

RCIA

Catechetical Office – Archdiocese of New York
“Discerning Readiness for Lent”

Discerning the readiness for the Rite of Election

“The catechumens have undergone an intense period of formation throughout the period of the catechumenate. Stirred by the Word of God and the life of the Catholic community, they have experienced the call to a new way of life again and again. At some point in the process, the catechumens, along with their sponsors and the RCIA Team, discern their readiness to live faithfully the commitment of the sacraments they will celebrate with the Catholic community. The discernment for election for catechumens takes place slowly during the weeks before the Lenten season. The rite suggests the criteria to judge and discern the readiness for the Easter sacraments (RCIA, n. 120).”
Page 145, **“The RCIA, Transforming the Church”, Thomas Morris, 1997**

Questions for reflection on a Catechumens’ readiness for the Rite of Election

Conversion in mind and action:

- Has the catechumen come to know God in this community?
- Has he or she been open to receive the Word of God?
- Has he or she responded to the Word both in prayer and in a life of service?
- Does he or she struggle with the demands of the Word of God?

Sufficient acquaintance with Catholic Christian teaching:

- Does he or she welcome the insights of the Catholic community in its teaching about how to follow the gospel?
- Has he or she been exposed to the best in Catholic thought on the fundamentals of the Christian life?

Spirit of faith and charity:

- Does he or she seek God in prayer, with confidence and trust?
- Is there growth in the individual’s capacity to give and receive love?
- Is there a personal relationship with God?

Acknowledged intention to receive the sacraments:

- Has the catechumen found this community to be a place of welcome and support?
- Does he or she desire to contribute to the growth and development of this particular community?
- Does he or she desire to receive the gift of freedom and salvation (and all its demands) from God in Christ through the Spirit?
- Does he or she recognize himself or herself as a child of God?

Page 145-146, **“The RCIA, Transforming the Church”, Thomas Morris, 1997**

“The discernment for election and recognition is not a discernment for canonization and final perfection. Nor is this the “final exam”, the test for religious knowledge. Rather, our posture needs to be of welcome, of waiting, of listening to the catechumen’s willingness to embrace fully, with all his or her limits and gifts, the way of life of the gospel with the Catholic communion.... The decision for election ultimately rests in the hands of the community, as represented by the pastor, to make their recommendation to the archbishop. If the catechumenate process has been honest and willing to respect individual conversion, then the catechumen will most probably be able to respect whatever decision is made. Recommendation to celebrate the sacraments and the commitment that entails **or** to continue in the catechumenate preparation demands a trust forged by respect and concern for the catechumens.”

Page 146, **“The RCIA, Transforming the Church”, Thomas Morris, 1997**