

Period of Purification- Enlightenment

The third stage of the process commences with the Rite of Election/Call to Continuing Conversion and ends with the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil. This period consists of intense preparation and prayer and includes the celebration of the scrutinies (last 3 Sundays in Lent) for catechumens and is marked by the presentation of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. At the Easter Vigil, which takes place on the Saturday night prior to Easter Sunday, the catechumens will receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist and the candidates will be confirmed and receive Holy Eucharist.



Mystagogy

The fourth stage in the process is mystagogy. While this period formally extends into the 50 days of the Easter season, in reality it is a lifelong process of learning what it means to be a Disciple of Jesus Christ! During the 50 days, the newly initiated continue to undergo catechesis on the Faith and reflect on their participation of the Sunday Eucharist. Those who have been "candidates" do not necessarily need to participate in this process if they have been actively living the Christian life in another denomination.

Making the Journey

Becoming a Catholic is a life long journey that begins with our baptism and continues throughout our life. It is a continual saying "Yes" to the Lord. Like all human institutions, we are not perfect, however together we are called to strengthen one another in faith. As Pope Francis so aptly noted "the Church is a field hospital" a place where wounded people gather to receive grace, forgiveness and mercy from God.

If you are interested in joining us in this journey, contact your nearest Catholic parish or the parish office where you picked up this pamphlet. Come see why our Holy Father stated that belonging to the Church "is truly the most wonderful experience we can have: to belong to a people walking, journeying through history together with our Lord, who walks among us! We are not alone; we do not walk alone. We are part of the one flock of Christ that walks together."

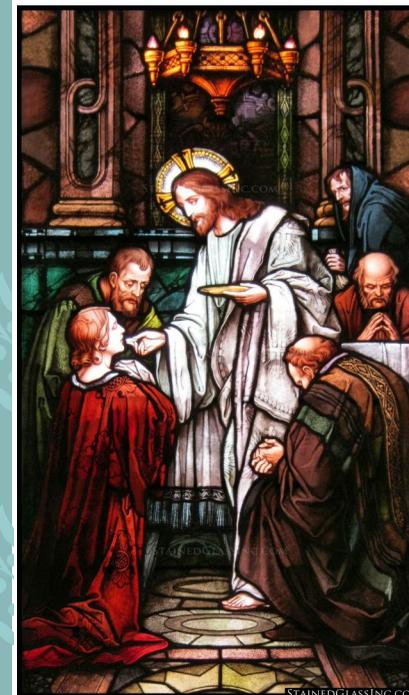
We invite you to come walk with us.



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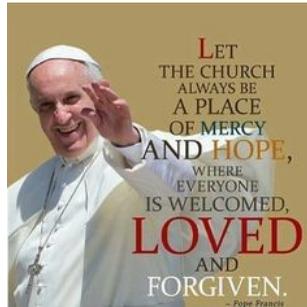
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A JOURNEY OF FAITH: THE RCIA



Catholic Diocese of Columbus,
Office for Divine Worship

The Catholic Church Welcomes You



For over 2,000 years, the Catholic Church has been faithful to the truth of Jesus Christ and His Gospel, which has been revealed

by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures and Apostolic Tradition. As Christians, we are made members of God's Holy Family through the Sacrament of baptism. We receive grace from God to live a life of faith through reception of the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist—the gift of Christ's abiding presence. Strengthened by the Eucharist, we seek to become the hands and feet of Jesus in service to our brothers and sisters in need and working for His Kingdom here on earth.

We invite you to learn more about us and join us in living this great mystery of faith!

[The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults \(RCIA\)](#)

The formation of adults and the process for initiation into the Catholic Church is called the "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults", or simply the "RCIA". This program provides the groundwork for basic faith development. Together with others, you will gather for classes, prayer, Mass, and discussion with members of the Church who have been specially trained for this ministry. The program

is centered around the liturgical calendar of the Church and it will help you enter into the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ which is central to our Faith. While each parish's programs may differ in function and format, they all follow the same process. The RCIA has several stages, each tailored to foster your relationship with Jesus and learn more about His Church.

[Who should Attend RCIA?](#)

[The Unbaptized](#)—these are people age 7 and above who have discerned God's call to conversion and faith, and are seeking to answer that call. They are called *catechumens*.

[Those Baptized in another Christian Church](#)—these are men and women who have been baptized and formed in another faith

community other than the Catholic Church. These individuals are seeking full communion with the Catholic Church. They are called *candidates*.



[Baptized, but uncatechized Catholics](#)—these are individuals who were baptized as an infant in the Church, but received no formal religious education. These men and women will be catechized to receive the Sacraments of Penance, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. In the Diocese of Columbus, there is a special liturgy for those who have been baptized Catholic to receive the remaining Sacraments of Initiation from the Bishop of the

Diocese at the Cathedral. This usually takes place sometimes during the first two-three weeks of Lent.

[The Stages of RCIA:](#)

[Inquiry/Pre-catechumenate](#)

This is the "come and see" stage. You are invited to join others interested in the faith to learn more about the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Church. This is a time for reflection on your

own life's journey in light of the Gospel values. You are invited to discern if God may be inviting you to your spiritual home in the Church. This period allows for you to ask questions and to learn more about what it means to be a Catholic. This period can take as long as you need, and it assists you to determine if you are ready to make this step. It is important to know that if you decide that this is not the right choice for you, you can leave any time. If you choose to continue, you will be formally accepted at the parish of your choice through the Rite of Acceptance into the order of catechumens or the Rite of Welcoming (for candidates). This rite allows

"I will go peaceably and firmly to the Catholic Church. For if faith is so important to our salvation, I will seek it where true faith began...seek it among these who received it from God Himself."

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

you to state publicly that you wish to follow Jesus Christ as a member of the Catholic Church.

[Catechumenate](#)

This is a time for formation and growth in the faith. Along with your companions and the faith community you will continue to study, pray upon and learn more about the teachings of the Catholic Church. Each Sunday you will attend the Liturgy of the Word at Mass and after the homily, you will be invited to break open the Word of God with one another, and further understand God's role in salvation history—both your own and the world's. During this time you will be anointed, and participate in various prayers, and blessings. Through all of this, the Church community prays with and for you as you make this journey of faith. At the Rite of Election/Call to Continuing Conversion, celebrated the first Sunday of Lent, the Bishop of the Diocese will formally acknowledge your intentions and readiness to receive the Sacraments of Initiation. From this time, the catechumens will be called "The Elect".

