



Diocese of Richmond

Office of Christian Formation

Office of Worship

Thank you for your interest in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for the Rite of Election.

Please note, this document contains the FAQ for the **2019 Rite of Election** liturgies in the Diocese.

An updated FAQ for the 2020 Rite of Election liturgies will be released by January, 2020.

In the meantime, should you have any questions pertaining to the Rite of Election or the RCIA, please feel free to contact the Office of Christian Formation or the Office of Worship. We are happy to assist you in any way.

Peace, and God bless,

Mrs. Emily Filippi
Director, Office of Christian Formation

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

May 3, 2019

Rite of Election with Bishop Barry C. Knestout

Frequently Asked Questions

Below is a summary of FAQs for parishes preparing for the Rite of Election with Bishop Knestout.

Please review this document with those involved in the RCIA Formation Ministry at your parish.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Is my pastor required to attend?

No, but pastors are encouraged to attend, if possible.

2. Will my pastor (or parochial vicar or chaplain) vest and participate in the Rite of Election liturgy?

No. Only the host parish pastor vests and participates in the liturgy.

3. Will Deacons vest and participate in the Rite of Election liturgy?

No. Only the Deacon assigned by the host parish vests and participates in the liturgy. All other Deacons attending sit in the assembly in "General Seating." If a Deacon is a parish's RCIA Coordinator, he sits with the catechumens and their godparents.

4. Can a parish add or remove a catechumen's name on the day of the Rite of Election?

No. Additions (or removals) to the list of catechumen's names submitted prior to the Rite of Election liturgy are not accepted on the day of the Rite of Election liturgy.

5. Is there a rehearsal?

Yes. On February 28, 2019, the RCIA Coordinator is asked to participate in a video conference call. A description of the ritual, a seating chart, and a map of the host parish will be provided to all RCIA Coordinators on this conference call. This video conference call serves as the rehearsal. On the day of the Rite of Election liturgy, the Bishop's Priest Secretary is available to answer last minute questions, however, the rehearsal occurs on the video conference call.

6. What time should the parish RCIA Coordinator arrive?

All RCIA coordinators should arrive 45 minutes prior to the liturgy and check-in with the Diocesan Representative from the Office of Christian Formation.

7. Where do my parish's catechumens and godparents sit?

Each parish's catechumens and godparents are seated in a reserved pew. The parish's RCIA Coordinator receives the pew assignment on the video conference call. Please refer to question five (5) above.

8. What if a godparent is unable to attend?

If a catechumen's godparent is unable to attend, please ensure someone stands in as a proxy during the Rite of Election liturgy. The catechumen is asked to select the proxy prior to the day of the Rite of Election liturgy.

9. Where do the parents of child catechumens sit?

Parents sit in the "General Seating" section for family and friends.

10. Where does the parish's RCIA Coordinator sit?

The RCIA Coordinator sits with their parish's catechumens and godparents, but on the end of the pew so as to allow the RCIA Coordinator to come forward with the *Book of the Elect* at the appropriate time during the liturgy.

11. Where do the family and friends of catechumens sit?

Family and friends sit in the "General Seating" section of the church.

12. Do I bring our parish's *Book of the Elect*?

Yes. The RCIA Coordinator should ensure each catechumen's name and their signature is inscribed in the *Book of the Elect* prior to arriving at the host parish for the Rite of Election liturgy.

13. What if my parish is a cluster parish with a *Book of the Elect* for each parish?

Please bring the *Book of the Elect* for each parish that has catechumens to be elected.

14. Are the catechumens and their godparents a part of the procession and/or recession?

No. The catechumens and their godparents are seated before the beginning of the liturgy.

15. Is the RCIA Coordinator part of the procession and/or recession?

Yes, the RCIA Coordinator processes in with the *Book of the Elect*. However, the RCIA Coordinator does not participate in the recession at the end of the liturgy. If the RCIA Coordinator is part of a cluster of parishes, the RCIA Coordinator processes in with only one *Book of the Elect*, not multiple books.

16. During the Presentation of the Catechumens, do the catechumens come forward?

No. The catechumens stand in place in their pew as their name is called.

17. When does the RCIA Coordinator present and bring forward the *Book of the Elect*?

At the conclusion of the Invitation and Enrollment of Names, the Bishop says to the catechumens, "Then offer your names for enrollment." The Bishop and all present are then seated. The Diocesan Representative from the Office of Christian Formation comes forward and says, "At this time, we shall present the catechumens for enrollment to the Bishop. When your parish name is read, I invite the RCIA Coordinator to come forward with your parish's *Book of the Elect*. Catechumens, please stand when your name is called and remain standing." The Diocesan Representative reads the first parish name. The parish's RCIA Coordinator stands, moves to the front of the altar with the *Book of the Elect* open. Upon reaching the altar, the RCIA Coordinator turns to face the assembly. Once in place, the Diocesan Representative reads the supplied list of the parish's catechumens. The catechumens stand and remain standing until directed to be seated. When the next parish is called, the RCIA Coordinator moves from the front of the altar to their assigned place reviewed on the video conference call.

18. When do I return to my seat?

After all of the parishes are called and each catechumen is presented to the Bishop, the Bishop stands and invites the godparents to stand with their catechumen. The RCIA Coordinators remain in their assigned place, holding open their parish's *Book of the Elect*. Upon standing, the Bishop declares the catechumens as members of the elect. When asked by the Bishop how they (the elect) respond, they reply, "Thanks be to God." The Bishop begins to lead the assembly in an applause. After the applause concludes, the Bishop offers words of encouragement. When these words conclude, a hymn/acclamation is sung. As the hymn/acclamation is sung, the RCIA Coordinators close the *Book of the Elect* and then return to their pews. The catechumens and godparents remain standing during the hymn/acclamation. The RCIA Coordinator, upon reaching the pew, also remains standing.

19. If I serve as the RCIA Coordinator for a cluster of parishes and have several *Book of the Elect*, do I bring forward each book?

No. Only one *Book of the Elect* is brought forward. The names of all catechumens from each parish in the cluster are read together.

20. What is the role of the godparent at the Rite of Election?

The godparent sits with the catechumen—on the left of the catechumen—in the parish's reserved seating section. After the catechumens are presented, the Bishop invites the godparents to stand and place their right hand on the shoulder of the catechumen. He presents three questions to the godparents, who respond "They have" to each of the questions, as noted in the worship aid. All are invited to be seated after the Bishop's invitation to the catechumens to offer their name for enrollment. After all the names are presented, immediately before the catechumens are declared elect, the Bishop invites the godparent to stand with his/her catechumen.

21. Can we take photographs during the Rite of Election liturgy?

Yes. However, during the liturgy, no one should leave their pew or seat and move around the church to take photographs. The Office of Worship photographer is present at all Rite of Election liturgies to handle photography of the liturgy. In addition, flash photography is prohibited during the liturgy.

22. Is there an opportunity for a photograph of the elect with the Bishop?

A parish, group photograph with the Bishop and the parish's elect may occur following the conclusion of the liturgy. The Diocesan Representative from the Office of Christian Formation facilitates and organizes the group photographs. Due to time constraints, the "official" photograph of a parish's elect with the Bishop is taken by the Office of Worship's photographer. When the parish's photograph is taken, the next parish is immediately called forward for their photograph with the Bishop. Again, due to time constraints, group photos need to occur expeditiously.

23. Can the elect take individual photographs with the Bishop?

Unfortunately, no. Due to time constraints, only group photos with the Bishop will occur. Please reference question twenty-two (22) for further details.

24. Will the Bishop sign the parish's *Book of the Elect*?

Yes. When a parish comes forward for the group photograph, the RCIA Coordinator is asked to bring and present the parish's *Book of the Elect* to the Bishop for his signature. If the RCIA Coordinator is part of a cluster of parishes, the RCIA Coordinator should present each parish's *Book of the Elect* to the Bishop for his signature.

25. I am the RCIA coordinator for a cluster of parishes. Is there anything different for me?

Please reference questions fifteen (15), nineteen (19), and twenty-four (24).

26. What do I need to do after I register the catechumens from my parish?

After completing the registration, a confirmation email is sent. Please review all of the information in the email, especially the pronunciations of the catechumens' names. In addition, please forward this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to those on the RCIA Formation Team who may need to reference the information in this document.

27. Do the Candidates for Full Communion attend the Rite of Election?

No. The Rite of Election is for unbaptized catechumens.

28. Where do I park?

The Rite of Elections in the Eastern and Western Vicariate have available parking on site. In the Central Vicariate, parking is available in parking decks around the Cathedral, as well as some street parking. Please consult the included map. In addition, if parking on the street, please be aware of any street parking restriction signs or meters.

29. How should the catechumens present themselves for the celebration?

Dress should be appropriate and dignified, in keeping with the dignity of a liturgical celebration.

30. Will the Bishop greet each elect individually when gathered for the group photograph?

Yes. However, per question twenty-three (23), the Bishop is unable to take individual photographs with the elect due to time constraints.

31. Will there be a reception following the Rite of Election?

No. There is no reception following the Rite of Election.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

For additional questions or support regarding:

- Registration: Nina Henry, (804) 622-5158
- RCIA Formation: Sheri Kemp, (804) 622-5113
- Liturgical questions: Father Sean Prince, Priest Secretary to the Bishop and Director, Office of Worship, (804) 622-5235