

CELEBRATION OF THE RITE OF ELECTION AND THE CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION – LITURGY OF THE WORD

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INTRODUCTORY RITES

Celebrant: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

As we gather, let us prepare ourselves for this celebration by calling to mind our sins and asking God for mercy.

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord have mercy.
You came to call sinners: Christ have mercy.
You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

Let us pray.
Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Readings from the 1st Sunday of Lent:
Genesis 9:8-15
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:12-15

HOMILY

550 After the readings (see no. 128), [the bishop, or] the celebrant who acts as delegate of the bishop, gives the homily. This should be suited to the actual situation and should address not just the catechumens and the candidates, but the entire community of the faithful, so that all will be encouraged to give good example and to accompany the catechumens and candidates during the time of their Lenten preparation for celebrating the Easter sacraments.

CELEBRATION OF ELECTION

Presentation of the Catechumens

551 After the homily, the priest in charge of the catechumens' initiation, or a deacon, a catechist, or a representative of the community, presents the catechumens, using the following or similar words.

Representative: Reverend Father, Easter is drawing near, and so these catechumens, whom I now present to you, are completing their period of preparation. They have found strength in God's grace and support in our community's prayers and example.

Now they ask that after the celebration of the scrutinies, they be allowed to participate in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist.

Celebrant: Those who are to be chosen in Christ, come forward, together with your godparents.

One by one, the catechumens are called by name. Each catechumen, accompanied by a godparent (or godparents), comes forward and stands before the celebrant.

[If there are a great many catechumens, all are presented in groups, for example, each group by its own catechist. But in this case, the catechists should be advised to have a special celebration beforehand in which they call each catechumen forward by name.]

Affirmation by the Godparents [and the Assembly]

(Option B)

Celebrant: God's holy Church wishes to know whether these catechumens are sufficiently prepared to be enrolled among the elect for the coming celebration of Easter. And so, I speak first of all to you their godparents.

He addresses the godparents:

Have they faithfully listened to God's word proclaimed by the Church?

Godparents: They have.

Celebrant: Have they responded to that word and begun to walk in God's presence?

Godparents: They have.

Celebrant: Have they shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined with them in prayer?

Godparents: They have.

Celebrant: And now I speak to you, my brothers and sisters in this assembly: Are you ready to support the testimony expressed about these catechumens and include them in your prayer and affection as we move toward Easter?

All: We are.

Invitation and Enrollment of Names

553 Then addressing the catechumens in the following or similar words, the celebrant advises them of their acceptance and asks them to declare their own intention.

Celebrant: And now, my dear catechumens, I address you. Your own godparents and teachers [and this entire community] have spoken in your favor. The Church in the name of Christ accepts their judgment and calls you to the Easter sacraments.

Since you have already heard the call of Christ, you must now express your response to that call clearly and in the presence of the whole Church.

Therefore, do you wish to enter fully into the life of the Church through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist?

Catechumens: We do.

Celebrant: Then offer your names for enrollment.

The Catechumens inscribe their names on the appropriate page for the Diocesan Book of the Elect. An appropriate hymn may be sung.

Act of Admission or Election

554 The celebrant briefly explains the significance of the enrollment that has just taken place. Then, turning to the catechumens, he says the following or similar words.

Celebrant: Now that you have presented your names, I declare you to be members of the elect, to be initiated into the sacred mysteries at the next Easter Vigil.

Catechumens: Thanks be to God.

Celebrant: God is always faithful to those he calls: now it is your duty, as it is ours, both to be faithful to him in return and to strive courageously to reach the fullness of truth, which your election opens up before you.

Then the celebrant turns to the godparents and instructs them in the following or similar words.

Celebrant: Godparents, you have spoken in favor of these catechumens: accept them now as chosen in the Lord and continue to sustain them through your loving care and example, until they come to share in the sacraments of God's life.

CELEBRATION OF THE CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION

Presentation of the Candidates

555 The priest in charge of the candidates' formation, or a deacon, a catechist, or a representative of the community, presents the candidates, using the following or similar words.

Representative: Reverend Father, I now present to you the candidates who seek to complete their Christian initiation (or: who are preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church.) They too have found strength in God's grace and support in our community's prayers and example.

Now they ask that after this Lenten season, they be admitted to confirmation and the eucharist (or: to full eucharistic sharing.)

Celebrant: Those who desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church, come forward, together with your sponsors.

One by one, the candidates are called by name. Each candidate, accompanied by a sponsor, comes forward and stands before the celebrant. [If there are a great many candidates, all are presented in groups, for example, each group by its own catechist. But in this case, the catechists should be advised to have a special celebration beforehand in which they call each candidate forward by name.]

Affirmation by the Sponsors [and the Assembly]

Celebrant: The Christian life and the demands that flow from the sacraments cannot be taken lightly. Therefore, before granting these candidates their request to share fully in the Church's sacraments, it is important that the Church hear the testimony of their sponsors about their readiness.

Have they faithfully listened to the apostles' instruction proclaimed by the Church?

Sponsors: They have.

Celebrant: Have they come to a deeper appreciation of their baptism, in which they were joined to Christ and his Church?

Sponsors: They have.

Celebrant: Have they reflected sufficiently on the tradition of the Church, which is their heritage, and joined their brothers and sisters in prayer?

Sponsors: They have.

Celebrant: Have they advanced in a life of love and service of others?

Sponsors: They have.

Celebrant: And now I speak to you, my brothers and sisters in this assembly:

Are you ready to support the testimony expressed about these candidates and include them in your prayer and affection as we move toward Easter?

All: We are.

Act of Recognition

Celebrant: The Church recognizes your desire (to be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and) to have a place at Christ's eucharistic table. Join with us this Lent in a spirit of repentance. Hear the Lord's call to conversion and be faithful to your baptismal covenant.

Candidates: Thanks be to God.

Then the celebrant turns to the sponsors and instructs them in the following or similar words.

Celebrant: Sponsors, continue to support these candidates with your guidance and concern. May they see in you a love for the Church and a sincere desire for doing good. Lead them this Lent to the joys of the Easter mysteries.

He invites them to place their hand on the shoulder of the candidate whom they are receiving into their care, or to make some other gesture to indicate the same intent.

Intercessions

Celebrant: My brothers and sisters, in beginning this period of Lent, we look forward to celebrating at Easter the life-giving mysteries of our Lord's suffering, death, and resurrection. These elect and candidates, whom we bring with us to the Easter sacraments, will look to us for an example of Christian renewal. Let us pray to the Lord for them and for ourselves, that we may be renewed by one another's efforts and together come to share the joys of Easter.

Assisting Minister:

Our response to these intercessions will be Lord, hear our prayer.

1. For Francis our Pope and Lawrence our Bishop, all the church's ministers, and all our people, that they will continue to heal and teach in the likeness of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.
2. For peace and justice in our world, for those who call for war, for those who cry for peace, and for those who are starving and homeless, let us pray to the Lord.
3. For us all, that together we may fruitfully employ this Lenten season to renew ourselves through self-denial and works of holiness, let us pray to the Lord.
4. For our Catechumens, that they may always remember this day of their election and be grateful for the blessing they have received from heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
5. For our candidates preparing for confirmation and Eucharist, and for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church that they may grow daily in fidelity to their baptismal covenant, let us pray to the Lord.
6. For their teachers, Godparents, and sponsors that they may always convey - by the lives they live - the beauty of God's word to those who search for it, let us pray to the Lord.
7. For their families, their loved ones, and their parish communities that they may help them to follow the promptings of the spirit - especially in this Lenten season, let us pray to the Lord.

Prayer Over the Elect and the Candidates

559 After the intercessions, the celebrant, with hands outstretched over the elect and the candidates, says the following prayer.

Celebrant: Lord God, you created the human race and are the author of its renewal. Bless all your adopted children and add these chosen ones to the harvest of your new covenant. As true children of the promise, may they rejoice in eternal life, won, not by the power of nature, but through the mystery of your grace. We ask this through Christ our Lord,

All: Amen.

FINAL BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The celebrant dismisses those present in these or similar words.

Celebrant: May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the +Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

Celebrant: Go in peace, and may the Lord remain with you always.

All: Thanks be to God.

An appropriate song may conclude the celebration.