

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

Come and learn more about the Catholic church through R.C.I.A. program. Preparation to receive the initiation sacraments of the Catholic Church!



The RCIA (*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*) is a process whereby those interested in learning about the Catholic faith come together on a weekly basis to learn about the scriptures and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and at the same time, to discover where God is present in their lives.

The process is designed for those adults and children over the age of seven who are:

- ◆ Unbaptized
- ◆ Baptized in another tradition and desire to



The First Phase: The Period of Inquiry (Pre-Catechumenate)

The period of Inquiry is a time for:

- ◆ Asking questions about the Catholic faith
 - ◆ Building community within the group
 - ◆ Developing a trusting atmosphere
 - ◆ More importantly, it is a time for:
 - ◆ Examining God's presence in our lives, past and present
 - ◆ Learning about prayer
 - ◆ Fostering conversion
 - ◆ Developing or improving our relationship with God
 - ◆ Getting to know his Church
- At this point the group will discuss topics such as:
- ◆ What brought you to RCIA
 - ◆ Prayer and Liturgy
 - ◆ What is your image of God
 - ◆ Who is Jesus
 - ◆ Who is the Holy Spirit
 - ◆ Who is the Trinity
 - ◆ The Saints

The conclusion of this Phase leads onto the **Rite of Acceptance.**



The First Rite: The Rite of Acceptance

The Rite of Acceptance is the first rite of the RCIA process. It takes place within the context of a Sunday Mass. Those wishing to enter into the second phase of the RCIA (the Catechumenate or Study Period) make public commitment to accept the way of the cross. The worshipping community, the members of your parish family, publicly welcome them and promise to support to them in their ongoing journey of faith. The Candidates (*those who are baptized*) and Catechumens (*those who are unbaptized*) are signed with the sign of the cross to remind them of their commitment, and they also receive the Word of God, to remind them that the Scriptures are the source of our faith.

Candidates and Catechumens now move onto the **Catechumenate (Study) Period.**



The Second Phase: The Catechumenate (Study) Period

The period of study (Catechumenate) is a time for:

- ◆ "Breaking Open the Word" - reading and discussing the Sunday Gospel
- ◆ Getting more involved in parish activities, getting to know the parish community
- ◆ Learning about the basic teachings and beliefs of the Catholic Church
- ◆ More importantly, it is a time for:
 - ◇ Continuing to examine God's presence in our lives, past and present
 - ◇ Developing prayer life, entering into the communal worship of the parish
 - ◇ Fostering conversion and Developing or improving our relationship with God.



The Second Rite: The Rite of Sending

The Rite of Sending is often celebrated in a parish the week before the Rite of Election. It is a sending forth rite, which symbolizes the parish sending the candidates to the Cathedral the next week with love, prayers and support.

The Third Rite: The Rite of Election

The Rite of Election is a celebration that is usually held at the Diocesan Cathedral. It is celebrated on the same day in many of the Dioceses around the world. Those wishing to be Baptized or Received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church come together for prayer. Their names are publicly declared to all present. This signifies their intention to be initiated at the Easter Vigil. The Bishop joyfully welcomes those to be baptized as children of God, as well as those who have already been baptized but seek full communion with the Catholic Church.



The Third Phase: The Period of Purification and Enlightenment

The period of purification and enlightenment is a time for:

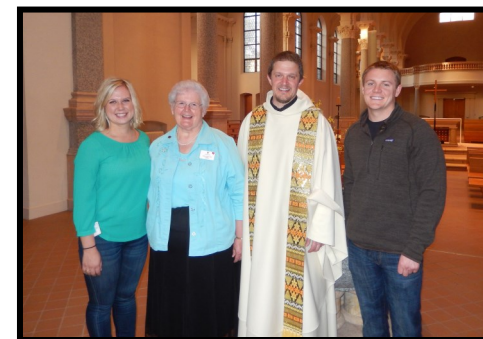
- ◆ Repentance
- ◆ Examining areas of sinfulness and weakness in our lives and asking for God's help in healing these areas
- ◆ Prayer, fasting and almsgiving
- ◆ Preparation for receiving the Sacraments of initiation
- ◆ Often the Sunday Gospel for the week is discussed and what it means in the context of our lives. At this stage the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church are explored:
 - ◆ Baptism
 - ◆ Eucharist
 - ◆ Confirmation
 - ◆ Matrimony
 - ◆ Reconciliation
 - ◆ Holy Orders
 - ◆ Anointing of the Sick

The Fourth Rite: The Penitential Rite and Scrutinies

The Penitential Rite and the three Scrutinies are rites designed to help those seeking initiation into the Catholic Church to overcome their areas of weakness, and to strengthen their areas of goodness. The parish family joins in prayer with them, asking God to purify them and help them be ready to receive the Sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil.

The Fifth Rite: The Rite of Initiation

On the night of the Easter Vigil – on the night we celebrate new life through death – Communities usually celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism (for the Catechumens), Confirmation and Eucharist. In our Campus community we will schedule this at a Campus Mass after Easter. The ceremonies used can be traced back to the year 200 A.D., the whole campus community renews it's own baptismal commitment as it welcomes new members into its midst. It is the culmination to the journey of conversion, but certainly not the end of that journey. Our new full members now join all the community in a lifelong journey of continuing education and formation.



Interested in receiving more information or joining the RCIA group this year?
Call Sister Sharon Nohner
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