



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

Message to our Catechumens and Candidates

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I'm sending this brief message to all the people who were looking forward to entering the Church at Easter this year. That's not going to happen, obviously, due to current medical preventative measures currently in effect during this COVID-19 pandemic. This has left a number of you wondering what to expect.

First of all, let me assure you that we are not talking about a cancellation; only a postponement. What I've told the parish priests of the Archdiocese is that all sacramental initiation is postponed indefinitely until such time as we can begin to gather again in our churches. When that "all-clear" is given, the priests will then begin to establish schedules for the celebration of the sacraments, including those by which you will enter the Church.

It was only a few weeks ago that I met many of you at the Rite of Election celebrated at St. Joseph's Basilica. I remember a lot of smiling faces as you reached that particular milestone. You seemed pretty excited, and rightly so. So was I! And I still am! This will happen, just not according to the timeline that we had anticipated. Your parish will keep you posted as things become more clear.

I can imagine the delay might well be a disappointment for you. After all, you've been preparing for quite some time, not just over the last number of months of catechesis but also prior to that in the years of discernment. Well, don't forget one of the lessons you would have surely learned along the way: God is in our lives and gets involved in everything that comes our way. So, God is with us in this delay, too. Not that God is the cause of it, no. We blame the virus for that. But God draws near to us in every circumstance, and if we turn it over to him he will turn it to the good. You can trust that.

So, hang in. God remains with you, and the Church continues to accompany you in whatever way we can. God has chosen you, and he never takes back his election. The Church continues to pray for you, and we all look forward to the day when we can come together to celebrate and rejoice with you as you become a member of the Church and take up your participation in her mission.

God bless,

✠Richard W. Smith  
Archbishop of Edmonton

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