



**The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** is the educational and spiritual process for welcoming and initiating new adult members in the Catholic faith community. The group meets each Monday at 7:00 PM in the school. The process is approximately one year in length and consists of four steps (see below).

Please see the Pastor or Assistant Pastor after Mass or call the Parish office ( 860) 871.1970 to make arrangements.

**The RCIA is done in 4 steps;**



## 1. PERIOD OF INQUIRY

Awakening , conversion - a personal journey of mind, heart and spirit.  
This is the initial period involving prayer and study using the Bible, the new Catholic Catechism, early Church history, documents of Vatican II etc.

The following titles are classic examples of the awakening process, or journey of conversion,-

" [The Seven Storey Mountain](#) " - Thomas Merton,- Harcourt Brace Oct. 1998,

" [Crossing The Tiber](#) " - Stephen K. Ray - Ignatius Press Feb. 1997,

" [Something Beautiful for God](#) " [Malcolm Muggeridge](#) - Harper San Francisco Nov. 1986.

( [Article - Dion DiMucci personal testimony](#) )

" [A Century of Catholic Converts](#) " - 46 Mini-biographies from the 20th Century.

" [In Good Company](#) " - Autobiography of Fr. James Martin S.J., - 2007

## 2. Rite of Acceptance

[Desire](#) on the part of the inquirer for full discipleship, initiation and full communion with the [Church](#) is the requirement for this step.

## 3. Rite of Election

The Rite of Election marks the end of the period of **basic** instruction and formation, so the catechumens are now called the elect. The Bishop calls all catechumens and candidates to the diocesan cathedral to recognize and receive them in the Rite of Election ceremony. The elect now join with the parishioners sharing the same goal as they journey through Lent.

#### 4. Initiation and Full Participation

Assembling together with the parish congregation on the Easter Vigil, the elect and candidates celebrate their Baptism, Confirmation and first Eucharist, recognizing, as the [Church](#) teaches, in baptism we die to sin in Christ's death so that we may rise to new life with Him. This Initiation is the beginning of a life of full ongoing sacramental participation and prayer.

( More information on the R.C.I.A. process can be obtained through the new [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#)

**also**

available on Amazon.com or Barnes & Noble).

**Resource Links** (also see [Links](#) in main menu).

#### Resources

1. Brennan Purcell, Ph.D, professor of history.

[See Dr. Purcell as guest on The Journey Home program share his faith journey. Live caller Q&A, emails.](#)

[\( Video, 60 min.\).](#)

2. [Personal Testimony – Michael Cumbie on The Journey Home program – June 7, 2010 .](#)  
(Video)

3. [Journey Back to the Faith Through the RCIA - Video 28 minutes](#)

4. [Who Is Jesus and What Makes Him Unique ? - Video clip - 5 minutes](#)

[RCIA FAQs from The USCCB \( United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#)

[Online Catholic Catechism. - Contains Scripture, theology, prayer resources, references and more.](#)

[The Documents of The Second Vatican Council](#)

[Early Church Fathers - Links](#)

[Faith Facts](#) - Complete, and easy-to-read answers to specific questions about the Catholic faith.

## **Frequently Asked Questions About Adult Initiation.**

Frequently Asked Questions about the RCIA  
( excerpted from St. Charles Borromeo Church )

**At this time I have no intention of joining the Church but I do want to learn more about Catholicism. Is there a place for me in the adult initiation process?** Yes. We all learn from

one another and from our journey to know God better. Please join us for the next Catholic Inquiry Session and we can discuss what path may be best for your continued journey.

**I know that I want to join the Catholic Church. Where do I begin?** This depends on you and where you are on your faith journey. If you are fairly new to Catholicism or have limited experience with the Christian faith, you may still find it helpful to continue to explore Catholicism for a time before moving into the Catechumenate gathering. Each person's journey is unique and the adult initiation Team will assist you in utilizing the process at St. Joseph's so that your journey is fruitful and fulfilling.

**Once I have decided to join the Catholic Church, why might it take a year or longer? That seems like a long time.** When someone who is not baptized comes forward with an interest in joining the Catholic Church, that interest is then to be joined with knowledge about the Church's traditions and teachings, as well as a sufficient experience of the Catholic faith community. Joining the Catholic Church is not about passing a test on Catholicism; rather it is about learning and living the Gospel of Jesus in the context of the parish and wider Catholic community. This takes time and it is suggested that one preparing for baptism wishing to join the Church experience at least one full liturgical year of the Catholic faith community.

Adult baptisms are celebrated each year at the Easter Vigil (the Saturday night before Easter Sunday), which occurs each year in the Spring. If one comes to the parish in December with a desire to be baptized and to join the Church, the following Easter would only be approximately 4 months away. This is not sufficient time for someone to experience the fullness of the Catholic faith Church and community. This "December seeker" would be welcomed into the adult initiation process, would journey with a fellow group of seekers, and would most likely be baptized and initiated into the Catholic Church approximately 16 months later.

If one comes to the parish in the spring having made a decision to join the church, depending on the level of preparation needed, that person may be deemed ready to be initiated into the church at the following Easter, which would be approximately 12 months later. Each person's journey is unique and the duration in formation depends on the grace of God.

The goal in joining the Catholic Church is not purely to be baptized, although the Sacrament of Baptism is a priceless gift from our God. The goal is to grow in your love and awareness of God, to begin or build on your relationship with Jesus Christ, and to learn how the Catholic faith community lives out this call. Baptism is part of the journey but not a finish line to sprint towards.

Joining the Church is a process of shaping our hearts, minds, and spirits so they look more like God's. The rich exploration of faith is not a race, but a journey to be savored, reflected upon, and celebrated.

**I am not baptized and am getting married to a Catholic. I wanted to join the Church before our wedding. Is that possible?** Remember, the goal is not purely baptism or even joining the Catholic Church. The goal is learning and living within the context of the Catholic faith community, which allows us to fully live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ as celebrated in the Catholic Church.

If your wedding is not yet scheduled, you are invited to talk over this timetable with a member of

the adult initiation Team or a priest. If your wedding is already scheduled within the next 12 months, it may be helpful to put the time and energy needed into preparing for and beginning your marriage. This too is also a very important and wonderful part of your faith journey!

Having said this, you may simultaneously be preparing to join the Church and be preparing for your marriage. Each situation is unique and deserves consideration. Racing to join the Church before your wedding does not respect you nor the unique faith journey that God is creating just for you.

**I was baptized, but not as a Catholic. I wish to join the Catholic Church. Am I still looking at 12+ months of preparation?** That depends on a variety of things. If you come to the Catholic faith community with a full experience of living the Christian life within the context of your previous faith community, you may be invited to study and understand the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism. This may be sufficient preparation which builds upon your previous adult faith formation.

On the other hand, if you come to join the Catholic Church with limited faith experience or knowledge, you will be better served with a fuller and more extensive experience within the adult initiation process.

The journey IS the way to faith! Your individual journey is the highest priority and just like any other relationship, our relationship with our God takes energy, intention, and time. Unlike adult baptisms, welcoming baptized adults into the Catholic Church can occur outside of the Easter season.

**I was baptized as a Catholic but never received my first Eucharist nor been confirmed. Where do I fit in?** You might be invited into the weekly adult initiation sessions and to prepare to complete your initiation into the Catholic faith community. Unlike adult baptisms, welcoming baptized Catholics into full initiation can occur outside of the Easter season. Permission from the Bishop to celebrate your eventual Confirmation would need to be granted.

**I was baptized as a Catholic and received my first Eucharist. I was never confirmed. Do I jump into the Adult Initiation process too?** Depends, those who are solely preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation may also find the adult initiation sessions to be an excellent way to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Adult Confirmations can also occur throughout the year. The adult initiation Coordinator can give you additional information.

**I am divorced. Is this an issue as far as the adult initiation process is concerned?** Each situation is unique but these are important issue to understand and sort out. You are encouraged to talk with the adult initiation Coordinator or a priest about your unique situation when you first inquire into the process.

**I understand that I need a sponsor?** Jesus taught his disciples the importance of community. It is meaningful that we walk this faith journey with companions. If you decide to join the Catholic Church or if you are a Catholic who wishes to complete your initiation, you will need a sponsor from the Catholic faith community.

Basically, a sponsor is a fully initiated Catholic who will serve as a companion, listener, and mentor. The sponsor will also help you to learn more about the parish and ways to live out the Catholic faith. If you already have someone in mind that is not from St. Joseph's, a co-sponsor may be assigned from the parish if you wish. Baptismal candidates will also have an opportunity

to choose a Godparent(s) as baptism approaches.

**Is there any cost associated with Initiation?** None whatsoever.

**So where do I start?** Once you have read through all of the information provided here, you are asked to attend an upcoming Catholic Inquiry Session. You may also contact us at 860.871.1970

May God bless you on your continued journey of faith. Know that you are a welcomed seeker at St. Joseph Church.