



CHRISTIAN INITIATION

ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Tues, Sept 24, 2024

Meeting for Initiation Teams



Agenda

1:30p

Welcome, Prayer, Intros

1:35p

Ritual Text

1:40p

National Statutes

2p

Canonical Issues

2:15p

Questions of Clarification

2:30p

Formation Opportunities

2:45p

End



OCIA/RICA

Opening Prayer

Father of love and power,
it is your will to establish everything in Christ
and to draw us into his all-embracing love.
Guide the elect of your Church:
strengthen them in their vocation,
build them into the kingdom of your Son,
and seal them with the Spirit of your promise.

Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

– Prayer Over the Elect, Option B (RCIA 135)

Timeline for Implementation

- **Feb 14, 2024** (Ash Weds): translation confirmed by the Holy See
- **Mar 31, 2024** (Easter Sun): decree of promulgation from USCCB
- **Nov 1, 2024** (All Saints): ritual book available
- **Dec 1, 2024** (Advent I): *National Statutes* take effect (old statutes abrogated) and book MAY be used
- **Mar 5, 2025** (Ash Weds): Ritual book MUST be used

Changes to the Ritual Book

- Organization of the book vs. *RCIA*
- “Candidate” vs” ”Catechumen”
- Harmonization with the *Roman Missal*
- Clarity around Rite of Entrance (Acceptance) at Mass
- Inscription of Names of Catechumens
- Role of the deacon
- Psalmody

Revised *National Statutes*...

What Are the National Statutes?

From the *Forward to the Revised Edition* (available online as a preview from *Magnificat*):

- The National Statutes are “the norms which regulate the discipline of Christian Initiation as well as the duties and prerogatives of catechumens.”
- They have “been revised to better reflect the experience of the Church in U.S.”
- “These statutes ... include only those statutes which are truly legislative, complimentary to the universal law, and unique to the United States.”
- “They do not reiterate norms already contained in the ritual text or universal law.”



Note: In the following pages, **red font** indicates a point that requires a new approach to initiation ministry.



What's New?

Structure of the Statutes

- These statutes are fewer in number: 18 vs. 37.
- The word “Norm” in front of each paragraph number reminds us that they are legislative, not merely suggestions or reiterations.
- There’s now a Norm for the period of Purification and Enlightenment (Norm 12)

Initiation in General

- It is now “a general rule” that the preparation of catechumens for the Sacraments of Initiation takes place in a parochial setting or its equivalent. (Norm 5)
- **There should be a Register of Catechumens and a Register of Reception Into Full Communion** – this is not new to the text but probably is new to common practice!
 - **There is also new information to be recorded in each one.**
 - **These books are to be kept in a Parish Archive.** (Norms 14-16)
- The local ordinary has authority to issue norms regarding the preparation of candidates. (Norm 17.4)



What's New?

Precatechumenate

- Evangelization of inquirers during the Precatechumenate period should now include “leading them through Scripture.” (Norm 1)
- A parish minister will meet inquirers individually to “discuss any issues (e.g., an irregular marriage) that could affect their eventual celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation.” (Norm 2)

Catechumenate

- The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults* are now named as “catechetical texts” for use during the catechumenate. (Norm 6)
- Other texts can be used, assuming they are “approved by the local ordinary.” (ibid.)
- The Catechumenate should involve participation of catechumens in “works of service” (Norm 6) and “works of mercy.” (Norm 9)
- Unbaptized persons in irregular marriages cannot celebrate the Rite of Election until they are free to enter a canonical marriage. (Norm 7)



What's New?

Catechumenate, Cont.

- Catechumens have the right to enroll their children in Catholic schools. (Norm 9)
 - The local ordinary can establish other rights for catechumens as well.
- Not only do catechumens have certain rights, they also now *incur certain obligations*.
 - This includes participation in the Liturgy of the Word on holy days of obligation as well as on Sundays. (Norm 8)
- Catechumens are dismissed after the homily and before the Creed “to reflect on the Word of God just proclaimed.” (Norm 10)
- Because liturgical ministries arise from Christian Baptism, it is inappropriate for catechumens to proclaim the Word of God or serve at the altar during the liturgy. (Norm 11)

What's New?

Purification & Enlightenment

- “Candidates for initiation” are now called “The Elect” in order to reserve the term “candidate” for those who are already validly baptized. (see the *Forward to the Revised Edition*)

Mystagogy

- “At least monthly assemblies” up to the anniversary of initiation are no longer a required element of the program of formation for neophytes after Pentecost. (compare RCIA, National Statute, 24 with OCIA, National Statutes, 13)

What's the Same?

- The paragraph numbering in the ritual text has remained the same.
- The Catechumenate period should still last at least one year. (Norm 4)
- The general approach to each period is the same. In other words:
 - We must still welcome and accommodate people whenever they come to us.
 - We must still make disciples *before* the Rite of Entrance into the Catechumenate.
 - The Purification & Enlightenment period should still consist “more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction.” (RCIA 139)
 - We must still involve the entire community, integrate inquirers and catechumens into parish life *from the beginning*, and prioritize accompaniment and disciple-making.
 - We must still form candidates (especially catechized ones) differently than we form catechumens.



OCIA

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Catechetical Texts for the Initiation Process

Norm 6 The formation of catechumens is to be comprehensive. It is to be:

1. suited to the liturgical year and supported by the Church's liturgy;
2. rooted in Sacred Scripture, the truths of Catholic doctrine and the moral life, and aided by catechetical texts, such as the Catechism of the Catholic Church, texts based upon that Catechism, such as the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, and other texts approved by the local ordinary;
3. exercised in works of service and charity (OCIA 75).

Policy

- Catholic Bible, Catechism, work based on Catechism, Church documents do not have to be approved.
- The pastor can determine if a work is “based on the Catechism”
- Approval only needed when your primary text or curriculum is not based on the Catechism.
- Submit to the CNE for approval.
- Everyone use their common sense on what a “primary text” or “curriculum” is.
- Pastors can also approve supplemental texts that aren't specifically “based on the Catechism” but are still good and helpful, such as a work from the saints, a handbook of prayers, a book by Scott Hahn, etc.



Canonical Issues

- Sacramental Record-Keeping
 - **Norm 14** – register of those who have entered the catechumenate (name, names of sponsors, minister, date and place of rite of entry; date and place of birth)
 - **Norm 16** – register of those received into full communion (name, date and place of baptism, date and place of birth, minister, parents, sponsors, and date and place of Reception into full communion); if married, a notation of spouse, date and place of marriage should be added (any future marriage should also be noted)
 - As a policy of the archdiocese, a note in the "Remarks" column that the person was confirmed should also be included.

Canonical Issues

- Marriage issues
 - **Norm 7** – unbaptized persons in irregular marriages can enter the catechumenate (Rite of Entry), they are not to celebrate the Rite of Election until they are free to enter a canonical marriage
 - Change in practice
 - Managing expectations



QUESTIONS

What questions of clarification about the new ritual book or national statutes or canonical issues do you have?



Formation Opportunities

- **March 25** (Cincinnati)/**March 26** (Dayton): One-day workshop for all initiation ministers
- Updated documentation on everything on AoC websites (one-page coaching sheet, FAQs, etc.)
- Webinar series Fall-Winter 2024-25 (**1:30-2:30 p.m.**):
 - **Oct 29:** Sacramental Record-Keeping
 - **Dec 4:** Purification & Enlightenment: Making it a Retreat
 - **Jan 15:** National Statutes...a Deep Dive!
 - **Feb 27:** Marriage Issues & the Catechumenate
- Location-based training for each Family team offered on demand
- Boot Camp for new initiation ministers in May, annually