

STUDY GUIDE

8

Baptism and Confirmation

Keep these ideas in mind as you study *Chapter 8*.

❖ The seven sacraments of the Church are special encounters we have with Jesus through signs and words at key times in our lives. The Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—bring us into the community.

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❖ The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the process through which people join the Catholic Church.

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❖ A person who begins the process of the RCIA needs to be sponsored by a Catholic. This sponsor will assist the catechumen through the process.

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❖ Those who are to become new members of Christ's family celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation during the Easter Vigil.

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❖ At Mass during Lent, catechumens leave after the homily to show that they do not yet belong fully to the community. After they are baptized, they will be full Christians and will stay for the whole Mass.

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❖ The names of catechumens are written in the book of the elect during a ceremony called the Rite of Election. During this ceremony, catechumens answer questions from the bishop, and he declares that they are called to the Sacraments of Initiation.

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❖ Scrutinies are petitions and exorcisms in the Rite of Christian Initiation. Exorcisms are prayers against the evil spirit. They teach repentance, the mystery of sin, and how Christ the Redeemer saved us. The scrutinies strengthen the elect in their decision to live for Christ.

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❖ After the scrutinies, the elect are given the presentations. They are given the Creed and Lord's Prayer. Finally, they may celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation.

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❖ Mystagogy is the time to learn more about the faith and how to live it. Catechumens have months of mystagogy. During this time, members of the Church help the catechumens grow spiritually.

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❖ Jesus said you must be born of water and the Spirit to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Water is the main physical sign of Baptism. When the water is poured over you, you are removed from the reign of evil and strengthened against it. You receive divine life.

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❖ In Confirmation, the catechumen is anointed with a special mixture of olive oil and balsam called chrism. With the words "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit," a person is anointed and marked permanently as God's possession.

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❖ The Eucharist completes and fulfills Christian Initiation. The community gathers to celebrate the Paschal Mystery and to receive nourishment. It is our greatest celebration.

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