



Reflection

'Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will embrace; faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from heaven.'

Psalm 85

In recent weeks, many parishes have begun the process of welcoming people to 'Come and See' what the Catholic Church is about. This initial stage of the RCIA process, named a period of Evangelization and Pre-Catechumenate, is designed for those adults who seek to find out more about the Catholic faith, and it is characterised by a simple approach of presenting the good news of Jesus Christ to the inquiring adults. In the process of sharing their faith and reflections on the gospels, those guiding the RCIA process are, in turn, deepening their own understandings of who Jesus is for them, how he called people to be with him and to come to faith in him, and how he shared with them his intimate relationship with God. The good news that Jesus came to proclaim was that the Kingdom, or Reign of God, was now present in their midst.

At the heart of the good news is that Jesus came among us as human; he belonged to a family and religious community, and out of the depths of his relationship with God, he showed us **how God is** with God's people, and **what God is like** – challenging the beliefs and mindsets of many around him.

We are rapidly approaching the end of this liturgical year, and towards the end of November we will celebrate the feast of Christ the King. Jesus taught that the Reign (or Kingdom) of God was no earthly kingdom. It was not to be a temporal kingdom peopled by those who would seek power, prestige and fame by talking up their own self-importance and inflicting hardship, suffering and oppression on the poor. Rather, Jesus revealed to the people of his time a God who desires to be closely involved in human history, who has a special tenderness and care for the poor, a God of justice, mercy and peace.

This Reign of God is characterised by peace and fellowship among people, the inclusion of all, respect for the dignity and worth of each person, and loving kindness expressed in service of one another. When we celebrate the feast of Christ the King, we acknowledge the true kingship of Jesus. When questioned by Pilate, Jesus claimed to be a king – though not of this world. Jesus came to announce the truth that God's Reign was imminent, and that those wishing to be part of the Reign of God must be willing to be of service, especially to the most vulnerable, and ready to be missionary disciples of Christ. The Reign of God is among us, but not yet fully realised. We see traces of the Reign of God when we take notice

of people being faithful to God, being of service, sharing hospitality and friendship, showing loving kindness and witnessing to the values of Jesus.

Psalm 85 names many of the qualities Jesus spoke of when announcing what God is like:

'Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will embrace; faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from heaven.'

It is into this vision of life in the Reign of God, through the work of the Church, that inquirers are invited to 'Come and See' and to hear the good news of the meaning of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. The early inquiries by potential candidates will lead to the stirrings and development of a faith response to the risen Lord. This initial period is a rich time for exploring and praying the Scriptures, acknowledging the stirrings of faith and sharing insights and moments of faith with those supporting the candidates.

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RCIA Coordinator



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The first formal step in the process of becoming Catholic through the RCIA process is named:

Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens.

This consists of a liturgical rite that marks the beginning of the Catechumenate proper, and it signifies to the community that these candidates who have been inquirers seeking to encounter and know Jesus Christ have now reached a point where there is evidence of the first stirrings of faith and initial conversion, with the intention of entering into a personal relationship with God in Christ.

The Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens consists of:

- ♦ A reception of the candidates
- ♦ A celebration of the Word of God
- ♦ Dismissal of the candidates.

It is highly desirable that the local Christian community know, understand and take part in this rite of acceptance and welcome of these candidates as they continue their journey and formal learning about the Catholic faith in the catechumenate.

As the journey continues, a more intensive process of catechesis takes place during Lent, and during this time, candidates discern, along with their sponsors, catechists and parish priest, their readiness to celebrate the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil.

DIARY DATES FOR 2022

Rite of Election

Sunday 6 March

Sunday 26 June

Mystagogia Mass

Adult Confirmation

Date to be confirmed September/October