

# Minor Exorcisms

Even though the word “exorcism” has negative connotations in our culture, the minor exorcisms prescribed for the catechuminate help prepare the catechumens for Baptism by drawing their “attention the real nature of Christian life, the struggle between flesh and spirit ... and the unending need for God’s help” (RCIA 90). They are usually given at the conclusion of a Liturgy of the Word (RCIA 92).

Although they are not included in the ritual book, prayers against sin and the power of evil may be prayed for the candidates as well. Having already received Baptism, candidates are in a very different situation than catechumens – so the two groups should be clearly distinguished from one another, and their sacramental situations reflected in the prayers for them.

The minor exorcisms for catechumens (see RCIA 94A – K) can easily serve as a basis for prayer for candidates if the text is adapted to make it appropriate for those already baptized. In any case, when catechumens receive minor exorcisms and candidates receive a prayer against sin and the power of evil, the two groups must be called up and prayed over separately.

## PRAYERS OF EXORCISM (catechumens)

94 As the catechumens bow or kneel, the celebrant, with hand outstretched over them, says one of the following prayers.

A. Let us pray.  
God of power,  
Who promised us the Holy Spirit through Jesus, your Son,  
we pray to you for these catechumens,  
who present themselves before you.  
Protect them from the spirit of evil  
and guard them against error and sin,  
so that they may become the temple of your Holy Spirit.  
Confirm what we profess in faith,  
so that our words may not be empty,  
but full of the grace and power  
by which your Son has freed the world.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## (similar prayer for candidates – an example)

Let us pray.  
God of power,  
Who has given us the Holy Spirit through Jesus, your Son,  
we pray to you for these candidates,  
who present themselves before you.  
Protect them from the spirit of evil  
and guard them against error and sin,  
so that they may always be a temple of your Holy Spirit.  
Confirm what we profess in faith,  
So that our words may not be empty,  
But full of grace and power,  
By which your son has freed the world.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.