

FIRST SCRUTINY (THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT)

Liturgy of the Word

Readings

150. *The texts and the readings for Mass are always those given for the first scrutiny in the Missal and the Lectionary for Mass among the ritual Masses, "Christian Initiation: The Scrutinies."*

Homily

151. *After the readings and guided by them, the celebrant explains in the homily the meaning of the first scrutiny in the light of the Lenten liturgy and of the spiritual journey of the elect.*

Invitation to Silent Prayer

152. *After the homily, the elect with their godparents come forward and stand before the celebrant.*

The celebrant first addresses the assembly of the faithful, inviting them to pray in silence and to ask that the elect will be given a spirit of repentance, a sense of sin, and the true freedom of the children of God.

The celebrant then addresses the elect, inviting them also to pray in silence and suggesting that as a sign of their inner spirit of repentance they bow their heads or kneel; he concludes his remarks with the following or similar words.

Presider: Elect of God, bow your heads [kneel down] and pray.

The elect bow their heads or kneel, and all pray for some time in silence. After the period of silent prayer, the community and the elect stand for the intercessions.

153. *Either of the following formularies, options A or B, may be used for the intercessions for the elect and both the introduction and the intentions may be adapted to fit various circumstances. During the intercessions the godparents stand with their right hand on the shoulder of the elect.*

[If it is decided, in accordance with no. 156, that after the dismissal of the elect the usual general intercessions of the Mass are to be omitted and the liturgy of the eucharist is to begin immediately, intentions for the Church and the whole world are to be added to the following intentions for the elect.]

Presider: 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.

A.

Assisting Minister: *That they may ponder the word of God in their hearts and savor its meaning more fully day by day, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That they may learn to know Christ, who came to save what was lost, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That they may humbly confess themselves to be sinners, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That they may sincerely reject everything in their lives that is displeasing and contrary to Christ, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That the Holy Spirit, who searches every heart, may help them to overcome their weakness through his power, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That the same Holy Spirit may teach them to know the things of God and how to please him, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That their families also may put their hope in Christ and find peace and holiness in him, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That we ourselves in preparation for the Easter feast may seek a change of heart, give ourselves to prayer and persevere in our good works, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That throughout the whole world whatever is weak may be strengthened, whatever is broken restored, whatever is lost found, and what is found redeemed, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Or:

Presider: 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.

B.

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

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That they may be freed from the spirit of mistrust that deters people from following Christ, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

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

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That by accepting the Son of God as their teacher, they may become true worshipers of the Father in spirit and in truth, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That they may share with their friends and neighbors the wonder of their own meeting with Christ, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Assisting Minister: *That those whose lives are empty for want of the word of God may come to the Gospel of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.*

All: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

Exorcism

154. *After the intercessions, the rite continues with one of the following exorcisms.*

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

Presider: God of power,
you sent your Son to be our Savior.
Grant that these catechumens,
who, like the woman of Samaria, thirst for living water,
may turn to the Lord as they hear his word
and acknowledge the sins and weaknesses that weigh
them down.

Protect them from vain reliance on self
and defend them from the power of Satan.

Free them from the spirit of deceit,
so that, admitting the wrong they have done,
they may attain purity of heart
and advance on the way to salvation.

All: We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

If it is convenient, the celebrant lays his hands on each of the elect.

Then, with hands outstretched over all the elect, he continues:

Presider: Lord Jesus,
you are the fountain for which they thirst,
you are the Master whom they seek.
In your presence
they dare not claim to be without sin,
for you alone are the Holy One of God.

They open their hearts to you in faith,
they confess their faults
and lay bare their hidden wounds.
In your love free them from their infirmities,
heal their sickness,
quench their thirst, and give them peace.

In the power of your name,
which we call upon in faith,
stand by them now and heal them.
Rule over that spirit of evil,
conquered by your rising from the dead.

Show your elect the way of salvation in the Holy Spirit,
that they may come to worship the Father in truth,
for you live and reign for ever and ever.

All: *Amen.*

Or:

B.

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

Presider: 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 favorably on these elect,
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.

All: Amen.

Here, if this can be done conveniently, the celebrant lays his hands on each one of the elect.

Then, with hands outstretched over all the elect, he continues:

Presider: 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 from the cunning 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.

All: Amen.

An appropriate song may be sung, for example, Psalm 6, 26, 32, 38,39, 40, 51, 116:1-9, 130, 139, or 142.

Dismissal of the Elect

155. *If the eucharist is to be celebrated, the elect are normally dismissed at this point by use of option A or B; if the elect are to stay for the celebration of the eucharist, option C is used; if the eucharist is not to be celebrated, the entire assembly is dismissed by use of option D.*

A. *The celebrant dismisses the elect in these or similar words:*

Presider: Dear elect, go in peace, and join us again at the next scrutiny. May the Lord remain with you always.

Elect: Amen.

B. *As an optional formulary for dismissing the catechumens, the celebrant may use these or similar words.*

Presider: My dear friends, this community now sends you forth to reflect more deeply upon the word of God which you have shared with us today. Be assured of our loving support and prayers for you. We look forward to the day when you will share fully in the Lord's Table.

C. *If for serious reasons the elect cannot leave and must remain with the baptized, they are to be instructed that though they are present at the eucharist, they cannot take part in it as the baptized do. They may be reminded of this by the celebrant in these or similar words.*

Presider: Although you cannot yet participate fully in the Lord's 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 re-create the face of the earth.

D. *The celebrant dismisses those present, using these or similar words.*

Presider: Go in peace, and may the Lord remain with you always.

All: Thanks be to God.

An appropriate song may conclude the celebration.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

156. *When the eucharist is to follow, intercessory prayer is resumed with the usual general intercessions for the needs of the Church and the whole world; then, if required, the profession of faith is said. But for pastoral reasons these general intercessions and the profession of faith may be omitted. The liturgy of the Eucharist then begins as usual with the preparation of the gifts. In the eucharistic prayer there is to be a remembrance of the elect and their godparents (see ritual Mass "Christian Initiation: The Scrutinies").*