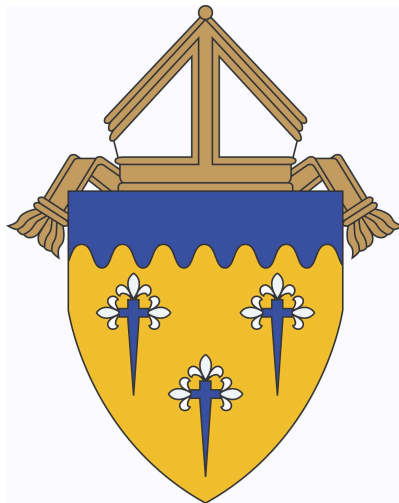


# **Order of Christian Initiation of Adults**

## **Diocesan Manual**



Diocese of Superior | 2025

# Table of Contents

---

Chapter 1	Christian Initiation: Introduction	Page 3
Chapter 2	General Pattern for Adults	Page 8
Chapter 3	General Pattern for Children	Page 15
Chapter 4	Special Circumstances for Initiation	Page 18
Chapter 5	Special Situations and Questions	Page 20
Chapter 6	Leaders of the Parish OCIA Process	Page 23

## Appendices

---

Appendix A	Guidelines for Recording for OCIA	Page 25
Appendix B	Inquiry Interview	Page 28
Appendix C	Suggested Leader Qualification	Page 30
Appendix D	Implementation of OCIA in Combined Parishes	Page 31
Appendix E	Request to Confirm	Page 32

### References:

Code of Canon Law (CIC), Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA), Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC).

# Chapter One

---

## CHRISTIAN INITIATION: INTRODUCTION

- Purpose of these guidelines.
- The *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*.
- Initiation into the Christian life.
- Persons who can be included in the OCIA.
- Those for whom the OCIA may not be appropriate.

### 1.1 **PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES**

In response to the provision in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (the OCIA ritual book) for bishops to “Establish instruction for the catechumenate and decide on appropriate norms as necessary” (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, #34), the Diocese of Superior OCIA advisory committee offers the following guidelines for implementing the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, which by extension, may also be used to help in implementing and interpreting other aspects of the catechumenate as well. The OCIA is designed for adults; however, local parishes can include adaptations from it for children of catechetical age. These guidelines are not intended to be a presentation or explanation of the OCIA. **There can be no substitute for reading the official ritual book, the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*, published in 2024 by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (This book is published in hardcover by several publishing companies and is also available in less expensive softcover study editions.)**

Parish priests, deacons, OCIA coordinators, catechists, sponsors and other team members have a special responsibility to see to it that the liturgical, catechetical and pastoral norms of the OCIA and the Church law governing it are observed. They must understand the spirit of the rite, be familiar with its directives and pay special attention to the particular needs of those seeking initiation.

Learning models for adults need to be constructed differently than those which are most effective for children. We caution you not to move into a child-centered learning model, but rather use adult principles. The *National Directory for Catechesis* (NCD, p. 258) states, the challenge for catechesis of adults is “engaging them in dialogue and reflection on the Gospel and the teaching of the Church.” For instance, the instructional and spiritual development of catechumens and candidates should not necessarily follow the model of the school year. If at all possible, the OCIA process ought to be based on an ongoing process of instruction and spiritual guidance. The leaders of the parish OCIA process need to be aware that it is a **process** of leading individuals into the church and so should avoid calling it a **program**.

This handbook is prepared for the Diocese of Superior to answer basic questions about the OCIA and to offer some specific recommendations. As is stated above, ***before reading this handbook***, it is important first to become familiar with the OCIA ritual book.

## 1.2 **THE RITUAL**

The revised ritual for the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults* (referenced in these guidelines as the OCIA ritual book) was first published in 1972 for the universal Church. The provisional English translation appeared in 1974, followed by a 1988 edition. *The edition published in 2024 for the dioceses of the United States is normative.*

**The ritual book explains each period of the initiation process as well as all of the rites. It is an indispensable guide for every pastor, for deacons, for coordinators, for catechists, as well as for other ministers working in the OCIA process.**

A Spanish translation of the 2024 edition specifically for use in 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.

## 1.3 **INITIATION INTO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

Initiation into the Christian life as a Catholic involves acceptance into a parish. A serious and consistent effort ought to be made to implement the OCIA process fully in all parishes in our diocese.

Below are catechetical models commonly associated with parish OCIA processes. Each has its own benefits and shortcomings:

<b>The ‘school’ model</b>	Catechesis is offered much like instruction in school. <b>(Adults are not children.)</b>
<b>The ‘nine-month’ model</b>	Catechesis is offered with the expectation that pretty much everyone starts in September and finishes in May.
<b>The ‘ongoing’ model</b>	Catechesis is offered by the parish on an ongoing basis, taking the individual at the point they are, giving them what they need to become ready for the Sacraments of Initiation, and initiating them as soon as possible. There is no official start time or end time—it is all based on the needs of the individuals involved.

Instead of either the ‘school’ or ‘nine-month’ models, parishes should consider using an ongoing method of initiation. Parishes that use either the ‘school’ or ‘nine-month’ models need to be aware that these models could convey to the catechumens and candidates that there is an end to their spiritual development. While it is true that sacramental initiation does ‘end’ at Baptism/Confirmation/First Eucharist, it is also true that the sacramental life has no end and is ongoing.

All parish catechetical efforts need to include the idea of *mystagogy*.<sup>1</sup> In determining the length of the period of mystagogy, it is important to remember that its purpose is to draw the newly initiated ever more fruitfully into the Church and the practice of their faith. Remember that we are striving for conversion and faith of the newly initiated to become strong and lifelong.

The goal of the OCIA process is to bring the catechumen/candidate into living the Christian life in the Catholic tradition. The *Code of Canon Law* (CIC) requires that, before an adult is baptized, he or she must normally be admitted to the catechumenate, be led through various stages [see Appendix E], be sufficiently instructed in the Christian life by means of the catechumenate, and should be urged to have contrition for personal sins (CIC can. 851, 865). The *Code of Canon Law* also affirms that, through instruction, together with an apprenticeship in the Christian life, participants in the OCIA are initiated “into the mystery of salvation and introduced to the life of faith, liturgy, charity of the people of God, and the apostolate” (CIC can. 788).

The OCIA offers the inquirer guidance during the pilgrimage toward Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist, together with knowledge of and a desire for the Christian way of life. Consequently its principal characteristics are the study of the proclaimed Word of God in Scripture, authentic preaching, sound catechesis, liturgical involvement and spiritual enrichment.

The liturgical rites of the OCIA are integral elements of Christian initiation. They provide both the setting and the venues to the Sacraments of Initiation, specifically Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. In the case of baptized Christians seeking full communion with the Catholic Church, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will eventually be made available. These liturgical rites are meant to be celebrated in the midst of the parish assembly and according to the norms set forth in the OCIA ritual.

The Diocese of Superior encourages regular participation at the Sunday liturgy, for it is very important to be familiar with how your parish worships and celebrates.

#### 1.4 **WHO MAY ENTER THE OCIA PROCESS**

**The Sacraments of Christian Initiation:** Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist lay the foundation of every Christian life. “The sharing in the divine nature given to men through the grace of Christ, bears a certain likeness to the origin, development, and nourishing of natural life. The faithful are born anew in Baptism, strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation and receive the Eucharist, the food of eternal life. By means of these sacraments of Christian initiation, they receive in increasing measure the treasures of divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity” (Catechism #1212).

**There are two groups welcomed into the OCIA,** 1) the un-baptized who eventually go through the process as *catechumens* and 2) those who have received Trinitarian Baptism (in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) either as Catholics or in another Christian denomination, who are

---

<sup>1</sup> Mystagogy stands as a unique way of enacting theology that intends to deliberately initiate the believer more profoundly into the mystery. Having formalized the deposit of faith at baptism, mystagogy seeks to impart greater understanding via extended explanation. Undergoing the ritual of baptism is one thing; revisiting it in an environment of holy remembering, meditation, and explanatory preaching is another. Mystagogy attempts the latter. Regular attendance at Mass will often encourage growth along these lines.

known as ***candidates***. The process of bringing adults into the Church is not new to our Catholic faith; it has been in existence since the early days of the Church. Those who have been able to experience this process - either through receiving the rites, as a sponsor, or as a catechist - find it to be faith-fulfilling and life-changing.

**Un-baptized adults** (*catechumens*) are normally led through the catechumenal process as described in Part 1 of the OCIA ritual book. **Ideally, the combined length of the catechumenate period and the period of purification and enlightenment is expected to be twelve months or more** (National Statutes, Norm 4). While a shorter duration may be pastorally acceptable in some cases, parishes should set a standard of twelve months or more and take care not to create the expectation that a shorter period of time will be sufficient (OCIA, #76). However, in extraordinary situations, the catechumenate can be completed in one abbreviated rite (OCIA, #331 and #332). Catechumens are normally baptized, confirmed, and receive First Communion by a priest at the Easter Vigil.

**Those already baptized as Catholics or in another denomination** (who will eventually be known as *candidates*) should be clearly distinguished from those who have not been baptized yet (who will eventually be known as *catechumens*). Whereas most of the liturgical rites in the ritual book are aimed at the (unbaptized) catechumens, the ritual book also provides special rites for the candidates to celebrate as an individual group. It also provides 'combined rites' when certain liturgical rites are celebrated with both groups present. Prior to the reception of any remaining Sacraments of Initiation (Confirmation and/or First Communion), the (already baptized) candidates should celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (OCIA #482). On the specified date of reception, they usually make a profession of faith and are received into the full communion of the Catholic Church (if not already Catholic), are confirmed, and receive the Eucharist.

**Those baptized as Catholics** may or may not have received their First Communion. Those who have *not* received First Communion are considered un-catechized. They may participate in some aspects of the OCIA as candidates (rites of continuing conversion preparing to receive First Communion and Confirmation). They may receive First Communion when duly prepared. They may be confirmed by a priest at that time only if the priest administering the sacrament has received the faculty to do so from the Bishop. [See Appendix E for the form.]

**Adult Catholics seeking Confirmation** may journey with those in the OCIA and will be allowed to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at a time best determined by the local pastor and/or the Bishop.

**Un-baptized children of catechetical age** (usually age seven or older) are ideally enrolled in a catechumenate for children and catechized in a manner appropriate for their age level (OCIA ritual book Part II). However, there may be parishes that may offer the children to join with the adult OCIA process. In the case of un-baptized children of catechetical age (seven and older), Canon Law states that they should receive all three of the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) at that time (cf. CIC can. 852).

**Pastors and leaders of the OCIA must use care when dealing with marriage issues;** irregular marriage issues must be resolved before celebrating the Rite of Election.

## 1.5 **THOSE FOR WHOM THE OCIA MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE**

**Alienated Catholics** are adults who are interested in exploring the possibility of a return to the Church and the practice of their faith, and they do not belong in the 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 approach and response on the part of the Church. There are programs available to parishes to help them work with returning Catholics.

**Catholics seeking updates** are committed Catholics who desire to learn more about their Church and the practice of their faith. They may receive ongoing education from parish adult education sessions.

**Pastoral reasons to allow the above to join the OCIA.** Under certain conditions the OCIA team and pastor may determine that the OCIA is the best instrument to use in bringing alienated Catholics and Catholics seeking updates to be invited back into the Church.

# Chapter Two

---

## GENERAL PATTERN FOR ADULTS:

- Definition of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults.
- Terms of address.
- The Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate.
- Sponsors and godparents.
- Rites for Entrance into the Catechumenate and of Welcoming the Candidates.
- The Period of Catechumenate.
- Participation in parish life.
- Rites of Sending.
- Rites of Election of Catechumens and of Calling Candidates to Continuing Conversion.
- The Period of Purification and Enlightenment.
- The Scrutinies.
- Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- The Handing On of the Creed and of the Lord's Prayer.
- Immediate Preparation Rites on Holy Saturday.
- Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation.
- The Period of Mystagogy.

### 2.1 **Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA)**

The goal of the OCIA is a period of formation which encompasses the evangelization of inquirers, bringing them to faith and conversion. The catalyst which leads them to this process varies with the individual. It may be a marriage situation, or the death of a loved one. It could be as simple as experiencing the example or welcome received from one who is living out the gospel message. God is always calling the human person to conversion and faith.

Through evangelization of inquirers, they enter the process of conversion, a turning away from sin and turning to the triune God revealed in the gospel. It is a continual call to share in divine life, to the Father through the Son in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Our goal is to help facilitate this process.



## 2.2 **TERMS OF ADDRESS**

- **INQUIRERS:** During the precatechumenate (or period of inquiry) both the un-baptized and those who are baptized who have not received First Communion or Confirmation may be called “inquirers.”
- **CATECHUMENS:** During the catechumenate period, the un-baptized are given the title of “catechumen” (one who is receiving training in doctrine and discipline before Baptism).
- **CANDIDATES:** Those who have been baptized but are requesting from the Church the Sacraments of Eucharist and/or Confirmation are called “candidates”.
- **NEOPHYTES:** After the catechumens have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, they are then referred to as “neophytes”.

## 2.3 **THE PERIOD OF EVANGELIZATION AND PRECATECHUMENATE**

Each inquirer is to be interviewed (see Appendix B) by a member of the parish’s OCIA team<sup>2</sup> who is thoroughly familiar with the OCIA process. These interviewers need to be able to ask the inquirer the appropriate questions in a way which makes them feel comfortable and at ease.

The interviewer must also have a basic knowledge of the Church’s marriage laws, so that if there are any irregularities in terms of a marriage situation, the inquirer can be directed to the pastor for clarification and resolution. The interviewer is not to make any evaluation of the marriage situation in the interview.

## 2.4 **SPONSORS AND GODPARENTS**

‘**Godparent**’ specifically refers to the role of someone who accompanies a catechumen through the OCIA process, including the liturgical rites. ‘**Sponsor**’ refers both to godparents as well as to those accompanying candidates through the OCIA process and rites adapted to their circumstances. So ‘godparent’ is a baptismal role, whereas ‘sponsor’ refers to the role of those accompanying someone receiving any of the Sacraments of Initiation and/or reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

The role of the sponsor/godparent includes:

1. Presenting the inquirer to the parish community at the Rite of Entrance/Welcoming.
2. Participating with the catechumen/candidate at all the liturgical rites.
3. Offering support, encouragement and explanations, when appropriate, for the catechumen/candidate.
4. Witnessing to the catechumen/candidate’s moral character, faith, and intention.
5. Providing a link with the parish community.
6. Assisting in the discernment process of the catechumen/candidate.

In order to fulfill these roles adequately, the sponsor/godparent should participate regularly in catechetical sessions with the catechumen/candidate. While it is mentioned in the OCIA that the godparent/sponsor may be chosen by the candidate, it is recommended that the OCIA team select the godparents/sponsors. It is necessary that sponsors/godparents be identified and in

---

<sup>2</sup> By “OCIA team” we mean the people who facilitate the OCIA process, usually under the guidance of an OCIA director and/or the pastor, parish life coordinator, or parish director.

place well in advance of the Rites of Entrance/Welcoming since sponsors/godparents must be able to attest to the catechumens'/candidates' readiness.

Since the role of godparent/sponsor is one defined by canon law, the godparent/sponsor must be fully initiated in the Catholic Church and living a life consistent with the faith and responsibility of a godparent. They may not be the actual parent of the catechumen/candidate (CIC can. 872-874). Since the sponsor/godparent acts as a witness to the Christian faith, his/her example should be evident in a life of prayer and gospel values, and participation in the liturgical life of the parish, especially Sunday Mass.

## 2.5 **rites of Entrance/Welcoming**

Several weeks before the parish celebrates the Rite of Entrance/Welcoming, 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. *"In order for them to take this step, it is necessary for the beginnings of a spiritual life and the foundations of Christian doctrine to have been planted in the inquirers, namely: the first faith conceived during the Period of the Precatechumenate; an initial conversion and a desire to change their lives and enter a relationship with God in Christ; a consequent beginning of a sense of penitence and of a habit of calling on God and of prayer; a sense of the Church; a first experience of the company and spirit of Christians through contact with a Priest or some members of the community; and preparation for this liturgical order."* (OCIA #42).

**The Rite for Entrance Into the Catechumenate** (OCIA 41-68) is for the unbaptized and should ordinarily be celebrated in the context of the Sunday Mass so that parishioners can have the opportunity to offer their support and prayers to those who are becoming catechumens at that time. If this rite is not celebrated at Sunday Mass, every effort should be made to see that a good number of the people of the parish attend the celebration and are able to offer their support to the catechumens (OCIA #45).

Not all inquirers need to be included at the same time. The Rite for Entrance is properly celebrated as individuals are ready, and it may take place in the parish several times a year as necessary. This rite involves the acceptance of the Gospel and the signing of the catechumens with the cross; it also includes the dismissal of the catechumens prior to the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

**The Rite of Welcoming the Candidates** (OCIA 411-433) is an optional rite, similar to the above **Rite for Entrance**, but is designed only for those who are already baptized. After their participation in this rite, these inquirers are referred to as "candidates". As above, it is best for the rite to take place at a parish Mass, or at a time when a good number of parishioners are able to be present to offer their prayers and support.

The **Rite for Entrance Into the Catechumenate and of Welcoming the Candidates**, (OCIA 505-529) is a combined rite which may be used in place of the above Rites of Entrance and Welcoming if there are both baptized as well as un-baptized inquirers who are ready to make this transition at the same time. Clear distinctions are to be maintained between the un-baptized and the baptized during the celebration of this rite.

- 2.6 **The catechumenate period** is the lengthiest period of the whole initiation process. The duration is dependent upon the progress the individual is making, together with the input of the OCIA team and the pastor.

During the catechumenate, parishes are encouraged to engage in the optional practice of kindly **dismissing** the catechumens from the Sunday assembly before the liturgy of the Eucharist begins (unless their dismissal would present practical or pastoral concerns). These dismissals especially should take place in combination with the Scrutinies, which take place at Mass on the third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of Lent. These dismissals from the Sunday assembly may take place during the entire length of the catechumenate if it is thought to be beneficial.

During the period of the catechumenate, sessions ought to be focused on the four major areas of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: what we believe, how we celebrate, how we live, and how we pray.

2.7 **PARTICIPATION IN PARISH LIFE**

Catechumens and candidates should be encouraged and aided in participating in the life of the parish, and to meet and have opportunities to socialize with the members of their parish community. They should become familiar with the mission of the parish, and through its influence better understand that the purpose of the Church is to encounter the teachings of Jesus Christ. Do not wait until after Easter sacraments to encourage this involvement. Get them involved early, and they will have an easier time becoming active members of the community.

2.8 **RITE OF SENDING CATECHUMENS FOR ELECTION**

(OCIA 106-117) This rite usually takes place in the home parish on the first Sunday of Lent before the catechumens leave to attend the combined **Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion** which is held in the cathedral in Superior with the Bishop as celebrant.

The Rite of Sending provides an opportunity for the parish community to express its support of the catechumens and for their godparents and sponsors to offer personal testimony about them. At the diocesan celebration, the Bishop will formally admit them to the period of purification and enlightenment. In the Diocese of Superior, the catechumens (including any children present) sign the Book of the Elect at the cathedral during the Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion.

2.85 **RITE OF SENDING THE CANDIDATES FOR THE CALLING TO CONTINUING CONVERSION**

(OCIA 434-445) Similar to the situation above with the Rites of Entrance/Welcoming, here the candidates also have their own rite designed especially for them. For the candidates, the Rite of Sending is significant in that it provides an occasion for them to be formally recognized by the Bishop. This is an opportunity for him to receive their commitment to continuing conversion. In this rite, the parish ought to make special notice of the candidates to allow them to feel that the parish is ready to assist them on their journey toward full communion.

2.9 **RITE OF SENDING CATECHUMENS FOR ELECTION AND CANDIDATES FOR THE CALLING TO CONTINUING CONVERSION**

(OCIA 530-546) If there are both catechumens and candidates who are being sent to the Rite of Election and the Calling to Continuing Conversion from the parish, this combined rite is used. As with all combined rites, both in the catechesis of the community and in their celebration, care must always be taken to maintain the distinction between the catechumens and the baptized candidates.

## 2.95 **RITE OF ELECTION OF CATECHUMENS AND OF CALLING THE CANDIDATES TO CONTINUING CONVERSION**

(OCIA 547-561) This rite normally takes place at 3:00 p.m. on the First Sunday of Lent at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Superior.

For the catechumens: based on testimony of godparents and catechists, the Bishop on behalf of the Church declares their state of readiness to enter the final period of their faith journey. During the celebration, each catechumen signs their name in the Book of the Elect, signifying their commitment to complete their journey of conversion. Now called the “elect” they are strengthened to take part in the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil. This rite marks the close of the catechumenate.

For the candidates: the Bishop, in the name of the community, accepts the Church’s testimony concerning their readiness and acknowledges their desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church. The “elect” and candidates now enter into the period of purification and enlightenment to intensify their preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation.

## 2.10 **THE PERIOD OF PURIFICATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT**

This period coincides with Lent and “is given to a more intense preparation of spirit and heart, which has the character of recollection rather than of catechesis, and is intended to purify hearts and minds by examination of conscience and penitence. This period is intended as well to enlighten the minds and hearts of the elect with a deeper knowledge of Christ the Savior” (OCIA 139).

There are several rites that are intended to help in this process: the **Scrutinies** (OCIA 141-146) and the **Rites of Handing On** (OCIA 147-149).

1. The First Scrutiny (Third Sunday of Lent). (OCIA 150-156)
2. The Handing On of the Creed (Third Week of Lent). (OCIA 157-163)
3. The Second Scrutiny (Fourth Sunday of Lent). (OCIA 164-170)
4. The Third Scrutiny (Fifth Sunday of Lent). (OCIA 171-177)
5. The Handing On of the Lord’s Prayer (Fifth Week of Lent). (OCIA 178-184)

## 2.11 **THE SCRUTINIES**

The Scrutinies are normally celebrated on the Third, Fourth and Fifth Sundays of Lent. The Masses at which the Scrutinies are celebrated, the cycle A readings are to be used (OCIA 146). They are rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose (OCIA 141). **The Scrutinies are only for the elect:** for those who are unbaptized and who are preparing to receive the three Sacraments of Initiation. Candidates (who are baptized), as well as the congregation, should join in heart and mind with the elect, so as to pray for the elect and reflect with the elect on the meaning of these rites.

In place of the Scrutinies, candidates may celebrate a similar rite called the Penitential Rite (Scrutiny) (OCIA 459-463) on the second Sunday of Lent or a Lenten weekday. The Scrutinies and the Penitential Rite are separate and are meant to be separate; there is no combined rite (OCIA 463).

## 2.12 **CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

The catechumens, who are also known at this point as the “elect” (both adults and children) do not receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to baptism, since baptism takes away all sins, personal as well as original sin.

Catechesis for both the catechumens and candidates needs to include a presentation on the Sacrament of Reconciliation and its positive spiritual value of Confession, along with the pertinent teaching of the Church (CIC can. 989) that all Catholics are “obliged to confess faithfully his or her grave sins at least once a year.” Candidates should celebrate this sacrament prior to their reception into full communion and/or the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Easter Vigil, first informing the confessor that they are about to be received into full communion (OCIA 482).

## 2.13 **THE RITES OF HANDING ON**

The “rites of handing on” are for the elect (catechumens) only (OCIA 147). **The Handing On of the Creed** takes place during the week following the First Scrutiny (OCIA 148). “In the case of the Creed, in which the mighty deeds of God for the salvation of humans are recalled, their eyes are filled with faith and joy” (OCIA 147). **The Handing On of the Lord’s Prayer** normally takes place during the week following the Third Scrutiny. “In the Lord’s Prayer they discover more deeply the new spirit of sons and daughters by which they call God their Father, especially in the midst of the Eucharistic Assembly” (OCIA 147).

## 2.14 **rites of immediate preparation**

The elect (catechumens) should be encouraged to refrain from their usual activities on Holy Saturday, engage in prayer and reflection, and, if possible, to fast (OCIA 185.1). The morning of the vigil would be an opportunity to offer a retreat for the catechumens and candidates prior to receiving the sacraments or being received into full communion that evening.

When it is possible for the elect (catechumens) and the candidates to gather together for prayer and reflection on Holy Saturday, there are several rites that may be celebrated as a preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation (OCIA 185.2).

## 2.15 **CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION**

The Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are normally celebrated during the Easter Vigil Liturgy for those adults and children of catechetical age who have not yet been baptized.

After the elect have been baptized, they may be clothed in a white baptismal garment such as a robe. Traditionally, this is a simple white flowing garment that clothes the whole person. Full-length alb-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 may not be used as such. The presentation of a lighted candle follows (OCIA 209).

When the elect are baptized, the Sacrament of Confirmation and Eucharist are to be conferred immediately thereafter, unless a grave reason prevents it (OCIA 215, CIC can. 866). It is not permissible at one celebration for one priest to baptize and another to confirm. 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 confirming, provided the norms of the OCIA are followed (OCIA 14).

In the Diocese of Superior, a priest must request permission from the Bishop for the faculty to confirm a baptized Catholic if this person:

1. Was baptized before the use of reason and uncatechized.
2. Never belonged to another church.
3. Never apostatized from the faith.
4. Never left the Church.

A priest may lawfully confirm in virtue of office or mandate when:

1. He baptizes an adult (anyone of catechetical age or older).
2. He receives a previously baptized non-Catholic into full communion.
3. He re-admits into full communion a previously baptized Catholic who apostatized from the faith.
4. He re-admits into full communion a previously baptized Catholic who through no personal fault was instructed in or adhered to a non-Catholic religion.
5. A baptized Catholic is in danger of death.

## 2.16 **THE PERIOD OF MYSTAGOGY**

After a catechumen is baptized, they are known as a “neophyte.” During the Easter season, the neophytes and their godparents/sponsors should participate as a group at Sunday Masses. Special places in the assembly should be reserved for them (OCIA 248). The Masses for the neophytes, or Masses of the Sundays of Easter Time, are the main settings for the post baptismal catechesis (OCIA 247). The Easter season consists of fifty days, concluding at Pentecost (OCIA 249).

Following the immediate mystagogy during the Easter season, the catechesis for the neophytes should extend until the first anniversary of their Christian initiation. The Mystagogy that takes place during the first year is called “extended Mystagogy”. This period may include periodic meetings with neophytes (National Statutes, Norm 13). Individuals who were received into full communion with the Church and those who celebrated continuing conversion may participate as well.

# Chapter Three

---

## GENERAL PATTERN FOR CHILDREN

- Intent of the Order of Initiation of Children Who Have Reached Catechetical Age.
- Age of Children.
- Who does not belong in the catechumenate?
- Special needs of children.
- Role of Catholic peers.
- Adapting the rites for children

### 3.1 INTENT OF THE ORDER OF INITIATION OF CHILDREN WHO HAVE REACHED CATECHETICAL AGE

This form of the Order of Christian Initiation is intended for children (not baptized as infants) who have attained the use of reason and are of catechetical age (OCIA 252).

### 3.2 AGE OF CHILDREN

Children of catechetical age are those who have reached the age of reason, which generally is considered to be by the age of 7 (OCIA 252; cf. CIC can. 11). The initiation of young people under the age of 18 should be taken case-by-case. Those 18 and older should be governed by the norms for adults.

### 3.3 WHO DOES NOT BELONG IN THE CATECHUMENATE

**Un-baptized children below the age of seven** are to be baptized according to *The Order of Baptism of Children*, which is the rite used for infant baptism. Their Confirmation and First Eucharist normally is to be deferred until a later age, according to parish and diocesan policy.

**Baptized (non-Catholic) children younger than seven whose parents are being received into the Catholic Church** do not participate in the catechumenate process. They are received into the Church on the same date as their parents. In such cases, it is suggested that the ceremonies be supplied as in an emergency baptism, so that there is a formal reception into the Church (see Chapter VI of *The Order of Baptism of Children*, entitled “Order of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church”). 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 (cf. Diocese of Superior “Guidelines for the Recording of Sacramental Records” p. 16). They are to participate in catechesis for the sacraments and are to receive the remaining sacraments of initiation with their peers.

**Baptized children younger than seven who were baptized in another Christian denomination and whose parents are Catholic** can be received into the Church at any time prior to their reception of First Communion. In such cases, it is suggested that the ceremonies be supplied as in an emergency baptism, so that there is a formal reception into the Church (see Chapter VI of *The Order of Baptism of Children*, entitled “Order of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church”). A record of the date and place of their formal reception should be entered into the baptismal register, along with a notation of the date and place of their baptism (cf. Diocese of Superior “Guidelines for the Recording of Sacramental Records” p. 16). They are to participate with their

Catholic peers in catechesis and the reception of the sacraments and need not take part in a formal catechumenate.

### 3.4 **WHO BELONGS IN THE CATECHUMENATE**

**Un-baptized children of catechetical age (7-17) are the primary group of children in the catechumenate.** Their special concerns are addressed in Part II in the ritual book. *Without exception, they are to participate fully in the children's catechumenate and celebrate all three of the sacraments together.* "Baptism is celebrated during the Mass in which the [child] neophytes first take part in the Eucharist. Confirmation is conferred at the same time either by the Bishop or by the Priest who administers Baptism" (OCIA 305; cf. CIC can. 852 §1).

**Children baptized in another religion, seeking reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.** Under canon law (CIC can. 852 §1), children who have reached the age of reason are to be considered adults, and their formation is to follow the general pattern of the adult catechumenate with appropriate adaptations for children as permitted (OCIA Part II Chapter II and Part II Chapter V). The priest who presides at the reception of these young candidates receives from the law the faculty to confirm them (CIC can. 883.1). Therefore, children who are received into the Church and who have not been validly confirmed are to be confirmed (excluding baptized Catholics, and those from Churches whose confirmation is deemed valid in the Catholic Church; e.g., the Orthodox Churches) at the same time as their reception. If the parents of these children are also being baptized or received into the Church, their children should be received at the same time.

**Baptized but uncatechized Catholic children of catechetical age.** These children are to be included in the catechumenate if this is thought to be pastorally prudent and desirable. 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 the Eucharist with children of other ages, since the celebration of these sacraments should always be based on readiness and not on chronological age or grade level. These children receive Confirmation with their peers when the Bishop comes to his/her parish for Confirmation.

### 3.5 **SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN**

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 needs continuing nurturing in faith.

Those responsible for the Christian initiation of children of catechetical age must therefore take special care to evaluate the following elements of the child's conversion so the child's special needs may be met.

1. What is the attitude of the child's family? Is there a commitment from the parents to help the child grow in faith and in the community of the Church? Can this commitment be deepened?
2. What is the child's relationship to the parish community and to Sunday worship? Is there an ongoing relationship? Can such a relationship be developed?



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

**Role of the family.** The catechumenate for children strives to incorporate ways for the family of the young catechumen to be involved in the process of initiation. The pastor or his representative is to meet with the family and enlist their active support from the beginning of the process. A commitment to bring the child to the catechumenal gatherings is essential. The pastor should make clear either personally or through his representative, what the process involves for the child and for the family. The family is expected to participate with the child in the rites and the catechumenal process.

For children who are minors to be initiated into the church, it is necessary to have the consent of the parents, or at least one of them, or the lawful guardian of the child. 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. The parental role may be assumed by the grandparents, responsible older siblings, godparents, or other key family members who will consistently support the conversion of the child.

### 3.6 **ROLE OF CATHOLIC PEERS**

The support of the child's community of peers will strengthen the young catechumen's experience of the church and of conversion and should be sought whenever possible. The special role of a "peer companion" is to be used judiciously. It does not substitute for an adult sponsor, but it can provide a helpful support for the catechumen.

### 3.7 **ADAPTING THE RITES FOR CHILDREN**

When celebrating the rites for children, the ritual book is to be adapted to the needs of the particular children who will participate (OCIA Part II Chapter II). Those who are involved in preparing the rites should keep the following principles in mind.

1. It is the goal of any adaptation to preserve the central symbols of the rites.
2. It is important to avoid adding additional layers of symbolism to the symbols that are already in the rite.
3. It is necessary to understand the structure of the rites and to keep this structure intact.
4. The rite as it appears in the ritual book is always to be the reference point when implementing the rite.

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 presider is to prepare carefully, perhaps using a specially prepared text that combines the adult rite with the adaptations for children.

**Care ought to be exercised for children who are initiated at the Easter Vigil and will be in the parish religious education process. Be mindful that there may be conflict when their classmates have not been fully initiated into the faith.**

# Chapter Four

---

## **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR INITIATION**

- Use of the short form of adult initiation in exceptional circumstances.
- Christian initiation of a person in danger of death.
- Persons with disabilities.
- Illiteracy.
- Schools and institutions.

### **4.1 USE OF THE “SHORTER ORDER” OF ADULT INITIATION**

The period of the catechumenate and the period of purification and enlightenment ordinarily last at least one full year, but may be adjusted as pastoral needs dictate.

### **4.2 CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS IN DANGER OF DEATH**

Priests and deacons must become familiar with the form of initiation to be used in the case of a person in danger of death (OCIA 370-374). Persons who have already been accepted as catechumens must make a promise that upon recovery they will complete the usual catechesis (OCIA 371). When a person initiated in this way recovers and returns to complete the catechumenate, the norms for the formation of baptized but uncatechized adults are to be followed (OCIA 374, 400-410).

### **4.3 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Provisions should be in place so that persons with disabilities seeking initiation can be warmly welcomed into the parish community. The participation in the catechumenate and their celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation is to be encouraged to the fullest degree possible.

Since one of the goals of the catechumenate is to integrate the person into the church, persons with disabilities are ordinarily to be taken into the catechumenate process with others, rather than as a separate group. If a separate group is deemed necessary, persons with disabilities should participate in the common liturgical rites and undergo a common course of catechesis (adapted to the person's abilities).

Every effort should be made to emphasize the fact that they are one with their fellow catechumens and candidates. They should also be provided with the same opportunities to meet other members of the parish community and to participate in parish life and the mission of the church to the extent that they are able to do so.

The catechumenate team must develop sensitivity to the needs of persons with disabilities and find ways to meet them creatively within the resources of the parish.

### **4.4 ILLITERACY**

The OCIA presumes literacy on the part of the ministers of the rites but not of the catechumens, candidates, or other participants in the process. Care shall be taken to enable adults who cannot read to be welcomed and included in the process of initiation.

#### 4.5 **CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS**

The Catholic school principal has a special responsibility to identify needs and encourage families to pursue the initiation process through the parish catechumenate. After the initial period of inquiry, the catechumenate must always be connected to the Sunday worship experience. Enrollment in a Catholic school, therefore, is never sufficient in and of itself to fulfill the requirements of the catechumenate.

Catholic school personnel, nonetheless, have an important role to play in facilitating the faith journey of the students who are catechumens and candidates. Teachers are to encourage the Catholic peers to support and affirm the faith journey of the young catechumens and candidates in their midst.

Although the major rites take place at parish liturgies, some of the minor rites may be celebrated with the classmates of catechumens and candidates in various settings where school prayer is conducted. These rites are to be planned collaboratively with catechumenate ministers to assure continuity and avoid duplication.

**Nursing homes, residences, correctional facilities.** Those charged with the pastoral care of people in nursing homes, residences, and correctional facilities are to adapt the catechumenate to the needs of those who seek initiation in these settings. Those catechumens and candidates who will reside in these institutions for but a brief period, or who begin the catechumenate near the end of their stay, ought to be helped to find a parish catechumenate in which to continue their formation after they depart.

# Chapter Five

---

## SPECIAL SITUATIONS AND QUESTIONS

- Marriages, annulments, and convalidations.
- Baptisms in other faith traditions.
- Conditional baptisms.
- Confirmations in other faith traditions.
- Eastern Orthodox candidates.
- Eastern Catholic Churches.
- Funeral of a catechumen.
- Record keeping.

### 5.1 MARRIAGES, ANNULMENTS, AND CONVALIDATIONS

Pastors and OCIA teams are to work closely together to assure that inquirers in irregular marriages are identified at the initial interview. [See Appendix B.] Clear instruction on Catholic teaching regarding cohabitation, as well as utmost pastoral care, must be provided for those couples living together without benefit of marriage. OCIA teams handling inquiries should direct the individual to the parish priest or deacon to determine what steps need to be taken to proceed.

**Annulments.** Those who minister to people in the OCIA process ought to always refer annulment cases to those who are competent to assess them. Any questions about the annulment process or about anyone seeking to begin the annulment process ought to be referred to the parish priest or to the Diocesan Tribunal Office (715-394-0209).

**Rules concerning the marriage of a catechumen.** Once a person has become a catechumen (the result of celebrating the *Rite for Entrance into the Catechumenate*) 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 *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* (OCIA 47).

The language of the rite of marriage for a catechumen is adapted to reflect the fact that the catechumen is un-baptized (cf. *The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* Chapter III). The marriage should take place in the context of a celebration of the Liturgy of the Word and not a Mass. The nuptial blessing may be used (*The Order of Celebrating Matrimony* 138). When a catechumen wishes to marry a baptized person, a dispensation is needed for disparity of cult; hence the diocesan Marriage Tribunal at the chancery in Superior must be consulted.

**Divorced but not remarried individual seeking the Sacraments of Initiation.** A person who is divorced but not remarried may celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation. That person should clearly understand, however, that the Church considers him or her bound by the bond of the previous marriage and that a future marriage would not be possible unless the previous marriage was 1) dissolved by death; or 2) declared invalid *ab initio* through a declaration of nullity due to defective consent, lack of form, or the existence of any other impediment. A non-sacramental union may be dissolved by the Pauline Privilege or Privilege of the Faith (Petrine Privilege). A non-consummated marriage may be dissolved by a Papal Dissolution. In all

cases except death of the previous spouse, the pastor should consult the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal immediately.

**Convalidations of marriages.** Those in an irregular marriage who desire to receive the Sacraments of Initiation may become a catechumen or a candidate, but any necessary convalidation must take place prior to their participating in the Rite of Election or Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion (cf. National Statutes, Norm 7).

## 5.2 **BAPTISMS IN OTHER FAITH TRADITIONS**

There are three criteria for determining the validity of any baptism: the use of water, the use of the Trinitarian formula, and the intention to do what the Church does when it baptizes.

If the ritual of a church or communion in another faith tradition prescribes baptism by water (by immersion or pouring) and the Trinitarian formula, the only way that one can question the validity of the baptism in such a church is to have reasonable proof that the minister did not use proper matter or form or did not intend to baptize; or in the case of an adult recipient, that the proper intention was lacking on the part of the baptizing minister or the one being baptized (CIC can. 869 §2).

Inability to obtain a baptismal certificate from a particular church does not in itself constitute reasonable proof that a baptism was not valid. Ordinarily a certificate is to be obtained, but sometimes there are reasons that written records do not exist or have become unavailable. Each case is to be considered individually. The Marriage Tribunal is to be consulted in doubtful cases. The certificate of baptism should ordinarily be obtained before the *Rite of Welcoming the Candidates*. If however, there is doubt about the fact of validity of baptism, and the doubt remains after serious investigation, baptism is to be considered conditionally.

## 5.3 **CONDITIONAL BAPTISM**

Conditional baptism must be celebrated privately rather than at a public liturgical assembly of the community and with those limited rites, which the diocesan bishop determines. The doctrine of the Sacrament of Baptism and the reasons for the doubtful validity of the baptism should be explained to the person before conditional baptism is conferred (CIC can. 869 §3). Each case should be handled separately.

## 5.4 **CONFIRMATIONS IN OTHER CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS**

The only other Christian traditions whose Sacrament of Confirmation is accepted as valid by the Catholic Church are the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Polish National Church. Candidates from Christian churches other than these generally must be confirmed when they are received into the Catholic Church. In doubt, consult the diocesan Tribunal.

### 5.5 **EASTERN ORTHODOX CANDIDATES**

In all cases involving Orthodox Christians and their spouses or children, the pastor should consult the Office of the Chancellor before proceeding with the process. They do not participate in the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*.

**Orthodox Christians:** Orthodox Christians (e.g., Greek Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, etc.) normally should seek membership in the corresponding Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church. If they desire membership in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church, the Eparch/Bishop of the corresponding Eastern Church and our diocesan Bishop must each approve. This process is intended to protect the integrity of and to show respect for their Churches. Again, they do not participate in the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*.

### 5.6 **EASTERN RITE CATHOLICS**

Eastern Rite Catholics should be referred to the Church in which they were baptized. If they desire membership in the Latin Rite, consult the Chancery. **They do not belong in the OCIA.**

### 5.7 **FUNERAL OF A CATECHUMEN**

As with the above instance concerning marriage, once unbaptized individuals have celebrated the *Rite for Entrance into the Catechumenate*, they “already belong to the house of Christ” (OCIA 47). They may receive blessings and sacramentals and may also be buried as Christians. Within the funeral rites, catechumens are to be considered members of the Christian faithful (CIC can. 1183 §1). The language of *The Order of Christian Funerals* that refers to baptism is to be adapted.

### 5.8 **RECORD KEEPING**

**Register of Catechumens.** Since unbaptized individuals who are accepted into the *catechumenate* 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 the celebration (OCIA 46, CIC can. 788 §1; cf. Appendix A: “Guidelines for Recording for OCIA”). The Register of Catechumens is not a ceremonial book. It is solely a record book.

If for any reason someone who is enrolled in the catechumenate drops out and later returns (e.g. for marriage, to resume his or her formation for baptism, or is brought back for burial), the Register of Catechumens provides a record of the person’s status in the church.

The names of the baptized candidates are not written in the Register of Catechumens. Their status in the church is determined by their baptism and this is recorded in the church of their baptism.

**The Book of the Elect.** The Book of the Elect is both a ceremonial book and a record book. The Diocese of Superior Office of Worship will keep the Book of the Elect for those who attend the Rite of Election.

# Chapter Six

---

## LEADERS OF THE PARISH OCIA PROCESS

- The community
- Coordinator
- Catechists
- OCIA Team development

### 6.1 **THE COMMUNITY**

The primary importance of the parish community in the catechumenate cannot be over-emphasized. This ministry is described in detail in the ritual book (OCIA 9). The parish community must be consistently and sufficiently catechized so that it recognizes its responsibility to help and support the catechumens and candidates throughout the process of initiation. Members of the parish should be made aware of the importance of giving witness to their faith and its impact in evangelizing and nurturing conversion. They should be encouraged to pray for the catechumens and candidates, socialize with them, and by their example, encourage them to participate in the life of the parish and the ongoing mission of the church.

### 6.2 **COORDINATOR**

A coordinator to help the clergy and catechists in the OCIA process is often desirable. A person in this position is to have appropriate educational preparation as well as pastoral experience with the catechumenal process.

### 6.3 **CATECHISTS**

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 children. Catechists who work with adults should understand the principles of adult teaching. Those who work with children should apply teaching skills that are appropriate to the age group of the children.

The catechumenate is intimately bound up with the liturgical life of the church and draws substantially on the scriptures proclaimed in the Sunday Mass. Therefore, catechists need to have solid grounding in good principles of liturgy, scripture, basic Catholic doctrine and spirituality.

The catechist who works in the catechumenate must have a special responsibility of witnessing to the principles of ecumenism and interreligious cooperation and worship. A commitment to ongoing formation is essential for the OCIA team. Special presentations, workshops and institutes sponsored by the Diocese of Superior and by surrounding dioceses can help the catechist grow in this ministry.

#### 6.4 **OCIA TEAM DEVELOPMENT**

From year to year the OCIA team will need to incorporate new members and provide ongoing education for those who continue to minister in the catechumenal process. Some of the orientation of new members and ongoing education of experienced team members can be accomplished in the parish under the guidance of the pastor and coordinator. Participation in workshops, seminars and courses offered by the diocese and other organizations will also provide valuable help to team members. The parish is to encourage team members to grow in their ministry and to support their participation in outside events and workshops that will enrich their understanding of the OCIA process.

The following personnel are important for the OCIA team helping the clergy:

1. A coordinator who is actively involved in helping organize the process and coordinates the work of various team members.
2. Catechists who ideally have gone through diocesan certification.

The following roles can be helpful on the OCIA team:

1. A liturgy coordinator who helps prepare the various liturgies of the rite in conjunction with the pastor and parish musicians.
2. A coordinator of sponsors who acts as a liaison between the team and the sponsors.
3. A hospitality coordinator who assists in preparing a welcoming environment for all activities.
4. Publicity coordinator to keep the parish informed via bulletin, local media, pictures, etc.

As the team organizes under the pastor's leadership, it needs to set goals and establish communication with the parish staff, the parish council and the entire parish community. Some of the items to attend to are:

1. The training and formation of its members;
2. Organizing itself according to tasks and responsibilities;
3. Educating and informing the parish community about the OCIA;
4. Establishing a calendar of its own activities as well as a time line for beginning the pre-catechumenate and potential dates for celebrating the *Rite for Entrance into the Catechumenate/Rite of Welcoming the Candidates*.

The ongoing tasks of the team include:

1. Establishing an atmosphere of hospitality and openness in the parish to provide a basic form of evangelization.
2. Ongoing spiritual renewal.
3. Ongoing formation of team members.
4. Evaluation of the entire parish's OCIA process.
5. Discernment with and for those who approach the various steps of the rite.



## **GUIDELINES FOR RECORDING FOR OCIA (ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS)**

### **REGISTER OF CATECHUMENS** (OCIA 46)

Each parish shall keep a record in their archive of those who enter the catechumenate. This record may be any formatted book or binder the parish wishes to use. The register should include:

- The given or Christian name(s) of the person
- The date and place of birth
- The date and place of entrance into the catechumenate
- The name(s) of sponsor(s)
- The minister of admission to the catechumenate

### **BOOK OF THE ELECT** (OCIA 119)

The Diocese of Superior Office of Worship will keep the Book of the Elect for those who attend the Rite of Election.

### **PROFESSION OF FAITH AND RECEPTION INTO FULL COMMUNION** (OCIA 486)

The names of persons who are baptized Christians and who enter into Full Communion of the Catholic Church by means of a Profession of Faith shall be recorded in the parish baptismal register under the date of profession together with the date and place of baptism of the individual, and all other information as required, as well as the date, if known, even if only approximate, of the non-Catholic baptism. Notations shall be recorded in the Confirmation register as well.

The data concerning the Rite of Reception into Full Communion should be entered in the space provided for baptism, and the data concerning the original baptism should be entered in the “Notations” column.

Special care must be taken to follow the proper procedure when young children (who are not yet of catechetical age) are received into full communion along with their parents. In such cases, it is suggested that the ceremonies be supplied as in an emergency baptism, so that there is a formal reception into the Church (see Chapter VI of *The Order of Baptism of Children*, entitled “Order of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church”).

For the “Full Reception into the Church” celebrated for a baptized adult (OCIA), the following information is to be entered in the Baptismal Register.

- The given or Christian name(s) of the person (use the maiden name of a woman).
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle, maiden name)
- The date and place of birth
- The name of the sponsor
- The date and place of the Rite of Reception are noted in the space provided for Baptism
- Marginal notations giving the date and place of the original baptism, reception of Eucharist and confirmation, and marital status (either current valid marriage or the convalidation of the current marriage). Any declaration of invalidity (including where granted and protocol number) should be noted.

Baptisms performed in the following churches are deemed to be invalid:

- All non-Christian groups and communities
- Amana Church Society
- American Ethical Union
- American (United American) - Catholic Valid Baptism/Confirmation is doubtful
- Apostolic Church (“Apostolic Overcoming Holy Church of God)
- Apostolic Faith Mission

- Armenian Apostolic
- Bohemian Free Thinkers
- Baha'i Faith
- Brethren
- Children of God ("The Family")
- Christadelphians
- Christian Community (disciples of Rudolph Steiner)
- Christian and Missionary Alliance
- Christians of Universalist Brotherhood
- Church of Christ, Scientists ("Christian Scientists")
- Church of Daniel's Band
- Church of Divine Science
- Church of Illumination
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints ("Mormons")
- Church of Revelation
- Church of the New Jerusalem
- Church of the Scientology
- Erieside Church
- General Assembly of Spiritualists
- Hephzibah Faith Missionary Association
- House of David Church
- Iglesia ni Kristo (Philippines)
- Independent Church of Filipino Christians
- Jehovah's Witnesses
- Masons/Freemasonry
- Metropolitan Church Association
- New Church of Mr. Emmanuel Swedenborg
- National David Spiritual Temple of Christ Church Union
- National Spiritualist Association
- New Jerusalem Church (Swedenborg or "New Age" Church)
- Peoples Church of Chicago
- Pentecostal Churches
- Plymouth Brethren
- Quakers ("Society of Friends")
- Reunification Church ("Moonies")
- Salvation Army
- Shakers ("United Society of Believers")
- Some communities of Mennonites and Moravians (handle on a case-by-case basis)
- Spiritualist Church
- Swedenborg ("New Age")
- Unitarians
- Universal Emancipation Church
- World Harvest

### **BAPTISM OF AN ADULT**

For baptisms celebrated for a non-baptized adult (OCIA), the following information is to be entered in the Baptismal Register:

- The given Christian name(s) of the person (use maiden name of a woman)
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first, middle and maiden name)
- The date and place of birth
- The name of the sponsor(s)
- The place and date of the baptism

- The name of the minister performing the baptism
- Marginal notation of reception of Eucharist and Confirmation and marital status (either current valid marriage or the convalidation of the current marriage). Any declaration of invalidity (including where granted and protocol number) should be noted.

## **CONFIRMATION**

### Required Data

The following data are to be entered into the Confirmation Register for Confirmation celebrated under normal circumstances:

- The legal and Christian names of the child or adult (use maiden name of a woman)
- The name of the father (first, middle, surname) and the name of the mother (first middle, maiden name)
- The date and place of baptism
- The name of the sponsor selected by the person
- The place and date of Confirmation
- The name of the minister performing the Confirmation

### Baptismal Certification

In order to satisfy the obligation of notifying the parish of baptism about the conferral of Confirmation, a baptismal certificate for each candidate for confirmation should be obtained in advance of the celebration of Confirmation.

Noting the place and date of baptism in the Confirmation Register can be especially helpful when a person has difficulty locating a baptismal record later in life.

### Notification of Church of Baptism

Notification of the church of baptism about the fact of Confirmation should be made as soon as possible by the place where the record of Confirmation is retained. This notification is to include the name of the recipient and the date of baptism, as well as the place and date of Confirmation. The names of the minister, parents and sponsor are not required. When a person previously baptized in another Christian community is received into full communion and confirmed, the church of baptism is not notified. In the case of a baptized person, under the age of reason, who was brought into full communion in the Church, the place of reception (Profession of Faith) is to be notified instead of the place of baptism.

When a large number of persons are to be confirmed, it is essential that one person be designated to collect the necessary information and see to it that it is communicated accurately to the parish or parishes of the recipients for proper recording in the Confirmation Register.

### Emergency Confirmation

In the case of an emergency Confirmation for a catechumen in the OCIA program, the record of the emergency Confirmation or profession of faith is kept in the parish the ceremony was performed and notated in the Baptism Register.

**FIRST COMMUNION** see Profession of Faith and Reception into Full Communion

## Appendix B

### INQUIRY INTERVIEW

This form serves as a guide for the initial interview. It is intended to be completed by the interviewer, not the inquirer. Confidentiality should be assured to the inquirer.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City and State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

When and where do you preferred to be called? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Any pertinent family background or issues that would be helpful to the OCIA team:

#### **Sacramental Status**

Baptized? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, baptismal certificate required: \_\_\_\_\_

Baptized in which denomination? \_\_\_\_\_

Date of baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Where was baptism performed: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmed? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, where was it held: \_\_\_\_\_

If Catholic, have you received Eucharist? \_\_\_\_\_

**Marital Status**

Married \_\_\_\_\_ Single \_\_\_\_\_ Cohabitation \_\_\_\_\_ Engaged \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_

Separated \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_\_\_ Annulled by church? \_\_\_\_\_

If married, name of spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Church/place of married: \_\_\_\_\_

Married by: Priest \_\_\_\_\_ Minister \_\_\_\_\_ Justice of Peace \_\_\_\_\_

If married or engaged, is this your first marriage? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, name of previous spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Church/place of marriage (of spouse): \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information for Children seeking initiation sacraments:

Name of father: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion of father: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of mother: \_\_\_\_\_

Religion of mother: \_\_\_\_\_

Married status of parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Children:	Age	Baptized
-----------	-----	----------

_____		
-------	--	--

_____		
-------	--	--

_____		
-------	--	--

_____		
-------	--	--

Any other pertinent family information:

## **Appendix C**

Christian initiation of adults and children is the responsibility of all the baptized. This assumes that the parish fully understands its mission to initiate so that enough ministers are available to assist the coordinator.

### **JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE OCIA COORDINATOR**

- Puts forth the vision of the Christian initiation process for the parish community, its leadership and the team.
- Provides or arranges for training of all ministers.
- Coordinates all the ministries within the OCIA.
- Convenes meetings for the team coordinators.
- Communicates with all members of the team and oversees communication with the parish, the coordinators, the catechumens and the candidates.
- Keeps abreast of diocesan and regional events for team members and communicates these to the team and other initiation ministers as needed.
- Enables, encourages and supports the Christian initiation team in their ministry.
- Oversees the keeping of appropriate records of catechumens, candidates and neophytes.

### **REMUNERATION FOR CERTIFIED COORDINATORS**

A fully involved coordinator needs extensive training and invests a great amount of time in the implementation of the rite in the parish. Therefore, a just remuneration is appropriate for those who meet the following criteria:

- They spend a substantial amount of time in coordinating the initiation process over and above what can be expected of a volunteer.

## **Appendix D**

### **Implementation of OCIA in Cluster Parishes**

The Diocese of Superior is facing an ever-changing church as we move into the future. The diocese has clusters of parishes, individual parishes, parishes with missions, multiple parishes sharing one pastor, etc.; and this will continue. The question is asked quite often as to whether parishes ought to combine the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) for the sake of saving money and utilizing resources efficiently.

The OCIA is a process of introducing individuals and families to the life of the Catholic Church through helping them to become an active part of a particular parish. The parish needs to support the individual in their journey of faith. Ideally, this individual should not be arbitrarily separated from the parish of which they are trying to become a part. The instruction and development of the spiritual life of an individual is something that cannot be taken lightly and abdicated simply for the sake of convenience. Initiation takes place in the midst of the community through the catechumen's/candidate's interaction with the parish they wish to join. When the rituals take place apart from the community of choice, the faithful are deprived of the experience of conversion, which is a reminder of the treasure of faith. The potential for bringing new life to the parish is then lost.

However, on the practical side parishes may decide to unite in presenting the OCIA to prospective members because of the ease of offering one process instead of trying to duplicate the effort in each individual parish. Even though this is less than ideal, the instruction and to a certain degree the spiritual development of an individual can be accomplished within the framework of a combined parish initiative.

When this is the case it is best to include portions of the catechumenal process such as the dismissal of catechumens and the Scrutinies in all parishes of the cluster involved in the initiation so that the newly initiated will have been formed as much as possible in their own parish.

It is difficult for the new member who has prepared for initiation apart from his/her community to return to it. Oftentimes when they find themselves in this situation, they end up becoming worshipping members of the parish in which their formation took place, which is a loss to what could have been their "home" parish. When parishes share the ministry of one priest and celebrate the Easter Vigil in one church, then the members of the catechumen's/candidate's home parish ought to be present at the Sacraments of Initiation.

Combined parishes may benefit from one coordinator who oversees the implementation of the OCIA for more than one community. Team formation and support may take place in parish groupings while assuring that there are some team members for each community of worship.

Again, while it may be convenient or easier to combine parish processes for initiation, care ought to be exercised in maintaining individual parish identity as much as possible. We do not want to deprive any parish from involvement in bringing new members into the community but to give each catechumen and candidate a profound and life-giving experience. Even if there is only one candidate in any given parish community, the effort is to be made to form that person and celebrate the conversion process in that community. This complies with the spirit of the OCIA and serves the best interest of the catechumen/candidates and the parish.

## REQUEST TO CONFIRM ADULT CANDIDATE(S)

*The priest who baptizes a catechumen or receives a candidate into full communion (baptized Protestants) already has the faculty to confirm this person at the time of baptism or reception into full communion. No request for faculties is necessary.*

*However, if a priest has any baptized Catholic(s), (who never formally left the Church), who is (are) part of the RCIA process, and who wish to be confirmed, the priest must request – in writing – the faculty to confirm from Bishop James P. Powers.*

---

I request permission to confirm the following member(s) of \_\_\_\_\_ Parish, in \_\_\_\_\_, Wisconsin, at the celebration of the Mass on \_\_\_\_\_.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

Pastor/Parochial Administrator/Parish Life Coordinator/Parish Director

Return to: Most Rev. James Powers  
Diocese of Superior, P.O. Box 969, Superior, WI 54880  
General Fax & Office of Bishop Fax: 715-395-3149  
Email: [pschoenfuss@catholicdos.org](mailto:pschoenfuss@catholicdos.org)

---

I hereby delegate you as Pastor to confirm the adult named above at the celebration of the Mass on \_\_\_\_\_.

---

Most Rev. James P. Powers

---

Peggy M. Schoenfuss, Chancellor

---

Date