

Rite of Calling Christian Candidates to Conversion



Resource Packet

Cathedral of the Holy Angels
Sunday, 4 December 2011 ❖ 2:00 p.m.
Second Sunday of Advent



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One of the ministries in which liturgical renewal has blossomed and has deepened the faith of communities is the rites of Christian initiation. In particular, every year the Paschal Triduum culminates in the baptism, confirmation and eucharist of catechumens. The depth of the paschal mystery, Christ's life, death, resurrection, Ascension and subsequent sending of the Spirit-gift to incorporate us into the life of Christ, is experienced anew. There is no doubt how well many of our parish communities have implemented the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

In their culmination of research in the document, *Journey to the Fullness of Life: A Report on the Implementation of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in the United States*, the five U.S. bishops' committees conclude: "The study indicates a concern on the part of the bishops that sufficient distinction be made in both the formation and in the ritual between the baptized and unbaptized persons coming forward for initiation" (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, Inc., 2000; p. 31). The concern of the bishops is rooted in the vision of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). In particular, the RCIA cautions that "anything that would equate [the baptized] candidates for reception with those who are catechumens [who are unbaptized] is to be absolutely avoided" (art. 477).

Theologically, the Church believes that the Holy Spirit is birthed into the heart of the human person being baptized and the Holy Spirit is sealed in the sacrament of confirmation. The Church believes, even though an infant is baptized at a very early age, the child receives the gift of the Spirit. We might say this is the sowing of the seed of faith. Over time, many of us have that seed of faith nurtured in the home and in the Sunday eucharistic assembly. Some of us never had that opportunity. We might have been baptized, but never catechized or practiced our faith. The Church believes God works in the sacrament of baptism, even though we might not be able to articulate what has happened. The 1983 Code of Canon Law reminds us that the "Christian faithful are those who, inasmuch as they have been incorporated in Christ through baptism, have been constituted as the people of God, for this reason, since they have become sharers in Christ's priestly, prophetic and royal office in their own manner, they are called to exercise the mission which God has entrusted the Church to fulfill in the world, in accord with the condition proper to each one" (Canon 204, para. 1). Mystagogy (or post-baptismal catechesis) is a process we all continue to go through until we die. On the Christian journey, we repeatedly unfold the mission of God, which is to bring about the reign of God in the here and now.

Experientially, anyone who has ever participated in a well-prepared rite of baptism has sensed the work of God. God's presence is manifested with "care-ful" gestures: marking the senses of the child with the sign of the cross; proclaiming God's marvelous deeds in the Word of the prayers and scriptural readings; dipping the child in living water; singing an exuberant Alleluia as the child is lifted from font and presented to the liturgical assembly. Whether conversion blossoms over time in the Christian assembly or one was never given the opportunity to grow in faith, we are to have faith that indeed, God does marvelous things in baptism. Or, as the Introduction to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults states, "Baptism is a sacramental bond of unity linking all who have been signed by it. Because of that unchangeable effect (given expression by the anointing of the baptized person with chrism in the presence of God's people) the rite of baptism is held in highest honor by all Christians.

Making Distinctions

Catechumens:

- No or little faith
- Unbaptized
- "true converts"

Candidates

- Validly baptized
- No confirmation or eucharist, but are members of the Christian faith
- Need to develop the effects they received in baptism

Those who have already been baptized in another church or ecclesial community should not be treated as catechumens or so designated. Their doctrinal and spiritual preparation for reception into full Catholic communion should be determined according to the individual case, that is, it should depend on the extent to which the baptized person has led a Christian life within a community of faith and been appropriately catechized to deepen his or her inner adherence to the Church.”

National Statutes for the Catechumenate,
NCCB, 1986, art. 30.

Once it has been validly celebrated, even if by Christians with whom we are not in full communion, it may never lawfully be repeated” (art. 4). In sum, to paraphrase the third century African theologian, Tertullian, in baptism, Christians are made, not born.

In our own diocese, there has been concern over this very issue of affirming and respecting the baptism of candidates by keeping distinction between the already baptized Christians and yet-to-be Christians. Each Christian candidate brings gifts of him/herself. Part of those gifts is the gift of the faith tradition of origin. Respecting baptism recognizes the gifts the person brings to the Catholic tradition and affirms the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church into which this candidate will be steeped. With these concerns in mind, the discussions lead to the distinction between the Rite of Election for Catechumens and the Rite of Calling Christian Candidates to Conversion in 2002.

The RCIA states that participants in the Rite of Calling Christian Candidates to Conversion are those who are “baptized but previously uncatechized adults who wish to complete their Christian initiation through the sacraments of confirmation and eucharist or who wish to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church” (art. 466). In simplest terms, this rite is a change of membership from a Christian faith tradition to the Catholic Church. Since the candidates are baptized, they are counted already among the Elect, which is why they do not participate in the Rite of

Election, and do not sign the Book of the Elect. Since they are counted among the faithful baptized, they participate in the general intercessions or prayers of the faithful, and if it is discerned that the uncatechized candidates are to be dismissed, they are dismissed on Sundays following the prayers of the faithful, while the catechumens are dismissed after the homily.

The RCIA provides a Rite of Sending the Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop and for the Call to Continuing Conversion. Parishes may wish to celebrate this before the Rite of Calling Christian Candidates, possibly the morning before the Rite of Call or the weekend before.



Presentation of the Candidates

One of the deans will present the candidates as stated in #555 of the rite. Deans have been chosen to do this because they have the responsibility in the bishop's name to ensure that the parishes in their deanery are preparing their candidates for full communion. An assisting deacon will call out the names of the Christian candidates from each parish. Therefore, it is imperative that the Office of Worship receive the list of names from each parish submitted to the office by the due date. Once the candidate's name has been called, the candidate stands and says loudly for all to hear; "present!" Please practice this whole part of the rite with the candidates and their sponsors so their nervousness does not overcome their joy at the event.

Affirmation by the Sponsors and the Assembly

The bishop will then address the sponsors. The bishop will use form-B of #452 of the rite which asks four questions of the sponsors. Their answer is: "They have." Then the bishop will address the whole assembly.

Act of Recognition

While the bishop addresses the candidates, who answer "We are," the sponsors will place their hand on the shoulder of their candidate. Next, the deacon will proclaim, "Let us bless the Lord!" The candidates answer, "Thanks be to God!"

Intercessions for the Candidates

Prayer Over the Candidates

An assisting deacon will ask the candidates to kneel at their place. With the bishop, all will be asked to extend their hands over the candidates during this prayer.

Dismissal

Reception in the School Cafeteria

❖ INTRODUCTORY RITES ❖

Call to Worship

Gathering Hymn

Greeting

Opening Prayer

❖ THE LITURGY OF THE WORD ❖

First Reading: Philippians 3: 10-16

Psalm 130: With the Lord There is Mercy

Gospel: Matthew 16: 13-17

Homily

Candidates, ministers of initiation, family and friends are invited to the school cafeteria, where the celebration will continue with a reception.

Arriving:

We highly encourage people to car pool. This will help in many ways: 1) less people will get lost on the way to the cathedral; 2) those concerned about safety will be reassured; 3) saves gas, builds community, and further ensures everyone arrives at the cathedral on time.

Seating in the Cathedral will be reserved for candidates and sponsors only. All the candidates and their sponsors will sit in the East and West transepts of the cathedral (Please see diagram on next page). This is why you are asked to send the Office of Worship the participation form on the back inside cover of this resource packet regarding the number of people expected from each of these groups. All family members and the parish catechumenal team will be seated together in the nave. If your parish group can arrive at the cathedral together it would facilitate the process greatly.

We plan NOT to assign specific seats by-way-of parish groups. Instead, the numbers you provide us on the enclosed form will allow us to save enough seats in the transepts (and, if needed, in the main nave of the cathedral). Candidates do not need to sit together by parish groupings, but each candidate must be seated next to her/his sponsor(s). Therefore, please know that the numbers you send in are taken very seriously. We cannot guarantee that we can accommodate mistakes in head count - so please be very careful.

Those participating in the Rite of Call should arrive at least 15 minutes before the time of the liturgy. Parking will be available for this group in the NORTH LOT of the cathedral. The south lot will be reserved for buses.

Above all things, let us remember charity.

COPY and DISTRIBUTE the enclosed map so every one knows the way.

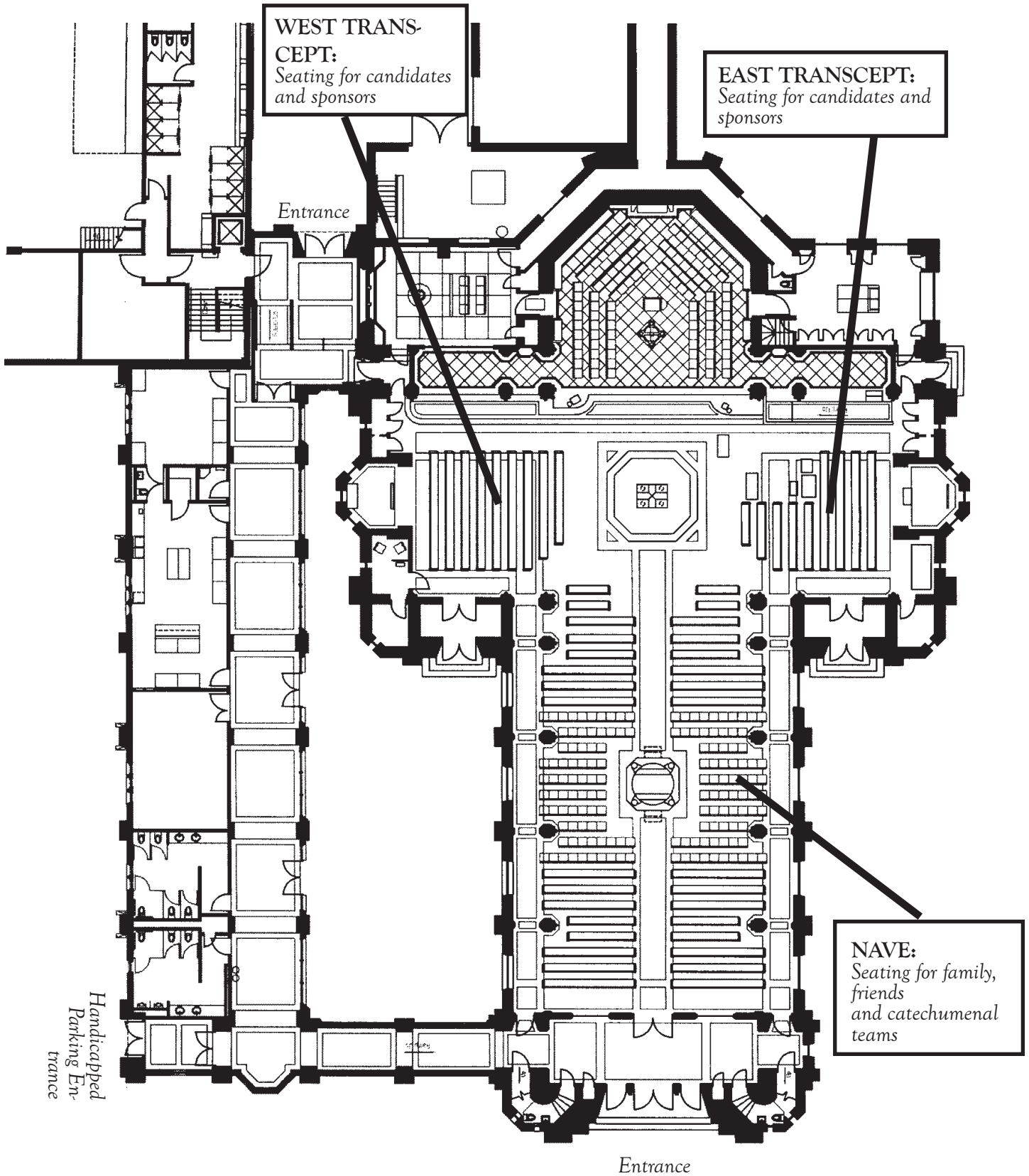
Cookies for the Reception:

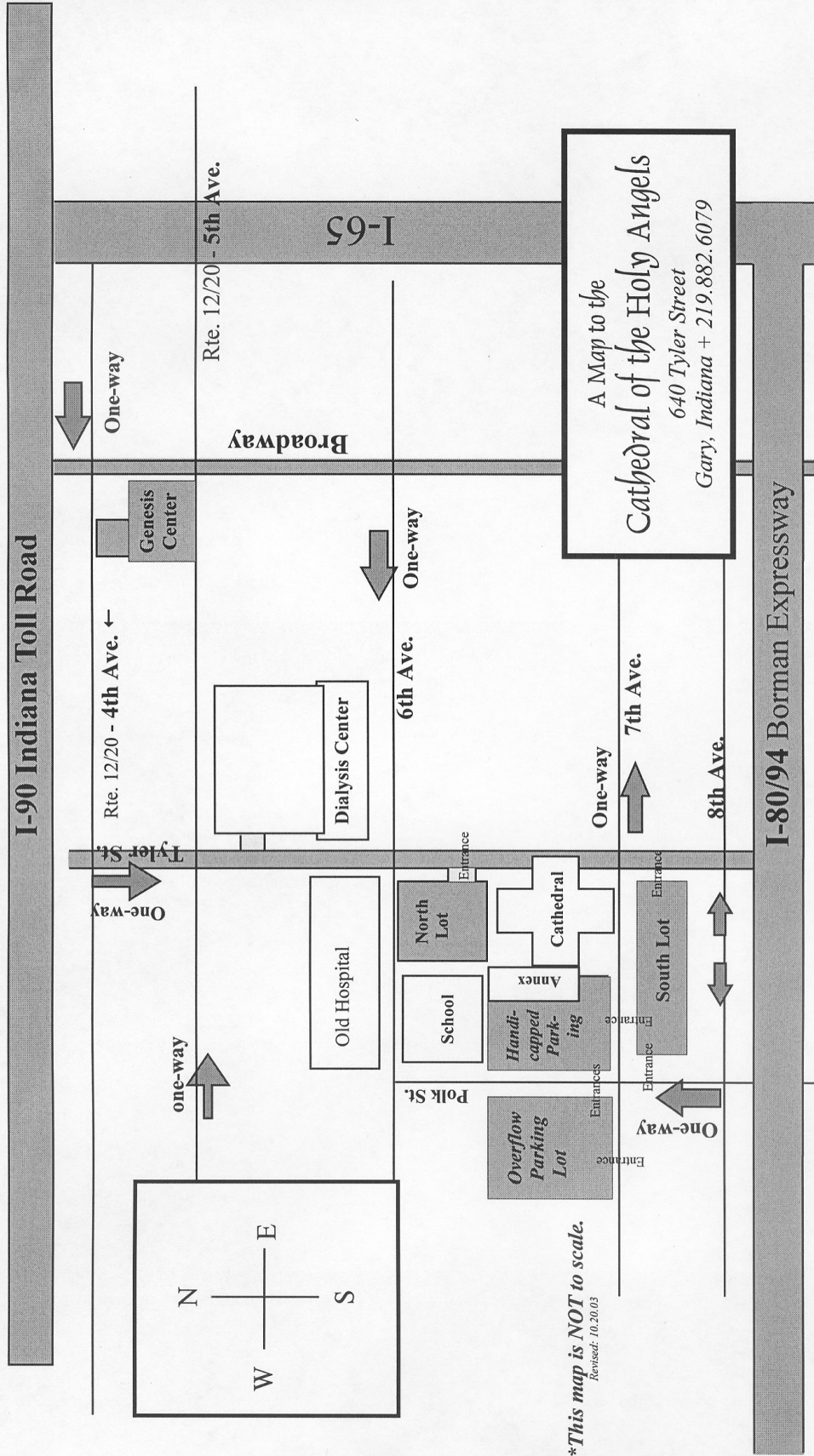
As in the past, we would ask that each parish-group bring enough cookies for themselves. Upon arriving the cookies can be taken to the cafeteria. Coffee, punch and napkins will be provided. Thank you.

Departing:

The bishop will meet each candidate at the brief reception following the liturgy. There will be ministers of hospitality in the cafeteria to facilitate this process.

CATHEDRAL OF THE HOLY ANGELS ❖ RITE OF CALL SEATING DIAGRAM





**This map is NOT to scale.
Revised: 10.20.03*

POSSIBILITY 1: Coming from north Lake County or West of Cline Ave. Take Cline Ave. to Rt. 20 EAST (5th Ave.). Go East on Rt. 20 a few miles passing Methodist Hospital. Turn RIGHT onto Tyler (the former St. Mary Medical center is on the corner. Go 1 block and you will see the Cathedral parking lot. Additional parking can be found across from the cathedral main entrance on the south side of the Cathedral.

POSSIBILITY 2: Coming from East or West - take I-80/94 to the Broadway Exit NORTH. Head North on Broadway approximately 25 blocks. Turn LEFT onto 6th Ave. (the street right before the main intersection and traffic light at 5th Ave.) Go 8 blocks to Tyler and you will see the Cathedral Parking lot. Additional parking can be found on the south side of the Cathedral. Don't panic if you miss 6th Ave. just head through the light at 5th Ave. and turn LEFT on 4th Ave. Then go 8 blocks to Tyler, turn LEFT again and go 3 blocks to the Cathedral.

POSSIBILITY 3: Coming from East or South - take I-65 to the end and turn LEFT onto Rt. 20 WEST. Go West on Rt.20 which will split into a one-way street (4th Ave.). Cross over Broadway and continue onto Tyler (another 8 blocks) then turn LEFT. Go 3 blocks and you will see the Cathedral parking lot. Additional parking is on the south side of the Cathedral.

RITE OF CALL TO CONTINUING CONVERSION ❖ PARTICIPATION FORM

Sunday, 4 December 2011 ❖ 2 p.m.

Please return this form to the Office of Worship no later than Monday, 28 November 2011

Parish: _____ Town/City: _____
 Deanery: _____ Initiation Ministry Contact Person: _____
 Day Telephone: _____

<p>TOTAL NUMBER OF:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Candidates: _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Sponsors: _____</p> <hr/> <p>CLOSEST POSSIBLE ESTIMATE OF:</p> <p>Total Family/Friends Participating: _____</p> <p>Total Initiation Team Participating: _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Grand Total of All in Party: _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">HOSPITALITY INFORMATION</p> <p>Will any persons in your party require the following assistance? (If yes, please indicate the number of persons requiring that particular assistance in the box to the right).</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Seating for a wheelchair? _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Seating for a walker? _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Assisted hearing devices? _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">An American Sign Language Interpreter? _____</p>
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Please type (or print legibly) the names of those seeking candidacy. The names submitted will be published in the Northwest Indiana Catholic Newspaper. Names submitted after November 16th will not appear in the newspaper.

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
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We will be bringing snacks to share at the reception and will drop them off before the liturgy begins. Please circle your response: **yes** or **no**

Please use reverse side or another sheet of paper for listing more names. Please return this completed form to Office of Worship, Diocese of Gary, 9292 Broadway, Merrillville IN 46410-7088. Telephone: 219.769.9292, ext. 226; Fax: 219.738.9034

Cut along dotted line or photocopy page.

