

Preparing for the Rites

Parish Rite of Sending

Parish Rite of Sending. The Rite(s) of Sending involve "sending" the Catechumens and/or Candidates to the Bishop and the people of the Local Church. Catechumens are sent for Election while Candidates are sent for recognition and the Call to Continuing Conversion. The *Rite of Sending* affords the parish the opportunity to express its approval, to rejoice in the decision to receive the sacraments of initiation and to assure the Catechumens and Candidates of the community's care and support.

When to Celebrate the Rite of Sending. The ritual text states that the *Rite of Sending the Catechumens for Election* and the *Rite of Sending the Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop and for the Call to Continuing Conversion* may be celebrated at a "suitable" time prior to the rites [RCIA 108,436,533]. It may take place within a Celebration of the Word or within Mass. The anticipated or morning Masses of the Sunday when the rite will take place make excellent sense, because many of the faithful will be able to participate. In all three cycles of the *Lectionary for Mass*, the Church is faced with the temptation of Jesus and his choice for God and for the reign of God. However, the Sunday before Lent begins, or a day in that week, are alternatives. Ash Wednesday does not seem to be a suitable day since the receiving of ashes imprints a strong penitential character on the liturgy.

Option 1: Combined Rite of Sending for Election & Recognition [RCIA 530-546]

Use this rite if there are both Catechumens and Candidates who will be ready for the sacraments this year, and you wish to do the sending in one ceremony. If a parish has both Catechumens and Candidates in formation, this is the appropriate rite to use if sending both groups to the Cathedral for the Combined Rite. If a parish has only Catechumens or only Candidates in formation, use one of the rites below.

Option 2: Rite for Sending Catechumens for the Rite of Election [RCIA 106-117]

This rite is used for the unbaptized.

Option 3: Rite for Sending the Candidates for Recognition and the Call to Continuing Conversion [RCIA 434-445]

This rite is used only for validly baptized Christians seeking the full communion of the Catholic Church with *Profession of Faith, Confirmation, and the Eucharist*. Also included are Catholic adults and children of catechetical age who were baptized in infancy, but received little or no catechetical formation, and are seeking to complete their initiation with both *Confirmation* and the *Eucharist*. These persons are properly called Candidates for Full Initiation.

NOTES:

1. While the *Rite of Sending* is optional for the dioceses of the USA, it does not mean it should not be celebrated. Although it is not required, it makes catechetical sense to involve the broader parish membership in this part of the journey to the Easter Vigil.
2. The Enrollment of Names (signing the Book of the Elect) will take place at the Cathedral, and, therefore, should not be duplicated at the parish.