

What is RCIA?

RCIA is the process through which you can learn more about the Catholic Church, grow in your faith, and complete the initiation Sacraments of Baptism, Communion, and Confirmation.

What should I expect in RCIA?

Each week, we will meet and discuss various topics of faith. As we discuss these topics, participants are encouraged to ask questions and share their own experiences during the process.

When do we meet?

RCIA meets on Tuesday nights at 7pm (to about 9pm) in the meeting room ("Bride's room") in the new St. Anthony of Padua Church (or on Zoom, when necessary). We start in September and continue until about Memorial Day. In order to successfully prepare for their sacraments, members must be a part of the discussion, so regular attendance is expected.



Stages of the RCIA process:

During the **Inquiry** Period, participants learn about the Catholic faith and find out whether they want to become full members of the church. Participants are encouraged to ask questions and bring up topics that they are trying to understand.

The ***Rites of Acceptance and Welcoming*** mark the end of the inquiry period as participants publicly state their wish to continue the process of formation.



During the **Catechumenate** Period, participants (now referred to as "catechumens" or "candidates") learn more details about the Catholic faith and especially about the sacraments. Participants continue meeting on Tuesday nights and now also attend the 9AM Sunday mass together. During mass, catechumens and candidates are dismissed after the homily to reflect on the week's scriptural readings.

The ***Rites of Sending and Election*** mark the end of the catechumenate period. These occur at the beginning of Lent.



During the **Lenten** Period, catechumens and candidates make final preparations for reception of the sacraments.

They will continue to meet on Tuesday nights and at Sunday mass. Also, an RCIA retreat is held during which participants have more time to reflect on their faith journey.



During the ***Easter Vigil*** (on Easter Saturday evening), catechumens and candidates will receive their sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation, and communion). In some cases, the sacrament of marriage may also be celebrated.



After receiving the Easter sacraments, RCIA continues to meet on Tuesday nights for the **Mystagogy** Period to discuss the role of new members of the church.

What is a sponsor and how do I get one?

During the process, a practicing Catholic will act as your sponsor. This sponsor will stand with you during the various rites and take part in discussions with you during RCIA meetings. Your sponsor should be someone with whom you are comfortable to talk and bring up any questions you may have. You are encouraged to find your own sponsor. Your sponsor must be in full communion with the church. This means that he/she regularly attends mass, has received the initiation sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Communion, and, if married, is married according to the norms of the Catholic Church.

What if I am divorced or not married in the Catholic Church?

If you have been divorced, have been married outside the Catholic Church, or are living with a boyfriend or girlfriend outside of marriage, you may need to discuss this situation and what will be necessary to receive your sacraments. RCIA team members can give you some guidance, but these situations really need to be discussed with the parish pastor, Father Denny. You can call the parish office (638-2012) to make an appointment with him.

What if I have been baptized in another Christian faith?

The Catholic Church recognizes baptisms from Protestant faiths, so you would not be baptized again in the Catholic Church. You will need to show a copy of your baptismal certificate to show that you have been baptized.



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St. Anthony's of Padua Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

