



THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BRIDGEPORT

INSTITUTE FOR CATHOLIC FORMATION • 238 JEWETT AVENUE • BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT 06606-2892
203-416-1657 • www.formationreimagined.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Pastors, Administrators, and OCIA Coordinators
FROM: Patrick Donovan
DATE: February 7, 2025
RE: Rite of Election – March 9, 2025

The Rite of Election will be held on March 9, 2025, at 4 pm at the Cathedral of St. Augustine, 399 Washington Ave. Bridgeport, CT.

In the Rite of Election, we celebrate the Lord's choosing of men, women, and children who, with the help of the Church, acknowledge God's election of them for the Easter Sacraments. The Rite of Election marks the beginning of the final period of intensive preparation before receiving the sacraments of initiation.

The Call to Continuing Conversion marks the final period of preparation for those candidates preparing to be received into full communion or for Catholics completing their initiation through Confirmation *and* First Communion.

Who Should Attend?

Catechumens seeking Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, and candidates for reception into full communion, as well as those Catholics completing their initiation will be welcomed at the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion. A clear distinction will be made to respect the baptismal status of those being received into full communion.

Candidates for the Rite of Election are expected to have a conversion of mind and morals, a sense of faith and charity, and be judged by those involved in their preparation to be worthy to receive the Easter Sacraments at this year's Easter Vigil.

Those seeking full communion in the Church and those Catholics preparing to complete their initiation are to have listened faithfully to the Gospels, developed a deeper appreciation of their baptism, reflected upon the tradition of the Church, and have advanced in a life of love.

What Happens in the Parish?

Although this Rite takes place in a larger diocesan setting with the bishop (or his delegate), local parishes should celebrate a Rite of Sending (cf. OCIA 106). In this celebration the catechumens are presented to the community, testimony is given by the catechists and sponsors, and **they inscribe**



their names in the Book of the Elect that will be kept in the parish. (Note: Each parish was recently given a Book of the Elect by Bishop Caggiano, so let us know if you do not have one.)

Baptized candidates for reception into full communion and Catholics preparing for the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist may also be presented to the parish at this time (cf. OCIA 434 or 530). **Since those who are baptized already have their names enrolled in the baptismal registers, they do not inscribe their names in the Book of the Elect.**

Rite of Election of Catechumens

This year, each parish brings its Book of the Elect to the Rite of Election. Each parish should designate a catechist or someone who has played a significant role in the formation of the catechumens to present the Book of the Elect during the celebration of the Rite of Election.

That designated person (who should not be a catechumen or candidate) will come forward and present the Book of the Elect as the name of the parish is called. They will be directed to an appropriate place to stand.

Even though formation and even liturgical rites may be taking place at a regional or deanery level, each parish should retain its own Book of the Elect.

Once all parishes have been called, and the catechumens are standing, the Bishop/celebrant will ask the godparents to give testimony regarding God's action in the lives of the catechumens and how the catechumens have responded to God's call. Then he will question the catechumens of their desire to answer God's call through the celebration of the Easter sacraments.

Each parish representative will then bring the Book of the Elect before the Bishop/celebrant, who will bless it. The book-bearer then returns to the pew.

Only the names of the catechumens are inscribed in the Book of the Elect. It will be brought forward only during the presentation of catechumens.

Calling of Candidates to Continuing Conversion

Baptized candidates will then be invited to stand. The Bishop/celebrant will question the sponsors about the readiness of the candidates to enter fully into the sacramental life of the Church.

How is Seating Arranged?

This year, seating will be reserved only for catechumens and godparents, candidates and sponsors.

Children who are catechumens/candidates, their parents and godparents, team members and the pastors are asked to be seated in the non-reserved sections.

Please see the Action Item page we have prepared.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Patrick Donovan at pdonovan@diobpt.org or 203-416-1657.



**RITE OF ELECTION OF CATECHUMENS
and of CALLING THE CANDIDATES TO CONTINUING CONVERSION**

Action Items

1. Please email institute@diobpt.org and let us know how many catechumens and candidates will be attending the Rite of Election so we can reserve enough seats.
2. Designate the person to present the parish Book of the Elect during the celebration. Before celebrating the Rite of Election, that person will need instructions to present the book. (Refer to the section above). The book-bearer should arrive and meet the master of ceremonies 20 minutes prior to the liturgy, beginning at the front of the sanctuary for a brief walk-through.
3. Prepare your catechumens and candidates for the liturgy by walking through the basic structure with them. You don't have to "spoil it" for them but giving them a basic understanding will help them participate fully. Also, please rehearse their responses with them:
 - a. Catechumens will be asked if it is their will to be initiated; they respond, "It is." The Bishop/celebrant will also declare them to be "elect," to which they respond, "Thanks be to God!"
 - b. After the Bishop or celebrant recognizes the candidates and affirms them, they respond, "Thanks be to God!"
4. Plan to celebrate the Rite of Sending at a parish Mass on the First Sunday of Lent. The ritual text is in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. Please have your catechumens sign the Book of Elect at this parish celebration, as they will not sign the book at the Rite of Election.
5. After celebrating the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, the Book of the Elect should be returned to the parish church and displayed there in a place of honor during the remainder of the Lenten season.