



## Diocese of Richmond

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Office of Christian Formation

Office of Worship

Dear Priests, Deacons and Lay Leaders in RCIA Ministry:

Happy New Year! We write today to share with you the plan for our diocese for the Rite of Election in 2021. Due to social distancing guidelines that impact church capacities, we are modifying the upcoming Rite of Election celebrations. As per a letter to all pastors dated January 4, 2021 regarding the Rite of Election, Bishop Knestout has delegated the celebration of the Rite of Election to every pastor in the Diocese of Richmond.

The Offices of Worship and Christian Formation have scheduled a conference call for Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 1:30 pm to address any questions parishes may have concerning the celebration of the Rite of Election. For any parish with catechumens ready for the Easter Sacraments in 2021, we invite pastors or a designee to attend the virtual conference call.

Each year, parish communities provide the Office of Christian Formation with the number of adult and children catechumens participating in the Rite of Election, as well as contact information for the parish's RCIA ministry; this information assists in our planning for the Vicariate, regional Rite of Election liturgies. Further, in our preliminary planning for the upcoming year's Rite of Election celebrations, the prior year's number of catechumens is extremely helpful. Therefore, while the Rite of Election is celebrated in each parish in 2021, your parish's number of catechumens is helpful for our future planning. Additionally, if a parish does not have any catechumens in 2021, this information is also helpful. Please visit the website—<https://CDROCF.regfox.com/rite-of-election-2021>—to provide this information.

In 2021, please note, per *RCIA*, §129-136, the Rite of Sending of the Catechumens for Election should not occur in parishes. Rather, each catechumen signs the parish's *Book of the Elect* during the parish celebration of the Rite of Election and Enrollment of Names. While the Bishop signs the *Book of the Elect* each year, this action is not part of the Rite of Election. Unfortunately, in 2021, this customary act by the Bishop will not occur.

We regret that we will be unable to gather with you and your parish's catechumens in 2021 at our Vicariate, regional Rite of Election celebrations as we have done in the past. However, we very much look forward to being with you and your parish's catechumens in 2022. Please know of our prayers for all those in the various stages of the RCIA process, as well as with their sponsors, catechists, and all who support them. We pray for a joy filled celebration at each of your parishes as you continue to accompany the catechumens to the Easter Sacraments.

Peace, and God bless,

Rev. Sean M. Prince  
Priest Secretary to the Bishop  
Director, Office of Worship

Ms. Sheri Kemp  
Associate Director, Christian Formation  
Coordinator for RCIA Ministry

January 6, 2021