
THE ROLE OF THE BISHOP IN THE PROCESS OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION



IN GENERAL -- THE ROLE OF A BISHOP

- From the Homily of Ordination of a Bishop: “Through the Bishop's exercise of his duty as father, Christ himself adds new members to his body... Never relax your concern for those not yet gathered into the one fold of Christ; they too are entrusted to you in the Lord.”
- The Bishop is the chief liturgist of his diocese – the OCIA is a liturgical text
- Code of Canon Law (select citations)
 - Canon 375 – the role of the Bishop in teaching/ governing/sanctifying
 - Canon 383 – concern for all in his care
 - Canon 387 – Bishop as sanctifier
 - Canon 392 – Fostering common disciplines regarding sacraments
 - Canon 394 – to foster the work of the apostolate and to encourage the faithful to take part
 - Canon 775 – to issue norms on catechesis
- *Ceremonial of Bishops*
 - 404-405 Introduction – The Bishop and the Sacraments
 - 406-407 The Bishop and the Christian Initiation of Adults
 - 408-428 Bishop’s role in specific rites of initiation
- *Christus Dominus* #14 – Decree of the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (#14)
 - Specifically addresses the responsibilities of the Bishop in regard to instruction in the catechumenate
- *Presbyterorum ordines* – Decree on Ministry and Life of Priests (#5)
 - The role of the priest in representing the Bishop, particularly in sacraments

THE INTRODUCTION TO THE *ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS*

The Role of the Conference of Bishops (OCIA 32, nos. 1-8)

translation and arrangement of the *editio typica*

adaptations for the entire conference, e.g., “In Dioceses of the United States.....”

a preliminary manner of receiving inquirers –optional (OCIA 39)

The role of the Bishop in his own diocese [Local Ordinary]

What policies may he establish? (OCIA 34, nos. 1-7)

Adaptations by a Minister

Very limited permission – he may adapt text to circumstances, number, gender (OCIA 35)

THE ROLE OF THE BISHOP AS RECORDED IN THE STEPS AND PERIODS OF THE OCIA

and related texts

RITE OF ENTRANCE INTO THE CATECHUMENATE

- OCIA 38-59 discretion of the Bishop – new name, add rites in celebration of the word of God
OCIA 69 additional rites for entrance – first exorcism, renunciation of false worship; giving of new name; rite for acceptance into the community
OCIA 72 renouncing false worship
OCIA 73 rite for new name (see also National Statutes 5)
Signing with a cross (then not on Holy Saturday, cf. OCIA 200)

PERIOD OF THE CATECHUMENATE

- OCIA 77 The Bishop fixes the duration and direct progress of the catechumenate
OCIA 331-355 Bishop may shorten the catechumenate in special circumstances
OCIA 332, 336 Abbreviated form requires permission of Bishop (see also OCIA 369 and NS 6)
OCIA 96 qualified catechist as appointed by the Bishop (cf. 16)
OCIA 101 anointing of catechumens “with oil blessed by the Bishop at the Chrism Mass” (cf. Rite of Blessing of Oils and Consecration of Chrism, Intro #7) or oil blessed by the priest before the rite

RITE OF ELECTION

Ceremonial of Bishops – see nos. 408 to 419

- OCIA 118-121 general information
OCIA 122 Bishop
OCIA 125 Bishop or his delegate
OCIA 126 Choice of day related to the celebration of the sacraments at the Easter Vigil (or other)
OCIA 127 Where the Rite of Election is to be held
OCIA 129 Importance of the homily; to whom it is addressed
OCIA 131 How to call by name, present to Bishop; testimony of the community
OCIA 132 How to give and enroll names...options
OCIA 133 Act of Admission or Election

PURIFICATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

- OCIA 143 Three scrutinies are celebrated; need permission of bishop to do less than three
OCIA 147-149 Rites of Handing On Creed, Lord’s Prayer [Presentations] cf. *Ceremonial* 420-424
OCIA 185-205 Rites of Immediate Preparation

SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION / RECEPTION

- GIRM 387 Fonts, ordering and arrangement of Churches
BLS 34 Role of the Bishop—director, promoter, and guardian of the liturgy
BLS 66-69 The Baptistry, fonts
OCIA 206 ff Initiation in his cathedral church on Easter Vigil
CB 425-428 The Bishop and the Sacraments of Initiation
NS 14, 18, 19, 26, 35 All three sacraments of initiation at one liturgy
NS 12 Priests who do not exercise a pastoral office, need permission to celebrate the sacraments at Easter Vigil
NS 28-29 Priest need the Bishop’s permission to confirm a baptized Catholic

Confirmation

- NS 11 Bishop is the proper minister of Confirmation, including children of catechetical age (see Canon 852.1)
OC 7-8 Bishop is proper minister; a Priest may confirm by mandate of the Bishop or if a person is in danger of death.
NS 13 If the Bishop wants to confirm all neophytes, he must reserve the baptism to himself (see also Canon 863, 866; Rite of Confirmation #6; OCIA 481)
NS 35 If the Bishop wants to confirm the candidates, he must reserve the rite of reception to himself; Priest who baptizes/receives has faculty from the law itself to confirm “and is obliged to use it.” (see Canons 883.2, 885.2)

Reception into Full Communion

- OCIA 485 Local Ordinary may expand or shorten the rite of reception

Conditional Baptism

- OCIA 480.2 The Local Ordinary is to establish a rite of conditional baptism for his diocese (see also NS 37; Canon 869)

Special Circumstances

- OCIA 473- 504 Reception into Full Communion – other Christian Communities
 Bishop may adapt to the rite of reception to local circumstances, person, place (OCIA 485)
OCIA 474 Receiving those from Orthodox Churches; correspondence between Bishops received into a parallel rite, *sui iuris*

MYSTAGOGY

- OCIA 251 The Bishop gathers with the neophytes and the newly received around the Eucharist