



**Want to know more about the Catholic Faith?
An adult program called the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)
will be starting soon. This program gives the participants information
and experiences to help them make a decision about becoming a
Catholic. If you want more information,
please call the church office at 623-3600.**

What is R.C.I.A.?

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.

Is RCIA for you?

**There are many reasons why you may want to become involved in RCIA.
Do any of these fit you?**

- *I am searching for a deeper spirituality in my life.**
- *I am interested in learning more about the Catholic Church; what she teaches and why.**
- *I am a baptized Catholic but have received little or no formal religious formation.**
- *I have never been baptized.**
- *I am married to a Catholic and attend Mass but just don't know what the next step might be.**
- *I have been baptized in another Christian denomination and wish to become Catholic.**
- *I am a baptized Catholic but have not received Eucharist or Confirmation.**
- *I am not Christian and want to know more about Christianity.**

You are always welcome to "Come and See." The journey begins with one small step!

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

- **Unbaptized**
- **Baptized in another tradition**
- **Baptized Catholic, but with no further religious training or sacraments.**

Becoming Catholic --The R.C.I.A.

All are welcome to join the Catholic Church. For those interested in joining, the R.C.I.A program new classes begin in August. R.C.I.A. is a journey for those who are seeking faith or those seeking to learn more about the faith through the Catholic community. It embodies the recognition that faith and conversion are a gradual process. For more information call the church office at 623-3600.

How Does one Become a Catholic?

Some people become Catholic gradually. They were baptized as infants, grew up in Catholic homes, received a religious education and gradually shared in the sacraments of the Church. Others came to the Church as adults. Sometimes they were already baptized; sometimes they had already received a religious formation in another faith. They may have been contacted by a Catholic but they probably made the first move by talking to a priest or someone else about the Church. The Church wants to welcome all those who are interested in the Catholic faith. For those who think they might like to become Catholic, the Church has the RCIA. The process of welcoming new members into the Catholic Church is formally called the RCIA or the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

What is the Catechumenate?

The catechumenate is an extended period of instruction, of listening to the Scriptures, of praying, and of observing how Christians actually live their faith. It provides an opportunity for deepening one's understanding of the Gospel message, for spiritual renewal and for direct contact with members of the local church. The catechumenate includes various rites that are celebrated on the way to full membership in the Catholic Church. These rites mark the spiritual growth of the individual candidates and visibly express the community's concern for them.

How is the Catechumenate Organized?

Each parish has a format for the catechumenate that is appropriate to the local community. There are four distinct periods for this "spiritual journey of adults."

1. PRE-CATECHUMENATE or PERIOD OF EVANGELIZATION Inquirers are invited to ask questions to hear the Gospel message, and to reflect on the way they can apply it to their own lives. A member of the community, called a "Sponsor," will accompany each inquirer on the journey. At the conclusion of this period, candidates who want to continue on the journey celebrate the entrance into the next period. This "gateway" is THE RITE OF BECOMING A CATECHUMEN.

2. **THE CATECHUMENATE or PERIOD OF TEACHING** With the help of the sponsor and members of the community, they learn about the teaching of the Church and grow in faith. The catechumens interact with the faith community, learn about Christian service and participate in the Liturgy of the Word. This period concludes with **THE RITE OF ELECTION** and usually takes place the first Sunday of Lent. The rite celebrates the call of the catechumen to receive the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil.

3. **PURIFICATION & ENLIGHTENMENT** During Lent the parish community joins the "Elect" as they are now called, in their final preparation and continues with them on the journey toward the celebration of Easter. It is a time of conversion. This period focuses on overcoming fears and weaknesses and building strengths through prayer and reflection on religious experiences and faith. The climax occurs at the Easter Vigil with the celebrations of the Sacraments of Initiation. Christians who are already baptized may be formally received into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Liturgy.

4. **MYSTAGOGIA** This is a period of 50 days from Easter to Pentecost. It is a time for the new members of "Neophytes" to adjust to their place in the community and deepen their understanding of Jesus' death and resurrection.

How Is the RCIA Different from Past Practices of Receiving Adults into the Church?

It offers a fuller and more intensive preparation. It is a two-way ministry. The parish community ministers to the catechumens by sharing faith with them, by teaching the gospel views on life and by supporting their conversion process. The catechumens minister to the faithful by allowing them to share in their conversion. Thus, all members in the faith community renew their own baptisms