

PARISH CELEBRATION
FOR SENDING CATECHUMENS FOR ELECTION
and the
CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION OF THE CANDIDATES

This ritual is celebrated at a parish Mass of the First Sunday of Lent together with the readings assigned for the day.

Homily

After the readings, the Priest Celebrant (or the Deacon) gives the homily. This should be suited to the actual situation and should address not just the catechumens and 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 along the path of the paschal mystery.

Presentation of the Catechumens

After the homily, the one in charge of the catechumens' initiation process presents the catechumens using these or similar words.

Will the Catechumens and their sponsors, please stand.

Reverend Father, these catechumens, are beginning their final period of preparation and purification leading to their initiation. They have found strength in God's grace and support in our community's prayers and example.

Now they ask that they be recognized for the progress they have made in their spiritual formation and that they receive the assurance of our blessings and prayers as they go forth to the rite of election celebrated this afternoon by Bishop Checchio.

One by one, the catechumens are called by name. Each catechumen, accompanied by their godparent(s), comes forward and stands before the Priest Celebrant.



Affirmation by the Godparents and the assembly

Then the Priest Celebrant addresses the assembly in these or similar words.

My dear friends, these catechumens who have been preparing for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist hope that they will be found ready to participate in the rite of election and be chosen in Christ for the Easter sacraments. It is the responsibility of this community to inquire about their readiness before they are presented to the bishop. And so, I turn to you godparents, for your testimony about these individuals. Have these catechumens taken their formation in the Gospel and in the Catholic way of life seriously?

Godparents: *They have.*

Have they given evidence of their conversion by the example of their lives?

Godparents: *They have.*

Do you judge them to be ready to be presented to the bishop for the rite of election?

Godparents: *We do.*

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.

The assembly shows assent by applause.

The catechumens and their godparents, move aside to an appropriate place near the sanctuary so that space is available before the Priest Celebrant for the candidates who will come forward shortly.



Presentation of the Candidates

Then, the one in charge of the candidates' preparation process presents the candidates using these or similar words.

Will the Candidates, please stand.

Reverend Father, I now present to you the candidates who are already baptized and seek to complete their initiation with the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. 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 Eucharist.

Then, **Priest Celebrant** replies:

Those who wish to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church, please come forward with your sponsors.

One by one, the candidates are called by name. Each candidate, accompanied by their sponsor, comes forward and stands before the Priest Celebrant.

Affirmation by the Sponsors and the assembly

Then the Priest Celebrant addresses the assembly in these or similar words.

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 Church hear the testimony of their sponsors about their readiness.



Therefore, I turn to you sponsors and inquire. Have they faithfully listened to the apostles' instruction proclaimed in the Church?

Godparents: *They have.*

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

Godparents: *They have.*

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

Godparents: *They have.*

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

Godparents: *They have.*

Then the Priest Celebrant says:

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

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

All together: *We are.*



Act of Recognition

Then the Priest Celebrant says:

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.

Then, **Candidates only** reply:

Candidates: *Thanks be to God.*

Then the Priest Celebrant turns to the sponsors and instructs them in these or similar words.

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.

The Priest Celebrant invites them to offer the candidates a gesture indicating to the candidate that they are receiving them into their care for the Lenten season.



Intercessions for the Catechumens and Candidates

NOTE: these intercessions do not replace the usual Universal Prayer which is prayed following the dismissal of the Catechumens which takes place later in this ritual.

All are invited to stand.

Then the Priest Celebrant continues:

My brothers and sisters, in the beginning of Lent, we look forward to celebrating at Easter the life-giving mysteries of our Lord's suffering, death, and resurrection. These catechumens 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.

The Deacon or another minister announce the following intercessions.

That these catechumens and candidates may find joy in daily prayer, let us pray to the Lord:

All together: Lord, hear our prayer.

That they may read your word and joyfully dwell on it in their hearts, let us pray to the Lord:

All together: Lord, hear our prayer.

That they may humbly acknowledge their faults and work wholeheartedly to correct them, let us pray to the Lord:

All together: Lord, hear our prayer.

That they may grow to love and seek virtue and holiness of life, let us pray to the Lord:

All together: Lord, hear our prayer.

That they may renounce self and put others first, let us pray to the Lord:

All together: Lord, hear our prayer.



Prayer over the Catechumens and Candidates

After the intercessions, the Priest Celebrant, with hands outstretched over the catechumens and the candidates, says the following prayer:

**God of love and power,
it is your will to establish everything in Christ
and to draw us into his all-embracing love.**

**We ask that you guide these chosen ones:
strengthen them in their vocation,
build them into the kingdom of your Son,
and seal them with the Spirit of your promise.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All together: *Amen.*

The assembly is invited to be seated.

Dismissal/Sending of Catechumens

The **Catechumens only** are dismissed sending them to celebrate the rite of election. The Priest Celebrant dismissed the Catechumens with these words.

My dear Catechumens, you have set out with us on the road that leads to the glory of Easter. Christ will be your way, your truth, and your life. This community now sends you forth to celebrate the rite of election with Bishop Checchio. Until we meet again for the scrutinies on the final Sundays of this Lenten season, walk always in the peace of Christ.

The **Catechumens only** leave to celebrate the rite of election. The **Candidates** return to their places in the assembly. **The Mass continues as usual with the Universal Prayer. The Creed is omitted. As noted above, the Universal Prayer of the Mass is not replaced by the intercessions for the Catechumens and the Candidates.**

Following the Universal Prayer, the Mass continues in the usual way with the preparation of the altar and the presentation of the gifts of bread and wine.

