

RCIA: CELEBRATING INITIATION

ARCHDIOCESE OF PERTH

26 AUGUST 2014

OVERVIEW

- Baptized Candidates
- Initiation Sacraments



CATECHUMENS

- Unbaptized persons preparing for full initiation
- Easter Vigil as normal occasion
- 4 periods and 3 liturgies

- Precatechumenate
- Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens
- Catechumenate
- Election
- Purification and Enlightenment
- Initiation
- Mystagogy

VALID CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

- Trinitarian formula and meaning
 - Not baptism “in the name of Jesus”
 - Not “Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier”
- Baptism with water by immersion or pouring

UNCATECHIZED CATHOLIC

- Those baptized as infants who have received little or no catechesis, nor the sacraments of confirmation or first communion [Part II, Section 4]
- Give catechesis appropriate to the circumstance
- A priest needs permission from the bishop to confirm Catholics, even if they were prepared with an RCIA group

RECONCILIATION

- RCIA 408 The period of catechesis for these [Catholic] adults should be properly coordinated with the liturgical year. This is particularly true of its final phase, which should as a rule coincide with Lent. During the Lenten season penitential services should be arranged in such a way as to prepare these adults for the celebration of the sacrament of penance.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES: ONE IN CHRIST

- The rights of people with disabilities to full participation in the local Church community includes ready access to the Sacraments.... it needs to be stated clearly that they are not to be denied the Sacraments, and that readiness to celebrate the Sacraments is to be measured by their capacity to understand, even if in some cases that awareness is minimal.

PENANCE

- Strictly speaking only those in serious sin are obliged to seek absolution in the Rite of Reconciliation. However all are encouraged to be reconciled in the Sacrament of Penance for less serious sins. Persons with disabilities, therefore, have the same rights as others in this matter.



- Instruction of the penitents is to be in keeping with their capacity. Confessors should make sure that the setting is appropriate for wheelchairs, and that visual and auditory aids are also provided.... If the person has difficulty communicating, the priest might use... questions that invite a "yes" or "no" answer. It is possible for the deaf to use sign language or to write out their sins, or even to use a language interpreter of their choice who is thereby obliged by the seal of the confessional.

- **THE EASTER VIGIL IS DESIGNED FOR THE BAPTISM OF THE ELECT, NOT THE RECEPTION OF BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS**
- **THE RECEPTION OF BAPTIZED CANDIDATES MAY TAKE PLACE AT ANY TIME OF YEAR**
- **ALL PRELIMINARY RITES FOR BAPTIZED CANDIDATES ARE OPTIONAL**

THE RECEPTION OF VALIDLY BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS II/5

- Some began their formation catechized, others not
- Conceived without preliminary rites
- Written for an individual candidate
- Occasion probably a Sunday mass



OCCASION FOR THE RITE OF RECEPTION

- Any time of year, when candidates are ready
- May be celebrated at Easter Vigil, combined rite may be used at Easter Vigil, however “any appearance of triumphalism should be carefully avoided” (RCIA 389/2)

RECEPTION OF CANDIDATES

- 473 The rite is so arranged that no greater burden than necessary (see Acts 15:28) is required for the establishment of communion and unity.



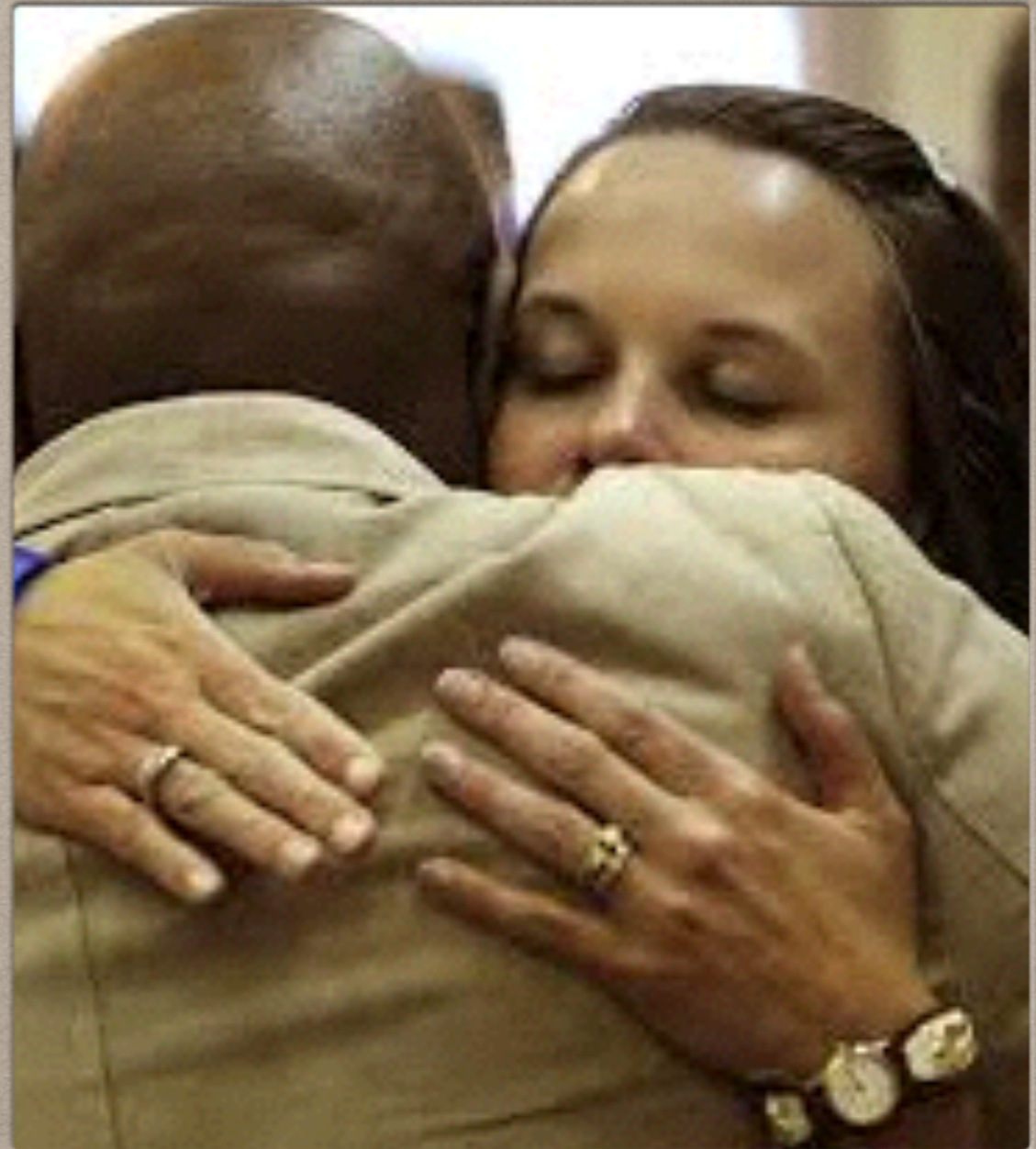
DEVELOPMENT OF NEW RITE

- Order of Reconciling Apostates, Schismatics or Heretics (Durandus, 13th c.)
- In force at time of the Reformation
- The practice of conditional baptism
- Vatican II: Rite of Reception



DECREE ON ECUMENISM

3 The children who are born into these Communities and who grow up believing in Christ cannot be accused of the sin involved in the separation, and the Catholic Church embraces ... them as brothers [and sisters], with respect and affection.



DECREE ON ECUMENISM

7 There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. For it is from renewal of the inner life of our minds, from self-denial and an unstinted love that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way. We should therefore pray to the Holy Spirit for the grace to be genuinely self-denying, humble, gentle in the service of others, and to have an attitude of brotherly generosity towards them....So we humbly beg pardon of God and of our separated brethren, just as we forgive them that trespass against us.

DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1988

- Catechesis has been combined
- Combined rites have become common
- The school year model has governed formation and celebration
- The rite of election and Easter Vigil have shifted their focus

VISION FOR CATECHESIS

- Inviting baptized Christians to formation
- Ask about Christian background
- Discern readiness
 - The Creed
 - "all that the Catholic Church believes, teaches and proclaims"

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

- RCIA 482 If the profession of faith and reception take place within Mass, the [validly baptized] candidate, according to his or her own conscience, should make a confession of sins beforehand, first informing the confessor that he or she is about to be received into full communion. Any confessor who is lawfully approved may hear the candidate's confession.

THE RITE OF RECEPTION OF VALIDLY BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS

487 May take place on a Sunday, on other days the Mass for the Unity of Christians

490 Invitation, coming "of your own free will"

491 Profession of Faith

492 Act of Reception

493-494 Confirmation



THE RITE OF RECEPTION OF VALIDLY BAPTIZED CHRISTIANS

495 Celebrant's sign of
welcome

496 General Intercessions

497 Sign of peace

498 Liturgy of the Eucharist



HOW THE EASTER VIGIL BENEFITS

- Clarifies the links between baptism and resurrection
- Clarifies link between baptism and confirmation
- Practical issue of numbers



HOW THE CANDIDATES BENEFIT

- Each may be received when ready
- Honors baptism without triumphalism
- Accommodates the annulment timetable



HOW THE PARISH BENEFITS

- People witness the reception of new members at different times throughout the year
- They may give personal attention to the candidates



RECEIVING FROM ORTHODOXY

- Normally the parallel Eastern Catholic rite performs this ritual
- May be done by Roman Catholic minister, but it does not receive into *Roman Catholic Church*
- Performed without ceremony
- Reception into Roman Rite possible, complicated, not advised

THE RECEPTION OF CHILDREN

- If the child is below the age of reason, a juridic act replaces the liturgical rites, and confirmation and communion follow later
- E.g., parents or guardians make a declaration in the presence of the pastor or his delegate, and reception is noted in parish register

SPONSORS

- RCIA 483 At the reception, the candidate should be accompanied by a sponsor and may even have two sponsors. If someone has had the principal part in guiding or preparing the candidate, he or she should be the sponsor.

BAPTISMAL SPONSORS

Can. 874 §1. To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must:

1/ be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;

2/ have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;

3/ be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;

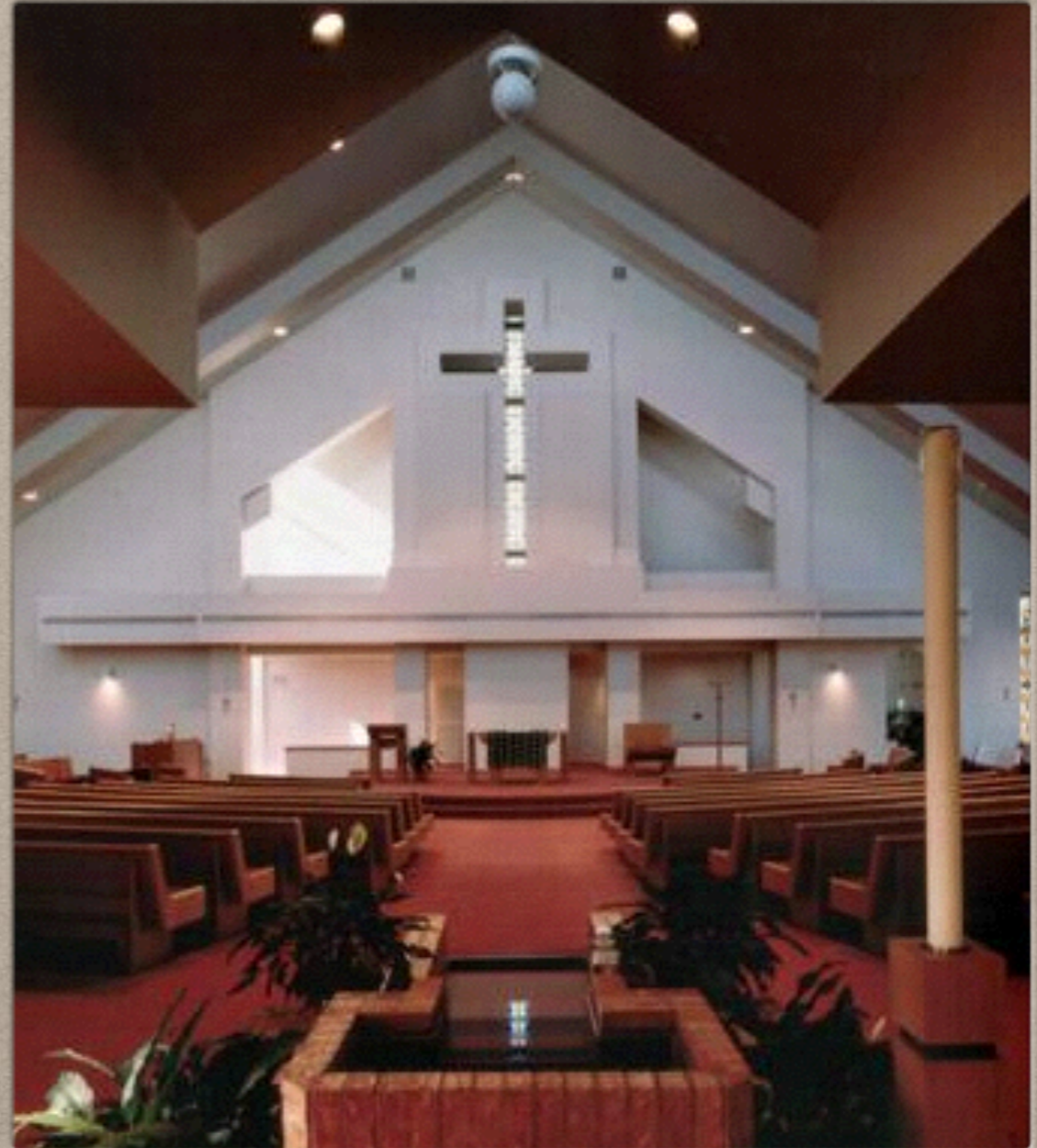
4/ not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;

5/ not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.



ONE IN CHRIST: BAPTISM

- If adults with disabilities present themselves for Baptism, appropriate adaptations to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults should be made, if required.



CHILDREN

- “What is prescribed in the canons on the baptism of an adult is applicable to all who are no longer infants but have attained the use of reason.” CCL 852/1

ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- The priest confirms a person he baptizes “who is no longer an infant or one already baptized whom he admits into the full communion of the Catholic Church” CCL 883/2
- “A presbyter who has this faculty must use it for those in whose favor the faculty was granted” CCL 885/2

Initiation, Maturity, Transfer



Constant Meanings

- Gift of the Holy Spirit
- For the purpose of bearing witness



RCIA 208

In accord with the ancient practice followed in the Roman liturgy, adults are not to be baptized without receiving confirmation immediately afterward, unless some serious reason stands in the way. The conjunction of the two celebrations signifies the unity of the paschal mystery, the close link between the mission of the Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the connection between the two sacraments through which the Son and the Holy Spirit come with the Father to those who are baptized.

Catechism 1285

Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the “sacraments of Christian initiation,” whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace.

Catechism 1285 (cont.)

For “by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed” [LG 11].

Catechism 1308

- Although Confirmation is sometimes called the “sacrament of Christian maturity,” we must not confuse adult faith with the adult age of natural growth, nor forget that the baptismal grace is a grace of free, unmerited election and does not need “ratification” to become effective.

Code of Canon Law 879

- The sacrament of confirmation strengthens the baptized and obliges them more firmly to be witnesses of Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith. It imprints a character, enriches by the gift of the Holy Spirit the baptized continuing on the path of Christian initiation, and binds them more perfectly to the Church.

Canon 889

Every baptized person not yet confirmed and only such a person is capable of receiving confirmation.

To receive confirmation licitly outside the danger of death requires that a person who has the use of reason be suitably instructed, properly disposed, and able to renew the baptismal promises.

CONFIRMATION - ONE IN CHRIST

- Children with disabilities should be, as far as possible, prepared for the reception of Confirmation at the same age as others, and feel part of the group being confirmed.
- Children and adults preparing for Confirmation are to be instructed to the level of their capacity. Where that capacity is very limited the person should nevertheless be Confirmed.

Canon 890

- The faithful are obliged to receive this sacrament at the proper time. Parents and pastors of souls, especially pastors of parishes, are to take care that the faithful are properly instructed to receive the sacrament and come to it at the appropriate time.

Canon 891

- The sacrament of confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful at about the age of discretion unless the conference of bishops has determined another age, or there is danger of death, or in the judgment of the minister a grave cause suggests otherwise.

Meanings

Initiation and the paschal mystery

Completion of baptismal grace

Becoming more perfectly bound to Christ and the Church

Being enriched by grace of the Holy Spirit

Becoming witnesses who spread and defend the faith by word and deed

What is not here

Becoming a Catholic

Personally accepting my faith

Ratifying a commitment to the Church

EUCCHARIST - ONE IN CHRIST

- In the case of children with severe intellectual disability, teachers will endeavour to impart whatever understanding is possible for the child.... "Often these people cannot use words which express their understanding, but they can show that they recognise the difference by their manner, the expression in their eyes, their gestures or the quality of their silence." However, even if awareness seems to be absent, Holy Communion may not be refused because of the right to the Eucharist given at Baptism.
- In some cases it may be more appropriate for a family member or carer to give Holy Communion to a person with disabilities.