**PREPARATORY NOTES**

1. The Combined Rite for the Celebration of the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion is taken for the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, (# 550-560).
2. The Rite takes place after the Homily in the Liturgy of the Word
3. It is to be celebrated during a Mass on the First Sunday of Lent.
4. For pastoral reasons it may be celebrated at a Liturgy of the Word on or near the First Sunday of Lent.
5. The presider of the Rite is the pastor of the parish as delegated by Bishop Edward Weisenburger.
6. Catechumens and Candidates and their Sponsors (or proxy sponsors) should be seated near the front of the Church.
7. The Book of the Elect is placed in a prominent place for the signing of the book by the catechumens. Pens can be available for the individual signing.
8. If only Catechumens are present, use pages 2-5, and 8-9 of this document.
9. If only Candidates for Full Communion are present, use pages 6-9 of this document.
10. The full text is available in Spanish in a separate document.

*Mass begins in the usual manner. The catechumens, candidates, godparents and sponsors may be seated before the beginning of the Mass or included in the procession as determined by the Pastor.*

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

The Readings may be from Year B or from Year A at the discretion of the Pastor.

**HOMILY**

*#550 - After the readings, the pastor gives the homily. This should be suited to the actual situation and should address not just the catechumens and the candidates but the entire community of the faithful so that all will be encouraged to give good example and to accompany the catechumens and candidates during the rime of the Lenten preparations for celebrating the Easter Sacraments.*

**CELEBRATION OF ELECTION OF THE CATECHUMENS**

**PRESENTATION OF THE CATECHUMENS**

*After the homily, the candidates are presented to the pastor by a deacon or member of the RCIA team using the following words:*

Father \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Easter is drawing near, and our catechumens are completing the period of preparation for full initiation in the Catholic Church. They have found strength in God's grace and support in our community's prayer and example. Now they ask that, after the celebration of the Scrutinies, they be allowed to participate in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist.

**PASTOR:** Those who are to be chosen in Christ, will you please come forward (OR STAND) with your godparents.

*After all the catechumens have been presented, the pastor begins the inquiry.*

**AFFIRMATION BY THE GODPARENTS AND THE ASSEMBLY - #552- A**

**PASTOR:**

My dear friends, these catechumens have asked to be initiated into the sacramental life of the Church this Easter. Those who know them have judged them to be sincere in their desire. During the period of their preparation, they have listened to the word of Christ and endeavored to follow his commands; they have shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined with them in prayer.

And so, I announce to all of you here that our community has decided to call them to the sacraments. Therefore, I ask their godparents to state their opinion once again, so that all of you may hear.

*The pastor addresses the godparents.*

**PASTOR:**

As God is your witness, do you consider these catechumens worthy to be admitted to the sacraments of Christian initiation.

**GODPARENTS: We do.**

**AFFIRMATION BY THE ASSEMBLY**

*The pastor addresses the entire assembly.*

**PASTOR:**

Now I ask you, the members of this community:

Are you willing to affirm the testimony expressed about these catechumens and support them in faith, prayer, and example as we prepare to celebrate the Easter Sacraments?

**ASSEMBLY: We are.**

**INVITATION AND ENROLLMENT OF NAMES**

*The Pastor addresses the catechumens.*

**PASTOR:** And now, my dear catechumens, I address you.

Your own godparents and teachers and this entire community have spoken in your favor. The Church in the name of Christ accepts their judgment and calls you to the Easter Sacraments. Since you have already heard the call of Christ, you must now express your response to that call clearly and in the presence of the whole Church.

Therefore, do you wish to enter fully into the life of the Church through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist?

**CATECHUMENS: Yes, we do!**

**PASTOR**: Then offer your names for enrollment.

**SIGNING THE BOOK OF THE ELECT**

*The catechumens come to the place where the Book of the Elect has been prepared for them to sign their names. The pastor acknowledges the names and signs his name at the bottom of the page. It is not necessary to secure the signature of the Bishop.*

**ACT OF ELECTION**

*After signing the Book of the Elect, the pastor or another minister may raise the book and show it to the assembly as he offers the Act of Election.*

**PASTOR:** I now declare you to be members of the Elect, to be initiated into the sacred mysteries at the next Easter Vigil.

**CATECHUMENS: Thanks be to God**

*The Pastor continues to address the catechumens.*

**PASTOR:**

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

*The Pastor addresses the godparents.*

**PASTOR:**

Godparents, I now invite you to place your hand on the shoulder of the catechumen whom you are receiving into your care.

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

**CELEBRATION OF THE CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION**

**#555-A**

**PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES**

*The candidates are presented to the pastor by a deacon or member of the RCIA team using the following words:*

Father\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I now present to you the candidates, who seek to complete their initiation or who are preparing to be received into the full Communion of the Catholic Church. They, too, have found strength in God's grace and support in our Community's prayer and example.

**PASTOR:**

Those who desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church, together with your sponsors, please come forward. (or stand).

*After all the candidates have been presented, they remain standing with their sponsors for the questions.*

**AFFIRMATION BY THE SPONSORS**

**PASTOR:**

My dear friends, these candidates, our brothers and sisters, have asked to be able to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. Those who know them have judged them to be sincere in their desire. During the period of their preparation, they have reflected on their baptism and have some to appreciate more deeply the presence of Christ in their lives, They have shared the company of their brothers and sisters, joined with them in prayers, and endeavored to follow Christ’s command more perfectly.

And so, I am pleased to recognize their desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church. I ask their sponsors now to state their opinions once again, so that all of you may hear.

*The pastor addresses the sponsors.*

**PASTOR:**

Do you consider these candidates ready to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist?

**SPONSORS: We do.**

*The pastor addresses the assembly.*

**PASTOR:**

Now I ask you directly, the members of this community:

Are you willing to affirm the testimony expressed about these candidates and support them in faith, prayer, and example as they prepare to participate more fully in the Church’s sacraments.

**ASSEMBLY: We are.**

**ACTOF RECOGNITION OF THE CANDIDATES**

**#557**

**PASTOR:**

Dear candidates, the Church recognizes your desire to be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit and to have a place at Christ's eucharistic table. Join with us this Lent in a spirit of repentance. Hear the Lord's call to conversion and be faithful to your baptismal covenant.

**CANDIDATES: Thanks be to God.**

*The pastor addresses the sponsors.*

**PASTOR:**

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

**INTERCESSIONS FOR THE ELECT AND THE CANDIDATES #558**

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

**DEACON/READER:**

1. That together we may fruitfully employ this Lenten season to renew ourselves through self-denial and works of holiness, let us pray to the Lord:

LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER

1. That our catechumens may always remember this day of their election and be grateful for the blessings they have received from heaven, let us pray to the Lord:

LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER

1. That our candidates preparing for confirmation and reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church may grow daily in fidelity to their baptismal covenant, let us pray to the Lord:

LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER

1. That their teachers may always convey the beauty of God’s word to those who search for it, let us pray to the Lord:

LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER

1. That their godparents and sponsors may be living examples of the Gospel, let us pray to the Lord:

LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER

1. That our community, during this Lenten period, may grow in charity and be constant in prayer, let us pray to the Lord:

LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER

**PRAYER OVER THE ELECT AND THE CANDIDATES**

*The Pastor with hands outstretched says the concluding prayer.*

**PASTOR:**

Father of love and power, it is your will to establish everything in Christ and to draw us into his all-embracing love. Guide these chosen ones: strengthen them in their vocation, build them into the kingdom of your Son, and seal them with the Spirit of your promise. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**ASSEMBLY: Amen.**

+++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++

**DISMISSAL of the ELECT**

**#560**

*If the Liturgy of the Eucharist is to be celebrated and the Elect are to be dismissed, the following prayer is said.*

**PASTOR:** My friends, you have set out with us on the road that leads to the glory of Easter. Christ will be your way, your truth and your life. Until we meet again for the scrutinies walk always in his peace.

Go in peace and the Lord remain with you always.

**ELECT: Thanks be to God.**

#561 – When the Eucharist is to follow, intercessory prayer is resumed with the usual general intercessions (Universal Prayer) for the needs of the Church and the whole world, then, if required, the profession of faith is said. But, for pastoral reasons these general intercessions (Universal Prayer) and the profession of faith may be omitted. The Liturgy of the Eucharist then begins as usual with the preparation of the gifts.