**RITES BELONGING TO THE PERIOD OF PURIFICATION AND ENLIGHTMENT**

**SCRUTINIES**

These rites are for self-searching and repentance. They should not be omitted without serious reason. They are for the unbaptised only.

They are celebrated on the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent. If for some serious reason they need to be celebrated on a weekday, optional Masses are given.

The Gospels used are for Year A: the Samaritan woman, the man born blind and the raising of Lazarus. The texts of the Scrutinies rely heavily on the gospels for the integration of the liturgy.

The presidential prayers are specific (Ritual Masses in the Roman Missal).

There are insertions for the Eucharistic prayer; there is a prayer for the godparents, calling them by name.

If for some extraordinary reason baptism is celebrated at a time other than Easter, the Scrutinies should still be celebrated beforehand.

The following prayers are for the First Scrutiny.

The same format is used for the Second Scrutiny (RCIA #154-156) and Third Scrutiny (RCIA # 161-163)

**HOMILY**

*Invite the godparents to bring the elect forward after the homily.*

*Make sure the elect and godparents are visible. The people may remain seated*.

**INVITATION TO SILENT PRAYER**

*Ask the community to pray for the elect (name them) that they might have a spirit of repentance, a sense of sin and the true freedom of the children of God. Invite the Elect to pray in silence with the words*

*“Elect of God, N, bow your heads and pray…..”*

**INTERCESSIONS FOR THE ELECT**

*The RCIA gives two sets of sample intercessions. Option B given here uses imagery from the Gospel.*

*You may blend the parish’s Prayer of the Faithful with these Intercessions.*

*The prayers may be carefully adapted to the expressed needs of the elect.*

**CELEBRANT**

Let us pray for these elect whom the Church has confidently chosen. May they successfully complete their long preparation and at the paschal feast find Christ in his sacraments.

R: That, like the woman of Samaria, our elect, N, may review their lives before Christ and acknowledge their sins, let us pray to the Lord.

R: That N may be freed from the spirit of mistrust that deters people from following Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

R: That, while awaiting the gift of God, they might long with all their hearts for the living water that brings eternal life, let us pray to the Lord.

R: That N may share with their friends and neighbours the wonder of their own meeting with Christ, let us pray to the Lord.

R: That all of us may learn from Christ to do the Father’s will in love, let us pray to the Lord..

**EXORCISM**

*The celebrant faces the elect and, with hands joined, says:*

All-merciful Father,

through your Son you revealed your mercy to the woman of Samaria;

and moved by that same care

you have offered salvation to all sinners.

Look favourably on these elect, N,

who desire to become your adopted children

through the power of your sacraments.

Free them from the slavery of sin,

and for Satan’s crushing yoke

exchange the gentle yoke of Jesus.

Protect them in every danger,

that they may serve you faithfully in peace and joy

and render you thanks for ever.

AMEN

*The celebrant lays hands on each one of the elect.*

*You may invite the godparents and catechists to also lay hands.*

*Then with hands outstretched over all the elect, you continue.*

Lord Jesus, in your merciful wisdom

you touched the heart of the sinful woman

and taught her to worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

Now, by your power,

free these elect, N, from the cunning of Satan,

as they draw near to the fountain of living water.

Touch their hearts with the power of the Holy Spirit,

That they may come to know the Father in true faith,

which expresses itself in love,

for you live and reign for ever and ever.

AMEN.

**DISMISSAL**

If the elect are dismissed at this point say to them:

Dear elect, go in peace, and join us again at the next scrutiny.

May the Lord remain with you always. AMEN

If the elect remain for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, say to them:

Although you cannot yet participate fully in the Eucharist, stay with us as a sign of our hope that all God’s children will eat and drink with the Lord and work with his Spirit to recreate the face of the earth.

**LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

*For pastoral reasons the Prayer of the Faithful and Creed may be omitted in which case the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the preparation of gifts.*

*The Elect and Godparents are remembered in the Eucharistic Prayer (see Missal p1178).*

**PRESENTATIONS**

During the Season of Lent the Church offers two presentations, the Creed and the Lord’s Prayer to the elect. They are not as important as the Scrutinies but should not be omitted. They are very ancient pre-baptismal rituals.

There is no physical presentation of either the Creed or Lord’s Prayer. They are passed from mouth to ear, heart to heart.

The Presentations may be offered during the period of the catechumenate.

With appropriate sensitivity, the Presentations may also be made to those who have been baptised as Catholics, but not catechised.

The Presentations should be celebrated during the week, at a Mass, Stations of the Cross or other liturgy where parishioners are gathered. Sundays are too crowded.

**PRESENTATION OF THE CREED**

This takes place during the week after the first scrutiny.

The Apostles’ Creed is recommended as a prelude to baptism.

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

Readings are taken from Lectionary Volume III, Ritual Masses.

**HOMILY -** explain the importance of the Creed which they will live by.

*Ask the elect to come forward.*

*Before beginning the Creed, you address the elect:*

My dear friends, N, listen carefully to the words of that faith by which you will be justified. The words are few, but the mysteries they contain are great. Receive them with a sincere heart and be faithful to them.

**The Apostles’ Creed**

*You begin:*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,

*The elect listen as you and the assembly continue reciting the Apostles Creed*

**Prayer over the Elect**

*Invite all the faithful to pray for the elect:*

Let us pray for these elect, N, that God in his mercy may make them responsive to his love, so that through the waters of rebirth they may receive pardon for their sins and have life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*All pray in silence.*

*Then the celebrant, with hands outstretched over the elect says:*

Lord, eternal source of light, justice and truth,

take under your tender care your servants, N.

Purify them (her/him) and make them holy;

give them true knowledge, sure hope and sound understanding

and make them worthy to receive the grace of baptism.

AMEN

*If during Mass dismiss the Elect in the following words:*

Dear elect, N, go in peace,

and may the Lord remain with you always.

AMEN

*The Prayer of the Faithful follows.*

*If during a Word Service, dismiss everyone.*

**PRESENTATION OF THE LORD’S PRAYER**

This takes place during the week after the third scrutiny.

It uses a similar structure as for the Presentation of the Creed.

Readings are taken from Lectionary Volume III, Ritual Masses. The Gospel is Matthew’s version of the Our Father.

**Liturgy of the Word**

*After the first and second readings, you, or the team leader, invite the elect to stand near the Ambo.*

Let those who are to receive the Lord’s Prayer now come forward.

*Address them in the following or similar words:*

Listen to the Gospel reading in which our Lord teaches his followers how to pray.

**Gospel**

**Homily -** explain the meaning and importance of the Lord’s Prayer

**Prayer over the Elect**

*Invite the faithful to pray.*

Let us pray for these elect, N, that God in his mercy may make them responsive to his love, so that through the waters of rebirth they may receive pardon for their sins and have life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*All pray in silence.*

*Then the celebrant, with hands outstretched over the elect, says:*

Almighty and eternal God,

you continually enlarge the family of your church.

Deepen the faith and understanding

of these elect, N, chosen for baptism.

Give them new birth in your living waters,

so that they may be numbered among your adopted children.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

AMEN

The rest of the liturgy takes the same format as the presentation of the Creed.