

# Sacramental Preparation Policy for Catholic High Schools in the Archdiocese of New York

*Prepared by the Office of Adult Faith Formation & the Archdiocesan Catechumenate Advisory Council  
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These sacramental preparation policies are for three kinds of Catholic High School Students:

- a) For students who are **NOT BAPTIZED** and seek baptism in the Catholic Church.
- b) For students who are **validly baptized Protestants or Catholics** and seek to make their first Holy Communion **and** Confirmation.
- c) For students who are **Catholic** and who seek to make their Confirmation only.

## A) For students who are **Not Baptized**:

1. The Catholic High School should **assist the student** in contacting the local Catholic parish near the student's home residence to connect the student to the local Catholic parish's **Catechumenate (RCIA)**
2. **IF** the local Catholic parish does not offer the student Christian initiation preparation, like the RCIA, the Catholic High School has two options:

**Option A:** Assist the student in connecting to **another** Catholic parish that will welcome the student in the parish's Catechumenate (RCIA)

**Option B:** Assist the student in asking **permission of the Pastor** of their local Catholic parish for the student to participate in the *Catechumenate (RCIA)* process that the Catholic High School will offer.

**IF Option B is chosen**, the following expectations are presented for the **Catholic High School Catechumenate (RCIA) process**:

- a. After a period of inquiry gatherings at the Catholic High School, the Inquirer (student) becomes a **Catechumen** – enters the Catechumenate Period – with the **Rite of Acceptance**, which can be celebrated in their local Catholic parish at a Sunday Mass, or if not possible, at a Liturgy of the Word at the Catholic High School with a Priest / Deacon.
- b. The Catholic High School would assist the student in acquiring an adult from their local Catholic parish that would serve as an appointed local parish **RCIA Sponsor**.  
This appointed parish RCIA Sponsor would begin their ministry at the **Rite of Acceptance** ceremony.  
The parish RCIA Sponsor would:
  - + monitor the Catechumen's (student's) Sunday Mass attendance / participation.
  - + invite the Catechumen (student) to engage in the life of the local parish as much as possible.
  - + engage the Catechumen (student) in regular faith sharing (reflection).

- c. The Catholic High School offers the Catechumen (student) – during the *Catechumenate Period*:
  - +Additional weekly faith formation sessions either before or after school... focusing on the liturgical year / Sunday Mass readings.
  - +Additional opportunities for prayer and apostolic service.
- d. ...the ***length of the Catechumenate Period*** should be at least one liturgical year (which means more than one school year). Exceptions can be made for High School seniors who become Catechumens in their senior year. High School seniors could be offered an abridged Catechumenate Period.
- e. The Catechumen (student) participates in the ***Archdiocesan Rite of Election*** after an appropriate time in the Catechumenate Period. The decision for participation in the ***Archdiocesan Rite of Election*** is made by the Pastor of the Catechumen's local Catholic parish. That decision is based on a discernment process that involves the Pastor of the Catechumen's local Catholic parish, their appointed parish RCIA Sponsor, the Catholic High School RCIA Team and the Catechumen.
- f. A Godparent, chosen by the Catechumen (student) and approved by the Pastor, accompanies the Catechumens (student) to the ***Archdiocesan Rite of Election***.
- g. After the ***Archdiocesan Rite of Election***, the Elect (student) participates in the three ***Scrutinies*** at the appropriate time in Lent either at their local Catholic parish, or if this is not possible, at the Catholic High School.
- h. The Elect receives the three sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation and Eucharist) at the ***Easter Vigil Mass*** at their local Catholic parish – **not** the Catholic School.

## B) For students who are **Baptized**

(Validly baptized Protestants or Catholics – who need to make their First Holy Communion and Confirmation)

1. The Catholic High School should ***assist the student*** in contacting the local Catholic parish near their home residence to seek sacramental preparation from the local Catholic parish's **Catechumenate (RCIA)** process.
2. **IF** the local Catholic parish does not offer the student sacramental preparation, the Catholic High School has two options:

**Option A:** Assist the student in contacting **another** Catholic parish near their home residence and seek sacramental preparation from that other Catholic parish.

**Option B:** Assist the student in asking permission of the Pastor of their local Catholic parish near their home residence for the student to participate in the Catechumenate (RCIA) process that the Catholic High School will offer.

**IF Option B is chosen, the following expectations are presented for the Catholic High School Catechumenate (RCIA) process:**

- a. After a period of inquiry gatherings at the Catholic High School, the Inquirer (student) becomes a **RCIA Candidate**– enters the Catechumenate Period – with the **Rite of Welcome**, which can be celebrated in their local Catholic parish at a Sunday Mass or if not possible at a Liturgy of the Word at the Catholic High School with a Priest or Deacon.
- b. The Catholic High School would assist the student in acquiring an adult from their local Catholic parish that would serve as an appointed local parish **RCIA Sponsor**. This appointed parish RCIA Sponsor would begin their ministry at the **Rite of Welcome** ceremony.  
The parish RCIA Sponsor would:
  - + monitor the Candidate's (student's) Sunday Mass attendance / participation.
  - + invite the Candidate (student) to engage in the life of the local parish as much as possible.
  - + engage the Candidate (student) in regular faith sharing (reflection).
- c. The Catholic High School offers the Candidate(student) – during the *Catechumenate Period*:
  - +Additional weekly faith formation sessions either before or after school... focusing on the liturgical year.
  - +Additional opportunities for prayer and apostolic service.
- d. ...the *length of the Catechumenate Period* for the RCIA Candidate... should be as long or as short as needed to help the RCIA Candidate "mature in faith".
- e. The Candidate (student) may (*THIS IS OPTIONAL*) participate in the **Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion** after an appropriate time in the Catechumenate Period. This Rite may be celebrated at the local Catholic parish or at the Catholic High School. The decision for participation in the **Rite of Calling the Candidate to Continuing Conversion** is made by the Pastor of the Candidate's local Catholic parish. That decision is based on a discernment process that involves the Pastor of the Candidate's local Catholic parish, their appointed parish RCIA Sponsor, the Catholic High School RCIA Team and the Candidate.
- f. A Confirmation Sponsor, chosen by the Candidate (student) and approved by the Pastor, accompanies the Candidate (student) at the **Rite of Calling the Candidate to Continuing Conversion**.
- g. After the **Rite of Calling the Candidate to Continuing Conversion**, the Candidate (student) should be invited to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the appropriate time in Lent at the Catholic High School or at the local Catholic parish.

- h. For the celebration of the Sacraments, there are two things to note:
1. **The RCIA Candidate** who is a **validly baptized Protestant** makes their *Profession of Faith*, and receives the sacraments of *Confirmation and Eucharist* at a Mass at either the Catholic High School or at a Mass at the local Catholic parish of the RCIA Candidate. This celebration can happen ANYTIME OF THE YEAR. **The presider can be any Priest. It is recommended that the celebration for the RCIA Candidates not be at the Easter Vigil.**
  2. **The RCIA Candidate** who is a **validly baptized Catholic** receives the sacraments of *Confirmation and Eucharist* at a Mass at either the Catholic High School or at a Mass at the local Catholic parish of the RCIA Candidate. This celebration will usually happen at a Mass during the 50 days of the Easter season. **The Archdiocese of New York grants faculties to pastors, administrators, and any priest whom they subdelegate to celebrate Confirmation for these RCIA Catholic Candidates only during the 50 days of the Easter season. Outside the Easter season, a priest should request delegation from the Chancery to confirm a baptized Catholic.** It is recommended that the celebration of First Holy Communion and Confirmation for the RCIA Candidates not be at the Easter Vigil.

## C) For students who are **Baptized**

(Validly baptized Catholics who already received first Holy Communion and only need to prepare for the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation)

1. The Catholic High School should **assist the student** in contacting the local Catholic parish near the student's home residence to seek sacramental preparation from the local Catholic parish's **Teen Confirmation Program. (NOT THE RCIA).**
2. **IF** the local Catholic parish does not offer the student sacramental preparation, the Catholic High School has two options:

**Option A:** Assist the student in contacting **another** Catholic parish near the student's home residence and seek sacramental preparation from that other Catholic parish.

**Option B:** Assist the student in **asking permission of the Pastor** of the local Catholic parish near the student's home residence to participate in the **Confirmation Program** that the Catholic High School will offer.

**IF Option B is chosen**, the Confirmation Candidate (student) participates in Confirmation classes before or after school at the Catholic High School. The Catholic High School can determine the number of Confirmation classes that will be required. **At the appropriate time, the Confirmation candidate receives the sacrament of Confirmation from a Bishop at a Mass either at the Catholic High School or at the local Catholic parish of the Confirmation Candidate (student).**