

COMMISSIONING OF CATECHISTS—2021

*“THEY RECOGNISED HIM
IN THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD”*

He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and **they knew Him.**

- Luke 24:30-31



✠ FINDING THE TRUE FAITH

The vocation to the ministry of Catechesis flows from the Sacrament of *Baptism* and is strengthened by *Confirmation*, both are Sacraments through which the layperson participates in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ. [...]

This *personal call of Jesus Christ* and the relationship with him are the true engines of the catechist's activity: 'from this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to 'evangelise', and to lead others to the 'yes' of faith in Jesus Christ'. The Church fosters and discerns this divine vocation and confers the mission of catechising." (Directory for Catechesis 122)

ORDER OF COMMISSIONING CATECHISTS WITHIN MASS

INTRODUCTION OF CATECHISTS: THE CELEBRANT ADDRESSES THE ASSEMBLY.

CELEBRANT: For the pastoral activity of the Church, the cooperation of a great many people is needed, so that communities as well as individuals may advance to full maturity in faith and continually show forth their faith through:

- The celebration of the liturgy
- Through ongoing deepening and understanding of the Faith
- Through their style of life.

This cooperation is provided by those who devote themselves to catechesis. Enlightened by God's Word and the teaching of the Church, catechists impart to others an initiation or a deeper formation in those realities that they themselves have learned as truths to be followed in living and to be celebrated in liturgy.

In this celebration we will bless the name of the Lord for giving us such co-workers and pray, that through the Holy Spirit, they will receive the grace they need in their service to the Church.

Blessing of Catechists:

Addressing catechists to the ministry, a deacon or catechetical coordinator says the following:

Would those who have been called to serve as catechists in [.....name of parish] please stand? (Or ask them to come forward, depending on the number and the size of the church).

CELEBRANT: Now I ask you, are you willing to exercise the ministry of catechesis here at [.....name of parish]?

CATECHISTS: With the help of God, I am ready and willing to serve as a catechist along with all the catechists of this parish.

CELEBRANT: May God help you to be good stewards to what has been entrusted to you, and may you and all the catechists who serve in this parish receive the grace you need for your service here at [name of parish].

General Intercessions: *The general intercessions follow the introduction to the blessing.*

These intercessions may be used in whole or in part. Always include your own intentions for local needs.

CELEBRANT: God created us to live and grow in love. By being stewards of God's gifts, we take an active part in bringing this vision of life into being. Confident in the power of prayer to transform us, we bring our needs to God who hears and answers us.

ASSISTING MINISTER or CATECHISTS: The response is “Lord, hear our prayer.”

For the Church: May she grow stronger in her resolve to welcome and embrace those who are living on the margins of society. We pray to the Lord: **R/**

For the leaders of nations: May their first concern be to preserve and foster peace through compassionate policies and just systems. We pray to the Lord: **R/**

For families: May they grow stronger in their love and commitment to one another. We pray to the Lord: **R/**

For catechists: May they be blessed with creativity and enthusiasm as stewards of God’s gifts. We pray to the Lord: **R/**

For those who suffer from physical and mental illness: May they be healed through God’s infinite mercy and be comforted by those who care for them. We pray to the Lord. **R/**

For families: May they grow stronger in their love and commitment to one another. We pray to the Lord: **R/**

For catechists: May they be blessed with creativity and enthusiasm as stewards of God’s gifts. We pray to the Lord: **R/**

For those who have lost their lives due to the Covid pandemic:

May God in his infinite mercy grant eternal rest to them and consolation to their families and loved ones: **R/**

BLESSING: *The blessing of catechists follows the general intercessions. As an alternative, the prayer of blessing may be used at the end of Mass after an invitation such as, “Bow your heads and pray for God’s blessing.”* With hands outstretched, the celebrant prays the blessing for the catechists.

CELEBRANT: With your fatherly blessing, Lord, strengthen these servants of yours in their resolve to dedicate themselves as catechists. Grant that they will strive to share with others what they themselves derive from reflecting on your Word and studying the Church’s teaching. And let them gladly join those they teach in honouring and serving your name. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R/ Amen.**

OR

CELEBRANT: Lord God, source of all wisdom and knowledge, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to live among us and to proclaim his message of faith, hope, and love to all nations. In your goodness bless our brothers and sisters who have offered themselves as catechists for your Church. Strengthen them with your gifts, that they may teach by word and by example the truth that comes from you. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R/ Amen.**

After the prayer of blessing, each catechist may be presented with a Certificate of Commissioning. If desirable, the congregation may signify its support by applause, an acclamation, or an appropriate hymn.

NOTE: *Some parishes offer a “Response Sunday” the week after Commissioning Sunday.*

On that day, following the homily, the celebrant reminds the community of the commissioning of the catechists. He asks the community to respond to the parish catechetical ministry by promising to give it the support and involvement it deserves. A statement of “I do” from the community may be the alternative response.

BLESSING OF PARENTS AND GUARDIANS: *(optional)* following the prayer after communion, this special blessing for parents and guardians may be offered as recognition of their critical role in forming their children in faith.

CELEBRANT: Parents and guardians are entrusted with a special role and responsibility in forming their children in faith. It is fitting that today we offer a blessing for them.

The celebrant invites parents and guardians to stand. Stretching out his hands over them and inviting the rest of the community to do the same, he prays the following:

CELEBRANT: God our Father, let your peace settle within the hearts of these mothers, fathers and guardians. Give them strength and wisdom as they care for their children. Show them how to raise their families with patience and tenderness. Give them strength during the times of greatest difficulty and help them recognize the little joys that are part of each day. May they grow in wisdom, understanding and grace. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who is one with you and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. **R/** Amen.



ORDER OF COMMISSIONING OF CATECHISTS OUTSIDE OF MASS

(in the presence of the catechists and as many parishioners as possible)

Introductory Rites: The celebration starts with an appropriate hymn and continues with the following greeting.

CELEBRANT: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **R/** Amen.

CELEBRANT: May God the Father of mercies, who wills that all be saved, be with you.

ALL: And with your Spirit.

CELEBRANT: The cooperation of a great many people is needed if individuals and communities are to grow to full maturity in faith through prayer and the celebration of the Sacraments, through study, and through their way of living. Those who devote themselves to the ministry of catechesis play a vital role in the Church's pastoral activity.

Enlightened by God's Word and the teaching of the Church, and inspired by their own lives of prayer and witness, catechists lead others to know the living Jesus Christ through word and deed.

Through the Ministry of Catechesis, catechists provide a process of initiation and formation for those in their care, introducing them to the truths of faith, which they themselves have learned, lived and celebrated.

In this celebration we will bless the name of the Lord for giving us such co-workers and will pray that through the Holy Spirit they will receive the grace they need in their service to the Church.

READINGS: *A reader, another person present, or the celebrant reads either the following text or another suitable for the occasion.*

FIRST READING: Romans 10:9-15

Response to the Psalm (96) Proclaim his marvellous deeds to all the nations.

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all you lands.

Sing to the Lord, bless his name. **R/**

Announce his salvation, day after day.

Tell his glory among the nations; among all peoples, his wondrous deeds. **R/**

Give to the Lord, you families of nations, give to the Lord glory and praise; give to the Lord the glory due to his name. **R/**

Say among the nations: The Lord is king.

He has made the world firm, not to be moved; he governs the people with fairness. **R/**

GOSPEL: Mark 16: 14-20 - *The eleven are commissioned to proclaim the Gospel.*

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS:

CELEBRANT: Since God wills the salvation of all, let us pray to him in these words. **R/** Lord, hear our prayer.

- CATECHISTS:**
1. God of all creation, we long for a world transformed by peace and bound together in love. Fill us with hope and remind us to turn to you with our needs and our prayers. Let us pray to the Lord. **R/** Lord, hear our prayer.
 2. Strengthen and multiply those called to catechetical ministry, and show us how to support and encourage their work. Let us pray to the Lord. **R/** Lord, hear our prayer.
 3. Give us a sense of urgency and passion as we proclaim the holy Gospel. Let us pray to the Lord. **R/** Lord, hear our prayer.
 4. Give us courage to speak the truth and to stand firm in our call for international peace and justice. Let us pray to the Lord. **R/** Lord, hear our prayer.
 5. Open us to listen to others with a spirit of compassion and empathy. Let us pray to the Lord. **R/** Lord, hear our prayer.
 6. Remind us of the ways we can serve those in our midst who are overlooked, ignored or rejected. Let us pray to the Lord. **R/** Lord, hear our prayer.
 7. May your Holy Spirit guide our hearts and our lips, so that we may remain constant in our love and praise for you. Let us pray to the Lord. **R/** Lord hear our prayer.

BLESSING: *With hands outstretched, the celebrant prays the blessing for the catechists.*

CELEBRANT: With your fatherly bless, Lord, strengthen these servants of yours in their resolve to dedicate themselves as catechists. Grant that they will strive to share with others what they themselves derive from reflecting your Word and studying the Church's teaching. And let them gladly join those they teach in honouring and service your name. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R/** Amen.

CONCLUDING RITE: *The ritual concludes with the Celebrant offering the final prayer.*

CELEBRANT: In Christ, God has revealed his love and his truth. May he make you witnesses to the Gospel and to the Divine Love. **R/** Amen.
The Lord Jesus promised to be with his Church until the end of the world. May he give power to your actions and your words. **R/** Amen.
May the Spirit of the Lord be with you, so that you may help the ministers of his Word. **R/** Amen.
And may almighty God bless us all, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. **R/** Amen.