



*Come and
See*

*What it means
to become Catholic*

What is the R.C.I.A.?

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a process for preparing, welcoming, forming and supporting enquirers who wish to 'Come and See' what the Catholic community is all about. The process of the R.C.I.A. may lead enquirers to faith within the Catholic Church.

Stage 1: Period of Evangelization and Pre-Catechumenate

This is a gradual process that engages individuals with the story of Jesus and the community that follows Jesus. This process, over time, may lead the enquirer to seek membership in the Catholic Church through initial conversion in faith, reflection on the story of Jesus and the celebration of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

First Ritual Step: Acceptance into the Order of Catechumenate

This first ritual step marks the beginning of the catechumenate proper, as the candidates express and the Church accepts their intention to respond to God's call to follow the way of Christ. These candidates are then known as catechumens.

Stage 2: Period of the Catechumenate

This is a longer time of preparation with a focus on formation or catechesis, in duration corresponding to the progress of the individual, for the nurturing and growth of the catechumens' faith and conversion to God; celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word and gradual involvement in the life of the community are important expressions of participating in the life of the believing community.

Second Ritual Step: The Rite of Election or Enrolment of names

This is the liturgical rite, usually celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent, by which the Church formally acknowledges the catechumens' readiness for the sacraments of initiation, and the catechumens, now the elect, express the will to receive these sacraments.

It was not until they experienced the release of the Spirit of Pentecost that they could go out and do what Jesus did; spread the good news that Jesus lived on and called them forth.





Stage 3: Period of Purification and Enlightenment

This is the time immediately preceding the elects' initiation, which takes place during the season of Lent; it is a time of reflection, intensely centred on conversion, marked by celebration of the scrutinies and presentations, and of the preparation rites on Holy Saturday.

Third Ritual Step: Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation

This is the most important liturgical rite, celebrated at the Easter Vigil, when the elect are initiated through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

Stage 4: Period of Post-Baptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy

This is the time, during the Easter season, following the celebration of initiation, when the newly initiated experience being fully a part of the Christian community by participation with all the faithful in the Sunday Eucharistic celebration. It is also a time of renewal for the whole community.

What is involved in the R.C.I.A.?

- The process of Becoming Catholic through the R.C.I.A takes place over time within the context of a Catholic parish community.
- During the process, particularly in the initial stages, enquirers will be introduced to the story of Jesus and his mission to the world.
- The Catholic community plays a role in welcoming, supporting and praying for enquirers who come along. There is usually a parish team or coordinator whose purpose is to support enquirers, educate them and provide formation in the faith of the Church. The parish priest is often part of this support group.
- Sponsors are people who take on a specific role in supporting an enquirer; they act as mentors to the enquirer.
- Enquirers are those who come along to find out about the Catholic Church. They are not baptised and may express a desire to seek Baptism.
- Enquirers may also be people who are baptised in another Christian denomination but wish to become Catholic.
- The R.C.I.A is a process; there is room for catechumens to take as long as they need.



For more information about
Becoming Catholic and the RCIA process,
please contact:

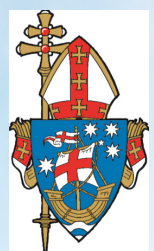
Your Local Catholic Church

Or for help in connecting with a local group

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