



**ACM**  
Association for  
CATECHUMENAL MINISTRY

## **From Fear to Freedom: Understanding the Purpose of Scrutinies**

**Supporting your mission as an OCIA Leader through your inbox.**



As we journey through Lent, we approach the powerful rites of Scrutinies celebrated on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of this season.

### **Beyond the Word "Scrutiny"**

The term "scrutiny" might initially sound intimidating. In our culture, being scrutinized often feels uncomfortable—whether by others, authorities, or especially by God. We naturally prefer words like "mercy" and "forgiveness." Yet this discomfort reveals precisely why these rites are so essential.

## **The Spiritual Purpose**

These ancient rites are not about harsh judgment but loving protection. As exorcism prayers, they offer special safeguards against spiritual attacks that often intensify as the Elect approach baptism. The closer they come to the Easter sacraments, the more they may experience resistance from forces that would draw them away from Christ and His Church.

## **Three Powerful Gospel Encounters**

Each Scrutiny is paired with a transformative Gospel:

1. The Samaritan Woman (3rd Sunday) This encounter reminds the Elect that while Jesus knows their sins completely, He invites honest acknowledgment and personal responsibility. No sin lies beyond divine mercy—only Jesus can provide the forgiveness and healing we seek.
2. The Man Born Blind (4th Sunday) This week's Gospel illuminates how we inherit the blindness of original sin that separates us from our created purpose. The Elect are encouraged to recognize their spiritual blindness and seek restoration.
3. The Raising of Lazarus (5th Sunday) (Coming next week)

As you prepare the Elect for these encounters, help them understand that scrutiny leads not to condemnation but to liberation. These rites prepare them to receive the fullness of grace in the baptismal waters with open hearts and genuine joy.

Praying for you and those you guide,  
The ACM OCIA Team