

WITH HUMBLE SPIRIT

AUGUST 2024

CALENDAR NOTES

AUG 6

Transfiguration of the Lord

- The Gloria is said.

AUG 10

St. Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr

- The Gloria is said

AUG 15

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

- This is a Holyday of Obligation
- The Gloria and Creed are said.

AUG 24

St. Bartholomew, Apostle

- The Gloria is said.

Looking Ahead

- **BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**
MASS – It is customary to celebrate a Mass of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the Academic year (Votive Masses, #9). This may replace the assigned mass of any day noted V3 or V2 in the Ordo, (ie. any ferial or memorial).

ARS CELEBRANDI

OCIA — WHY IT MATTERS

While most contemporary Catholics see the fruit of the Second Vatican Council's liturgical reforms primarily in the celebration of the Mass, one might argue that among the most drastic and perduring reforms is the celebration of the sacraments of Christian Initiation for Adults (cf. Sacrosanctum Concilium, 64-66). This year, we receive a new translation of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, and yet among the many ritual books in use after the liturgical reform, it is perhaps the most abused, neglected, and rejected. By some, it is used as a program for adult formation, for others, it is excused as an invention of the council. For some, it is an opportunity to make up ever-new liturgical celebrations, and for others, it is an occasion to minimalism, reducing everything to the minimally required sacramental formula.

Why does the OCIA matter? Simply put, the present Order of Christian Initiation of Adults provides us with

the normative order of rites which are to be celebrated in a parish by clerics, catechists, baptized lay-faithful, and unbaptized persons along the unbaptized persons' paths to full initiation in the Christian faith. Some rites are required, some are optional. Some rites are scripted and must be followed according to the given order, and some are unscripted, left to the discretion of the clergy or catechist who is the celebrant of the rite but modeled by the ritual book itself.

The OCIA matters because, like the other ritual books of the Church, it provides the Church's direction on the most effective means to signify sacramental realities through the liturgy. Like at the Mass, the baptism of children, confirmation, penance, anointing of the sick, matrimony, and ordination, in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, the Church gives the rites which are required for the valid celebration of the sacraments, and she also gives other rites which help to more fully understand the mystery which is being celebrated, namely the paschal mystery.

In the OCIA, that mystery is experienced in the conversion of adults who are called "out of darkness into his marvelous light" (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9). God calls them to conversion, they cooperate with his grace, and they are strengthened to persevere in coming to the faith. This is sacramentalized not merely in the sacramental formulae that happen on Holy Saturday night, but all throughout their process of conversion.

In this year when we receive a new translation of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, I wish to take this column as an opportunity to explore this ritual text. Hopefully, it will enrich those who use it to celebrate these rites with a deeper understanding of the mind of the Church, and it will encourage those who do not celebrate the rites to consider this gift of our catholic heritage. We are the true Church founded on the scriptures and the magisterial tradition, and our celebration of the sacraments of Christian Initiation for Adults according to the OCIA manifests that foundational ecclesiological faith.

In the coming months, we will explore the OCIA by following its structure. Here is a preview of the topics to be covered in this newsletter.

1. Who is OCIA for?
2. Structure of the Periods and Steps
3. Period of Evangelization and the Precatechumenate
4. Rite of Acceptance
5. Period of the Catechumenate and its associated rites
6. Rites of sending and election
7. Period of Purification and Enlightenment and Scrutinies
8. Presentations and Preparation Rites
9. Period of Post-Baptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy

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Go Make Disciples

DIVINE WORSHIP

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