

## What is the RCIA?

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The RCIA is a formation process for adults seeking initiation into the Church, and it provides the groundwork for basic faith development. Candidates 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 which is meant to allow believers to enter into the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Throughout the Diocese, each parish's programs may differ in function and format, but they all follow the same process and stages.

Sponsors are an integral part of the RCIA process.

Interested in learning more?  
Contact the following at your parish:



Catholic Diocese of Columbus  
Office for Divine Worship  
197 E. Gay Street  
Columbus, OH 43215  
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## RCIA Sponsors: Companions on the Journey

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## What is a RCIA sponsor?

As Church, we make a promise to accompany each person who makes the journey to become Catholic. The role of RCIA sponsor is the fulfillment of that promise. You are the bridge to the parish community. As a sponsor you are assigned a candidate (baptized adult) or catechumen (unbaptized adult) whose continuing faith journey you will share.

Being a sponsor is like being a trusted friend. As a sponsor, you walk with a candidate or catechumen through a formation process that culminates with initiation into the Catholic Church.

## Role of a Sponsor

Within the RCIA, the sponsor plays a very important role in the faith formation of the inquirer. The roles a sponsor plays are as varied and different as each person, but in general s/he is:

- ◆ A **mentor** to the individual through active listening, supportive questions and gentle guidance.
- ◆ The **human face** of the process of conversion, a person who knows that faith is a journey, that one makes mistakes, and that the good and the bad bear witness to faith.
- ◆ A **prayer partner**...someone willing to pray for and with their person. S/he is willing to attend special liturgies and Masses that mark the milestones of the process.
- ◆ A **witness** to the Gospel in words and deeds; someone who believes in and participates in the Church's call to social justice in the world.
- ◆ A **companion in faith**. A man or woman willing to share their own faith journey with another soul with the realization that the road is bumpy, often unpaved and full of potholes; yet, despite it all they keep their eyes on **Jesus**

## Requirements for Sponsors

Individuals serving in the role of sponsor should:

1. Have received all the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation).
2. Be at least 16 years of age.
3. Be a registered member of the parish with regular Mass attendance.
4. Able and willing to attend classes, retreats, special liturgies, etc. with their candidate as requested.
5. Be open and comfortable with questions, dialogue, and sharing their faith with others.
6. Be willing to accept the "grey" parts of life, trusting in the mercy and providence of God.
7. Live a life that is in accord with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.