




Coming into the Catholic Church Step by Step

The RCIA process serves 3 groups:


- Non-Catholic people who are interested in becoming Catholic
- Non-baptized people
- Some Catholics that have been Baptized, but have not been catechized at all, and need to receive Eucharist and Confirmation.

These three groups follow the following procedure, but are free at any point to leave or pause in the process.


STEP ONE- INQUIRY

 There are two ways to begin. First, individuals might ask their questions one on one with a director, anytime during the year. Second, a group of interested people forms during Lent, and is instructed by a knowledgeable catechist. After at least 6 sessions or more, they may or may not choose to continue.

STEP TWO- PRE-CATECHUMENATE

 If they decide to look further into the faith, they become "Inquirers". They still do not make any commitments to the church, but have made it known they are serious in their questioning. They begin weekly or bi-weekly group or individual sessions with a sponsor and other inquirers according to their own scheduling needs.


STEP THREE- CATECHUMENATE

 If they decide to make a commitment to pursue the sacraments as a Catholic Christian they go through the "RITE OF WELCOME / ACCEPTANCE." This is their declaration to the whole community that their intent is to become Catholic. After the RITE, the non-baptized are called CATECHUMENS. If they are already baptized in our church or another Christian church, they are called

CANDIDATES. They begin leaving Sunday Mass to study scripture with a catechist.

They continue to spend these meetings learning about the faith and asking questions they still have. They also read and study Scripture with a sponsor. If they choose to continue, they are close to their reception of the Sacraments at Easter or at a time determined by the team, the pastor and the Candidate.

STEP FOUR- RITE OF ELECTION

 On the first Sunday of Lent, all RCIA candidates and catechumens in the entire diocese are received by the Bishop at Public Hall. He states before all present, that these people are recognized and welcomed as members-to-be. It is the first time the official church acknowledges them in this way. The non-baptized are then given the name ELECT. Those baptized in other Christian Churches are retain the title CANDIDATES.

The last 6 weeks before Easter, they spend extra time in study and prayer. They have a retreat and again discern if they wish to move toward the sacraments and their commitment to the church.

THIS IS THE NIGHT!

At Easter Vigil, the non-baptized receive the sacraments of initiation, Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist. Candidates make a profession of Faith. After that, they are called NEOPHYTES for a year till the following Easter. They continue to meet occasionally and study the faith through various means and give service where it is needed. When the year is completed, they are expected, like all of us, to live the faith they have professed before all the church and the world.



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If you know someone who is interested in beginning the INQUIRY process, encourage them to call Sister Meribeth at 946-3287.