



TO BECOME A ROMAN CATHOLIC

Interested in learning more about the Roman Catholic Church? Welcome!

The process in which adults come into the Church is known as OCIA, "The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults."

Who is eligible for this process?

1. The unbaptized. The primary focus of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is on those who are not already Christian and have not been catechized, having little or no religious education.
2. Baptized but un-catechized. These are those who were baptized in the Catholic Church, but did not receive further catechetical formation or instruction, and therefore, have not celebrated the Sacraments of Confirmation or the Holy Eucharist. Some also have their marriage vows recelebrated through the Sacrament of Marriage.
3. Those seeking full Communion with the Catholic Church. These are baptized, practicing Christians from other denominations who were baptized in the Name of the Trinity, and seek entry into the Catholic Church.

In the case of children who have reached the age of reason, the pastor should be consulted for information about Baptism and the other Sacraments of Initiation. Enrollment in the parish religious education program is recommended.

For those who have already received their First Eucharist in the Catholic Church, celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation will occur at the Easter Vigil unless determined by the Diocese of Columbus.

What is the process?

The Rite of Christian Initiation is based on the principle that the process of conversion proceeds gradually, in stages. Progress from one stage to the next is marked by a liturgical celebration amid the parish community. The experience and needs of those in each category described above differ, and so the length of time may vary for each person. Nevertheless, there are certain similarities among all the groups and the process they will experience. These are listed as follows:

A. Pre-catechumenate

The first stage is called the Period of Inquiry, or Pre-Catechumenate. This is when the individual first expresses interest in becoming a Roman Catholic, and begins to explore, with the help of the parish community, what his or her relationship with Christ might be, and how this might be enriched and deepened by joining this Christian community. There is no liturgical rite to mark the beginning of this stage. This period of inquiry lasts several months and ends either when the inquirer feels ready to continue with the program, or decides to discontinue.

B. Catechumenate

The second stage is called the Catechumenate and, for the unbaptized listed above, who are now called Catechumens, should last a few months. For the baptized but un-catechized, the period should be a similar length. This stage could well be much shorter for the candidates who desire full communion with the Church. The Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens marks the beginning of this stage. Catechesis for this period is rooted in the Lectionary and the Word as it is proclaimed amid the community. This is also a time for the Catechumen or Candidate to learn how to live as a Catholic Christian. This period ends when the Catechumens and Candidates express their desire to receive the Sacraments of Initiation, and the community acknowledges their readiness.

C. Purification and enlightenment

The third stage is the Period of Purification and Enlightenment coincides with Lent. During this time the Elect, formerly the Catechumens, and the candidates enter a period of intense preparation and prayer, which includes three public celebrations of the Scrutinies. It is also marked by the presentations of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. The Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion are celebrated at the beginning of this stage. This period ends with the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

D. Mystagogy

The fourth stage is the period of post baptismal catechesis or Mystagogy. At this time, the newly initiated explore their experience of being fully initiated through participation with all the faithful at Sunday Eucharist and through appropriate catechesis. The period formally lasts through the Easter season and may be marked by a parish celebration on or near Pentecost. On a more informal level, Mystagogy is a lifelong process, one that all Christians are engaged in, as we all work to deepen our sense of what it means to live the Christian life.

I am interested. What should my first step be?

Contact Sharon Curtin at 614-563-8405, or sharon@mcurtin.com

Classes begin September 18, 2024

Classes are held in the library at St. John from 7 – 8:30 PM every Wednesday evening,

Please know that the prayers of all the parishioners of St. John and Sacred Heart Parishes, as well as 65 million Catholics in the United States, and the 1.2 billion Catholics around the world, are with you as you complete your journey. Best wishes!