

**DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG DIRECTORY
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS**

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**LITURGICAL AND CANONICAL
STATUTES FOR THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS
FOR THE DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG**

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CHAPTER ONE

Christian Initiation: Introduction

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Who Should Use These Statutes

1. These statutes have been written to provide pastors and RCIA directors in the Diocese of Harrisburg with information and guidance on practical questions about the Christian initiation of adults and children of catechetical age.

2. These statutes are not written for catechumens, candidates, or inquirers. Their needs are better served by other resources.

3. Although the responsibility for the Christian initiation of adults belongs to all the baptized (RCIA no. 9), pastors and RCIA directors are charged with a special responsibility to see to it that the liturgical, catechetical and pastoral norms of the catechumenate and the Church laws governing it are carried out.

4. In order to do this with pastoral sensitivity, pastors and RCIA directors must understand the spirit of the rite, be fully conversant with its particular directives, and attend well to the particular needs of those who are seeking initiation.

5. No directives can substitute for experience and pastoral training. It is hoped that these diocesan norms will help the reader come to a clearer understanding of the mind of the Church (expressed in its documents) concerning Christian initiation, and that it will articulate a standard of practice for the catechumenate in the Diocese of Harrisburg. In this way, practical decisions in various circumstances may be based on a firm and common foundation.

Initiation Into the Christian Life

6. Christian initiation is not only a matter of intellectual assent to the teachings of the Church, but is incorporation into a living community of faith, represented by the local church. Private instruction and/or convert classes are no longer the appropriate vehicle for Christian initiation, but are to be replaced by the full implementation of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*.

7. The goal of Christian initiation is the living of the Christian life. Reception of the sacraments therefore must be accompanied by conversion. It is for this reason that the *Code of Canon Law* not only requires that before an adult is baptized he or she must be admitted to the catechumenate, led through its various stages (Canon 851-§1) and sufficiently instructed (Canon 865-§1), but also that he or she must be tested in the Christian life by means of the catechumenate (Canon 865-§1), and exhorted to have sorrow for personal sins (Canon 685-§1).

8. Cultivation of the practice of prayer, doing good works, and taking an active part in the community life and mission of the Church are essential elements of the formation offered by the catechumenate (RCIA no. 75). The catechumenate provides catechesis, training in the Christian way of life, and companions and mentors who will help them on their journey of faith (sponsors, godparents, catechists, and other members of the community). The *Code of Canon Law* affirms that "Through instruction and an apprenticeship in the Christian life catechumens are suitably to be initiated into the mystery of salvation and introduced to the life of faith, liturgy, charity of the people of God, and the apostolate." (Canon 788-§2)

9. The liturgical rites of the catechumenate are essential elements of Christian initiation. They gradually incorporate the candidates into the full sacramental life of the Church, and are the means of grace which enable them to live as Christians in the world. The rites should be celebrated in the midst of the community, and according to the norms set forth in the RCIA.

10. Implementing the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* constitutes a substantial challenge for both clergy and parishioners. Serious and consistent effort should be made to implement it fully in all the parishes of the diocese.

Two Models of Initiation

11. Within the total life of the Church at present, the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* represents one of two alternative patterns for the reception of the sacraments of initiation.

12. These two patterns may be summarized as follows:

1. Baptism, confirmation and Eucharist celebrated together, preceded by a catechumenate of considerable duration with rites appropriate to each of its stages, and followed by a period of mystagogy; or

2. Infant baptism, followed by confirmation and Eucharist some time

after the baptized child has reached the age of reason. According to Canon 97.2 with the completion of the seventh year one is presumed to have the use of reason. (In this pattern, the sacrament of penance, though not a sacrament of initiation, is administered before the Eucharist.) Each of these sacraments is preceded by its own proper catechesis.

13. Each of these patterns--in whole or in part--is appropriate to different groups seeking initiation and is governed by distinct norms and directives.

1. The first alternative is used for adults and children of catechetical age, and is described in detail by the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*.

2. The second alternative is used for infants of Catholic parents, and is described in detail by the *Rite of Baptism for Children*, the *Rite of Confirmation*, and local norms concerning the reception of first Eucharist. It is important to understand that each of these patterns has a different history and its own legitimate existence today in the Church. Much confusion can result if we try to collapse these two patterns into one, or to interpret one using the rules of the other.

14. In both patterns of initiation, and indeed in all cases, the sacraments are integrally related to one another, and through them God brings about his work of salvation in the Church. Although there are many different categories of persons who seek initiation into the Church today, and several ways of initiating them, a basic unity underlies all these practices. "There is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism; one God who is Father of all, who is over all, and works through all, and is in all." (Ephesians 4:5-6)

Unity and Order of the Sacraments

15. Baptism, confirmation and Eucharist were celebrated together in the early Church. After the baptismal washing and anointing of the whole body (usually by deacons or presbyters), the bishop anointed the forehead with chrism. The new Christians were then welcomed into the assembly for participation in the Eucharist. This sequence has been preserved to the present day in the liturgy of the Eastern Churches.

16. In the West, the sequence of baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist remained almost entirely intact until our own century. While the sacraments were separated in time, the sequence remained the same. Baptism was separated from both confirmation and Eucharist by a period of about ten years. In 1910 Pope Pius X mandated in *Quam Singulari* that children be welcomed to the table by the age of seven, but no mention was made of when confirmation should be celebrated. The result was that the order of the sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist were inverted in many parts of the world. (One should note however that the practice of celebrating confirmation before communion was maintained in some places, such as parts of Latin America. The *Code of Canon Law* also has consistently referred to the sacraments of initiation in their traditional order, baptism, confirmation and Eucharist.)

17. In 1971, the new *Rite of Confirmation* reiterated the traditional order: "The faithful are born anew by baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of confirmation, and finally are sustained by the food of eternal life in the Eucharist." The whole process of initiation culminates in the celebration of the Eucharist. The ongoing life of faith is then continually nourished on the sacrament of the Eucharist.

18. The *Apostolic Constitution on Confirmation* stresses that:

Confirmation is so closely linked with the holy Eucharist that the faithful, after being signed by holy baptism and confirmation, are incorporated fully into the body of Christ by participation in the Eucharist.

19. In 1972, the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* gave further support to this sequence, as did the National Catechetical Directory, *Sharing the Light of Faith*.

20. The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* states the purpose of celebrating the sacraments of baptism and confirmation together, in this way:

21. The conjunction of the two celebrations [baptism and confirmation] signifies the unity of the paschal mystery, the close link between the mission of the Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the connection between the two sacraments through which the Son and the Holy Spirit come with the Father to those who are baptized. (RCIA no. 215)

22. The celebration of the Eucharist that follows, then, is the event in which ". . . the newly baptized reach the culminating point in their Christian initiation." (RCIA no. 217)

23. This sequence is followed both in the initiation of adults and in the initiation of children of catechetical age.

A Summary of How The Various Groups Are Addressed by the Rite

24. This directory is concerned with issues and questions pertaining to the initiatory pattern described in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. The needs of several distinct groups of persons are addressed in this rite.

25. The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* includes the norms and all the ritual celebrations of initiation for the following groups:

1. Unbaptized Adults (RCIA Part I);
2. Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age (RCIA Part II, chapter 1);
3. Baptized but Uncatechized Adults (Catholic or Non-Catholic) Preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist (RCIA Part II, chapter 4);

4. Baptized Christian (Non-Catholic) Candidates for Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church (RCIA Part II, chapter 5). (It is not automatic that candidates for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church would become part of the catechumenate process.)

26. The following is a summary of how the various groups are addressed by the rite.

1. Unbaptized Adults are normally led through the full-length catechumenate described in Part I of the rite. The combined length of the catechumenate period and the period of purification and enlightenment is expected to be at least one year (NCCB Statutes no. 6). Although a shorter period may be pastorally acceptable for certain individuals, parishes should set a standard of twelve months or more, and take care not to create the expectation that a shorter period of preparation will be sufficient.

In exceptional cases, an abbreviated catechumenate (RCIA Part II, chapter 2) may be used (RCIA no. 331, NCCB Statutes no. 20), by faculty granted by the bishop (see ministerial faculties). The sacraments can be celebrated together at one time (RCIA Part II, chapter 3).

2. Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age are normally accepted into a catechumenate for children, catechized in a way that is appropriate for their age level, celebrate a penitential rite (scrutiny) or rites, and receive the three sacraments of initiation together at one time (RCIA Part II, chapter 1).

3. Baptized but Uncatechized Adults (Catholic or Non-Catholic) Preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist are so similar to the unbaptized in their catechetical status that the rite permits them to participate in most of the full process of formation outlined in RCIA Part I (see RCIA Part II, chapter 4). By virtue of their baptism, they are already members of the Christian community. They are called candidates, not catechumens (NCCB Statutes no. 2). They are never referred to as converts (NCCB Statutes no. 2). Clear distinctions between catechumens and candidates must always be kept in the celebration of the rites (NCCB Statutes no. 31). Such candidates receive the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil (RCIA no. 409).

Baptized but uncatechized children are also, in some cases, addressed by this portion of the rite. For more information, see Chapter 3.

The sacrament of penance is celebrated with these candidates at a time prior to and distinct from the celebration of confirmation and Eucharist (NCCB Statutes no. 27).

For information on the faculty of administering confirmation, see Chapter 2 of these norms, under the subheading "Sacraments of Initiation."

4. Baptized Christian (Non-Catholic) Candidates for Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church who are not described in number 3 above, are normally received into the Catholic Church at a Sunday Eucharist (NCCB Statutes no. 32), at which they make a profession of faith, are confirmed (with very few exceptions--see Chapter 6 of these norms), and receive Communion. If for pastoral reasons such persons take part in a catechumenate, their reception, confirmation and Eucharist may take place at the Easter Vigil (NCCB Statutes no. 34).

For information about children who are to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, see Chapter 3 of these norms.

The sacrament of penance is celebrated with these candidates at a time prior to and distinct from the celebration of confirmation and Eucharist (NCCB Statutes no. 36).

For more information on the canonical status of baptisms celebrated in other Christian denominations, see Chapter 6 of these norms. For information on confirmation for candidates coming from Protestant denominations, see Chapter 2 of these norms under the subheading "Sacraments of Initiation"; for Eastern non-Catholic candidates for reception, see Chapter 6.

Who Belongs in a Process Other Than the Catechumenate

27. The catechumenate is a process of initiation and conversion centered on the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist. Its steps and periods are designed for the welfare of catechumens and candidates, whose progress in faith it is meant to serve. Although its principles and structure may give inspiration to other processes and programs in the Church, the catechumenate itself must maintain a clear identity, and should not be asked to take on tasks for which it was not intended.

28. The implementation of the catechumenate comes at a time when the Church is increasingly aware of the pastoral and catechetical needs of many of its members. These needs are real and important, but should normally be addressed by other means.

1. Alienated Catholics who are interested in exploring the possibility of a return to the Church and the practice of their faith do not belong in a catechumenate. Their experiences of the Church, their questions, and their pastoral needs are different from those of catechumens and candidates, and require a different pastoral response on the part of the Church. Some programs (such as "Re-Membering Church," and "Another Look") are available to help parishes work with returning Catholics.

2. Adult Catholics Seeking Updating or a deeper knowledge of their faith belong in an adult education group or a faith renewal process, not the catechumenate. If such Catholics are interested in becoming involved in the catechumenate through a particular ministry, such as hospitality or sponsorship, that is another matter and should be decided based on the person's gifts and desire to serve.

3. Adult Catholics Seeking Confirmation Only belong, not in the catechumenate, but in a program of preparation for the reception of confirmation. Normally these adults should receive an appropriate catechesis and be confirmed by the bishop.

Although these adults may have received only an elementary catechesis during their Catholic upbringing, they are nonetheless different from the "Baptized but Uncatechized Adults" who have received no Christian formation, and normally have never participated in the Eucharist.

Because of the variety of ages at which the sacrament of confirmation is administered in the Church at present, and because of the mobility of our society, an increasing number of young Catholics "fall through the cracks" of the sacramental system and reach adulthood without having been confirmed. Their lack of confirmation frequently goes unnoticed until they prepare for marriage. When large numbers of unconfirmed Catholics seeking marriage are introduced into the catechumenate, they alter the focus of the process and create time pressures that are not appropriate for a conversion journey. Therefore it is especially important that the needs of such candidates be considered separately.

29. The norms outlined above describe the general expectations of the diocese. Individual cases may arise in which a pastoral decision to include in a catechumenate someone who falls into one of these categories may be the best solution available at the time. Pastors and RCIA directors should use their judgment in such special cases, keeping in mind the general concerns outlined above.

The Ritual Book

30. The revised *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* was first published in 1972 for the universal Church. The first approved English translation appeared in 1974. The edition published in 1988 for the dioceses of the United States is the authoritative one for our country, and replaces all previous editions. It contains explanatory material concerning each of the periods of the initiation process as well as all of the rites. It is an indispensable guide for every pastor and RCIA director.

31. A Spanish translation of the 1988 version specifically for use in the dioceses of the United States is also available. In Spanish-speaking communities this edition should be used in preference to the one published by the episcopal conference of Spain.

32. The National Statutes for the Catechumenate are included as an appendix in both the English and the Spanish versions of the RCIA. They are binding in all the dioceses of the USA.

33. Communities in the dioceses of the United States that worship in languages other than English or Spanish are not thereby exempt from initiating adults according to the norms and rites contained in the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. Pastors of such communities should obtain translations of the rite from their community's country of origin, and follow the NCCB National Statutes contained in the English edition for use in the dioceses of the United States. In situations where the episcopal conference of the country of origin has not translated the Rite, consult the diocesan office.

34. The ritual book has only one proper title: The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. The process of initiation may be called by several different names however, such as adult baptism, Christian initiation, the catechumenate, the order or rite of Christian initiation of adults and RCIA.

CHAPTER TWO

General Pattern for Adults

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	The Catechumenate Period
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	The Period of Purification and Enlightenment
	The Sacraments of Initiation
	Mystagogy
	Notes About Teenagers

Nomenclature

35. During the precatechumenate, both the unbaptized and those who are baptized but uncatechized may be called inquirers. During the catechumenate period, the unbaptized are called catechumens and the baptized are called candidates. During the period of purification and enlightenment, the unbaptized are called the elect, and the baptized are called candidates. During the period of mystagogy, the newly baptized are called neophytes, which is a Greek word which means "the newly-planted." Those who have been received into the Church or have completed their Christian initiation with the catechumenate at the Easter Vigil may be called by a variety of names: the newly-received, the newly-confirmed, new Catholics, or neophytes.

The Precatechumenate

The Initial Interview should take place as soon as possible. (see Initiation Questionnaire in Appendix C)

36. Someone on the catechumenate team should interview each inquirer. The person who conducts the initial interview need not be a priest, but should be thoroughly familiar with the initiation process and able to put the inquirer at ease.

37. The interviewer should have a basic knowledge of the Church's marriage laws in case questions about marriage arise. But the interviewer need not be versed in canon law, and should not make any evaluation of the marriage situation in the interview.

38. The person conducting the interview should also attend the meetings of the precatechumenate so that he or she can introduce the new inquirer to others who are in the group.

The purpose of the initial interview is three-fold:

1. to welcome and put the inquirer at ease
2. to find out the inquirer's background
3. to provide information and answer questions

1. Conducive elements to welcome will put the inquirers at ease. A sense of welcome is conveyed by conducting the meeting in a comfortable setting, by the warmth of the interviewer, and by the interviewer's use of good listening skills.

2. The information needed will include:

A. Religious Background To what religion, if any, does the inquirer belong? Has the inquirer ever been baptized? When and in what church? If either or both parents of the inquirer were Catholic, were (are) they members of the Latin Church or of an Eastern Catholic Church? Is there any Eastern Orthodox background?

B. Catechetical Background Has the inquirer received any religious education? What are the sources of his or her understanding of the Catholic faith?

C. Marital History Is the inquirer presently married? Are there any previous marriages of either the inquirer or the inquirer's spouse? Is the inquirer presently engaged or seriously dating someone who was previously married?

D. Motivations and Expectations Why has the inquirer come forward at this time? What is he or she hoping to find?

The Initiation Questionnaire (see Appendix C) can begin to be used at this time. The interviewer, not the inquirer, fills out the questionnaire.

Based on the information gathered at the initial interview, several important questions can begin to be addressed by the catechumenate team, such as:

What does the church need to provide for a full formation?

Who might be an appropriate sponsor?

What religious issues might be important here, given the inquirer's background?

Will the inquirer need to speak to a qualified member of the parish staff about any marriage issues sometime during the precatechumenate?

3. Information provided to the inquirer should include the time and place of the meetings of the precatechumenate, and a general description of the process. Any questions that can be answered on the spot should be answered. Long discussions should be deferred to the group meetings.

Group Meetings of the Precatechumenate

39. Group meetings are essential to the precatechumenate and should include some members of the parish as well as the inquirers themselves and a catechist. If the inquirer brings a sponsor, the sponsor should attend the meetings. Sponsors may also be found from among the parishioners who take part in the precatechumenate group meetings.

40. These meetings should be informal and flexible. Although the structure and the tools used to conduct these meetings may vary, they should always take place in a setting that conveys hospitality, and in a manner that encourages the inquirers to share their stories and questions. This sharing is of prime importance. It not only establishes trust within the group but also uncovers the needs and faith questions of the inquirers.

41. The goal of the precatechumenate is evangelization. Inquirers should hear the good news proclaimed both in the central stories of scripture and in the witness of the faithful who take part in the process. The precatechumenate process must invite the participants to discover, express, and cultivate the faith that is already present in their own hearts.

42. The time frame of the precatechumenate will vary from person to person and from year to year. It takes time to become acquainted with believers, to get to know what it means to be a Catholic, and to hear the good news in one's own life situation. A time limit should not be set in advance, and individuals should not be urged to make a hasty decision about whether or not to continue.

43. Ideally, the precatechumenate group meets year-round, so that any time an inquirer comes forward there is a group to receive that person. A year-round precatechumenate also ensures that inquirers may pursue the inquiry at their own pace. If the group does not meet year-round, some definite provisions should be made for individuals who do not conform to the schedule.

Discernment for the Rite of Acceptance (and Welcome)

44. Several weeks before the parish celebrates the Rite of Acceptance (or the Rite of Welcome, for the baptized candidates), there should be another interview with each inquirer. The purpose of this interview is to discern whether the inquirer is ready to proceed to the next period of the process. The criteria for discernment are found in the rite (RCIA no. 42).

45. If the Initiation Questionnaire (see Appendix C) has not yet been completed, it should be filled out at this time. The interviewer, not the inquirer, fills out the initiation questionnaire.

46. Inquirers with unresolved marriage cases may be admitted to the catechumenate, but their initiation cannot be completed until the marriage questions are resolved. To avoid any misunderstanding or disappointment later, the inquirer must be informed of this clearly before the Rite of Acceptance (or Welcome) is celebrated. The inquirer's sponsor should also be informed.

47. The question of who will sponsor each inquirer should be decided by this point. If no suitable sponsors have been found, the rite should be delayed until each candidate has a sponsor.

The Rite of Acceptance (and Welcome)

48. This rite may be celebrated at any time of the year. There is no basis for the popular misconception that the beginning of Advent is either the required or the most desirable time for celebrating the Rite of Acceptance.

49. This rite may be celebrated more than once during the liturgical year--perhaps as many as three times, as groups of candidates in the precatechumenate become ready to celebrate it (RCIA no. 18).

50. It may be celebrated in the context of Sunday Mass, or at some other time when the faithful gather. If it is not celebrated at Sunday Mass, every effort should be made to see that the people of the parish attend and give their support (see RCIA no. 45). The Rite of Acceptance is never celebrated privately (note RCIA no. 41).

51. If there are baptized as well as unbaptized inquirers who are ready to make this transition, the combined rite should be used (RCIA no. 505 ff). Clear distinctions should be maintained between the baptized and the unbaptized in the celebration of this rite.

The Catechumenate Period

52. The catechumenate period is the lengthiest period of the whole initiation process (see chapter 1 of these norms). "The length of the catechumenate period will depend on the grace of God and on various circumstances . . . Nothing, therefore, can be settled a priori. The time spent in the catechumenate should be long enough--several years if necessary--for the conversion and faith of the catechumens to become strong." (RCIA no. 76) In the dioceses of the United States the catechumenate period must be at least one full year, from Easter to Easter (see National Statutes no. 6).

53. The four ways in which the catechumenate period brings to maturity the initial faith that is manifested in the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome are: (1) catechesis, (2) liturgical rites, (3) community life, and (4) apostolic works (RCIA no. 75).

54. Experience has shown that the word of God proclaimed in the Sunday

assembly is the most effective basis for weekly catechesis in the catechumenate. The lectionary readings not only contain material for instruction, but they also foster prayer and formation in the common liturgical life of the faithful.

55. Participation in the Liturgy of the Word at Sunday Mass is an integral part of the catechumenate. After hearing the Word and homily at Sunday Mass, the catechumens are kindly dismissed, together with a catechist, to reflect on the Word they have just heard. Candidates may be dismissed with them, if this is felt to be pastorally helpful. After the dismissal catechesis, a longer catechetical session may follow, in which particular issues are explored in depth and the Church's tradition may be presented more fully. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and other resources can be helpful to catechists in preparing for these sessions.

56. With the help of the sponsor, the catechumen or candidate should be introduced to other members of the parish community, and take part in parish activities to the extent that they are able. The development of the catechumens' and candidates' active participation in the mission of the Church should not be deferred until after their sacramental initiation, but should begin during the catechumenate period, under the guidance of the sponsor.

Rites Celebrated During the Period of the Catechumenate

57. A variety of minor rites are available for use during the catechumenate period, and should be employed according to the directions in the ritual book.

58. In addition to the Liturgy of the Word at Sunday Mass, special celebrations of the word of God should be held for the catechumens (RCIA no. 82) and candidates (RCIA no. 406), and celebrations of the word should provide a context of prayer for catechetical meetings as well (RCIA no. 84).

59. The instructions for the minor exorcisms and blessings indicate that catechists deputed by the bishop may preside at these rites (RCIA no. 16, 91, 96).

60. The blessings and minor exorcisms may be adapted for the baptized candidates. The language of prayers offered for the candidates should reflect their baptismal status.

61. The blessings (RCIA no. 95 ff.) may not be celebrated at the end of the Liturgy of the Word at Mass (see the Book of Blessings, no. 28). The celebrations of the word at which the minor exorcisms and blessings are to be celebrated are those held specially for catechumens (see RCIA no. 82, 84, 89).

62. Only a priest or deacon may anoint with the oil of catechumens (RCIA no. 98, 103). Because of its close connection with baptism, this anointing is reserved for catechumens, and may not be celebrated with candidates. The anointing is optional, but may be celebrated whenever it seems beneficial or desirable during the period of the catechumenate, but not on Holy Saturday or immediately before baptism (RCIA #33; NCCB Statutes #16).

It may be desirable to have these anointing celebrations periodically as the prayer to open or close the educational sessions of the RCIA process. Please refer to RCIA #102 for this ritual.

63. The presentations of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer may be anticipated during the catechumenate period. But the presentations are not to take place until a point during the catechumenate when the catechumens are ready for these celebrations (RCIA no. 104). When they are anticipated, they may be accompanied by the ephphetha rite, according to the provisions of the rite (see RCIA no. 105, including footnote 1).

Discernment for the Rite of Election (and Call to Continuing Conversion)

64. This final discernment of the progress of each catechumen and candidate should be deeper and broader in its consultation than the one that took place before the Rite of Acceptance. Those who by means of this discernment are admitted to the period of purification and enlightenment will receive the sacraments of initiation at the next Easter Vigil.

65. "This deliberation is carried out by the priests, deacons, and catechists involved in the formation of the catechumens, and by the godparents and representatives of the local community." (RCIA no. 122) Groups of catechumens and candidates may even be consulted. The catechumenate team therefore should set aside sufficient time to undertake this deliberation seriously.

66. The criteria for this discernment can be found in RCIA no. 120. These criteria may be supplemented by a careful review of RCIA no. 75, which indicates the ways in which conversion is expected to have occurred during the catechumenate period, and by RCIA no. 131, which summarizes the results of the discernment process.

67. Each January, the Office of Worship will send out a packet of information with registration material for the Rite of Election to all pastors and RCIA directors. The forms listing the names of the catechumens and the baptized candidates for reception to full communion provided by each parish, assist in the planning for the Rite of Election. It is understood that names may be deleted from this list as the actual discernment progresses, but no new names may be added. More specific instructions are included in the information packet concerning the Rite of Election.

The Rite of Sending

68. This rite, which takes place in the parish, is the occasion for the parish community to express its approval of the elect, and for the godparents to offer more personal testimony about elect. Refer to RCIA #106–116 (elect only) or #434–444 (candidates only) or the combined ritual #530–545. In it the parish offers support to the elect, and sends them to the diocesan celebration of election at which their names are presented for enrollment, and the bishop formally admits them to the period of purification and enlightenment. The rite fulfills a similar function for the candidates, who will be recognized by the bishop and receive their call to continuing conversion.

69. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, the catechumens sign the Book of the Elect in their parishes (RCIA #113 or #539). The names in the Book of the Elect are then presented to the bishop during the Rite of Election. Candidates do not sign the Book of the Elect. It should be explained to them that the Book of the Elect symbolizes the enrollment for baptism.

70. Although listed as an optional celebration, the Rite of Sending is highly recommended. If celebrated, it should be done prior to the diocesan celebration of election.

The Rite of Election (and Call to Continuing Conversion)

71. This rite is presided over by the bishop or his delegate on the First Sunday of Lent for all who are to be initiated at Easter. To ensure the smooth functioning of this large liturgical event, pastors and RCIA directors are asked to provide the diocesan coordinators of the Rite of Election with registration information. Packets of information, with registration materials, are sent to each RCIA director and pastor in January.

72. If a catechumen is not able to attend the diocesan Rite of Election, because of illness or some other grave reason, the Rite of Election must still be celebrated in the parish. Delegation to celebrate the Rite of Election or the combined Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion in the parish may be obtained by writing to the Bishop's Office (see Appendix C).

73. In the case of a candidate who is unable to participate in the diocesan Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, no delegation is required to celebrate the Call to Continuing Conversion in the parish. Please note that in such a case, the pastor presides (RCIA no. 448).

The Period of Purification and Enlightenment

74. This period coincides with Lent, which should have the character of a time of retreat for those preparing for baptism, for the candidates who will complete their initiation or enter the full communion of the Catholic Church, and for the faithful who will commemorate their own baptism at Easter.

75. The centerpiece of this period of prayerful preparation is the celebration of the scrutinies. Although the candidates will not be the subject of the scrutinies, catechesis for both the elect and the candidates during this period should be related to the celebration of the scrutinies.

The Scrutinies

76. The scrutinies, which are solemnly celebrated on Sundays and are reinforced by an exorcism, are rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose. The scrutinies are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. Normally the scrutinies are (RCIA nos. 150–156, 164–177) celebrated on the third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of the Lenten

season. At the Masses at which the scrutinies are celebrated, the cycle A readings must be used (RCIA no. 146). Three scrutinies should be celebrated. When, for lack of time, the election is held early, a dispensation must be requested from the Bishop. In this case, the first scrutiny is to be held early and care is to be taken not to prolong the period of purification and enlightenment beyond eight weeks. To obtain this dispensation, refer to the form provided in the Appendix C.

77. If the scrutinies are celebrated at one of several parish Masses, the other parish Masses may also use the cycle A readings for these Sundays. (See Introduction to the New Lectionary for Mass #97 Lent)

78. Candidates are not the subject of the scrutinies, but they should participate in them with the assembly so as to pray for the elect, and should reflect with the elect on their meaning. In place of the scrutinies, candidates celebrate a similar rite called a "Penitential Rite" (RCIA no. 459 ff.) on the second Sunday of Lent (RCIA no. 462) or at some other time when the community gathers.

The Presentations

79. The presentations of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer may be celebrated at a Lenten weekday Mass or Liturgy of the Word during the week following the first scrutiny and the third Scrutiny, respectively. The readings proper to these celebrations take precedence over the weekday readings.

80. If the presentations are anticipated during the catechuminate period, they should also take place on a weekday, so that the readings proper to them may be used. If the presentations have been anticipated during the catechuminate period, they are omitted during the period of purification and enlightenment.

The Preparation Rites

81. On Holy Saturday, the elect and the candidates should be instructed to refrain from their usual activities, to engage in prayer and reflection, and if possible, to fast (RCIA no. 185). The preparation rites to be celebrated on Holy Saturday should assist this process of prayer and reflection. There are several rites to choose from (see RCIA no. 185 ff), and proper readings are provided for each choice.

Choosing a Baptismal Name

82. In November 1986, the NCCB established as a norm that there be no giving of a new name, (RCIA #200) while leaving to the discretion of the diocesan bishop the giving of a new name to persons from those cultures in which it is the practice of non-Christian religions to give a new name. (BCL Newsletter, January, 1992)

The Sacraments of Initiation

83. The sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist are normally conferred at the Easter Vigil. The Easter Vigil must, in every way, be a worthy celebration, especially in its full and lavish use of symbol, both in the celebration of the sacraments themselves, and in the preceding services of Light and Word.

84. The elect do not carry lighted tapers as the baptized do during the Service of Light, because they have not yet been enlightened by Christ in baptism. The candidates however do carry lighted tapers, because they are baptized.

85. After the elect are baptized, they may be clothed in a baptismal garment. Traditionally, this is a simple, white, flowing garment that clothes the whole person. The alb is a baptismal garment. Full-length, poncho-like garments are sometimes used. The baptismal garment should not be decorated with "symbols." It is itself the symbol, and anything added to it will detract from its effectiveness. Stoles are not baptismal garments and should not be used as such.

86. If the newly-baptized are to receive a baptismal garment, it is appropriate that the candidates who will complete their Christian initiation at that celebration (but have already "put on Christ" in their baptism) be clothed in such garments from the beginning of the liturgy.

87. Priests who exercise a pastoral office in the Diocese of Harrisburg are automatically granted faculties by the bishop to baptize adults and children of catechetical age, and they receive from the law the faculty to confirm them (Canon 883.2). Those who have the faculty to confirm are bound to exercise it (Canon 885-§2; see also NCCB Statutes no. 35).

88. When the elect are baptized (adults and children of catechetical age), the sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist must be conferred immediately thereafter, unless a grave reason prevents it (canon 866, cf. RCIA no. 215, NCCB Statutes no. 14). The absence of a bishop does not constitute a grave reason (cf. NCCB Statutes no. 13-14); nor does the personal preference of the celebrant or candidate for baptism. A grave reason may arise in emergency situations or missionary situations where the minister of baptism is a deacon, or the oil of chrism is not available.

89. It is not permissible at one celebration for one priest to baptize and another to confirm. The faculty to confirm is only granted to the priest who baptizes. For the same reason, it is not permissible for a deacon to baptize and a priest to confirm. If there are a large number to be confirmed, the presiding minister may invite other priests to assist him in the anointing (RCIA no. 14).

90. When an ordinary minister of baptism is available, a lay person is not authorized to baptize. Nor is it appropriate for anyone except the baptizing minister to question the catechumen for the renunciation of sin and the profession of faith prior to baptism.

91. Priests who exercise a pastoral office in the Diocese of Harrisburg are automatically granted faculties by the bishop to receive into the full communion of the Catholic Church adults and children of catechetical age, and they receive from the law the faculty to confirm them (Canon 883-§2). Those who have the faculty to confirm are bound to exercise it (Canon 885-§2; see also NCCB Statutes no. 35).

92. With respect to those who have been baptized at birth as Catholics and are later catechized as adults and seek to complete their initiation through the reception of confirmation and the Eucharist, the priest's faculty to confirm does not extend to these cases. If necessity warrants it, however, the priest must petition in writing the diocesan bishop in accord with Canon 884-§1 for the special faculty to

confirm a particular person in such circumstances.

93. The neophytes and the other newly-initiated may take up the gifts at the preparation of the altar.

94. Communion should be offered under both forms.

The Period of Mystagogy

95. The period of post-baptismal catechesis or mystagogy refers to the fifty days of the Easter season, concluding at Pentecost (RCIA no. 249), and also to the first year of the neophyte's life as a baptized Christian (NCCB Statutes no. 24), concluding on the anniversary of the neophyte's initiation (RCIA no. 250). The mystagogy that takes place during this first year is also called "extended mystagogy." Extended mystagogy includes monthly meetings (NCCB Statutes no. 24). Seasonal gatherings may also be appropriate.

96. The neophytes and their godparents should participate as a group in the Sunday Masses of the Easter season, and special places in the assembly should be reserved for them (RCIA no. 248). They may wear their baptismal garments at these celebrations, so as to make their presence more visible to the assembly. These "neophytes' Masses," are the main setting of the mystagogy (RCIA no. 247). Candidates whose initiation was completed in the catechumenate participate in this period in the same way as the newly-baptized. Their sponsors should support them and participate in the neophytes' Masses with them.

Notes about Teenagers

97. According to John Huels in *The Catechumenate and the Law*, pg. 25, "The law gives no upper age limit on those who are considered children of catechetical age, but the age of fourteen could be recommended as the standard upper age because it has certain significance in canon law with reference to baptism. At age fourteen a person is free to choose to be baptized in any ritual church - in the Latin rite or an Eastern rite (Canon 1111-§2). Parents no longer can choose the rite of their children when they are fourteen or older even when they themselves transfer to a new rite".

Although teenagers of the age of fourteen and older are to be initiated according to the norms for adults, it is an open pastoral question whether these young people should form their own group or be included with the adults. This decision should be based on the maturity and the pastoral needs of the teenagers involved. If a separate group is formed, it should follow the catechetical and ritual pattern set by the steps and periods of the rite and be linked with the adult group whenever possible.

98. Teenagers need adults to mentor them, as well as peers to support them. The role of the sponsor should usually be taken by an adult, and the teenager's peers should be involved as a community of support and encouragement.

CHAPTER THREE

Children of Catechetical Age

Contents:	Who Are the Children?
	The Relationship of the Rite for Adults to the Rite for Children
	Special Needs of Children
	Role of the Family
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Who Are the Children?

99. Children of catechetical age are those children who have reached the age of reason, which is generally considered to be age seven. Since children who have reached the use of reason are considered, for purposes of Christian initiation, to be adults (Canon 852:1) their formation should follow the general pattern of the ordinary catechumenate as far as possible, with the appropriate adaptations permitted by the ritual (NCCB Statutes for the Catechumenate #18).

100. The category of "children of catechetical age" extends up to the fourteenth year (See No. 97 of these norms). The initiation of young people fourteen years and older (Canon 111-§2) should follow the rite for adults (Part I, and Part II, chapters 2-5) in every respect, rather than the rite for children (Part II, chapter 1).

101. Children of catechetical age are old enough to hear and understand the call of Christ, and to respond with faith at their own age level. Consequently, their initiation is not based, as is the baptism of infants, entirely on the commitment of the parents and the faith of the Church, but requires a genuine faith response on the part of the child. At the same time, the child is still dependent on his or her parents, and will need continued nurturing in faith.

Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age

102. This is the primary group of children involved in the catechumenate. Their special concerns are addressed by the Part II, Chapter 1 of the rite. They should, without exception, participate fully in the children's catechumenate, and celebrate baptism, confirmation and Eucharist together. (NCCB Statute No. 18)

Baptized Non Catholic Children Seeking Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church

103. Because children of catechetical age are considered, for purposes of Christian initiation, to be adults (Canon 852-§1), this group is included in the norms set forth by the RCIA. Their situation is addressed in part by the description of the catechumenate for children found in Part II Chapter 1 of the rite. Their situation is also addressed in Part II, Chapter 5 of the rite, which concerns the reception of baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church.

104. The priest who presides at the reception of these young candidates receives from the law the faculty to confirm them (Canon 883-§2), and must use it (Canon 885-§2; see also NCCB Statute no. 13). Therefore, children who are received into the Church and who have not been validly confirmed, must be confirmed at the time of their reception.

105. The process of formation for these baptized children may be carried out in the catechumenate, with the clear understanding that they are candidates, not catechumens. Just as the participation of baptized adults is allowed in the adult catechumenate for pastoral reasons, so the participation of baptized children is allowed in the children's catechumenate. If the parents of these children are also being baptized or received into the Church, their children should be received at the same time if they are ready.

Baptized but Uncatechized Catholic Children of Catechetical Age

106. These children may be included in the catechumenate, if this is thought to be pastorally prudent and desirable, because their situation parallels the circumstances of baptized but uncatechized adults (Part II, chapter 4). Or, they may be catechized with their Catholic peers and celebrate the sacraments with them. The fact that they may be out of the grade level at which the sacraments are usually celebrated should not be seen as a barrier to receiving confirmation and Eucharist with children of other ages, since the celebration of these sacraments should always be based on readiness as described in the rite no. 252-254, and not on chronological age or grade level.

107. Those children who have received their formation in a catechumenate must be confirmed in the same liturgy in which they celebrate the Eucharist. Delegation of the special faculty to confirm must be obtained from the bishop for a priest to confirm baptized but uncatechized Catholic children of catechetical age who have taken part in a catechumenate. (Canon 884-§1).

Children Younger Than Catechetical Age

108. Unbaptized children younger than catechetical age (7 years old) are to be baptized according to the Rite of Baptism for Children, which is the rite used for infant baptism. Their confirmation and Eucharist are then deferred until a later age, according to parish and diocesan policy.

109. Baptized children younger than catechetical age whose parents are being received into the Catholic Church do not participate in a catechumenate. They are received into the Church on the same date as their parents. Although no rite is required of them, these children should be warmly welcomed and may be recognized in various ways at the celebration of their parents' reception. Notation of their reception and record of the date and place of their baptism should be made in the parish Baptismal register at the time of their parents' reception. They then receive the remaining sacraments of initiation with their Catholic peers.

110. Baptized children younger than catechetical age who were baptized in a non-Catholic Church, and whose parents are Catholics, are considered to be received into the Church at the time of their reception of first Communion, with no additional rites required of them. The date of their first Communion should be noted in the parish Baptismal register as their date of reception, and record of the date and place of their baptism should also be entered. They should participate with their Catholic peers in catechesis and the sacraments, and should not take part in a catechumenate.

The Relationship of the Rite for Adults to the Rite for Children

111. The catechumenate as it is described for adults is the model for the catechumenate for children. What is contained in the section devoted to children (RCIA Part II, Chapter 1) is a set of adaptations to render the adult catechumenate better suited to the pastoral needs of children. It does not constitute a different model. Whenever the introductory material in the chapter on children does not provide enough information or guidance concerning the periods or the rites, the reader should refer to the corresponding section of the rite for adults for more information.

112. From apostolic times, families have come to the grace of baptism together. Families that are undergoing initiation should, as far as possible, celebrate the rites of the catechumenate and the sacraments of initiation together as a family, provided that each member is truly ready for the next stage of the process. In these cases, the rite followed is the one for adults, with appropriate adaptations made for the children who are participating.

113. The catechumenate for both adults and children is a single reality, and adults and children may always participate in the rites together. When the children's parents are not part of the catechumenate for adults, however, the parish may celebrate the rites for them in gatherings separate from the adult catechumenate, where the fullest use of the adaptations for children may be exercised. This is a pastoral decision.

Special Needs of Children

114. The children's progress in the formation they receive depends on the help and example of their companions and on the influence of their parents. Both these factors should therefore be taken into account. (RCIA #254)

1. Since the children to be initiated often belong to a group of children of the same age who are already baptized and are preparing for confirmation and Eucharist, their initiation progresses gradually and within the supportive setting of this group of companions.

2. It is hoped that the children will also receive as much help and example as possible from their parents, whose permission is required for the children to be initiated and to live the Christian life. The period of initiation will also provide a good opportunity for the family to have contact with priests and catechists.

115. The Christian initiation of children of catechetical age must take special care to evaluate the following elements of the child's conversion, so that the child's special needs may be met:

1. What is the attitude of the child's family? Is there a commitment on their part to help the child grow in faith and in the community of the Church? Can this commitment be developed?

2. What is the child's relationship to the parish community and to Sunday worship? Is there an on-going relationship? Can such a relationship be developed?

3. Has the child expressed faith in Christ? Does the child want to belong to the Church? Can a personal relationship to Christ and to the Church be developed?

The pastor, RCIA director and catechist(s) should all be part of the discernment process. Ultimately, it is the pastor who is responsible for the final decision.

Role of the Family

116. The catechumenate for children should incorporate opportunities for the family of the young catechumen to be involved in the process of initiation.

117. The pastor or RCIA director should meet with the family and enlist their active support from the beginning of the process. A commitment to bring the child to the catechumenate gatherings is essential. The pastor or RCIA director should make clear what the process involves for the child, and that the family is expected to participate with the child in the rites and the catechetical process.

118. Families today take a great many different forms, due to the prevalence of divorce and remarriage in our society. The family structure also varies according to culture. Families today are frequently subject to economic pressures, and experience time pressures due to both parents working outside the home. The Church should take these factors into account in determining reasonable expectations for family involvement.

119. For children to be initiated into the Church, it is always necessary to have the consent of their parents, or at least one of them, or those who lawfully take their place. Children who have the consent but not the active involvement of their parents in the process of initiation should not on that account alone be barred from the process. If these children have grandparents, responsible older siblings or other key family members who will support their conversion consistently, these factors should also be taken into account.

Role of Catholic Peers

120. The support of the child's community of peers and their families will strengthen the young catechumen's experience of the Church and of conversion, and should be sought whenever possible.

121. The special role of a "peer companion" does not substitute for an adult sponsor, but can provide a helpful informal support for the catechumen and should be used judiciously.

122. If the child is enrolled in a Catholic school or parish catechetical program, the child's classmates should be made aware of the special journey of the child and invited to participate in liturgical celebrations of the catechumenate for their classmate whenever appropriate. This may take the form of participation in one of the major rites held in the parish Church, or one of the minor rites, which may be celebrated with a group of children in a school or catechetical center.

The Shape of the Catechumenate for Children

123. Initiation is a gradual process for children as well as for adults, and care should be taken to allow enough time for the children to grow secure in their new faith and develop bonds to the Church community. Frequently, the time needed by the children is longer than the time needed by adults. Generally speaking, the full initiation process for a child will take a minimum of two years.

124. The catechumenate begins with an inquiry period that leads up to the celebration of the Rite of Acceptance (or the combined Rite of Acceptance and Welcome). The inquiry period, or precatechumenate, should introduce the child to ingredients basic to our faith: who is God, who is Jesus, what is the Church.

125. After the Rite of Acceptance, the process continues with the catechumenate period, which is linked with the Sunday Liturgy of the Word. This period includes dismissals and minor rites, as does the catechumenate period for adults. The child's experience of worship is very important to this period. Special attention should be given to cultivating a sense of wonder at God's presence in the central symbols of our faith: light, water, oil, bread and wine, and the people

gathered to worship. Catechesis about what it means to follow Jesus in our daily lives springs naturally from the lectionary readings Sunday by Sunday in the course of the liturgical year. At least one full liturgical year should be devoted to the catechumenate period (NCCB statute no. 6). This may take longer depending on the child's readiness. The pastor, RCIA director, catechists, and other members of the team should carry out a discernment of the children's progress and readiness for the sacraments of initiation. Those who are truly prepared then pass into the Lenten period of purification and enlightenment.

126. The Rite of Election is considered an optional rite for children. That does not mean that each child may decide whether or not to attend. Rather, the pastor and RCIA director, in consultation with the catechumenate team, should decide whether and how the children who will receive the sacraments at Easter should participate. Careful consideration should be given to this question as a matter of parish policy.

127. Children may participate in the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion. If the children do not participate with the adults another option is to hold a Rite of Election for children in the parish. If the pastor and RCIA director judge that a parish celebration of election for the children would be more pastorally suitable than the Diocesan celebration of the Rite of Election and call to continuing conversion, delegation to preside at this rite can be obtained from the bishop's Office (see Appendix C). A third option is to omit this rite altogether.

128. During the period of purification and enlightenment, one or two scrutinies should be celebrated with the children who are not baptized. These celebrations may be linked with services for the reception of the sacrament of penance for the children's Catholic peers. Those children taking part in the catechumenate who are already baptized should be prepared to receive the sacrament of penance during this time.

129. The sacraments of initiation are celebrated for the children at the Easter Vigil, unless some serious reason prevents it, such as inordinately large numbers. Children whose parents are being initiated at the Easter Vigil should be included with their family members if they are ready.

130. If for pastoral reasons, any of the children are not initiated at the Easter Vigil, they should receive the three sacraments of initiation as soon as possible thereafter, at the Mass of Easter day or a Sunday Mass during the Easter season.

131. Children should share in the joy of the fifty days of the Easter season, and be visible to the community at Sunday Mass with their godparents and the other neophytes, in a special place reserved for them in the assembly. For children, extended mystagogical catechesis will be provided by their ongoing participation in the Catholic school, parish catechetical program, and ongoing mystagogia through the parish catechumenate.

Adapting the Rites for Children

132. When celebrating the rites for children, the ritual for children should be used and adapted to the needs of the particular children who will participate.

133. Those who are involved in preparing the rites, especially catechists whose background in liturgy is not extensive, should take great care in adapting the rites. The following principles should be kept in mind:

The adaptations for children offered by the rite should be read and understood in light of Part I of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*.

It is the goal of any adaptation to preserve and highlight the central symbols of the rites.

It is necessary to avoid adding additional layers of symbolism to the symbols that are already in the rite.

It is necessary to understand the structures of the rites, and to keep those structures intact.

The rite as it appears in the ritual book, is always the primary guide and reference point.

134. When children celebrate the rites together with adult catechumens, the adult rite is followed, with some adaptations for the children. In order to accomplish this successfully, the celebrant should prepare carefully, perhaps using a text prepared specially that combines the adult rite with the adaptations for children.

135. When combining adaptations for children with the adult rite, in celebrations where both adults and children will participate, the following guidance is offered:

In the Rite of Acceptance, the opening dialogue with the children should ask the questions that appear in the rite for children, whereas the dialogue with the adults would ask the questions that appear in the adult rite.

The Rite of Acceptance for children incorporates a special affirmation by the parents. This affirmation by the parents should be retained when the children celebrate with the adults.

The scrutinies for children, unlike those for adults, may be combined with an anointing with the oil of catechumens. If the scrutinies for children are celebrated with the adults however, the anointing should be celebrated at another time.

Children Who Are Homeschooled

136. Children who are homeschooled must follow the catechumenate model as presented in the RCIA, Chapter 3 if they are unbaptized or baptized non-Catholic seeking reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. If the child is baptized Catholic but uncatechized, he/she may participate in the RCIA catechumenate adapted for children or follow the same diocesan policies that Catholic schools and religious education programs must follow. If the child is baptized Catholic and the parent chooses to follow the policies that Catholic schools and religious education programs must follow, Diocesan policies #6003/#6003RE and #6004/#6004RE address sacramental preparation. All of the above policies and guidelines are contained in the Catholic school policy book and the Parish C/DRE Handbook.

137. Further assistance in adapting the rites may be obtained from the diocesan Office of Worship.

The Initiation of Children

Code of Canon Law Citations

Revised Code of Canon Law approved on 27 November 1983

842:2 The sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the Most Holy Eucharist are so interrelated that they are required for full Christian initiation.

852:1 What is prescribed in the canons on the baptism of an adult is applicable to all who are no longer infants but have attained the use of reason.

97.2 ...with the completion of the seventh year one is presumed to have the use of reason.

865:1 To be baptized, it is required that an adult have manifested the will to receive baptism, be sufficiently instructed in the truths of faith and in Christian obligations and be tested in the Christian life by means of the catechumenate; the adult is also to be exhorted to have sorrow for personal sin.

883:2 The following have the faculty of administering confirmation by the law itself.....with regard to the person in question, the presbyter who by reason of office or mandate of the diocesan bishop baptizes one who is no longer an infant or one already baptized whom he admits into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

885:2 A presbyter who has this faculty to confirm must use it for those in whose favor the faculty was granted.

National Statutes for the Catechumenate

Approved by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on 11 November 1986

14. In order to signify clearly the interrelation or coalescence of the three sacraments which are required for full Christian initiation (canon 842:2), adult candidates, including children of catechetical age, are to receive baptism, confirmation, and eucharist in a single eucharistic celebration, whether at the Easter Vigil or, if necessary, at some other time.
18. Since children who have reached the use of reason are considered, for purposes of Christian initiation, to be adults (canon 852:1), their formation should follow the general pattern of the ordinary catechumenate as far as possible, with the appropriate adaptations permitted by the ritual. They should receive the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and eucharist at the Easter Vigil, together with the older catechumens.
19. Some elements of the ordinary catechetical instruction of baptized children before their reception of the sacraments of confirmation and eucharist may be appropriately shared with catechumens of catechetical age. Their condition and status as catechumens, however, should not be compromised or confused, nor should they receive the sacraments of initiation in any sequence other than that determined in the ritual of Christian initiation.

CHAPTER FOUR

Ministries

Contents:	The Community
	The RCIA Director/Coordinator
	Catechists
	Sponsors/Godparents
	Team Development

The Community

138. The community is the primary minister of the catechumenate. RCIA no. 9 describes this ministry in detail. Consistent effort should be made to enable the parish community to be aware of and undertake their responsibility for the new life that God is giving the Church through its inquirers, catechumens and candidates.

139. Efforts to enable parishioners to explore their faith in parish groups can promote awareness of the crucial role of the faithful in giving witness and nurturing conversion.

140. With or without special programs, the people of the parish should pray for the catechumens and candidates, socialize with them, and give them a good example of the Christian life. The ongoing ministry of preaching and catechesis in the parish should build up the sense of the faithful that it is important and necessary for the community to care for catechumens and candidates in the process of initiation.

The RCIA Director or Coordinator

141. It is expected that, in addition to the pastor, there is one person who is responsible for overseeing the work of the catechumenate in the parish. This person may be called the **RCIA** Director, or the Catechumenate Coordinator. A person in this position should have experience working in the catechumenate, as well as appropriate educational preparation for this ministry.

142. The director or coordinator is responsible for working with the pastor and the catechumenate team to see that the ministries of the catechumenate are carried out, and that the norms and directives of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* are observed. The director or coordinator also arranges for the team's training and ongoing development, and serves as contact person for the diocese.

Catechists

143. The catechists in the catechumenate must have a thorough knowledge of and love for the teachings of the Church, as well as the practical skills necessary to work effectively with adults and/or children. Catechists who work with adults should understand the principles of adult learning, and those who work with children should apply pedagogical skills that are appropriate to the age group of the children. Because the catechumenate is intimately bound up with the liturgical life of the Church, and draws substantially on the scriptures proclaimed in the Sunday assembly, catechists in the catechumenate need to be solidly grounded in good principles of liturgy and scriptural interpretation, as well as theology, morality, spirituality, and so on.

144. The catechumenate catechists have a special responsibility to show forth the Church's respect for non-Christian religions, and to exemplify and foster an ecumenical spirit within the catechumenate group. At the same time, the catechists should affirm and clearly explain the distinctive witness of Catholicism, and the unique gift of Christ, so that indifferentism or relativism--which are the enemies of true ecumenism and interfaith dialogue--may be avoided.

145. A commitment to ongoing formation is essential for the catechumenate catechists. Special presentations, workshops and institutes sponsored by the diocese and by surrounding dioceses can help the catechists to grow in this ministry. For information about what offerings are available, contact the diocesan Office of Worship, Office of Adult Religious Education or the Office of Catechetical Training. The Diocese of Harrisburg offers a certificate program for parish RCIA catechists.

The following are the requirements for RCIA Catechist certificate:

Beginning RCIA Catechist Certificate: The Beginning RCIA Catechist Certificate will be given to catechists who successfully complete the following course requirements:

1. Overview of Catholic Teaching - 10 hours
2. Essential Elements of RCIA - 12 hours
3. Methodology 1 - Teaching Dynamics in Adult Learning - 4 hours

Intermediate RCIA Catechist: The Intermediate RCIA Catechist Certificate will be given to catechists who have received the Beginning RCIA Catechist Certificate and who have also completed these additional course requirements :

1. Sacraments in General - 10 hours
2. Understanding the Bible - 10 hours

Master RCIA Catechist Certificate - The Master RCIA Catechist Certificate will be given to catechists who have received the Intermediate RCIA Catechist Certificate and who have also completed these additional course requirements:

1. Jesus the Christ - 10 hours
2. Intro to Catholic Morality - 10 hours

3. Methodology II – Catechetical and Spiritual Formation – 4 hours

Sponsors and Godparents

For Adults

146. Any fully-initiated adult Catholic who has completed the sixteenth year (Canon 874-§1.2), who is willing to assist in the process of initiation, and is able to set a good example of the life of faith may be a sponsor for an adult catechumen. The sponsor's role is described in RCIA no. 10. The godparent of an adult catechumen should also assist in the initiation process and set a good example. The godparent's role is described in RCIA no. 11. The godparent must be a fully initiated Catholic in good standing, completed the sixteenth year and living a life in harmony with the role to be undertaken (cf. Canon 874-§1) .

147. For adults, the roles of sponsor and godparent are usually filled by the same person, although they may be filled by two different people. We highly recommend that new sponsors and godparents be sought for each new catechumen and candidate, so that more people of the parish can take part in this important ministry.

148. The sponsor of a candidate accompanies the candidate through the entire process of initiation, and assists in all the liturgical rites with the candidate. (No "new" or additional godparents are permitted, since the candidates are already baptized.)

For Children of Catechetical Age

149. The godparents of unbaptized children in the catechumenate, whose role is analogous to that of the godparents for adults (RCIA no. 11) must not be their parents. (Canon 874-§1.5) These godparents should be involved during the catechumenate process, and will accompany the child at the rite of election and at the sacraments of initiation. They may also participate with the child in the rite of acceptance as sponsors, if the parents are unable to do so.

150. The sacramental sponsors of children who are baptized candidates in the catechumenate may not be their parents. These sponsors should take part in the entire catechumenate process, and may accompany the child in the rite of acceptance, if the parents are unable to do so.

151. To qualify for these ministries, adults should be willing to assist in the process of the child's initiation, and be able to provide a good example and witness to the faith. They must be fully initiated adult Catholics in good standing and have completed their sixteenth year. (Canon 874-1)

Formation of Sponsors and Godparents

152. The RCIA director is responsible to see to it that sponsors and godparents receive adequate formation for these important ministries.

Team Development

153. From year to year the catechumenate team will need to incorporate new members and provide ongoing education for those who continue to minister in the catechumenate process. Some of the orientation of new team members and ongoing education of experienced team members can be accomplished at the parish under the guidance of the pastor and the RCIA director. Participation in workshops, seminars, and courses offered by the diocese and by national organizations such as the North American Forum on the Catechumenate and the Institute for the Formation of Children will also provide valuable help to team members. The parish should encourage its team members to grow in their ministry and support their participation in outside events and workshops that will enrich their understanding of the RCIA such as the summer RCIA Networking Sessions, “Essential Elements of RCIA”, “Teaching Dynamics in Adult Learning” and “Catechetical and Spiritual Formation” courses.

154. Regular evaluation should be part of the work of the catechumenate team. All team members, including the director, should evaluate the process, their own work, and the functioning of the team. Evaluations are for the purpose of affirming those aspects of the ministry that have worked well, and discovering what improvements can be made in the future.

155. The catechumenate team may also become involved with assessing the needs of the parish in the area of Christian initiation, religious education, and liturgy. Because of their work with the Christian initiation of adults, their observations will be valuable to the pastor and the parish pastoral council in planning parish initiatives such as small communities, family catechesis, evangelization, and outreach to the alienated.

CHAPTER FIVE

Special Cases

Contents:	Use of the Short Form of Adult Initiation
	Christian Initiation of Persons in Danger of Death
	Persons with Disabilities
	Illiteracy
	Schools and Institutions

Use of the Short Form of Adult Initiation

157. This adaptation may not be granted on the basis of change of residence from parish to parish or diocese to diocese (NCCB Statutes no. 20). The use of this form is to be on the most limited basis possible, and will be restricted to extraordinary cases (NCCB Statutes no. 20).

Christian Initiation of Persons in Danger of Death

158. Priests and chaplains should become familiar with the form of initiation to be used in the case of a person in danger of death. Once the sacraments are celebrated, the celebrant must take responsibility for (A) finding out whether or not the person recovered from the dangerous illness, and (B) if the person recovered, seeing that the person is placed in a functioning catechumenate.

159. When a person initiated in this way recovers, and is returned to complete the catechumenate under the direction of the parish RCIA director, the norms for the formation of baptized but uncatechized adults should be followed (RCIA no. 374).

Persons with Disabilities

160. Persons with disabilities seeking initiation should be warmly welcomed by the community of the Church, and their participation in the catechumenate and in the sacraments of initiation should be encouraged to the fullest degree possible. Persons fourteen years of age and older are to be treated as adults, regardless of their disability, and initiated according to the norms for adults, with appropriate adaptations.

161. Although the support and active involvement of the family is desirable, and should be sought, no one should be barred from the initiation process because of a perceived lack of faith or Church involvement on the part of their parents or guardians. The permission and basic cooperation of parents or guardians should be sufficient. Often the parents of persons with disabilities have experienced hurt and rejection in the Church, and will only be won back to the Church by a long and patient process. The first priority and responsibility of the minister of Christian initiation is to respond generously to the desire of the one who is seeking the

sacraments of initiation. A resurgence of interest in Church involvement may very well develop in the family during the course of the initiation process.

162. Because one of the goals of the catechumenate is to integrate the person into the community of the Church, persons with disabilities should, as much as possible, take part in the catechumenate process with others, rather than as a separate group. If a separate group is deemed necessary however, participation in the common liturgical rites, and a common course of catechesis (adapted to the participants' abilities) will help to underline the fact that they journey together with the other catechumens and candidates. Contact with parishioners through sponsors and involvement in parish life should also be fostered, so that they will be fully accepted by the parish community.

163. Special efforts by the parish may be called for to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities in the catechumenate. Since disabilities and individuals vary widely, what is needed will also vary. A special catechist may be needed to present the catechesis in simple form to adults with mental retardation. A sign language interpreter may be needed for deaf persons. Braille or audiotaped resources might be needed for those who are blind. Transportation to the catechetical sessions or the Sunday liturgy may be needed. A person who has difficulty speaking may need special help to participate fully in discussions, and so on. The catechumenate team should develop sensitivity to the needs of persons with disabilities, and creatively find ways to meet these needs from the resources of the parish. Depending on the area of concern, the following offices can provide guidance: Office of Adult Religious Education, Department of Religious Education, Secretariat for Parish and Special Ministries.

Illiteracy

164. The *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* does not presume a level of literacy for any of the participants except the ministers of the rite. A survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census in 1982 showed that between 17 and 21 million adults over the age of 20 in the USA are functionally illiterate--an overall rate of nearly 13%. Pastors and RCIA directors should take care to insure that adults who cannot read are nonetheless welcomed and included in the process of initiation.

Schools and Institutions

Catholic Elementary and High Schools

165. After the initial period of inquiry, the catechumenate must always be closely connected to the Sunday worship of the Church. Enrollment in a Catholic school therefore is never sufficient in and of itself to fulfill the requirements of the catechumenate. While the religious education provided in a school is a source of valuable ongoing formation, catechesis for initiation normally is separate from regular, ongoing religious education and is specially suited to the particular goals of the initiation process.

166. Catholic school personnel nonetheless have an important role to play in facilitating the faith journey of the students who are catechumens and candidates enrolled in the parish catechumenate. They should understand and respect the special status of catechumens and candidates, who do not yet participate in the

Eucharist, but who are the focus of the Church's special care and may receive blessings and other sacramentals. They should encourage the Catholic peers of the catechumens and candidates to support and affirm the faith journey of the young catechumens and candidates in their midst. Although the major rites (Acceptance, Election, Scrutiny, and Initiation Sacraments) always take place at parish liturgies, some of the minor rites (such as blessings, minor exorcisms, anointing, the presentation of the creed and the presentation of the Lord's prayer) may be celebrated with the catechumens' classmates in various settings where school prayer is conducted. These rites should be planned collaboratively with the RCIA director, to assure continuity and avoid duplication.

167. The Catholic school principal has a special responsibility to identify needs and encourage families to pursue the initiation process through the parish catechumenate.

Colleges and Universities

168. Catholic campus ministry personnel may conduct a catechumenate adapted to the needs of resident students and commuting students and faculty families who wish to participate regularly in the worship and community life of the campus ministry. Out of pastoral concern for the ongoing Church life of student catechumens and candidates, campus ministers should foster a connection with an appropriate community where the student will participate in Church life outside of the school year and after graduation.

169. None of the regular features of the catechumenate are to be abridged because of the institutional setting. The academic calendar however may impose a necessity for adapting the time frame of the catechumenate, and even the time of the celebration of the rites.

170. The records of baptisms, receptions, confirmations and celebrations of first Eucharist are to be kept in the registers of the territorial parish in which the campus ministry is located.

Nursing Homes, Residences, Correctional Facilities

171. Those charged with the pastoral care of people in nursing homes, residences, or correctional facilities should fully adapt the catechumenate to the needs of those who seek initiation in these settings. They should observe, however, the norms contained in these statutes for obtaining faculties and permissions required by the rite.

172. Those catechumens and candidates who will only be in these institutions for a short period of time, or who begin their catechumenate near the end of their stay, should be helped to find a parish catechumenate in which to continue their formation after they are released.

CHAPTER SIX

Particular Questions

- A. Marriages, Annulments, Convalidations
- B. Funeral of a Catechumen
- C. Non-Catholic Baptisms, Conditional Baptism, Non-Catholic Confirmations
- D. Eastern Non-Catholic Candidates, and the Eastern Catholic Churches
- E. Record-Keeping

A. Marriages, Annulments, Convalidations

- Contents:
- Collaboration
 - Rules Concerning the Marriage of Catechumens
 - Divorced and Remarried Persons Seeking the Sacraments of Initiation
 - Types of Annulment Cases
 - Time Frame for Annulments
 - Convalidation of Marriages

Collaboration

173. Clergy and RCIA directors should work closely together to assure that the marriage situations arising in the catechumenate are addressed in a pastorally sensitive and expeditious manner as soon as possible.

174. Clergy should inform RCIA directors of the progress of annulment cases, and consult them concerning the needs and progress of those going through the process of initiation. RCIA directors should see to it that the need for a Church annulment is identified, and the process of seeking it begun, before the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome is celebrated.

175. In planning for the marriage of catechumens or the convalidation of marriages for those who are in the catechumenate, the RCIA director's advice and cooperation should be sought by the parish priests and deacons, so that the formation process can be integrated with these important events.

Rules Concerning the Marriage of Catechumens

176. Once a person has become a catechumen (the result of celebrating the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens), that person is a member of the household of faith and has certain rights in the Church. Among them is the right to be married according to the Catholic Rite of Marriage.

177. When a catechumen is married, the language of the rite is adapted to reflect the fact that the catechumen is unbaptized. The marriage should take place in the context of a Liturgy of the Word, not a Mass.

178. When a catechumen marries an unbaptized person, no dispensation is needed. When a catechumen marries a baptized person, a dispensation is needed from the impediment of disparity of worship. (Canon 1086)

Divorced and Remarried Persons Seeking the Sacraments of Initiation

179. As people enter into the Christian initiation process, they begin examining many aspects of their lives, including their marriage relationship. In forming people for the Christian way of life, the Church is concerned about bringing all aspects of life into relationship with Christ, including marriage. Specific qualities of marriage are proclaimed by the scriptures, including permanence and indissolubility. St. Paul proclaimed marriage a mystery that manifests the love of Christ for each of us (Ephesians 5:32). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* refers to marriage as a sacrament of the communion of the Church. Those who minister to divorced persons seeking initiation should keep in mind these pastoral and theological concerns.

180. A person who is divorced but not remarried may celebrate the sacraments of initiation. That person should clearly understand however that the Church still considers him or her bound by the bond of marriage and that a future marriage would not be possible unless the previous marriage was dissolved by death or unless a Tribunal issues a declaration of nullity. The time of preparation for initiation may be an appropriate time to present their case so they can know of their freedom to enter into a future marriage within the Church.

181. Anyone who was married and divorced, and is currently remarried, must seek a declaration of nullity of the prior marriage or marriages. (N.B. If the ex-spouse has obtained a declaration of nullity, that annulment frees both parties.) Also, anyone who is married to someone who was previously married and divorced cannot be admitted to the sacraments unless a Tribunal judges the previous marriage to be annulled.

182. A declaration of nullity is a statement by the Church that the marriage in question was not binding in the eyes of the Church. It affirms that a required form, intention or capability was not present. An annulment (declaration of nullity) does not deny that a real relationship existed, or imply that the relationship was entered with ill will or moral fault. It is a statement which says that the Church has judged that the relationship lacked at least one of the elements considered essential for a binding union. An annulment has absolutely no effect on the legitimacy of children.

183. The person seeking initiation should understand that a petition for an annulment is not the same as getting a divorce. Civil law views marriage as a contract that can be broken or dissolved. The Church understands marriage to be a covenant relationship that is indissoluble and permanent. A covenant relationship demands more than the establishment of a contract. Only when certain intentions and capabilities are brought to the relationship by the parties involved is the covenant real and genuine. A declaration of nullity from an Ecclesiastical Tribunal has no effects at all in civil law, and does not affect civil law matters such as child support, alimony or child custody.

184. It is necessary to petition for an annulment as soon as the inquirer's intention to join the Church becomes clear, that is, some time before the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome. It is possible to receive someone into the catechumenate while their marriage case is pending, but it will not be possible for them to enter into the final period of purification and enlightenment, to celebrate the Rite of Election or the Call to Continuing Conversion, nor to celebrate the Rite of Reception into full communion of the Catholic Church nor to receive the sacraments, until such time as the marriage situation is resolved. An affirmative decision (the granting of a declaration of nullity) can never be presumed.

185. Any questions about the annulment process (or anyone needing to begin the process) should be referred to the parish priest or to the Tribunal office.

Types of Annulment Cases

186. Those who minister to people in the process of Christian initiation should always refer annulment cases to those who are fully professionally competent to assess them. It is helpful however to know some of the possible reasons for granting a declaration of nullity.

Some possible reasons for an annulment are:

1. lack of ability or intention to enter into a lifelong commitment
2. lack of ability or intention to be faithful to one's spouse
3. lack of freedom in choosing to marry
4. intention against having children
5. lack of complete commitment (placing serious conditions or restrictions on the commitment)
6. an erroneous concept of Christian marriage
7. psychological, mental, or emotional illness, or addiction

There are certain reasons, in addition to the situations listed above, for which a Tribunal may issue a declaration or decree of nullity.

Lack of Canonical Form

187. This basis for marriage nullity applies only when one or both of the parties were Catholic at the time of the marriage. It is based on the rule that in order for a Roman Catholic's marriage to be considered valid and binding in the Roman Catholic Church, that person must be married before a Roman Catholic priest

or deacon and two witnesses. If the person was married in any other way, such as a civil ceremony or a non-Catholic ceremony, with out proper dispensation the marriage is considered null and void.

Privilege cases

188. There are two types of privilege cases, both dealing with either one or two unbaptized people.

Pauline Privilege

189. The Pauline Privilege comes from an ecclesiastical interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7:12-15, and applies to the marriage of two unbaptized persons, one of whom is later baptized. The first marriage of the now-baptized party can be dissolved with this privilege only when the baptized party intends to enter into a new marriage. For example: A Catholic who wishes to marry a convert to the faith who was previously unbaptized and married to another unbaptized person could invoke the use of the Pauline Privilege. This can be handled at the local level (i.e. the diocesan level). It does not have to be sent to Rome.

Privilege of the Faith (Petrine Privilege)

190. This is the dissolution of a legitimate marriage of a baptized party with an unbaptized party granted only by the Pope in favor of the faith. It pertains only to those cases in which one of the parties remained unbaptized during the entire marriage or the case of two unbaptized neither of whom converts and one of the unbaptized now wants to marry a Catholic. For further information, contact the Tribunal office.

Time Frame for the Tribunal Process

191. Much depends on the cooperation of the parties involved, and how quickly testimony is given and collected.

Convalidation of Marriages

192. Convalidation of an invalid marriage of a catechumen or a candidate should be completed before the sacraments of initiation are celebrated. One cannot enter into the full sacramental life of the Church unless one is completely free to receive the sacraments. It is pastorally advisable to convalidate the marriage as early in the process as possible. It is recommended that candidates participate in the sacrament of penance before the sacraments of initiation.

193. If one party of an invalid marriage is unwilling to participate in a convalidation ceremony, it is usually possible to obtain a radical sanation from the Bishop, provided that both parties intend to remain faithful to the marriage bond. Ordinarily, the sanation involves a dispensation from any further public rite, and it effects a valid marriage between the parties (Canons 1161-1165). For information, please contact the Tribunal office.

Any marriages that take place in your parish must be recorded in the Baptismal Record.

B. Funeral of a Catechumen

194. Once an unbaptized person has passed through the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens, that person becomes "part of the household of Christ" (RCIA no. 47), and may receive blessings and sacramentals, and be married according to the Rite of Marriage. Catechumens may also be buried as Christians (RCIA no. 47). Within the funeral rites, catechumens are to be considered members of the Christian faithful (Canon 1183-§1). The language of the Order of Christian Funerals which refers to baptism is to be adapted.

C. Non-Catholic Baptisms, Conditional Baptism, Non-Catholic Confirmations

Contents: Criteria for Determining a Valid Non-Catholic Baptism

 Conditional Baptism

 Those Churches or Communions Whose Baptism Is Recognized as Valid by the Catholic Church

 Those Churches or Communions That Either Do Not Baptize or Do Not Have a Baptism Recognized as Valid by the Catholic Church

 Non-Catholic Confirmations

Criteria for Determining a Valid Non-Catholic Baptism

195. There are three criteria for determining that any baptism is valid, whether Catholic or not. These are: the use of water (either by immersion or by pouring), the use of the traditional Trinitarian formula ("In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,") and the intention to do what the Church does when it baptizes.

196. If the ritual books of a non-Catholic Church or communion prescribe baptism by water (either by immersion or pouring) and the traditional Trinitarian formula, the only way that one can question the validity of a baptism in such a Church or communion is to have reasonable proof that the minister did not use the proper matter or form or did not intend to baptize, or in the case of an adult recipient, that the proper intention was lacking in the one being baptized (Canon 869-§2).

197. Inability to obtain a baptismal certificate from the particular Church or communion in question does not in itself constitute reasonable proof that a baptism was invalid. Ordinarily a certificate should be able to be obtained, but sometimes there are valid reasons why written records do not exist or have become unavailable. Each case should be considered individually, and the Secretariat for Canonical Services should be consulted in doubtful cases. Preferably, the certificate of baptism should be obtained before the Rite of Acceptance.

198. If, however, there is a doubt about the fact or validity of baptism, and the doubt remains after serious investigation, baptism may be conferred conditionally (Canon 869–§1).

Conditional Baptism

199. Conditional baptism is understood to be the exception rather than the rule. It may be conferred only when the fact of a person’s baptism or its validity remains doubtful after a serious investigation (canon 869, §1). The investigation is used to determine whether the person was baptized with true water, using the words of the traditional Trinitarian formula, and that both the minister and the recipient of the sacrament (if 7 years of age or older) have the proper requisite intentions (canon 869, §2). If a person was baptized by the sprinkling of water in a non-Catholic church, conditional baptism should be conferred as there is no way to prove that water actually touched the person.

If conditional baptism seems necessary after the investigation described above, it must be celebrated privately rather than at a public liturgical assembly of the community and with only those limited rites which the diocesan bishop determines (NCCB Statute no. 37) (See Appendix D). The doctrine of the sacrament of baptism, and the reasons for the doubtful validity of the baptism must be explained to the person before conditional baptism is conferred (Canon 863, §3).

Baptism celebrated conditionally is to take place privately sometime during the same day the person is to be received into full communion of the Catholic Church. The sacrament of reconciliation should be celebrated soon after this conditional baptism but before the public reception into full communion and confirmation. The minister of conditional baptism should always be a priest; this same priest then has faculties by law to complete the sacraments of initiation.

The Catholic Church’s position regarding the validity of non-Catholic baptism can be divided into four general categories: (1) churches with certainly valid baptism; (2) churches whose baptism is presumed valid unless there is good reason for doubt; (3) churches whose baptism is always doubtful; (4) churches whose baptism is always presumed invalid.

(1) Churches with certainly valid baptism.

Baptism within the following churches is always considered valid. It suffices to establish that baptism was administered.

All Separated Eastern Christian Churches (i.e., Orthodox)
Old Catholic Church
Old Roman Catholic Church
Polish National Catholic Church

(2) Churches whose baptism is presumed valid.

The following churches have baptism that is recognized as valid. That is, even if the person to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church cannot recall the details of his or her baptism, validity is presumed and baptism must not be conditionally conferred. Baptism should be conditionally conferred only if it becomes known that baptism took place with out the use of true water, without the

pronouncement of the traditional Trinitarian formula (“I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”), by sprinkling, or that the minister did not intend to baptize.

Adventist Church
African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.)
American Catholic Church
Amish
Assembly of God
Baptist
Brethren in Christ
Christian and Missionary Alliance
Church of the Brethren
Church of God
Church of the Nazarene
Congregational Church
Disciples of Christ (Christian Church)
Episcopal Church (Anglican)
Evangelical Churches
Evangelical Congregational Church
Evangelical Free Church
Evangelical United Brethren (E.U.B.)
Liberal Catholic Church
Lutheran Church
Mennonites
Methodist Church
Presbyterian Church
Reformed Churches
United Church of Christ

(3) Churches whose baptism is always presumed invalid.

The following is a nonexhaustive list of churches that either do not have baptism, or have a type of baptism which the Catholic Church holds to be invalid. These persons must be baptized unconditionally according to the norms of universal church law and this directory.

Apostolic Church
Bohemian Free Thinkers
Christadelphians
Christian Community (Rudolf Steiner)
Christian Scientists
Church of Divine Science
Jehovah’s Witnesses
Masons (no baptism at all)
New Church of Mr. Emmanuel
Swedenborg (Called the Church of the New Jerusalem in the U.S.)
Oneness Pentecostal (do not use the Trinitarian formula)
People’s Church of Chicago
Quakers
Salvation Army
Unitarian Church

Any additional questions may be referred to the Secretariat for Canonical Services or the Office of Worship.

Non-Catholic Confirmations

202. The only non-Catholic Churches whose sacrament of Confirmation is accepted as valid by the Catholic Church are: the Eastern Non-Catholic Churches (see p. 35 ff.), the Polish National Catholic Church, and the Society of Pius X. All candidates from Christian Churches other than these must be confirmed when they are received into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

D. Eastern Non-Catholic Candidates and the Eastern Catholic Churches

Contents:	Definitions
	Eastern Catholics Who Wish to Transfer to the Latin Rite
	Rules Concerning Eastern Non-Catholics Becoming Catholic

Definitions

Eastern Catholics

203. A Christian is a member, canonically, not of a rite but of a specific Church which follows in its worship a certain pattern of liturgy called a "rite." Thus in Catholicism there is a Latin Catholic Church, and several Eastern Catholic Churches. They are all Catholic, but they follow different liturgical rites. In the terminology of Canon Law, a person is "enrolled" in a particular church, whether the Latin Church or one of the Eastern churches.

204. There are six families of liturgical rites in the Catholic Church. They are: Latin, Byzantine, Alexandrian, Antiochene, Chaldean, and Armenian.

205. At least twenty ritual Churches comprise the Catholic Church: Armenian, Bulgarian, Byelorussian, Chaldean, Coptic, Ethiopian, Greek-Melkite, Hellenic Byzantine Rite, Hungarian Greek Catholic, Italo-Greek and Albanian, Krizevsky (Yugoslavian, Croatian, Russine, Macedonian, Ukrainian), Latin, Malabar, Malankar, Maronite, Romanian, Russian, Ruthenian, Byzantine-Catholic USA, Slovak Greek Catholic, Syrian, and Ukrainian. Each of these Churches uses one of the rites which exist in the six families listed above.

206. Members of any of the Eastern Catholic Churches listed above who wish to become members of the Latin Church are not candidates for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church, since they already belong to the Catholic Church. There are rules which govern the circumstances of their transfer of membership, however, which must be followed.

Eastern Non-Catholics

207. There are several groups of non-Catholic Eastern Churches. There are those Churches which call themselves Orthodox (usually Byzantine Churches). There are other Churches, sometimes known as non-Chalcedonian Churches, which may or may not use the term Orthodox (such as the Coptic Church, the Syrian Jacobite Church, the Ethiopian Church and the Armenian Church). There is also the Church of the East, or Assyrian Church (which is Nestorian). None of these Churches is in union with Rome; they are non-Catholic Churches.

208. For information on the reception of candidates from Eastern non-Catholic Churches, see Rules Concerning Eastern Non-Catholics Becoming Catholic.

Eastern Catholics Who Wish to Join the Latin Church

209. Catholics, one and all, everywhere in the world should retain their own rite, cherish it and observe it.

210. For this reason, a transfer of enrollment from an Eastern Church to the Latin Church (except for no. 2 or 3 below) should not be encouraged. Such a transfer is not to be treated under any circumstances as part of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. Information about this topic is included in these statutes for the orientation of the RCIA Director, who may be in the position of answering inquiries about this. Further information can be obtained by calling the Secretariat for Canonical Services.

211. A child of parents who belong to the Latin Church is enrolled in the Latin Church by receiving baptism in the Latin Church. If one of the parents does not belong to the Latin Church, and both parents agree that the child will be baptized in the Latin Church, the child may be baptized in the Latin Church and will belong to it because of being baptized in it. If the parents do not agree, the child is to be baptized in the ritual Church to which the father belongs (Canon 111).

212. A similar provision is used in the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, (canon 29): "By virtue of baptism, a child who has not yet completed his fourteenth year of age is enrolled in the Church sui iuris of the Catholic father; or the Church sui iuris of the mother if only the mother is Catholic or if both parents by agreement freely request it, with due regard for particular law established by the Apostolic See."

213. Anyone not yet baptized who has completed the fourteenth year of age can freely choose to be baptized in any of the ritual Churches and in this case the person belongs to that Church which is chosen (Canon 111).

214. After receiving baptism, the following are enrolled in another ritual Church (canon 112):

1. One who has obtained permission from the Holy See. (Anyone who does not fall into categories 2 or 3 below, should contact the Secretariat for Canonical Services to seek permission from the Holy See.)

2. A spouse who declares at the time of marriage or during marriage that he or she is transferring from their own ritual Church to the ritual Church of the other spouse. If the marriage ended, however, that person can freely return to the Church of their baptism.

3. Children under the age of fourteen, of parents who have legitimately transferred to another ritual Church. But when they reach the age of fourteen, they may return to the Church of their baptism.

(adapted from John Huels, *The Pastoral Companion to Canon Law*, p. 28–29)

Rules Concerning Eastern Non-Catholics Becoming Catholic

215. Christians of other Churches or ecclesial communions, when they are received into the full communion of the Catholic Church, become members of the ritual Church indicated by their baptism. Thus, all Protestants become members of the Latin Church (our rite). Someone who is Orthodox becomes a member of the corresponding Catholic Church. (A Syrian Orthodox person becomes a member of the Syrian Catholic Church, etc.) Exceptions constitute a transfer of enrollment, and require the permission of the Holy See. If such permission is necessary, it should be sought before any participation in the formation process of the catechumenate. This is why it is important to determine if there is any Eastern Catholic or Orthodox affiliation in an inquirer's family background.

216. In the case of uncatechized Eastern non-Catholic candidates, if and when permission to join the Latin rite is granted, these candidates may participate in the formation process of the catechumenate, but not in its rites. Such candidates are received with a simple profession of faith, and no liturgical rite (RCIA no. 474). The simple profession of faith takes place before a priest, and the date should be recorded in the parish baptismal register as the date of their reception.

217. For pastoral reasons, these candidates should be warmly welcomed by the parish community, and catechized in an appropriate way before their profession of faith. The baptism and confirmation of eastern non-Catholic Christians are considered valid by the Catholic Church and must not be repeated.

E. Record-Keeping

Contents: Initiation Questionnaire
 Register of Catechumens
 Book of the Elect
 Recording Sacraments

Initiation Questionnaire

218. In order to help the pastor and the RCIA director to keep an orderly record of important facts about the catechumens and candidates throughout the initiation process, a model Initiation Questionnaire is provided in Appendix C.

219. The questionnaire should be filled out by a minister of initiation, never by the catechumens or candidates themselves.

Register of Catechumens

220. Since those unbaptized persons who are accepted into the order of catechumens have a standing in the Church, their names should be kept in a formal register, along with the names of their sponsors, the minister, the date, and the place of celebration (RCIA no. 46; see also Canon 788-§1). The register of catechumens is not a ceremonial book. It is solely a record book.

221. If for any reason someone who is enrolled in the catechumenate drops out and later returns for marriage, burial, or the resumption of their formation for baptism, the register of catechumens provides a record of the person's status within the Church.

222. The names of the baptized candidates are not written in the register of catechumens, since they are not catechumens. Their status in the Church is determined by their baptism, and this is recorded by the Church of their baptism.

223. For practical purposes, the RCIA director's file of initiation questionnaires will keep a sufficient record of who is participating in the catechumenate as a candidate.

The Book of the Elect

224. The Book of the Elect is both a ceremonial book and a record book. It is used ceremonially when the catechumens sign it in the parish and when it is presented at the Rite of Election. It is kept by the parish as a record of those who will approach the waters of baptism at the Easter Vigil. The book also records the date of the celebrations of the Rite of Sending and the Rite of Election. Bishop signs the book during the Rite of Election as a record of the one who presided at this ritual.

225. Both adults and children who are the elect may sign the book. A catechist or godparent may write the names of the elect if for any reason the elect cannot sign their names themselves. Candidates do not sign the book.

Any marriages that take place in your parish must be recorded in the Baptismal Record.

Recording the Sacraments for Newly Baptized Persons, Age Seven and Above:

Baptismal Register

226. Information pertaining to the baptism of adults, including those conditionally baptized, should be placed in the baptismal register of the parish of celebration. Also to be noted in this same register are the date and place of confirmation and any valid marriages (see note on valid marriages at the end of this section).

Confirmation Register

227. The person's confirmation should be noted in the register of the parish of celebration as usual.

Recording the Sacraments for Persons Age Seven and Above Who Were Baptized in a Non-Catholic Church and Who Have Now Been Received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church:

Baptismal Register

228. The fact and all known details of the non-Catholic baptism should be entered into the baptismal register of the parish in which he or she was received into full communion. Also noted should be the date and place of reception into full communion, confirmation and any valid marriages (see note on valid marriages at the end of this section).

Confirmation Register

229. The person's confirmation in the Catholic Church should be noted in the parish of celebration as usual. It should be noted that confirmation was received following a profession of faith.

Recording the Reception into the Catholic Church of Minors Below the Age of Seven:

230. It sometimes happens that when a parent makes a profession of faith in the Catholic Church, and is received into full communion, he/she may have young children (under the age of seven) who have already been baptized in a non-Catholic church or ecclesial community. The parent now intends to raise such children in the Catholic faith. Since such children are presumed to lack the ability to reason, they cannot make a personal profession of faith in the Catholic Church, but nevertheless may be received into full communion through the profession of faith made by their parent(s). If there is no reason to seriously doubt the validity of the Christian baptism that the children have already received, the young children are simply received into the full communion of the Church along with their parents.

Baptismal Register

231. A child's baptism in the non-Catholic church should be recorded as fully as possible in the baptismal register of the parish of reception. It should be noted that the child was received through the profession of faith made by his/her parent(s) as well as the date of reception. All future notations (confirmation, marriage, etc.) will then follow clearly upon this entry.

Valid Marriages

232. We recognize the following as being valid marriages. There is no need to convalidate these marriages, prior to the reception of the sacraments of initiation.

Marriages involving a Catholic which are recognized by the Church as being valid are presumed to be valid. This is true when the couple was married according to canonical form [before a properly delegated cleric and two witnesses], or with a dispensation from canonical form. However, it should be noted that if the Catholic party left the Catholic Church by a formal act -- e.g., registering with a non-Catholic Church so as to leave the Catholic faith -- and the marriage took place after November 27, 1993, the Catholic was not bound by canonical form and the marriage is considered valid if there were no impediments present (such as a previous marriage). The Church also recognizes as valid all marriages of Catholics before clergy of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Marriages between two non-Catholics (baptized or unbaptized) are considered valid if neither party was prohibited from marriage by divine law impediments - e.g., a previous marriage, impotence at the time of marriage, a close degree of blood relationship.

Marriages involving at least one member of the Eastern Orthodox Church in which no Catholic was a party are only recognized as valid when the couple was married before a properly delegated priest of that church.

Common law marriages involving two non-Catholics are sometimes recognized as valid. Please call the Secretariat for Canonical Services for more guidance if this situation is discovered.

In all of the above situations, this marriage, prior to reception of the sacraments of initiation, must have been the first marriage for both parties unless:

All previous marriages were ended by the death of the spouse, or

A Catholic Tribunal had granted a Declaration of Nullity for all previous marriages.

[Proof of the bond having ended by either death or declaration of nullity must be gained by certified documents].

APPENDIX A: CATECHETICAL RESOURCES

Brown, Kathy; Duggan, Bob; Ferrone, Rita; Gensler, Gael; Gura, Carol; Lanza, Steve; Steffen, Donna. *Foundations In Faith: Manual for Catechumenate (Cycle A,B,C), Participate Book (Cycle A,B,C), Handbooks for Inquirers, Sponsors, Catechists, Coordinators, Priests. Resources for Christian Living, 1997*

Brown, Kathy; Sohal, Frank. *Issues in the Christian Initiation of Children: Catechesis and Liturgy*. Training Liturgy Publications, Chicago, IL 1989.

Bruns, William R. *Cenacle Session: A Modern Mystagogy*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1991.

_____. *Easter Bread: Reflections on the Gospels of the Easter Season for Neophytes and Their Companions*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1991.

Brusselmans, Christiane. *Sunday*. Loveland: Treehaus Communications, Inc., 1989.

Catucci, Thomas, and Kathy Coffey. *Lenten Journey: A Resource for Christian Initiation*. Denver: Living the Good News, Inc., 1992.

Coffey, Kathy. *Children and Christian Initiation, Living the Good News*, Denver, CO 1995.

Cole, Joan. *RCIA: Four Retreat Days*. Ligouri: Ligouri Publications, 1988.

DeVillers, Sylvia. *Lectionary Based Catechesis for Children: A Catechist's Guide*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1994.

Duggan, Robert and Maureen Kelly. *The Christian Initiation of Children: Hope for the Future*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1991. (about the process with children)

Dunning, James. *Echoing God's Word*. Arlington, VA: Forum, 1993. (about catechesis)

Episcopal Diocese of Colorado. *Living the Good News*.

Hamma, Robert M., ed. *A Catechumen's Lectionary*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1988.

Hinman-Powell, Karen, and Joseph Sinwell, eds. *Breaking Open the Word of God (Cycles A, B, C)*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1986-88. (3 Volumes)

Huck, Gabe. *Teach Me to Pray*. New York: Sadlier, 1979. (prayer book)

Lewinski, Ronald. *Guide for Sponsors*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1987 (revised). [Also available in Spanish]

McBrien, Philip. *How to Teach with the Lectionary*. Mystic, CT: XXIII Publications, 1992.

_____. *How to Teach with the Lectionary: Leader's Guide*. Mystic, CT: XXIII Publications, 1992.

----- . *Children's Catechumenate: A Catechists Guide*. Resource Publications, San Jose, CA 1997.

Morris, Thomas. *Walking Together in Faith: A Workbook for Sponsors in Christian Initiation*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1992.

----- . *RCIA: Transforming the Church*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1992. (about the process)

Oakham, Ronald A. *One at the Table*, Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, IL 1995.

Sinwell, Joseph. *Come Follow Me*. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1990.

APPENDIX B: LITURGICAL RESOURCES

- Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy. Study Text 10: *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. Washington, DC: USCC Publishing, 1985.
- Ferrone, Rita. *On the Rite of Election*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1994.
- Huck, Gabe. *The Three Days*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1992 (revised).
- Joncas, J. Michael. *Preaching and Christian Initiation*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1995.
- Kavanagh, Aidan. *The Shape of Baptism*. New York: Pueblo, 1978.
- Kuehn, Regina. *A Place for Baptism*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1992.
- McMahon, J. Michael. *FDLC Commentary on the RCIA*. Washington, DC: FDLC, 1986.
- . *Seek the Living God*. Washington, DC: FDLC, 1991. (series of bulletin inserts)
- Mitchell, Nathan D. *Eucharist and Christian Initiation*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1994.
- Montes, Elizabeth and Dralet, Kathy. *Celebrating the Lectionary: (Cycle A,B,C)* Resource Publications, Inc. 1997.
- Neumann, Don. *Holy Week in the Parish*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991.
- . *This Is the Night*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1992.
- Tufano, Victoria, ed. *Celebrating the Rites of Adult Initiation: Pastoral Reflections*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1992.
- Vincie, Catherine. *The Assembly in Christian Initiation*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1993.
- Wilde, James, ed. *Commentaries: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1988.

APPENDIX C: FORMS

(These may be duplicated as often as necessary.)

Contents: Request for the Delegation to Preside at the Rite of
 Election (See RCIA No. 12)

 Request for a Dispensation from One or Two Scrutinies
 (See RCIA No. 20)

 Initiation Questionnaire (To be completed as soon as
 possible)

REQUEST FOR THE DELEGATION TO PRESIDE AT THE RITE OF ELECTION

Please send a letter containing the information below, or use this form.

(N.B. No delegation is needed to preside at the Rite of Call to Continuing Conversion.)

1. Name of the parish or place where the rite will be celebrated:

2. Date on which the rite will be celebrated:

3. Priest who is requesting the delegation:

Position (e.g. pastor, parochial vicar, chaplain, etc.):

Address and telephone:

4. Number of adults and children who will become the elect in this celebration:

Adults _____ Children of catechetical age _____

5. Will the rite for children be followed? Yes _____ No _____

6. Reason for seeking this delegation:

Signature of the Priest seeking delegation / Date

*Please return this form to **The Bishop's Office, Diocese of Harrisburg,**
P.O. Box 2153, Harrisburg, PA 17105.*

REQUEST FOR A DISPENSATION FROM ONE OR TWO SCRUTINIES

Please send a letter containing the information below, or use this form.

(N.B. [1] The pastor or his equivalent must make this request. If his address or telephone number is different from that of the parish or place where the Scrutiny would have been held, it should be added at the bottom of the page, following his signature. [2] Ordinarily the dispensation is only granted for an individual because of a particular reason named in no. 4 below. But if there is some reason why dispensation is sought for a group, a list of names may be attached in place of no. 1 below.)

1. Name of the Elect for whom this dispensation is requested:

2. Name of the parish or place where the Scrutiny would have been celebrated:

Address:

3. Which Scrutiny(s) would be omitted? -----

4. Reason for omitting the Scrutiny:

Signature of the Pastor / Date

*Please return this form to **The Bishop's Office, Diocese of Harrisburg,**
P.O. Box 2153, Harrisburg, PA 17105.*

INITIATION QUESTIONNAIRE

(This page and relevant items on page 2 and 3 are to be completed as soon as possible and prior to the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens or the Rite of Welcome)

1. Name _____ Telephone _____

2. Address _____

3. Date of Birth _____ Place _____

4. Father's Name _____ Religion _____

5. Mother's Name _____ Religion _____
(maiden name)

6. Were you baptized? _____ If yes;

Was water poured or were you baptized by immersion? _____

Were you baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit? _____

Name of Church _____

Address of Church _____

Denomination of Church _____

Date of Baptism _____ Officiant _____

Is there any Eastern Catholic or Eastern Orthodox membership in your family

background? _____ If so, who would that person be? _____

7. Have you ever been confirmed? _____ Received communion? _____

Church _____ Church _____

Denomination _____ Denomination _____

Date _____

8. Have you ever been accepted as a catechumen or a candidate in the Catholic Church? _____

If yes, when? _____ where _____

Initiation Questionnaire, page 2

9. Are you currently married? _____ Yes (complete A below)_____ No (complete B below)

A. If yes, to whom are you currently married? _____

Date and place of marriage _____

Officiant _____

(name)

(title)

Prior to this marriage, have you ever been married to another person in church, civilly or in common law? _____ If yes, consult no. 1 on page 3.

Has your spouse ever been married (prior to your marriage) to another person in church, civilly or in common law? _____ If yes, consult no. 2 on page 3.

B. If no, have you ever been married before to another person in church, civilly, or in common law? _____ If yes, consult no. 1 on page 3.

10. Are you considering marriage in the near future?

11. In your dialogue, find out if there is a cohabitation issue.

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____

PREVIOUS MARRIAGE OF INQUIRER

- a. How many times were you married? _____
- b. To whom? _____
Date _____
Officiant _____
Place _____
- c. If former spouse is deceased,
give date of death _____ Do you have the death certificate? _____
If former marriage was dissolved or declared null by the Church, give
Diocese and Protocol No. _____
Date of decree _____

PREVIOUS MARRIAGE OF CURRENT SPOUSE

- a. How many times was he or she married before marrying you? _____
- b. To whom? _____
Date(s) _____
Officiant(s) _____
Place(s) _____
- c. If former spouse is deceased, give
date of death _____ Do you have the death certificate? _____
If former marriage was dissolved or declared null by the Church, give
Diocese and Case No. _____
Date of decree _____

WORKSHEET

The appropriate worksheet should be filled in as the information becomes available.

- If the person is unbaptized, answer questions 1 to 7.
- If the person was baptized in a non-Catholic Church, answer questions 8 to 12.
- If the person was baptized in a Catholic Church, answer questions 13 to 18.

• If the person is unbaptized, answer questions 1 to 7.

1. Sponsor_____

Telephone_____

Address_____

2. Godparent_____

Telephone_____

Address_____

Enter the following dates upon completion:

3. Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens_____.

4. Discernment for Admission to Election_____.

5. Rite of Election_____.

6. 1st Scrutiny_____ 2nd Scrutiny_____ 3rd Scrutiny _____.

7. Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist_____

Upon celebration of the sacraments, the information is to be entered into the baptismal register and confirmation register in the usual manner.

• If the person was baptized in a non-Catholic Church, answer questions 8 to 12.

8. Sponsor_____

Telephone _____

Address _____

Enter the following dates upon completion:

9. Rite of Welcome _____.

10. Discernment for the Call to Continuing Conversion _____.

11. Call to Continuing Conversion _____.

12. Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church;
confirmation and Eucharist _____.

Upon reception, an entry is to be made in the baptismal register with the date of full communion noted. Confirmation information is to be noted in the confirmation register.

• If the person was baptized in a Catholic Church, answer questions 13 to 18.

13. Sponsor_____

Telephone_____

Address_____

Enter the following dates upon completion:

14. Rite of Welcome_____.

12. Discernment for the Call to Continuing Conversion_____.

16. Call to Continuing Conversion_____.

17. Obtained from the Bishop's office the faculty to confirm this individual_____.

18. Confirmation and Eucharist_____.

Upon reception of confirmation and Eucharist, information is to be entered in the baptismal and confirmation register as usual.

APPENDIX D: CONDITIONAL BAPTISM LIMITED RITE

The doctrine of the sacrament of baptism, and the reasons for the doubtful validity of the baptism must be explained to the person before conditional baptism is conferred
(Canon 863,3)

The priest, candidate (and sponsor) would gather at the font for the ritual.

GREETING

WORD OF GOD

Matthew 28:18–20 The apostles are sent to preach the gospel and to baptize

Or

Mark 1:9–11 The baptism of Jesus

(short homily)

INVITATION TO PRAYER

Celebrant: Dear friends: Let us pray to almighty God for our brother (sister) *N.*, who is asking for baptism. He has called him (her) and brought him (her) to this moment; may he grant him (her) light and strength to follow Christ with resolute hearts and to profess the faith of the Church. May he give him (her) the new life of the Holy Spirit, whom we are about to call down on this water.

BLESSING OF WATER

Celebrant: Father, God of mercy, through these waters of baptism you have filled us with new life as your very own children.

Response: Blessed be God

From all who are baptized in water and the Holy Spirit, you have formed one people, united in your Son, Jesus Christ.

Response: Blessed be God

You have set us free and filled our hearts with the Holy Spirit of your love, that we may live in your peace.

Response: Blessed be God

You call those who have been baptized to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ to people everywhere.

Response: Blessed be God

You have called *N.* to this cleansing water and new birth, that by sharing the faith of your Church they may have eternal life.

Bless + this water in which he/she will be baptized.

We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

Response: Amen

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Celebrant: Do you reject, Satan and all his works, and all his empty promises?

Candidate: I do

Celebrant: *N.*, do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

Candidate: I do

Celebrant: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

Candidate: I do.

Celebrant: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Candidate: I do

BAPTISM

Celebrant: *N.*, I conditionally baptize you in the name of the Father (pour water),
and of the Son (pour water),
and of the Holy Spirit (pour water).

**APPENDIX E: CHURCH DOCUMENTS AND
REFERENCE WORKS**

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Documents of the Liturgy

Documents of Vatican II

New Catholic Encyclopedia

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

Code of Canon Law