

# WITH HUMBLE SPIRIT

JANUARY 2025

## CALENDAR NOTES

JAN 1

*Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God*

- Holy Day of Obligation.
- The GLORIA and CREED are said.

JAN 4-5

*Epiphany of the Lord*

- **PROPER VIGIL MASS:** The proper vigil Mass should be celebrated on Saturday evening.
- **ANNOUNCEMENT OF EASTER & THE MOVEABLE FEASTS:** The proclamation found in Appendix I may be proclaimed after the Gospel at the Mass during the day of Epiphany. The pointed proclamation for dates in 2025 may be found here: [in English](#) and [in Spanish](#).
- **BLESSED CHALK:** There is a tradition of blessing chalk for families to take home on Epiphany to bless their houses for a new year. Priests can use different formulae to bless the chalk outside of Mass or within Mass, but [here is a suggestion](#).

JAN 12

*The Baptism of the Lord*

- The GLORIA and CREED are said.
- **READINGS:** Note there are 2 options for the readings to be proclaimed.

JAN 13

*Ordinary Time Begins*

- **NB:** The daily Mass Lectionary cycle is year I.

JAN 18-25

*Week of Christian Unity*

- Consider inserting prayers for Christian Unity in the general intercessions at Mass, using the Mass formulary, "For the Unity of Christians" (VN #17), or others as noted in the Ordo, p 37.

## ARS CELEBRANDI

### OCIA: PERIOD OF THE CATECHUMENATE

We continue a series that examines the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*. The new Order must be used beginning March 5.

"The catechumenate is a lengthy period during which catechumens receive pastoral instruction and practice appropriate disciplines" (OCIA #75). This period is aimed at maturing the faith in the unbaptized catechumens. There are four ways this is achieved: 1) Appropriate catechesis, 2) familiarity with the practice of Christian life, 3) Liturgical rites through which they are cleansed and sustained with divine blessing, 4) Participation in the apostolic mission of the Church (cf. OCIA #75).

The "lengthy period" is not given a minimum by the Order, since it depends on "various circumstances" (cf. OCIA #76). However, the National Statutes indicate that "a person who has entered the catechumenate is to remain in it from at least the Easter Time of one year until the beginning of the Easter time of the Next year..." (National Statutes for the Christian Initiation of Adults, Norm 4). A period of the catechumenate cannot merely follow a "school year" model, therefore, and one's entrance into the catechumenate ideally occurs "before Lent" (Norm 4), at least a year before the Easter when they will be baptized.

The catechumenate is first and foremost under the care of the local Bishop, and catechumens incur rights (cf. Norm 9) and obligations (cf. Norm 8) in the life of the church.

Among the important obligations of a catechumen is to "participate in the Liturgy of the Word, preferably on Sundays and other holy days of obligation, with the community if possible (see OCIA 81)" (Norm 8). Again, the Order does not consider the Mass the primary space for catechumens to encounter and deepen their faith. It envisions "special celebrations of the Word of God" celebrated on Sundays "so that catechumens will be accustomed to taking an active and practiced part in these celebrations" (OCIA #83.a). A model for such celebrations is given in OCIA #85-89. Then, "the first part of the celebration [the Liturgy of the Word] should gradually be opened to them" (OCIA #83.b).

Catechumens who attend the Mass should normally be "gently dismissed" from the congregation before the Liturgy of the Eucharist, "unless there are difficulties that suggest otherwise" (OCIA #75.3). The logic provided by the Order is that it requires the grace of Baptism for one to be properly "deputed to participate in the new worship of Christ," which is the Eucharistic celebration (cf. *ibid.*). While several resources provide lengthy formulas for dismissal, it would be sufficient to use the brief formulas found in the Order itself, for example: "Catechumens, go in peace, and may the Lord remain with you" (cf. OCIA #67.A).

The Order provides several other rites to be used during the catechumenate. These include the Minor Exorcisms and Blessings normally prayed during the Concluding Rites of the celebrations of the Word of God, but which can be used at any

## CALENDAR NOTES, CONT'D

JAN 22

*Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children (Anniversary of Roe v. Wade)*

- Consult Ordo for possible Masses to be celebrated, VN #48/1 A or B, "For Giving thanks to God for the gift of Human Life." More information can be found online [here](#).

JAN 25

*The Conversion of St. Paul*

- The GLORIA is said.

JAN 26

*Third Sunday in Ordinary Time*

- SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD:** Declared in 2019 by Pope Francis. While no particular tradition or rite has developed, the theme can readily be included in the Homily or the Universal Prayers.

JAN 26-FEB 1

*Celebrate Catholic Schools Week*

- Consider using Book of Blessings, Ch. 5, "Order for the Blessing of Students and Teachers." (Universal Prayers, Blessing). A Votive Mass of the patron/patroness of the school might appropriately be celebrated.

## LOOKING AHEAD

- Presentation of the Lord (SUN Feb 2): Plan and prepare Blessing of Candles/ Procession; Blessing of Throats (Feb 3)
- World Marriage Day (Feb 11)
- Ash Wednesday (Mar 5)

time. They are celebrated by "a Priest, a Deacon, or by a worthy and suitable catechist appointed by the Bishop to carry out this ministry" (OCIA #91).

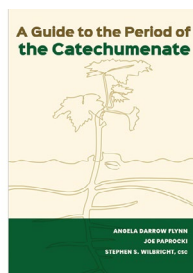
The Anointing of the Catechumens with the Oil of Catechumens "can be offered in places where this is found useful and desirable" (OCIA #98). It is important to note that only a deacon or priest can celebrate the anointing. This brief rite includes either a Prayer of Exorcism or a Blessing of Oil (if the Oil of the Catechumens blessed by the Bishop is not used), the actual anointing on the breast or on each hand, and a final Blessing of the catechumens (from OCIA #97).

Some rites from the Period of Enlightenment and Purification may also be celebrated during the Period of the Catechumenate as listed in OCIA #104-5: The Handing On of the Creed, The Handing On of the Lord's Prayer, and the Ephphatha.

The period of the Catechumenate ends with the optional rite of Sending Catechumens for Election (developed for use in the USA) and the Rite of Election itself. Both these will be discussed in the next article.

Zachary M. Boazman

## RESOURCES FROM OUR OFFICE

**A Guide to the Period of the Catechumenate**

Angela Darrow Flynn, Joe Paprocki, csc

The period of the catechumenate is rich with opportunities for catechesis, and the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults presents four ways that catechesis occurs during that time for the unbaptized. A Guide to the Period of the Catechumenate breaks open each of those ways of catechizing by first exploring the approach of catechesis accommodated to the

liturgical year, then by providing suggestions on how to introduce catechumens to the Christian way of life. In addition to this foundational material, this book also includes:

An overview of six foundational principles of initiation ministry and how they are applied to the period of the catechumenate

Practical advice for leading formational and catechetical sessions with the unbaptized

Thirty-five seasonal outlines and twenty-four monthly outlines with liturgical suggestions for preparing Celebrations of the Word

Thirty-four seasonal outlines and twenty-four monthly outlines with practical ways catechumens can serve their parish and local communities

Twelve catechetical sessions on the lives of the saints

**Register today** for the Southwest Liturgical Conference Study Week February 5-8 in Victoria, TX at Holy Family Catholic Church.

**In Communion with Christ***Joys and Hopes for All***En Comunion con Cristo***Gozos y esperanzas para todos*63rd Study Week  
February 5-8, 2025  
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