

**THE RITE
OF CHRISTIAN
INITIATION
OF ADULTS**

Baptized
Into the Faith



How Adults Become Catholic

The **Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults** is the process by which adults gradually become members of the Roman Catholic Church.

- Are you interested in learning more about the Catholic Church?
- Are you unbaptized but recognize a need for spirituality in your life?
- Are you a baptized Catholic or baptized into another Christian community but never or infrequently received any religious formation?
- Are you married to a Catholic and attend Mass but don't know how to become a member of the Catholic community?
- RCIA is the place for you. Every year adults are welcomed into the Catholic Community through RCIA. It is a learning and loving process in which conversion of the heart brings you to Jesus Christ who is our Lord and Savior.
- Please contact Tony Millette at 925-254-2426, x 308 for information.

Inquiry or Pre-Catechumenate

The period of Inquiry, also known as the Pre-Catechumenate, is a time to ask questions and tell our stories about our human and spiritual journey. It is a time to hear the good news of salvation, the Gospel-Story of Jesus Christ. As we look at our own life story in the light of the Gospel, we begin to make connections.

There is no fixed duration of this period. During this period, some may decide that this is not the right time for them to enter into the Catholic Church, perhaps because of their own life circumstances.

In previous years, the Inquiry period has occurred on an inter-parochial level, especially between Santa Maria and St. Monica parishes.

Catechumenate

The period of Catechumenate begins with the **Rite of Acceptance**, a celebration of welcome into the community. A person enters this phase with a sincere desire to become a member of the Catholic Church. During this phase, the catechumens gather with the parish community on Sundays, participating in the first part of the Liturgy through prayer and songs, and listening to the proclamation of the Scriptures. After the homily, the catechumens are dismissed with a blessing and go apart to reflect on the Scriptures with a Catechist. During this period, the initial conversion and knowledge of God's love are deepened in community. Additional instruction and study of the faith continues one night a week. This period, too, lasts as long as the person needs it to last, from a few months to several years.

Again, the inter-parochial exchange has deepened an appreciation of the sense that the Roman Catholic Church is truly universal.

Purification and Enlightenment

The period of Purification corresponds to that time known in many Christian communities as Lent, six weeks of extensive preparation for Easter. The transition to this stage is celebrated by the **Rite of Sending** in which the parish community sends the catechumens to meet with our Bishop, the Most Rev. Allen H. Vigneron, for the **Rite of Election**. This step involves not only the individuals, not just the parish community, but involves the entire diocesan church. The Elect enter a time of prayer and preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation. Throughout Lent, special prayers and liturgical rituals are offered at the Sunday Eucharist for the Elect. Throughout this period, the Elect are invited to join with the whole Church in a deeper practice of works of charity and in the practice of fasting.

Paschal Triduum and the Sacraments of Initiation

The Paschal Triduum is the heart of the Church year. It includes Holy Thursday with the Mass of the Lord's Supper, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil. The Sacraments of Initiation are celebrated at the Easter Vigil. By the waters of **Baptism**, a person becomes a member of the Body of Christ. By being anointed with the holy oil of Chrism during **Confirmation**, a person is sealed by the Holy Spirit. By participating in the **Eucharist**, a person is nourished with the body and blood Christ.

Mystagogy

The period of Mystagogy lasts 50 days, from Easter Sunday until Pentecost Sunday. It completes the initiation process. Those who have shared in the Sacraments of Initiation are called neophytes. During this season of Easter joy they reflect on their journey and discern how they can share in the mission of Christ who came to bring salvation and life to the whole world. This period of time reminds all the members of the church that their life in Christ constantly calls them to grow and to look for ways to live the life of grace, personally and in community.

How to Proceed?

The first step is to telephone Tony Millette who coordinates the RCIA process for our parish community for a meeting to learn about the program in more detail. We certainly invite you to join us in our weekend liturgies and fellowship. From the first weekend after Labor Day through the last weekend of June, our parish community liturgies are celebrated on Saturday evenings at 5PM; on Sunday, the liturgies occur at 8, 9:30, and 11 AM, as well as a 5 PM. Presently, from the last weekend of June until the first weekend after Labor Day, our summer schedule is: Saturday at 5 PM; on Sunday at 8 and 9:30 PM.

The schedules for the inquiry, catechumen, and mystagogy segments are being prepared. They will be added to this website page as soon as available.