



DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD IN ILLINOIS OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE CATECHUMENATE

28 December 2023

Dear Priests, Deacons, R.C.I.A. Coordinators, and Parish Secretaries,

The time has come to begin preparing for the Rite of Election. As was the case this past Lent, there will only be one celebration of the Rite of Election this year. It will be held at **2:30 p.m. on Sunday, February 18, 2024** at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Overall feedback from the one celebration for every parish in the Diocese was overwhelmingly positive and encouraging.

The Call to Continuing Conversion of already baptized candidates will not be celebrated; only the Rite of Election of catechumens (those not baptized) will be celebrated. Those already validly baptized should be brought into full communion whenever they are ready and should not be made to wait until the Easter Vigil because no greater burden than necessary should be placed upon them.

Attendance at the Rite of Election is mandatory for catechumens. If, for a legitimate reason, it is not possible for a catechumen to attend the Rite of Election, please let me know as soon as possible and for what reason so I can request a dispensation from the Bishop.

After reviewing the enclosed materials, please share with those on your team those pieces of information that will be useful or necessary for them. The enclosed packet and forms are available at <https://www.dio.org/worship>

Before you begin to read the enclosed materials, please allow me to make a few brief notes about them:

- When completing Form **NAMES for the RITE OF ELECTION 2024**, please include *both* children of catechetical age (*i.e.*, those over seven years of age) and adults on this one form and be sure to place the names in the proper age categories at the top of page 2. *Please either mail in a hard copy of this form or send it by e-mail* to worship@dio.org. If no one will receive the Sacraments of Initiation in your parish this Easter Vigil, please check the “no” box on the front page and return the form; this helps give me an idea of how many parishes I am still waiting to hear from.

- If a candidate was received into the full communion of the Catholic Church in the past year outside of the Easter Vigil, please complete **NAMES OF THOSE WHO RECEIVED BAPTISM OR WERE RECEIVED INTO FULL COMMUNION BETWEEN EASTER 2023 AND LENT 2024**. If you have no one in either of these categories, please check the "no" box and return the form; this helps give me an idea of how many parishes I am still waiting to hear from.
- Because godparents and sponsors have an especially essential role in the discernment process, as do members of the R.C.I.A. team, **LETTER OF TESTIMONY FORM 2024**, should be distributed to them to complete; please make copies of this form as needed. When they are completed, they may be mailed or e-mailed apart from the other forms.
- Bishop Paprocki **will no longer grant the faculty to confirm baptized but uncatechized Catholics at the Easter Vigil or within the Easter Season to priests**. Such candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation should receive it from the Bishop either at the Pentecost Celebration of the Confirmation of Adults or whenever their parish *confirmandi* receive the Sacrament.

If, after giving a careful reading to the enclosed packet and forms, you need assistance in completing the forms, please Chelli Branyan at (217) 698-8500 ext. 117 or cbranyan@dio.org; you may also contact me at (217) 698-8500 ext. 109 or dzehnle@dio.org. Please return the completed forms not later than **February 9, 2023**.

In order to highlight the dignity of this important celebration in the lives of the Catechumens, those in attendance are kindly asked to dress in *at least* "business casual;" one's "Sunday best" is especially encouraged; upper arms, thighs, and mid-sections should be covered on all. Please be certain to share this request with your catechumens and others who will attend.

Lastly, many thanks to you for your good work in this important and life-changing ministry, which I hope you find both rewarding and fulfilling!

Yours sincerely,



Reverend Daren J. Zehnle, J.C.L.
Director

Enclosures