



## Resources for Scrutinies

March 10, 2009

Greetings!

Last night, I saw the last full moon before the Paschal Moon--the full moon after the Spring Equinox. This means we're now deep into the heart of Lent, and this weekend the Church begins the first of three Scrutinies.

After a very long hiatus, this week's DSJ Liturgy newsletter has lots of resources to help you and your liturgy and catechumenate teams prepare these Scrutinies and other Lenten celebrations well.

I hope the warmer weather and the blossoming trees bring you and your parish continued Lenten hope and joy as we prepare for Easter.

Sincerely,

*Diana*

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**Bring in your oil vessels  
 for Chrism Mass!**



Chrism Mass is March 31, 2009. To help us get ready, **please deliver your empty, cleaned oil vessels to the Office for Parish Services by March 23.** [Click here for more info.](#)

### Liturgy pics & vids

Want to see pictures from the Wedding Anniversary Mass? Have you ever seen books dance at the Rite of Election?

Sofyan Nugroho took some wonderful photos from these two events. And he has made them all available to download! Check them out at the links below. Please include his name in any credits of the pics.

## Choosing readings for the Scrutinies

**Do we have to use Year A?**

"Why can't we use Year B readings this year for the Scrutinies?" "The assembly is missing out on hearing the readings for Year C. How come we always have to do Year A at the Scrutinies?" "We've written new scrutiny rites for the Year B readings. Can we use those?"



I hear those questions every year we aren't in the Year A cycle of the Lectionary. (Recall that the readings we hear every Sunday are structured on a three-year rotation. In Year A we hear primarily from Matthew's Gospel; in Year B, from Mark; and in Year C, from Luke. John's Gospel is interspersed throughout each year.)



I can understand why some people have these questions. We've come a long way since before Vatican II when the amount of Scripture people heard at Mass over the course of a year was very limited (1% of the Old Testament and 17% of the New Testament) compared to today (14% of the Old Testament and 71% of the New Testament). When the [Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy](#), 51, of Vatican II said that "[t]he treasures of the bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word," the Church took it seriously, and the faithful have come to value more and more a fuller proclamation of the Word in the midst of the assembly.

Yet I think we still have a way to go when it comes to trusting the power of the rites of initiation for the Sunday assembly. The best way we can help the assembly grow in appreciation of these rites of initiation is to do the rites well and fully, consistently year after year.

### What does the Rite say?

So, taking a look at the rubrics for the Scrutiny Rites, we read:

The scrutinies should take place within the ritual Masses "Christian Initiation: The Scrutinies," which are celebrated on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent; the readings with their chants are those given for those Sundays in the Lectionary for Mass, Year A....In every case the ritual Masses "Christian Initiation: The Scrutinies" are celebrated and in this sequence: for the first scrutiny the Mass with the gospel of the Samaritan woman; for the second, the Mass with the gospel of the man born blind; for the third, the Mass with the gospel of Lazarus. (146)

Seems clear, yes? Yet perhaps still not compelling enough a reason for those who ask our opening questions. [Click here for some reasons that may be more convincing.](#)

## Looking at the Scrutiny readings in a new way

### Was the Logos actually a question?

As you may know, I did my [graduate studies](#) at Saint John's University in



[photos from Wedding Anniversary Mass, February 14, 2009](#)



[photos from Rite of Election, March 1, 2009](#)

And take a peak at these little videos of the Rite of Election!



[a 4-minute video of our dancing books!](#)

[an 11-minute slideshow and video of the Rite of Election](#)

[\(hi-res version\)](#)

**Do you know there are proper prayers in the Sacramentary for Masses with the Scrutinies?**

You can find the proper Opening Prayers, Prayers Over the Gifts, and the Prayers After Communion in the Sacramentary under "Ritual Masses: Christian Initiation, The Scrutinies" (it starts on page 826 in my edition).

**We're moving! So get**

Collegeville, Minnesota. In my last summer of studies there, I took classes in the Gospel of John, Christology, and Christian Initiation. It must have been the Holy Spirit at work because all three classes just seemed to converge and build upon each other.



In my Gospel of John class, I decided to study the three Johannine pericopes (stories) used in the Scrutiny Rites. Eventually, that project became one of my grad papers. And that grad paper late last year became an article in *Catechumenate: A Journal of Christian Initiation* (November 2008, Liturgy Training Publications).

In studying the three passages side by side, I noticed a significant pattern. All of them--and, in fact, much of John's Gospel--included a multitude of questions. Running with this insight, I began to look at our understanding of the Incarnation and of catechesis in a new way.

I'm no Scripture scholar, but I saw lots of implications for liturgy and the catechumenate in the works I researched for the project.

If you want to read my article, you can purchase a back issue from [LTP](#) (and do your part to stimulate the economy), or you can download for your own study this PDF copy of "[And the Question Became Flesh: The Teaching of the Accounts of the Gospel during the Scrutinies.](#)"

## More RCIA resources

### A Lenten listing

Over a year ago, I began working with three other Team members of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate to create a Web site just for catechumenate ministers. The result is [TeamRCIA.com](#), the place to help you start and sustain the catechumenate in your parish.



On [TeamRCIA.com](#), you'll find tons of resources to help you with your parish RCIA process. Here are a few Lenten highlights from [TeamRCIA.com](#):

- [History of the Scrutinies: Three things your RCIA team needs to know](#)
- [Choreographing the Scrutinies](#)
- [How to rehearse the Scrutinies](#)
- [Children and the Scrutinies](#)
- [Don't catechize in Lent](#)
- [What are the proper prayers for the Scrutinies?](#)
- [Nine ways to treat the Elect like royalty](#)
- [An RCIA guide to fasting in Lent](#)

## About the Office of Worship

The Office of Worship for the Diocese of San Jose is one of the areas of service coordinated by the Office for Parish Services. The mission of the Office of Worship is to guide and assist parish ministers in preparing, fulfilling, improving, and reflecting on their parish and diocesan liturgical life.

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### your FREE books and resources now!

Sometime after Easter, near the end of April, the chancery offices will be moving from its rented space in Santa Clara to its very own building at 1150 North First Street in San Jose.

We've accumulated lots of resources during our time on Lafayette, and we can't take it all with us. So come by during business hours before March 27 to the Office for Parish Services ([900 Lafayette Street, 95050](#), Suite 405) and pick up free resources.

### Liturgical Calendar

Don't forget: Easter Vigil on April 11, 2009, should not start any earlier than 8:00pm in the Diocese of San Jose. [Click for more info.](#)

**March 17, 2009:** Optional Memorial of Saint Patrick, Titular feast day of the first cathedral of the Diocese of San José. Observed as a Feast in the parish of Saint Patrick Proto-Cathedral.

**March 19, 2009:** Solemnity of Saint Joseph, Titular feast day of the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Joseph and principal patron of the Diocese of San José

**March 21, 2009:** Anniversary of dedication of Saint Patrick Proto-Cathedral, first cathedral of the Diocese of San José

Get a full listing of the [Diocese of San Jose liturgical calendar here.](#)

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