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**To:**

Pastors and Initiation Ministers

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**From:**

Bishop Robert Casey, vicar general, and Todd Williamson, director of the Office for Divine Worship

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**Re:**

Rite of Election 2021

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**Date:**January 14, 2021

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This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for safety in celebrating our public liturgies because of it, **the Archdiocese of Chicago will celebrate only the Rite of Election with the catechumens (the unbaptized).**

We realize how different this will be, but because of the need to keep everyone safe, and the required distance of six feet that people must keep from one another, the Cathedral simply cannot accommodate the numbers of people that come to the combined Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion.

The Call to Continuing Conversion, celebrated with baptized candidates, is an optional Rite and can be celebrated at the parish (see RCIA nos. 446-458).

The celebrations of the Rite of Election have been scheduled for February 21 and February 28, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. on both days.

Please note the following requirements that need to be observed due to the capacity restrictions of the Cathedral:

- Only catechumens (the unbaptized) are to be registered;
- The godparents should accompany the catechumens;
- The pastor or the catechumenate director should also attend in order to present the catechumen(s).

Unfortunately, you should plan on bringing no one else to the Cathedral for the Rite of Election. Please know that these changes this year are out of an abundance of caution and aimed at the health and safety of all of us. The Cathedral will be livestreaming the Rites of Election and we encourage family, friends and parishioners to participate virtually with the catechumens.

With this letter are all the forms and information necessary for you to register your catechumens for the celebration of the Rite.

The registration forms are due **on or before Monday, February 15, 2021.**

Parking for these Rites is available on a limited basis in the Loyola University parking lot, 20 West Chicago Avenue, on the north side of Chicago Avenue, between State and Dearborn Streets. Paid, public parking is available at One West Superior Street, at State and Superior Streets.



# 2021 RITE OF ELECTION

There are **four** scheduled celebrations of the Rite of Election at **Holy Name Cathedral** (North State Street at Superior Street, Chicago) in 2021:

- **Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.**
- **Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 7 p.m.**
- **Sunday, February 28, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.**
- **Sunday, February 28, 2021 at 7 p.m.**

The liturgies planned for Holy Name Cathedral are the Rite of Election of Catechumens (the unbaptized) only. **Registration is due on or before Monday, February 15, 2021. Registration materials are enclosed.**

In the **Rite of Election**, catechumens (i.e., those who are not baptized) are formally called or chosen for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. This calling or election is founded on the election by God, in whose name the Church acts (RCIA #119).

In the **Call to Continuing Conversion** the Church welcomes those who are already baptized and are preparing to complete their initiation **through both Confirmation and Eucharist** and are preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. The Church acknowledges their desire to be one with the Church in faith, prayer and service. Respecting the integrity of their baptism, the Church charges these candidates to use the Lenten season as a time to hear again the call to conversion and to be faithful to their baptismal vows. **The Call to Continuing Conversion is an optional rite which, if celebrated, is to be done at the parish this year.**

Parish ministers have the responsibility of making sure that those who are presented for the Rite of Election are sufficiently prepared. The catechumens are expected to have undergone a conversion in mind and heart and to have a sufficient acquaintance with Christian teaching as well as a spirit of faith and charity (RCIA #120). Those involved in their preparation testify to their worthiness to receive the sacraments of initiation at this year's Easter Vigil.

## Godparents

Godparents are invited to join the catechumens for the celebrations held at the Cathedral. Accompanying their catechumens on the day of election the godparents exercise their ministry publicly for the first time. They give testimony on behalf of the catechumens before the community (RCIA #123). Godparents should be chosen on the basis of their Christian character and ability to give good example. It is the responsibility of godparents to show catechumens how "to practice the Gospel in personal and social life, to sustain the candidates in moments of hesitancy and anxiety, to bear witness, and to guide the candidates' progress in the baptismal life" (RCIA #11).

## **Children**

Children of catechumens, who are of catechetical age and are themselves catechumens, may accompany their parents to the Cathedral celebration. However, because the rites at the Cathedral are the adult rites, children who are catechumens but whose parents are not should not attend. Instead they should celebrate a Rite of Election specifically adapted for children, which can be celebrated at the parish (RCIA # 277 – 290).

## **Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election by the Bishop**

Although the Rite of Election takes place at Holy Name Cathedral with the Bishop presiding, an individual parish may wish to celebrate the sending of catechumens to the Archdiocesan celebration by using the **Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election by the Bishop** (see RCIA #106-117). This optional rite offers the parish community the opportunity to express its approval of catechumens and send them forth to the celebration at the Cathedral assured of the parish's care and support.

## **Book of the Elect**

All parishes are expected to bring their own Book of the Elect with them to the Cathedral.

**Note:** It is most appropriate that **only the Catechumens sign the Book of the Elect**. Candidates, by virtue of their Christian Baptism, already have their names "inscribed in the Book of Life," and are not considered as "Elect." Catechumens should sign this book at the parish's Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election by the Bishop. The Book of the Elect is then brought to the Archdiocesan celebration at the Cathedral.

After the names are read at the Cathedral the book will receive a special seal and then be returned immediately to the parish minister. It is expected that the same book will be used year after year.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR REGISTRATION

1. Complete and return the enclosed forms on or before Monday, February 15. On the forms, you will indicate your preference for service date and time. **Your choice will be confirmed on a first come, first served basis.** We regret that we will not be able to offer everyone their first choice. Therefore, it is important to indicate a **second** and **third** choice as well. **If only one choice is marked, it will lengthen the time it will take to process your form, and it does not guarantee you your first choice.** Due to the large number of parishes requesting the afternoon services, please assess carefully the number of seats needed for catechumens, godparents, pastor OR Catechumenate Director. **Confirmation will be made by email.**
2. Once completed, please email the forms to [riteofelection@archchicago.org](mailto:riteofelection@archchicago.org).  
**PLEASE DO NOT MAKE YOUR FINAL PLANS UNTIL YOU RECEIVE CONFIRMATION OF YOUR DATE AND TIME.**  
**SEATING WILL BE ASSIGNED BASED ON THE DATE YOUR FORM IS RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND ACCORDING TO THE CATHEDRAL'S COVID SEATING PLAN.**  
**Parishes may not reserve pews at the Cathedral.**
3. If your parish is part of a combined catechumenate (two or more parishes working together), indicate this in the box on the registration form.
4. Note that the Cathedral has a 12:30 p.m. Mass on Sunday and so there may be some traffic congestion for those who arrive early for the 2:30 p.m. service.
5. Please plan on being at the Cathedral at least 25 minutes prior to your service, so that you can check in and get your seat assignments.  
**FAXED forms CANNOT be accepted.**

# Registration for the Rite of Election 2021

## Holy Name Cathedral

Parish:		Pastor:	
Address:			
City:		ZIP:	Parish Phone:
Catechumenate Director/Parish Contact Person:			
Phone (day):		(evening):	
Email Address:			

Indicate your **first**, **second**, and **third** choices, and do not make final arrangements with your group until you have received confirmation of your date. **NOTE: If only one choice is marked, it will lengthen the processing time of your form and does not guarantee you your first choice.** Services are assigned on a first come, first served basis.

We would like to attend the Cathedral celebration on:

Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.

**Cardinal Blase Cupich**

Sunday, February 21, 2021 at 7 p.m.

**Bishop Robert Casey**

Sunday, February 28, 2021 at 2:30 p.m.

**Bishop Jeffrey Grob**

Sunday, February 28, 2021 at 7 p.m.

**Bishop Mark Bartosic**

**Parishes Participating in a Combined Catechumenate:**

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Check here if these parishes will be attending together.

**Total Number Attending:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Includes catechumens, godparents, pastor or catechumenate director

**Return this registration along with the names of catechumens and candidates on or before Monday, February 15, 2021.**

**riteofelection@archchicago.org**  
 Office for Divine Worship  
 3525 South Lake Park Avenue  
 Chicago, Illinois 60653

## Rite of Election 2021

Complete and email this form with your registration form to [riteofelection@archchicago.org](mailto:riteofelection@archchicago.org) as soon as possible. All forms must be received by **Monday, February 15, 2021**.

**Type or print clearly the first and last name for each individual.**

### CATECHUMENS

(those who are **not baptized** and who will be fully initiated at the Easter Vigil)

Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:
Name:	Name:

**Total Catechumens:**

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### Names of All Others Attending (we need all names for check-in at the Cathedral)

Name:	Role:
Name:	Role:
Name:	Role:
Name:	Role:
Name:	Role:
Name:	Role:

Duplicate this form as necessary.

**Return this form along with your registration on or before Monday, February 15, 2021.**

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