in gentle guidance of God who has brought them to this day. Let us pray that they may press onwards, until they come to share fully in our way of life.

Reader That God our Father may reveal his Christ to them more and more with every passing day, let us pray to the Lord:

Response Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader That they may undertake with generous hearts and souls whatever God may ask of them, let us pray to the Lord:

Response Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader That they may have our sincere and unfailing support every step of the way, let us pray to the Lord:

Response Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader That they may find in our community compelling signs of unity and generous love, let us pray to the Lord:

Response Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader That their hearts and ours may become more responsive to the needs of others, let us pray to the Lord:

Response Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader That in due time they may be found worthy to receive the baptism of new birth and renewal in the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord:

Response Lord, hear our prayer.

Giving of A New Name⁶

Invitation to the Celebration of the Word of God⁷

PRAYER OVER THE CATECHUMENS AND CANDIDATES

[RCIA 66 Option B]

Celebrant Let us pray.
Almighty God,
source of all creation,
you have made us in your image.
Welcome with love those who come before you today.
They have listened among us to the word of Christ;
by its power renew them
and by your grace refashion them,
so that in time they may assume the full likeness of Christ,
who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All Amen.

DISMISSAL OF THE CATECHUMENS⁸ [RCIA 67, The Parish Companion p.90]

Celebrant Go out now in peace to continue to let the Word of God speak to you; and may the Lord remain with you always.

All Thanks be to God

OR

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

[RCIA 68]

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

[The celebration of the Mass now continues as per Roman Missal]

⁶ [RCIA 73] According to The Conference of Bishops, the giving of a new name may take place. The Archdiocese of Perth does not follow this practice.

⁷ [RCIA 60-63] Invitation to the Celebration of the Word of God to be used outside of Sunday Mass

⁸ Only the now catechumens are dismissed. The candidates are never dismissed as they have already been baptised. Candidates remain for the whole of the Eucharistic celebration each week.