



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO  
Office of Worship  
215 N. Westnedge Avenue, Kalamazoo MI 49007

**2026 Rite of Election of Catechumens  
and  
Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion  
Information**

- ◆ The Rite of Election of Catechumens and Calling of Candidates to Continuing Conversion will be held on Sunday, February 22, the First Sunday of Lent, at 2:00 PM at St. Augustine Cathedral (542 W Michigan Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49007).
- ◆ The celebration which we will be following is found in #'s 547-561 *The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*.
- ◆ Instruct your catechumens/godparents and candidates/sponsors to respond with a strong **“they have”** or **“we do”** or **“It is”** to the questions from the Bishop.
- ◆ Please let everyone know that the Rite of Election is a Liturgy of the Word and not a Mass. It lasts about one hour.
- ◆ A reception with light refreshments will follow immediately in the Crowley Center.
- ◆ For the meaning of the celebration for the unbaptized catechumens, see #'s 118-128 in the OCIA book and, for baptized candidates, see #'s 408; 446-458 in the OCIA book.
- ◆ Godparent or sponsor, who brings which?
  - The catechumen is accompanied by a *godparent* (#'s 11, 123, OCIA).
  - The candidate for full communion continues with a *sponsor* (#'s 404, OCIA).
  - Please make sure that a sponsor or godparent attends with each candidate or catechumen. They play a simple yet important role in the celebration.
- ◆ We will use the Diocesan Book of the Elect. You do not need to bring your parish Book of the Elect to the Cathedral.
- ◆ Please register all catechumens and candidates online at <https://www.diokzoo.org/rite-of-election> by February 6.

## The Ceremony

Things you should know as well as share with your catechumens/godparents, candidates/sponsors

### THE RITE OF ELECTION and CALLING THE CANDIDATES TO CONTINUING CONVERSION OCIA #'s 547 - 561

#### Presentation of the Catechumens (those unbaptized, #551, OCIA)

- ◆ After the homily,
  - ◆ All catechumens from each parish will be called by name at this time. Catechumens are asked to stand in place when they are called.
  - ◆ Bishop will question the godparents, community and catechumens.
  - ◆ **When directed, each catechumen will walk with their godparent to the front, using the center aisle.**
  - ◆ **Each catechumen will sign the Diocesan Book of the Elect.**
  - ◆ **After signing, please return to your seat by way of the outside aiseways (Remain standing).**
  - ◆ The Book of the Elect will be presented to the Bishop after all have signed it.
  - ◆ The Bishop will declare these catechumens members of the elect. He will invite the godparents to place their hand on the shoulder of their catechumen as a sign of their support and care for their journey of faith.
  - ◆ If you have anyone who has difficulty walking or standing please notify our office in advance so accommodations can be made.

After the catechumens and their godparents have returned to their seats, the **Presentation of the Candidates for Full Communion** takes place (those already baptized, #555, OCIA)

- ◆ All candidates from each parish will be called by name at this time.
- ◆ **When called, each candidate will stand at their place with their sponsor.**
  - ◆ Candidates **do not** sign the Book of the Elect since they became part of the “elect” at their baptism. The Book of the Elect is only for those who are unbaptized.
- ◆ After all candidates and sponsors are standing, the Bishop will question the sponsors and then question the community.
- ◆ The Bishop will invite the candidates to have a place at Christ’s Eucharistic Table this coming Easter. He will invite the sponsors to place their hand on the shoulder of their candidate as a sign of their support and care for their journey of faith.
- ◆ If you have anyone who has difficulty walking or standing, please notify our office in advance.

At the Conclusion of the Liturgy, group pictures will be taken. First all catechumens will be invited forward. Second, all candidates will be invited forward. Bishop Lohse will attend the reception and individual pictures may be done at that time.

## Miscellaneous Information

### REGISTER

Please register all catechumens and candidates online at <https://www.diokzoo.org/rite-of-election> by February 6.

### ARRIVAL

Entry will be available only through the main doors of the Cathedral (facing West Michigan Ave). Doors will be unlocked at 1:00 pm.

### PARISH SEATING CHART AND NAME TAGS

Sections will be reserved and marked for catechumens, candidates, godparents, sponsors and two team members from each parish (OCIA Coordinator, Pastor, etc.). Seating for family and friends will be in the unreserved sections of the side aisles. The seating chart will be sent to you in advance.

Nametags will be together by parish in the assigned pews. Please have someone from your parish arrive early to greet, distribute nametags, and assist in seating your catechumens and candidates.

### SEVERE WEATHER PLANS

In case of hazardous snow or ice conditions we will email each parish coordinator by Noon on Sunday, February 22, requesting a verification of reception of email, at the email you provided on your form. Please notify our offices if weather conditions in your area are poor and you are unable to make it.

### COOKIES FOR THE RECEPTION

We ask that each parish bring **one dozen cookies per 3 catechumens and/or candidates** coming from your parish (i.e., 3 total catechumens & candidates = 1 dozen cookies).

Please drop the cookies off at the Crowley Center before going into the Cathedral. There will be a cart at the entrance to leave the cookies. This is a wonderful opportunity to ask parishioners to participate in the OCIA who otherwise may not be able to be involved.

### CARNATIONS

It is a tradition that parishes provide a carnation for each catechumen and candidate to wear as a simple way of distinguishing them from everyone else. A single white carnation will do.

### RESTROOMS

Handicap accessible restrooms are located in the Cathedral Church near the Cathedral side entrance. There are Men's & Women's Bathrooms available in the Crowley Center during the reception.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions, and/or to notify us of accommodations needed for walking/standing during the Rite, please contact:

Mr. Jamin Herold

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