



*Christian Initiation
Outline
for the
Easter Vigil*

Bibliography:

**Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults St Paul's Publications
2003**

**The Order of Confirmation
The Roman Pontifical, May 2015, St Pauls Publications**

Roman Missal St Paul's Publications 2011

DRAFT

Colour Key:

GREEN: SUGGESTIONS FOR CHRISTIAN INITIATION

RED: SUGGESTED COMMENTARY

BLUE: LITURGY

BLACK: CELBRANT

BROWN: THE ELECT & CANDIDATES RESPONSES

The Church environment needs careful consideration:

- Will the Paschal Candle be processed from the Altar to the Baptismal Font?
- The Priest calls forth the elect to be baptised.

Consider: will the Oil of Catechumens be administered during the Baptismal Liturgy or prior to the Easter Vigil?

- Depending on the number of elect to be baptised, they with their godparents may process to the Baptismal font during the Litany of Saints.

- Please provide catechesis for the whole RCIA group to explain that the candidates being Confirmed do not take part in the Baptismal Liturgy. This does not exclude them, but rather, since their Baptism is already recognised, they should remain with the whole assembly, as our brothers and sisters in Christ, bearing witness to the Baptism of the elect.

- Parishes that prefer to keep the whole RCIA group together, that is both catechumens and candidates, must consider the importance of the grace of Baptism, which candidates have already received.

Suggestion: the elect wear white; the candidates wear yellow or red. By the use of these liturgical colours, clarity is given to them and the whole parish.

Opening Commentary: (edit to suit parish needs)

Welcome to this most sacred Liturgy.

This evening we have the joy and pleasure of welcoming into the Christian family through (N.) their/his/her Baptism tonight.

We also welcome (N.) who is/are already our brother(s) and sister(s) in Christ; already Baptised, they have chosen to join into Full Communion with the Catholic faith within our Parish Community. Tonight they, with the newly Baptised, will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and make their 1st Holy Communion.

Please all proceed outside for the commencement of the Easter Vigil with the Blessing of the Fire and new Paschal Candle. The Church will be in darkness as the new light of Christ is processed in.

PART I:

- THE BLESSING OF THE FIRE¹
- PREPARATION OF THE PASCHAL CANDLE²

Offer an explanation to the elect and candidates prior to the Easter Vigil of the Blessing of the Paschal Candle, to deepen the understanding of the elect's Baptismal candle being lit from the Paschal Candle. Those baptised outside of the Easter Vigil may be disconnected from the symbolic ritual and meaning of the Paschal Light of Christ. In parishes where many baptisms occur throughout the year, the Paschal Candle can burn very low. Thereby, the newness of the Paschal Candle evokes the renewal of Church and parish life, transformed over the Lenten Season by the greatest Liturgical feast of Easter.

- ENTRANCE PROCESSION: Thurible precedes the minister carrying the lit Paschal Candle into the darkened Church.
- ORDER OF LIGHTING CANDLES:
 1. At the door of the Church: The Priest or Deacon sings 'The Light of Christ'. All reply 'Thanks be to God'. Only the priest lights his candle from the Paschal candle, if a Deacon is processing in the Paschal Candle.
 2. In the middle of the Church: The whole assembly light their candles *exception of the elect to emphasise their Baptismal candle being lit from the Paschal Candle at their Baptism. Ensure their Godparent is with them with a lit candle.* The Priest or Deacon sings 'The Light of Christ'. All reply 'Thanks be to God'. The whole assembly light their candles.
 3. At the altar: On reaching the altar The Priest or Deacon sings 'The Light of Christ'. All reply 'Thanks be to God'. The entire Church is lit, except the altar candles. *Ensure the elect and candidates with their Godparents/sponsors and families are seated prominently in the front of the pews.*³

The Easter Proclamation: *The Exsultet*⁴

The priest stands at the Presiders Chair and blesses the incense, which he adds to the thurible for the blessing of the Gospel.

¹ Roman Missal St Paul's Publications 2011, p.378

² Ibid

³ Ibid p.380-381

⁴ Ibid Longer Form p.382-394 Shorter form p. 394-396

PART II: LITURGY OF THE WORD

- The Easter Vigil calls for 9 Readings with options available. However, in choosing which Readings, The Law and The Prophets must be included along with the Reading from Exodus 14 with the accompanying Canticle. These cannot be excluded. At least three Readings from the Hebrew Scriptures plus two Readings from the New Testament must be proclaimed. After each Reading, a Psalm or Canticle is proclaimed *plus* the Presidential Prayer offered after the particular Reading.⁵

READING	PSALM/CANTICLE	PRESIDENTIAL PRAYER
Genesis 1:1-2,2 or 1:1, 26-31a (<i>Creation- let there be light</i>)	Psalm 103 (<i>Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.</i>) or Psalm 32 (<i>The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord</i>)	✓
Genesis 22: 1-18 or 1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18 (<i>Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac</i>)	Psalm 15 (<i>Keep me safe, O God; You are my hope.</i>)	✓
Exodus 14: 15-15:1 (must be read)	Canticle Ex 15 (<i>Let us sing to the Lord; He has covered Himself in glory.</i>)	✓
Isaiah 54: 5-14 (<i>I have taken pity on you, says the Lord, your redeemer</i>)	Psalm 29 (<i>I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.</i>)	✓
Isaiah 55: 1-11 (<i>Come to me and your soul will live.</i>)	Canticle Is 12 (<i>You will draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.</i>)	✓
Baruch 3:9-15, 31-4:4 (<i>Walk in the way of God and you will live in peace for ever.</i>)	Psalm 18 (<i>Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.</i>)	✓
Ezekiel 36: 16-28 (<i>I shall pour clean water over you and I shall give you a new heart.</i>)	Psalm 41 (<i>Like a deer that longs for running streams, my soul longs for you, my God.</i>)	✓

The Gloria is sung while the bells ring out, according to local custom.

The Collect	Romans 6: 3-11	Psalm 117
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⁵ Ibid

Gospel

YEAR A Mt 28: 1-10

YEAR B MK 16: 1-7

YEAR C LK 24: 1-12

Candles do not accompany the Gospel, only the thurible to incense the Gospel by the Priest or Deacon.⁶

HOMILY

PART III: BAPTISMAL LITURGY

- Invitation to Prayer⁷

Celebrant:

Dearly beloved,

With one heart and one soul, let us by our prayers come to the aid of these our brothers and sister in their blessed hope, so that, as they approach the font of rebirth, the almighty Father may bestow on them all his merciful help.

*Consider: whether the font will or won't be blessed. If no baptism is to take place, the Litany is omitted.*⁸

- Litany of the Saints

Ensure to include the saint's names of all those to be Baptised and Confirmed within the Litany of Saints.⁹

- Calling the elect forward¹⁰

Commentary: We invite (N.) to come forward for Baptism.

Celebrant:

Almighty ever-living God,

Be present by the mysteries of your great love and send forth the spirit of adoption to create the new peoples brought to birth for you in the font of Baptism, so that what is to be carried out by our humble service may be brought to fulfilment by your mighty power. Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

⁶ Ibid p.403 #35

⁷ Ibid p.404 #40

⁸ Ibid p.405

⁹ Ibid p.406-407 #43

¹⁰ Ibid p.408

- Blessing of the Baptismal water¹¹

If no one is to be baptised proceed to the Blessing of the Water for the Sprinkling Rite.¹²

- Renunciation of Sin and Renewal of Baptism Promises

This may be offered with the whole assembly with those to be Baptised.¹³

Celebrant:

Do you renounce Satan?

All: I do

And all his works?

All: I do

And all his empty show?

All: I do¹⁴

- Anointing with Oil Of Catechumens¹⁵

*Remember, was the Oil of Catechumens offered prior to the Easter Vigil?
Anointing the hands.*

Celebrant:

I anoint you with the oil of salvation in the name of Christ our Saviour

May He strengthen you with His power, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

The elect: Amen

- Baptism of the elect¹⁶

Celebrant:

I Baptise you...

- Explanatory Rites¹⁷

Celebrant:

The God of power and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin and brought you to new life through water and the Holy Spirit. He now anoints you with the chrism of salvation, so that united with His people, you may remain for ever a member of Christ who is Priest, Prophet, and King.

Newly Baptised: Amen

¹¹ Ibid p.411-412

¹² Ibid p.414

¹³ Ibid p.418 #55

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults St Paul's Publications 2003 p.137 #218

¹⁶ Ibid p.138-139 #220

¹⁷ Ibid p.139-140 #221

- **Clothing of Baptismal white garment¹⁸**

The elect may present already wearing white, consider offering a white scarf/stole representing their Baptismal Resurrection.

Celebrant:

Name(s)

You have become a new creation and have clothed yourselves in Christ.

Wearing this Baptismal garment bring it unstained to the judgement seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that you may have everlasting life.

Newly Baptised: Amen

- **Presentation of a Lighted Candle¹⁹**

Celebrant:

Godparents please come forward to give the newly baptised the light of Christ.
(to newly baptised)

Name(s), you have been enlightened by Christ. Walk always as children of the light and keep the flame of faith alive in your heart. When the Lord comes, may you go out to meet Him with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom.

Newly Baptised: Amen

Commentary: We will all respond together for the Profession of Faith.

- **Profession of Faith²⁰**

Celebrant:

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

All: 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?

All: 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?

All: I do

¹⁸ Ibid p.140 #223

¹⁹ Ibid p.141 #224

²⁰ Roman Missal p.419 #55

Celebrant:

And may almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and bestowed on us forgiveness of our sins, keep us by His grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord, for eternal life.

All: Amen

For simplicity the newly Baptised remain on the Sanctuary with their godparents during the Sprinkling Rite in readiness for Confirmation. Their Baptism Candle is blown out.

- Sprinkling Rite²¹

Commentary: We now call to come forward (N.), who are already our brother/sister(s) in Christ through Baptism. They will join the newly Baptised for Confirmation. I also ask their sponsor(s) to accompany them forward.

- Invitation

Celebrant:

Candidate (Name) 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 the 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.²²

- Profession Of Faith (for the Candidates)

Candidate:

I believe and profess all that the holy Catholic Church believes, teaches and proclaims to be revealed by God.²³

²¹ Roman Missal p. 420 #56

²² The Order of Confirmation

The Roman Pontifical, May 2015, St Pauls Publications p.11

²³ RCIA p.230 #404

- Act Of Reception

Celebrant:

Candidate (N.), the Lord receives you into the Catholic Church. His loving kindness has led you here, so that in the unity of the Holy Spirit you may have full communion with us in the faith that you have professed in the presence of His family.²⁴

Celebrant:

This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church.
We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: **Amen.**²⁵

PART IV: CONFIRMATION LITURGY

- Laying On Of Hands²⁶

Celebrant:

Dearly beloved,
let us pray to God the almighty Father,
for these, his adopted sons and daughters,
already born again to eternal life in Baptism,
that he will graciously pour out the Holy Spirit upon them to confirm them with
his abundant gifts, and through his anointing
conform them more fully to Christ, the Son of God.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who brought these your servants to new birth by water and the Holy Spirit,
freeing them from sin:

send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; give them the spirit of
wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of
knowledge and piety; fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.

Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

²⁴ Ibid #405

²⁵ The Order of Confirmation p.14 #23

²⁶ Ibid #24

Anointing With Chrism²⁷

The candidate may hand the Confirmation Card to the Celebrant.

Celebrant:

Candidate: (Saint's name) ...

be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Candidate: Amen

Celebrant:

Peace be with you.

Candidate: And with your spirit.²⁸

When the Confirmations are concluded it may be appropriate for the whole assembly to offer the Confirmed a round of applause.²⁹

- **Universal Prayer**

In the introduction to the general intercessions the celebrant should mention Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist, and express gratitude to God.³⁰

Reader:

For N. whom we have welcomed today as one of us, that he/she may have the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit to persevere faithfully in the choice he/she has made, we pray to the Lord.³¹

All: Lord hear our prayer

- **Sign of Peace**

After the general intercessions the sponsor and the entire assembly, if not too numerous, may greet the newly received in a friendly manner. The Sign of Peace before Communion may be omitted.³²

Consider: If the Sign of Peace is offered at this part of the Easter Vigil, a single member of the assembly, specially chosen and seated nearby, can represent the whole parish in offering the Sign of Peace to the newly received.

PART V: EUCHARISTIC LITURGY

It is appropriate for the neophytes to be the first to receive Communion and both the Host and Chalice for their First Holy Communion.³³

²⁷ Ibid p.15 #26-27

²⁸ The Order of Confirmation p.15

²⁹ RCIA p.232 #408

³⁰ Ibid #409

³¹ Ibid

³² Ibid #410

³³ Ibid #411