*Please copy and distribute to all sponsors and godparents.*

**RITE OF ELECTION - 2023\***

**Guide for Sponsors & Godparents**

The following is some information you'll want to be aware of for the upcoming celebration of the Rite of Election:

1. You should arrive at the church 30 minutes before the ceremony.

2. The pews will be marked with the names of the parishes. All Catechumens (unbaptized), Candidates (baptized), and sponsors and godparents from a parish will be seated together. Ministers of Hospitality will be available to help with seating.

3. The ceremony will begin with a Liturgy of the Word— readings from Scripture and a homily. The Catechumens will then be presented to the Bishop by the RCIA Coordinator.

**GODPARENTS FOR CATECHUMENS (Unbaptized):**

4. After the Catechumens have been presented by the RCIA Coordinator to the Bishop, the godparents will be asked to stand. The Bishop will address himself to you and then ask you several questions concerning the readiness of the Catechumens to be enrolled among the elect. Your response to each question will be, “They have”. He will then ask you to be seated and will give you the opportunity to offer personal testimony concerning the Catechumen you are sponsoring. We encourage you to participate in this part of the ceremony. When offering testimony, please stand and address yourself to the Bishop. The testimony that you offer should not include private details from the Catechumen's personal life but should focus on any or all of the following: growth that you have noticed in the person; their readiness to be fully initiated into the church; their progress along the faith journey.

5. After the testimony, the Catechumens will be asked to stand. The Bishop will address himself to the Catechumens. Then, pew by pew, the Catechumens and their godparents come forward through the center aisle and the Catechumens sign the Book of the Elect.

6. After all Catechumens have signed the Book of the Elect, the Bishop will ask all Catechumens and their godparents to stand. When he has finished addressing the Catechumens and their godparents, all are seated, and the Candidates (baptized) are then presented to the Bishop.

**SPONSORS FOR CANDIDATES (Baptized):**

7. After the Catechumens have signed the Book of the Elect, the Candidates for Confirmation and Eucharist will be presented to the Bishop. When the name of your parish is called out, the Candidates and their sponsors come as a group to the Bishop. You will introduce the Candidate you are sponsoring to the Bishop. When the introductions for your parish are completed, the group will return to their places.

8. After all Candidates have been introduced to the Bishop, the sponsors will be asked to stand. The Bishop will address himself to you and ask you several questions to which you will respond, "They have". He will then ask you to be seated and will give you the opportunity to offer personal testimony for the Candidate you are sponsoring. We encourage you to participate in this part of the ceremony. When offering testimony, please stand and address yourself to the Bishop. The testimony that you offer should not include private details from the Candidate's personal life, but should focus on any or all of the following: growth that you have noticed in the person; their readiness to be fully initiated into the church; their progress along the faith journey.

9. At the end of this period, the Bishop will ask the Candidates and their sponsors to stand and will address himself to both.

10. Catechumens and their godparents will join you in standing, and the community will pray intercessory prayer for all Catechumens and Candidates.

**ALL SPONSORS & GODPARENTS:**

11. All Catechumens, Candidates and sponsors and godparents stand and the community prays intercessory prayer for all Catechumens and Candidates. You should put your right hand on the shoulder of the one you are sponsoring during the prayer. After the petitions, the Bishop will pray over the whole group with outstretched arms. This will be followed by a sign of peace to those around you.

*\*Rite of Election will be held at St. Leo Catholic Church in Murray on Sunday, February 19 at 2:00 p.m. and at St. Stephen Cathedral on Sunday, February 26 at 2:00 p.m. and at 6:00 p.m*