

What are they saying about the RCIA?

The RCIA process was a wonderful experience for us in that it paved the way for our family to be in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, which is full of a rich history and was founded by the apostles Peter and Paul. Now our children can grow and live in the fullness of faith through partaking in the sacraments of the Church and following our righteous example.

Brian & Charmaine L'Oiseau

RCIA provided a place that stimulated my mind with weekly readings and thoughtful discussions, it opened my heart to people that offered encouragement and friendship and it gave me a foundation to allow me to grow in my faith with questions, answers and yes more questions. Now that I am Catholic I can share in the wondrous joy and love of communion and all aspects of the faith with my daughter and husband.

Lisa DeRosa

I am so joyful for my conversion, I am closer to God than ever before. The RCIA program helped me gain more insight into the beliefs that my wife and children have been practicing their entire lives. The powerful spiritual insight has changed many of my views of life and helped me to focus on what is really important in life. More than ever, my priorities are my faith and my family.

Louis W Grama



**Meetings are held in the
Our Lady of Sorrows
Church Meeting Room
on Wednesday evenings
from September thru April at
7:30 - 9 P.M.,
unless otherwise scheduled.**

If interested in knowing more,
the parish would be delighted to assist.
Please contact the office at 609.587.4372

I learned about the rosary and the Blessed Mother's constant intercession and prayer for our redemption. Her intercession restored and strengthened my faith that there is nowhere Christ's redemption can't reach. Through the process of RCIA I knew I had experienced a year I would never forget, and now as a team member. I have the happiness of helping others reach full communion in the Catholic Church.

Jan Hartman



RCIA has been my ministry for twenty years and has given me the blessed privilege to teach, serve and mentor those who are studying to become Catholics. Recently, our two parishes have merged and have become more diverse thus enriching the RCIA experience. As a result, I have met wonderful people along this journey of learning. This 2012 brochure is dedicated to the living and deceased members of our RCIA team and to those whom we initiated into the Catholic Faith. A special "thank you" to Rose Marie Peissner and Angelo Milioto for their invaluable help with this brochure. Connie Gaydos RCIA Team Member



**The Parish of
Our Lady of Sorrows –St. Anthony
Two Churches ~ One Parish Family**



**Becoming Catholic.....
R. C. I. A.
Rite of Christian Initiation
of Adults**

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Becoming a Catholic Christian

Most Catholics trace the roots of their faith to their baptism as an infant into the Catholic Christian community. They grew up in Catholic families and after proper preparation, were fully initiated in the life of the Church through the sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.. Baptized Christians of other traditions and unbaptized adults enter into the Catholic church through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, or RCIA, a period of formation in the teaching, spirituality, and life of the church.



What is the RCIA?

The RCIA offers more than the "instruction" classes that we had just a few years ago in the Church. While RCIA is still relatively "new" to us, its roots reach back to the 3rd and 4th centuries after our Lord's Ascension when initiation of adults was an important part of the daily life of the Catholic Christian community. The goal of the RCIA is to foster or deepen one's conversion, within the community of the Church, to Jesus Christ and to the kingdom He proclaims. Sponsored by Catholics in your local parish, it includes prayer, worship, teaching the gospel, catechesis (handing on the traditions of the Church), and dialogue with the community. The RCIA is a spiritual renewal, not only for those seeking to become Catholics, but also for the welcoming community.

The Journey of the RCIA

The RCIA describes initiation as a "spiritual journey." This journey from autumn through spring guides you through five stages:



1. Inquiry Period: During this time, the basic message of the Gospel is proclaimed, and inquirers are encouraged to reflect on their lives in the light of the message of Jesus Christ. This is the time to ask questions about Jesus and His Church. It is a time of crossroads in a person's life, of decision whether he or she wants to enter the Church via the catechumenate.

2. Catechumenate: This is a period of "apprenticeship" in Christian living during which catechumens change their minds, hearts, and lives through lessons, liturgy, and scripture. With the help of a sponsor and members of the parish community, they experience the Church as a community of the faithful: its spirit, work, prayer, creed, and mission.

3. Period of Purification and Enlightenment: This period coincides with the season of Lent in the spring and involves the final preparations for the sacraments of initiation at Easter. Together, the elect and the parish community journey toward Easter by deepening personal commitments to the Lord and praying to overcome any obstacles to spiritual growth.

4. The Sacraments of Initiation: During the most elaborate and joyous celebration of the Church year, Easter, the sacraments of initiation - baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist - are conferred on the elect. Those elect who were already baptized enter into full communion with the Church through confirmation and Eucharist. The entire community of the faithful joyfully welcomes the new members and joins in a renewal of their own baptismal vows.

5. Mystagogia or Post-baptismal Catechesis:

This period lasts from Easter to Pentecost and completes the initiation. It is a festive season for the Church. The new members penetrate the deeper meaning of the Easter sacraments and begin thinking about how they will share in the mission of the Church through service. It is, finally, a reminder to everyone that conversion is a life-long journey.

Who is the RCIA for?

- A. Any adult not yet baptized who wishes to become a Catholic Christian.
- B. Any adult baptized in another Christian Church who wishes to become a Catholic Christian.
- C. Any adult, baptized Catholic who has not yet celebrated Eucharist or Confirmation and wishes to do so.
- D. Any baptized Catholic who, after a time of inactivity in the Church, wishes to rededicate himself or herself as a Catholic.



How long does it take to become a Catholic Christian?

The RCIA is not a program. It is the means for the Church to minister to those who seek membership, and it recognizes that some will need more time than others to prepare for the lifetime of commitment that comes with initiation into the Church. The usual length of preparation is from one to two years. In all cases, the Easter Vigil is the time of initiation.