



CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS OUTSIDE THE EASTER VIGIL IN PANDEMIC

The following script has been prepared by the Diocese of Owensboro Office of Worship for use during the COVID-19 Pandemic 2020. Please use this script as a guiding document, but each parish must develop a plan according to its own needs and limitations. A parish may wish to place more restrictive measures, or choose to omit certain optional parts of the liturgy (this will be indicated throughout the script).

Here are some notable differences in the liturgy of Initiation outside of the Easter Vigil:

- The Ritual Mass for the Conferral of Baptism is to be used (RCIA 208), unless it is a Solemnity, in which case the proper Mass text must be used.
- The readings are to be chosen from those given in the Lectionary for Mass, “Celebration of the Sacraments in Initiation apart from the Easter Vigil” (RCIA 208), unless it is a Solemnity, in which case the proper readings must be used.
- “The Penitential Act, the Kyrie and the Creed are omitted. The Gloria, however, is said.” (Roman Missal, For the Conferral of Baptism).
- The “Service of Light” and “Renewal of Baptismal Promises” that takes place at Easter Vigil is not to be included in the liturgy of Initiation outside of the Easter Vigil.
- Outside of the Easter season, all kneel during the Litany of Saints.

Parishes Initiating *Only* Baptized Candidates:

- If a parish only has baptized candidates to be received into full Communion, “if the rite of reception takes place on a solemnity or on a Sunday, the Mass of the day should be celebrated; on other days it is permissible to celebrate the Mass ‘For the Unity of Christians’” from the Masses for Various Needs” (RCIA 487).
- Since the rituals of baptism are not included in this ceremony, the Penitential Act, Kyrie and Creed are *not* omitted from this Mass.

Here are some notable differences in the liturgy during the Pandemic:

- Initiation liturgy is subject to all guidelines in place for the public celebration of Mass.
- These rites may be observed at a weekday liturgy or a special Sunday liturgy separate from the regularly scheduled parish Mass so as not to elongate the ceremonies.
- The baptismal font may be filled for the purpose of this ceremony, to be emptied immediately afterward. Otherwise, a pitcher of water may be blessed. Since water cannot be reused after each baptism, water is directly poured on each elect’s head into a bowl. Fresh water from the font or pitcher is to be used each time. After the liturgy, the water should be disposed of into the ground. The baptismal font must then be sanitized.
- If time is a concern, the blessing of the water may occur prior to the start of Mass.
- The “Laying on of Hands” is to be done by extending hands over the candidates rather than physical touch.
- The Vatican has given approval for the anointing to be done with a cotton ball if necessary. This will be left up to the pastor’s discretion.

OUTLINE OF THE RITE

LITURGY OF THE WORD

CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

Presentation of the Candidates

Invitation to Prayer

Litany of the Saints (optional)

Prayer over the Water (optional if prepared prior to ceremony)

Profession of Faith

Renunciation of Sin

Profession of Faith

Baptism

Explanatory Rites (optional)

Clothing with a Baptismal Garment

Presentation of a Lighted Candle

CELEBRATION OF RECEPTION

Invitation

Profession by the Candidates

Act of Reception

CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION

Invitation

Laying on of Hands

Anointing with Chrism

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

The baptismal font may be filled for the purpose of this ceremony, to be emptied immediately afterward. Otherwise, a pitcher of water may be blessed.

Presentation of the Candidates

After the homily, the Priest invites elect and godparents to go to the font. No one else should be permitted to accompany them and physical distancing of six feet must be maintained. If the area is small, the elect and godparent could be called one at a time.

If the parish only has baptized candidates seeking full communion, please turn to (CELEBRATION OF RECEPTION).

Invitation to Prayer

Priest: Dear friends, let us pray to almighty God for our brothers and sisters, N., N., who are asking for baptism. He has called them and brought them to this moment. May he grant them light and strength to follow Christ with a resolute hearts and to profess the faith of the Church. May he give them the new life of the Holy Spirit, whom we are about to call down on this water.

Litany of the Saints (optional)

The litany may be said (not sung) with the participation of all gathered, standing during the Easter season, or kneeling outside of the Easter season. The litany may be omitted.

The litany “may include, at the proper place, names of other saints (for example, the titular of the church, the patron saints of the place or of those to be baptized) or petitions suitable to the occasion” (RCIA 221).

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Saint Michael,
Holy Angels of God,
Saint John the Baptist,
Saint Joseph,

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
pray for us.
pray for us.
pray for us.
pray for us.
pray for us.

O God, whose Spirit in the first moments of the world's creation hovered over the waters, so that the very substance of water would even then take to itself the power to sanctify;

O God, who by the outpouring of the flood, foreshadowed regeneration, so that from the mystery of one and the same element of water would come an end to vice and a beginning of virtue;

O God, who caused the children of Abraham to pass dry-shod through the Red Sea, so that the chosen people, set free from slavery to Pharaoh, would prefigure the people of the baptized;

O God, whose Son, baptized by John in the waters of the Jordan, was anointed with the Holy Spirit, and, as he hung upon the Cross, gave forth water from his side along with blood, and after his Resurrection, commanded his disciples:

“Go forth, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,”

look now, we pray, upon the face of your Church and graciously unseal for her the fountain of Baptism.

May this water receive by the Holy Spirit the grace of your Only Begotten Son, so that human nature, created in your image

**and washed clean through the Sacrament of
Baptism
from all the squalor of the life of old,
may be found worthy to rise
to the life of newborn children
through water and the Holy Spirit.**

The celebrant extends his right hand over the water.

**May the power of the Holy Spirit, O Lord, we pray,
come down through your Son into the fullness of
this font, so that all who have been buried with
Christ by Baptism into death may rise again to life
with him.**

**Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith

**Priest: N., N., N., before you can be baptized, you must
renounce Satan and his works
and promise to serve God
in the holy Catholic Church.**

And so I ask you:

Do you renounce Satan?

Candidates: I do.

And all his works?

Candidates: I do.

And all his empty show?

Candidates: I do.

**Do you believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth?**

Candidates: I do.

**Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son,
our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered death and was buried, rose again from the
dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?**

Candidates: I do.

**Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic
Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness
of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life
everlasting?**

Candidates: I do.

Since water cannot be reused after each baptism, water is directly poured on each elect's head into a bowl. Fresh water from the font or pitcher is to be used each time. After the liturgy, the water should be disposed of into the ground. The baptismal font must then be sanitized.

Priest: N., I baptize you in the name of the Father,

Priest pours water the first time.

and of the Son,

Priest pours water the second time.

and of the Holy Spirit.

Priest pours water the third time.

Clothing with a Baptismal Garment (optional)

The newly baptized receive a white garment and put it on. The use of hangers and bags would be prudent to keep the garment from being touched by multiple persons. If this is a hardship for a parish, then it may be omitted.

**Priest: You have become a new creation
and have clothed yourself in Christ.**

**Receive this baptismal garment
and bring it unstained
to the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ
so that you may have everlasting life.**

Presentation of a Lighted Candle (optional)

**Priest: Godparents, please come forward to give the newly
baptized the light of Christ.**

One at a time, a godparent may pick up a candle that has been placed on a table or other convenient surface (not to be handed between celebrant and godparent), then proceed to light it from the Easter candle to present to the baptized.

The celebrant says to the newly baptized:

**Priest: You have been enlightened by Christ.
Walk always as children of the light
and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts.
When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet him
with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.**

Newly baptized: Amen.

The newly baptized may now be seated.

CELEBRATION OF RECEPTION

Invitation

The already baptized who seek to enter into full communion are called to the front. It is important that they practice physical distancing. If this not possible, perhaps they could stand up at their place.

Priest: N. and N., of your own free will you have asked to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. You have made your decision after careful thought under guidance of the Holy Spirit. I now invite you to come forward with your sponsors and in the presence of this community to profess the Catholic faith. In this faith you will be one with us for the first time at the eucharistic table of the Lord Jesus, the sign of the Church's unity.

Profession by the Candidates

If the baptismal liturgy did not take place, the ones to be received join the community in reciting the Nicene Creed, after which then celebrant asks the candidates to make the profession of faith below. Otherwise, the Nicene Creed is omitted and the candidates for reception are asked to make the profession of faith:

Candidates: I believe and profess all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches, and proclaims to be revealed by God.

**Priest: My brothers and sisters,
the Lord receives you into the Catholic Church.
His loving kindness has led you here,
so that in unity of the Holy Spirit,
you may have full communion with us
in the faith that you professed
in the presence of his family.**

CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION

Invitation

The newly baptized are asked to join the candidates for full communion for the sacrament of Confirmation.

Priest: My dear candidates for confirmation, by your baptism you have been born again in Christ and you have become members of Christ and of his priestly people.

Now you are to share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among us, the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost and given by them and their successors to the baptized.

The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, which you are to receive, will make you more like Christ and help you to be a witness to his suffering, death, and resurrection.

It will strengthen you to be active members of the Church and to build up the Body of Christ in faith and love.

With hands joined, the celebrant next addresses the people:

Priest: My dear friends, let us pray to God our Father, that he will pour out the Holy Spirit on these candidates for confirmation to strengthen them

**with his gifts and anoint them to be more like
Christ, the Son of God.**

Pause for silent prayer.

Laying on of Hands

Priest extends his hands collectively over the group.

**Priest: All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you freed your sons and daughters from sin
and gave them new life.**

**Send your Holy Spirit upon them
To be their helper and guide.**

**Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgement and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your
presence.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Response: Amen.

Anointing with Chrism

The priest dips his right thumb into the Sacred Chrism and signs the cross on the forehead of the newly received. Since it is not permitted for him to use gloves or cotton ball to perform the anointing ritual, he must wash his thumb in a bowl of warm soapy water after each person is confirmed.

Priest: N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Candidate: Amen.

Priest: Peace be with you.

Candidate: And with your spirit.

After confirming each candidate, the priest may say:

**Priest: My dear brothers and sisters
it is with great joy and delight
that we welcome you to full membership
in the Catholic Church.**

The minister and the confirmed may exchange a sign of peace without physical contact (e.g. folding their hands on their chests and bowing slightly toward one another).

The assembly applauds and everyone returns to their seat.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Since the profession of faith has already been said, the general intercessions begin immediately (RCIA 592).

With Eucharistic Prayers I, II, or III the special interpolations given in the Roman Missal, the ritual Mass, “Christian Initiation: Baptism” are used (RCIA 593).

“Before saying ‘This is the Lamb of God,’ the celebrant may briefly remind the neophytes of the preeminence of the eucharist, which is the climax of their initiation and the center of the whole Christian life. He may also mention that for those received into full communion, this first full sharing with the Catholic community in eucharist communion is the high point of their reception” (RCIA 594).

The newly initiated are invited to receive communion first. There is no exception for the neophytes to receive the Precious Blood at this time.