

ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD



INITIATION OF ADULTS IN LIGHT OF THE PANDEMIC

PART I: THE ELECT

(Concerning adults in the RCIA process who seek Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation)

SCRUTINIES

Archbishop Blair has dispensed the elect in the Archdiocese of Hartford from the three scrutinies in light of the current pandemic.¹ The Office of Education, Evangelization and Catechesis will be assisting RCIA Coordinators in parishes with catechesis that may assist the elect, their sponsors and the RCIA team during this time of social distancing. It is important to be able to have some proximate preparation for Initiation in person such as a retreat, etc. before Initiation occurs.

REVISED DATE FOR INITIATION (AND ALTERNATIVE DATE IF NECESSARY)

The elect (that is, adults who will be baptized as well as received First Communion and confirmation) in the Archdiocese of Hartford² will be initiated on Saturday, May 30, 2020 at the Vigil for the Solemnity of Pentecost.

As you may know, the feast of Pentecost and its vigil the day before was historically connected to the Easter Vigil in many ways. Similar to the Easter Vigil, the service was celebrated in a “night watch” liturgy that included a number of prophetic readings and a solemn blessing of the baptismal font. Those catechumens who had not been baptized at the Easter Vigil received their sacraments during the service. The Third Edition of the Roman Missal now includes both the extended form and a simple form for the Vigil of Pentecost. This will give the elect the closest possible experience to the Easter Vigil.

¹ This is the privilege of the local ordinary, per RCIA #34.

² This is the privilege of the local ordinary, per RCIA #34.

If the conditions in the United States, and specifically Connecticut, warrant a further postponement of Initiation, the alternative date for parishes in the Archdiocese of Hartford will be on Sunday, June 14th- the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi). The Archdiocese will notify parishes by May 18th if the alternate date should be used for Initiation.

Archbishop Blair will issue a general decree giving all pastors permission to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation on the Vigil of Pentecost or on Corpus Christi if the archdiocese chooses to move to that date due to ongoing conditions.

Part II: Candidates for Full Initiation

(Concerning adults in the RCIA process who are already baptized and seek First Communion and Confirmation)

INDIVIDUAL PARISHES HAVE TWO OPTIONS FOR THESE CANDIDATES

Candidates should be received into the fullness of Christian initiation on the same occasion as the Elect are fully initiated (that is, the Vigil of Pentecost per above), **OR** on future Sundays over the summer as per each candidate's readiness.³

Pastors will need to request the faculty to confirm candidates if a parish chooses to fully initiate candidates on a future Sunday rather than on the Vigil of Pentecost (or Corpus Christi).

PART III: ADULT CONFIRMANDI

(Concerning adults who are baptized and have received First Communion, and ONLY need Confirmation)

MAY 5TH CEREMONY POSTPONED

The Archdiocesan Adult Confirmation ceremony,⁴ originally scheduled for May 5th at the Cathedral of St. Joseph, will be rescheduled to a date later in the summer so as to extend the time of proper catechesis and preparation for the sacrament. We hope to announce the new date by May 18th.

³ It is the wisdom of the RCIA that those adults who are already baptized and are candidates in the RCIA (that is, seeking First Communion and Confirmation) are not limited to reception of the sacraments at the Easter Vigil. (Archdiocesan RCIA Guidelines, chapter 1, section 5). Thus, it is acceptable to welcome candidates at a time outside of the Easter Vigil, which may be pastorally appropriate in light of the change in circumstances this Lent.

⁴ It is the privilege of the Archbishop to confirm adult confirmandi, who may not be confirmed at the Easter Vigil or in the parish by virtue of their baptism.