

ORDER OF RECEPTION OF THOSE ALREADY VALIDLY BAPTIZED INTO THE FULL COMMUNION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

1. The rite by which a person born and baptized in a separated ecclesial Community is received¹ into the full communion of the Catholic Church according to the Latin Rite, is so arranged that no further burden is imposed than what is necessary to restore communion and unity² (cf. Acts 15:28).

2. Nothing more is required of Eastern Christians coming to the fullness of Catholic communion, however, than what a simple profession of Catholic faith requires, even if, by virtue of recourse to the Apostolic See, a transfer to the Latin Rite is permitted to them.³

3. a) The rite of the celebration should appear as a celebration of the Church, and its high point should be realized in Eucharistic Communion. Therefore the admission normally should take place during Mass.

b) Nonetheless, those aspects that in any way have an air of triumphalism should be carefully avoided. The way in which this Mass will be celebrated must be precisely defined, attentive to circumstances. Consideration must be given both to the good of ecumenism and to the bond between the candidate and the parish community.

More appropriately, often it will be a Mass celebrated with only a few relatives and friends. Nevertheless, if for a serious reason a Mass cannot be celebrated, the Reception may be held within a Liturgy of the Word, whenever at least this is possible. The one being received, however, should also be consulted concerning the form to be chosen.

4. If Reception is celebrated outside Mass, its connection with Eucharistic Communion should be made clear by having it followed as soon as possible by a Eucharistic Celebration, in which the newly received fully participates among Catholic brothers and sisters for the first time.

5. For the Reception of those already baptized into the full communion of the Catholic Church, both a doctrinal and a spiritual preparation of the candidate is required, according to pastoral needs accommodated to individual cases. A candidate should learn to adhere more and more lovingly

1 Cf. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 69b; Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio*, no. 3; Secretariat for Christian Unity, *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 19: A.A.S. 59 (1967), p. 581.

2 Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio*, no. 18.

3 Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on Eastern Catholic Churches, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, nos. 25 and 4.

to the Church, in which the candidate will find the fullness of his or her Baptism.

At the time of this preparation some sharing in worship may already be taking place, according to the norms established in the Ecumenical Directory. Equating candidates with catechumens is to be altogether avoided.

6. An abjuration of heresy is no longer required of a person who was born and baptized outside the visible communion of the Catholic Church, but only a profession of faith.⁴

7. The Sacrament of Baptism cannot be repeated, and therefore conditional Baptism is not permitted to be conferred again unless a prudent doubt is present concerning the fact or the validity of the Baptism already conferred. If after a serious investigation has been undertaken concerning the prudent doubt about the fact or validity of the Baptism already conferred, conditional Baptism seems necessary to confer again, the minister should appropriately explain the reasons why Baptism in this case is being conferred conditionally, and he should administer it in a private form.⁵

The local Ordinary should determine in individual cases of conferring conditional Baptism which rites should be kept and which omitted.

8. It is for the Bishop to receive the candidate. A Priest, however, to whom he entrusts the celebration to be performed, has the faculty of confirming the candidate in the very Rite of Reception,⁶ unless the one being received has already validly received Confirmation.

9. If the Profession and Reception take place during Mass, the one being received should confess his or her sins with attention to personal circumstances, having made the confessor aware of the forthcoming Reception. Any duly approved confessor may hear this confession.

10. If the situation warrants, a sponsor, namely a man or a woman who had a greater role than others in leading or preparing the candidate, may accompany the one being admitted in the Reception itself; two sponsors may also be permitted.

11. In the Eucharistic celebration itself during which the Reception takes place, or, if this happens outside the solemnities of the Mass, in the Mass that follows, it is permitted not only for the one admitted to receive Holy Communion under both kinds, but also the sponsors, parents, spouse, (if these are Catholic), lay catechists who perhaps instructed the one being received, and indeed all Catholics present, if their number or other circumstances suggest it.

4 Cf. Secretariat for Christian Unity, Ecumenical Directory I, nos. 19 and 20: A.A.S. 59 (1967), p. 581.

5 Cf. *ibid.*, nos. 14-15: A.A.S. 59 (1967), p. 580.

6 Cf. *Ordo Confirmationis, Praenotanda*, (Introduction), no. 7.)

12. The Rite of Reception may be adapted to various circumstances by the Conferences of Bishops according to the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (no. 63). Above all the local Ordinary, paying attention to special conditions of persons and places, may himself adapt the Rite to them, by expanding or abbreviating it, if it seems appropriate.⁷

13. The names of those received should be recorded in a special book, along with the date and place of their Baptism

⁷ Cf. Secretariat for Christian Unity, *Ecumenical Directory I*, no. 19: A.A.S. 59 (1967), p. 581.

CHAPTER I
ORDER OF RECEPTION WITHIN MASS

14. a) If the Reception takes place on a Solemnity or on a Sunday, the Mass of the day should be celebrated; on other days, however, it is permissible to use the Mass “For the Unity of Christians” from the Masses for Various Needs.

b) The Reception is carried out after the Homily, in which the celebrant, with gratitude to God, should speak of Baptism as the basis for the candidate’s Reception, of the Sacrament of Confirmation, already received or about to be received by the candidate, and of the Most Holy Eucharist, to be celebrated by the candidate for the first time with the Catholic community.

c) At the end of the Homily, the celebrant, in these or similar words, briefly invites the candidate to come forward with his (her) sponsor to profess his (her) faith with the community:

**N., since after mature deliberation in the Holy Spirit
and of your own free will
you have asked to be received
into the full communion of the Catholic Church,
I now invite you to come forward with your sponsor
and in the presence of this community
to profess the Catholic faith.
In this faith, today for the first time
you will partake with us at the eucharistic table of the Lord Jesus,
by which the unity of the Church is signified.**

15. Then the person to be received, together with the faithful, recites the **Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed**, which is always said at this Mass.

After this, at the celebrant’s invitation, the one to be received adds:

**I believe and profess
all that the holy Catholic Church
believes, teaches, and proclaims as revealed by God.**

16. Unless Confirmation immediately follows, the celebrant then lays his right hand upon the head of the person to be received and says:

**N., the Lord receives you into the Catholic Church.
In his mercy he has led you here,
so that in the Holy Spirit
you may have full communion with us
in the faith you have professed before this his family.**

17. If the person to be received has not yet been confirmed, the celebrant lays his hands over the candidate's head and begins the Rite of Confirmation with the prayer **Almighty God** (cf. nos. 269-270).

18. After Confirmation the celebrant greets the one newly received, taking his (her) hand between his own hands as a sign of friendship and acceptance. With the permission of the Ordinary, another suitable gesture may be substituted, depending on local and other circumstances.

If, however, the person received is not confirmed, the greeting immediately follows the formula of Reception (no. 16).

19. The Universal Prayer follows the Reception (and Confirmation). In his introduction the celebrant should mention Baptism, (Confirmation,) and the Eucharist, and express gratitude to God. The person received into full communion is mentioned at the beginning of the intentions (cf. no 30).

20. After the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) the sponsor and, if there are only a few persons, all who are present may, if appropriate, greet the newly-received person in a friendly manner. In this case the Sign of Peace before Communion may be omitted. Finally, the person received returns to his or her place.

21. Then the Mass continues. It is fitting that the person received and the others mentioned in no. 11 above receive the Most Sacred Eucharist under both kinds

CHAPTER II

ORDER OF RECEPTION OUTSIDE MASS

22. If, for a serious reason, the Reception takes place outside Mass, a Liturgy of the Word is celebrated.

23. The celebrant, wearing an alb, or at least a surplice, and a stole of festive color, greets those present.

24. The celebration begins with (a suitable chant) and a reading of Sacred Scripture, which is explained in the Homily (cf. 14b).

25. Then follows the Reception, to be carried out in the manner described (nos. 14c-19).

26. The Universal Prayer is concluded with the Lord's Prayer, sung or recited by all present, and the Priest's blessing follows.

27. Then the sponsor and, if there are only a few persons, all who are present may, if appropriate, greet the newly-received person in a friendly manner. After this, all then depart in peace.

28. If, due to extraordinary circumstances, it appears that the Reception is to be celebrated without the Liturgy of the Word, everything takes place as above, beginning with the celebrant's Instruction (no. 14c). This Instruction should begin with a quotation from Sacred Scripture, for example, a text that praises the mercy of God that has led the candidate to be received into full communion and speaks of the Eucharistic Communion soon to be received at a later time.

CHAPTER III VARIOUS TEXTS TO BE USED IN THE RITES OF RECEPTION

29. I. BIBLICAL READINGS

The biblical readings, for Mass or for the Liturgy of the Word, may be taken in whole or in part, from those provided in the Lectionary for Mass for the Mass of the day, or for the Mass “For the Unity of Christians” (cf. nos. 867-871) or for the Ritual Mass “For Christian Initiation Apart from the Easter Vigil” (cf. nos. 751-755).

When the rite, however, is celebrated outside Mass, it is preferable that the texts that follow be used (cf. also the Lectionary for Mass, nos. 761-763).

The material in the following section is taken from nos. 761-763 of the *Ordo lectionum Missæ* (editio typica altera). Since different translations of the **Ordo lectionum Missæ** (Lectionary for Mass) are used in various English-speaking Conferences of Bishops. Only the biblical references are provided in this section for those texts taken from Scripture.

The Headings, Incipits, Psalm Responses, and Alleluia Verses and Verses before the Gospel approved for use by the Conference of Bishops are to be inserted in this section.

READINGS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. Rom 8:28-39
2. 1 Cor 12:31–13:13
3. Eph 1:3-14
4. Eph 4:1-7, 11-13
5. Philippians 4:4-8
6. 1 Thes 5:16-24

RESPONSORIAL PSALMS

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|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Ps 26 (27):1, 4, 8b-9abc, 13-14. | R. (1a) |
| 2. Ps 41 (42):2-3; Ps 42 (43):3, 4 | R. (Ps 41 [42]:3a) |
| 3. Ps 60 (61):2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 9 | R. (4a) |
| 4. Ps 62 (63):2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 | R. (2b) |
| 5. Ps 64 (65):2-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 | R. (2a) |
| 6. Ps 120 (121):1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 | R. (2a) |

GOSPEL READINGS

1. Mt 5:2-12a
2. Mt 5:13-16
3. Mt 11:25-30
4. Jn 3:16-21
5. Jn 14:15-23, 26-27
6. Jn 15:1-6

30. II. EXAMPLE OF THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

Dear brothers and sisters:
our brother (sister) N. has already been incorporated into Christ
through Baptism [and Confirmation];
now, with thanksgiving to God,
we have received him (her) into the full communion of the Catholic Church
(and confirmed him [her] with the gifts of the Holy Spirit),
so that he (she) may soon share with us at the table of the Lord.
As we rejoice at a newly received member of the Catholic Church,
let us join him (her) in asking for the grace and mercy of the Savior.

For our brother (sister)
whom we have welcomed among us today,
that with the help of the Holy Spirit
he (she) may persevere faithfully in his (her) resolve,
let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who believe in Christ and for their communities,
that they may come to perfect unity,
let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Church (Community) in which N. was baptized and formed,
that it may know Christ ever more deeply
and proclaim him more effectively,
let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all in whom the desire for heavenly grace is already kindled,
that they may be led to the fullness of truth in Christ,
let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.
For those who do not yet believe in Christ the Lord,
that, enlightened by the Holy Spirit,
they may enter the way of salvation,
let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For all people,
that they may be freed from hunger and war
and live in constant peace and tranquility,
let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

For ourselves,
that having received the free gift of faith,
we may persevere in it to the end,
let us pray to the Lord:

R. Lord, hear our prayer.

Prayer
Almighty eternal God,
hear the prayers we pour out to you,
that we may continue to serve you with grateful devotion.
Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

1. If the Reception is celebrated outside Mass, the transition from the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) to the Lord's Prayer can be expressed by the celebrant (cf. no. 26), in these or similar words:

Celebrant:

**Dear brothers and sisters,
let us unite our prayers and offer them,
praying as our Lord Jesus Christ taught us:**

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven . . .

If the person received was accustomed in his or her Community to the final doxology *For the kingdom, etc.*, it should be added here to the Lord's Prayer.