



RCIA Winter Gathering

Rite of Sending, Rite of Election, Call to Continuing
Conversion and Discernment

Rite of Sending



Rite of Sending

Questions



Regarding Catechumens:

- "I turn to you, godparents, for your testimony about these candidates. Have these catechumens taken their formation in the Gospel and in the Catholic way of life seriously?"
- "Have they given evidence of their conversion by the example of their lives?"
- "Do you judge them to be ready to be presented to the bishop for the rite of election?"

Regarding Candidates:

- "As God is your witness, do you consider these candidates ready to receive the sacraments of confirmation and eucharist?"

Rite of Sending

The importance of the parish community

Regarding Catechumens:

“My dear catechumens, this community gladly recommends you to the bishop, who, in the name of Christ, will call you to the Easter sacraments. May God bring to completion the good work he has begun in you.”

Regarding Candidates:

“And now, my dear friends, I address you. Your own sponsors (and this entire community) have spoken in your favor. The Church, in the name of Christ, accepts their testimony and sends you to Bishop Quinn who will exhort you to live in deeper conformity to the life of Christ.”

Rite of Sending

The importance of the parish community

“ It is within the parish community, however, that the preliminary judgment is made concerning the catechumens’ state of formation and progress. (RCIA, 107) ”

This rite is especially important for our parishes as it offers a chance for the local faith community to come together as a whole in support of the catechumens and candidates.

During the celebration of this rite, the pastor, deacon, members of the RCIA team, and all members of the parish community are asked to reflect upon the catechumens’ and candidates’ state of formation along with their progress through the RCIA.

This rite offers the parish community an opportunity to show their approval of those in the RCIA process and to come together as a whole to pray for those on this journey.

Through this rite, the catechumens and candidates are sent forth to the Rite of Election with the assurance of the parish’s support and care for each of them.

Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion



Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion

“ It is the focal point of the Church’s concern for the catechumens. (RCIA, 121) ”

By this liturgical rite, the Church “formally ratifies the catechumens’ readiness for the sacraments of initiation.”

Catechumens:

This rite also “marks the beginning of the period of final, more intense preparation ... during which the elect [which they are now called] will be encouraged to follow Christ with greater generosity.” (“RCIA,” #121)

Candidates:

For the baptized candidates as well, this rite marks the beginning of their final preparation to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist, and to enter into the full communion of the Church.

Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion

The faith community plays an important role in this rite as well.

During the rite, the **bishop asks parish members present if they support the testimonies of both the catechumens and the candidates.**

Not only is it important that we take the time to come to know those who are going through the RCIA process so that we can confidently answer this question...

...but we are also charged with an even greater task – **to support them with our prayers and to accompany them as they journey closer to the Easter Sacraments.**

Rite of Election

Need for Discernment

Dear Godparents of these Catechumens: 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:

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

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

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

Rite of Election

Need for Discernment

To the Assembly:

Now I ask the people of God who are here with you. Are you ready to support the testimony expressed about these catechumens and include them in your prayer and affection as we move toward Easter?

Dear catechumens, your godparents, 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 Eucharist?

Rite of Election

Need for Discernment

Act of Election

My brothers and sisters, I now declare you to be the elect of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester who will be initiated into the sacred mysteries at the Easter Vigil.

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.

Call to Continuing Conversion

Need for Discernment

Sponsors, 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 your testimony about their readiness.

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

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

Have they come to a deeper appreciation of their Baptism, in which they are joined to Christ and his Church?

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

Call to Continuing Conversion

Need for Discernment

Affirmation of the Assembly:

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?

Act of Recognition (to candidates):

My brothers and sisters, the Church recognizes your desire 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.

Act of Recognition:

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.

Discernment Questions to be asking...

Questions Asked at the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion:

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

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

Questions for Discernment...

- Have you given your assent to the teachings that you have heard?
- Do you understand what it means to be faithful to the teachings of the Church?
- Am I prepared to pledge fidelity to the Church and her teachings? Am I ready to do so publicly?
- Has my faith been enlightened on this journey?

Discernment Questions to be asking...

Questions Asked at the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion:

Have they responded to that word and begun to walk in God's presence? (Catechumens)

Questions for Discernment...

- Is my conversion made evident through my choices and actions, in my words, interests, dispositions?
- Are you moving away from a sinful habit?
- Are you seeing life from the perspective of faith in God and His plan? How might this differ from the perspective of the world?
- How have your relationships with your family, friends, and co-workers changed during this time?

Discernment Questions to be asking...

Questions Asked at the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion:

*Have they shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined with them in prayer?
(Catechumens)*

*Have they reflected sufficiently on the tradition of the Church, which is their heritage, and
joined their brothers and sisters in prayer? (Candidates)*

Questions for Discernment...

- What is your commitment to spending time with Jesus in prayer each day
- How are you becoming part of the community?
- Do I attend Mass every Sunday?

Discernment Questions to be asking...

Questions Asked at the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion:

Have they come to a deeper appreciation of their Baptism, in which they are joined to Christ and his Church? (Candidates)

Questions for Discernment...

- In what ways is your life different because you are baptized?
- How do you show God your thankfulness that you are His adopted child?

Discernment Questions to be asking...

Questions Asked at the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion:

Have they advanced in a life of love and service of others? (Candidates)

Questions for Discernment...

- How are you serving those in need? (*This can include simple things like smiling at someone.*)
- How is my life oriented toward God and doing His will?
- What, in your view, does it mean to live out the Catholic faith?
- Am I ready to follow Christ with greater generosity?