



Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

Rite of Calling Candidates to Continuing Renewal

The Calling to Continuing Renewal is the rite by which the candidates enter into the final period of preparation. At this time focus shifts from the head to the heart, from catechetical sessions to a more spiritual preparation.

When this rite takes place during Lent it is referred to as the Rite of Calling Candidates to Lenten Renewal.

In many parishes the Elect and Candidates enter the Church at the same time, that is, at the Easter Vigil. The combined rite is found in the Appendix to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. However, the combined rite is included in the case of pastoral need and is not normative.

Pastoral discernment is to guide the decision to either combine the rites or celebrate them separately. (see sidebar).¹

Before deciding when to celebrate the Rite of Reception:

- discern the readiness of the candidates
- assess the appropriateness of fully initiating the candidates at the same celebration as the elect

Penitential Services and the Sacrament of Reconciliation

A penitential service is recommended for the candidates in preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance).² This service is meant to prepare the heart of the candidate, to help him or her against temptation and to strengthen his or her desire to be received into the Church.

PASTORAL DISCERNMENT

Before deciding when to celebrate the Rite of Reception:

- ❖ discern the readiness of the candidates, and
- ❖ assess the appropriateness of fully initiating the candidates and the elect at the same celebration.

¹ See The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults nos. 389,2; 391; 420 and 421.

² An outline of the penitential service can be found in The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, no. 527.



It is important to note that “if the profession of faith and reception take place within Mass, the candidate, according to his own conscience, should make a confession of sins beforehand, first informing the confessor that he is about to be received into full communion.”³

[Rite of Reception into Full Communion of the Catholic Church](#)

The reception of the Sacraments takes place at appropriate times during the year when candidates are deemed, by the Pastor, to be ready. The Blue Book is very specific that “the Rite (of Reception) is so arranged that no greater burden than necessary (see Acts 15:28) is required for the establishment of communion and unity.”⁴

The Rite of Reception **may** take place during the Easter Vigil, and there is a combined rite in the Blue Book.⁵ However, it is possible to have the candidates receive the sacraments at another time or times during the year. It is suggested that the rite take place during the Easter Season, that is, from Easter Sunday to Pentecost.

³ See The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, no. 395.

⁴ See Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis redintegratio*, no. 18.

⁵ A Rite Combining Catechumens and Candidates at the Easter Vigil (Nos. 418-451) – this section of the rite is used when both catechumens and candidates receive the sacraments at the Easter Vigil.