

THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

What is the RCIA?

RCIA stands for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and it is the process through which people join or complete their initiation into the Catholic Church. Every year adults are welcomed into the Catholic Community through RCIA. It is a learning and loving process in which conversion of the heart brings you to Jesus Christ who is our Lord and Savior.

The RCIA is a tour of faith:

- through the initial stages of asking and seeking,
- through beginning involvement with Christian/Catholic people,
- through hearing the Gospel proclaimed and by faithful reflection and prayer on this Word of God,
- through study and discussion about the Catholic experience,
- through doubts and hesitations,
- through discernment of God's call for them as individuals,
- through the steps of commitment,
- through the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist)

Who is welcome to enter the RCIA?

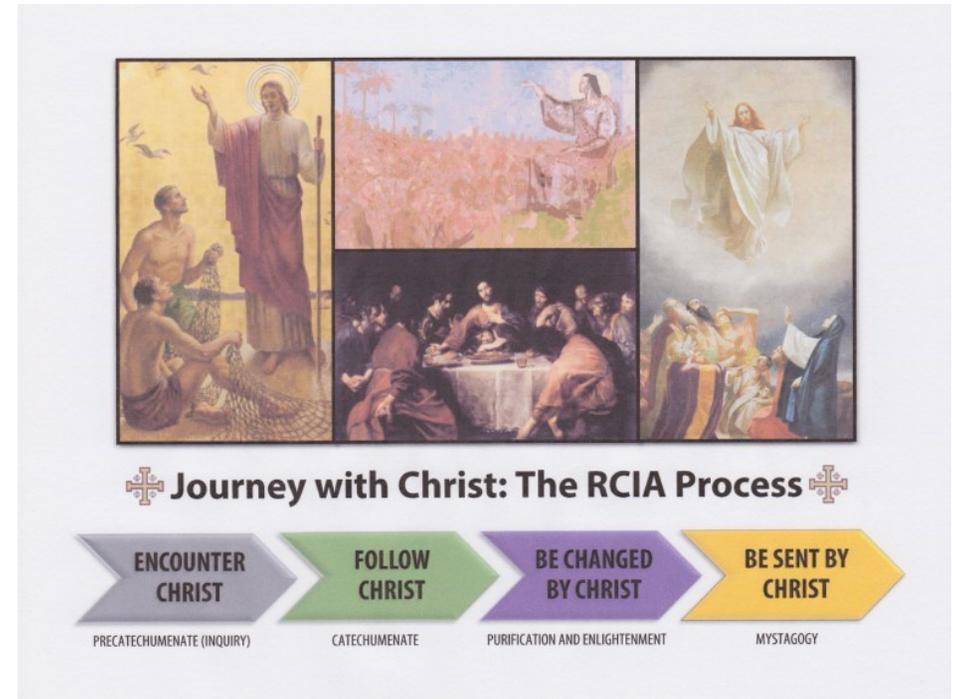
The RCIA is for three groups of people:

- Persons who have not received any or all of the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist).
- Those who were baptized into another Christian denomination and are interested in becoming Catholic.
- Baptized Catholics who were never formed in the Catholic faith and have not completed their initiation; that is, who have not yet received the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

How does the RCIA work?

RCIA consists of four periods of formation which are marked by rituals that celebrate what has been completed and call a person into the next phase. There is no specific length of time for each period. The RCIA is a journey that "takes as long as it takes," according to each individual.

- The Inquiry or Precatechumenate
- The Catechumenate
- The Lenten period of Purification and Enlightenment
- Mystagogy or a time of deeper understanding of the "mysteries"



RCIA at St. James

RCIA at St. James is a "year round" process meaning that we can start an Inquiry session any time during the year and can celebrate the sacraments as candidates (already baptized) are ready. Catechumens (unbaptized), however, must receive sacraments at the Easter Vigil after a minimum of one year in RCIA. The first step in the process is Inquiry. Initial Inquiry meetings are usually held at St. James in one of the meeting rooms, on an evening. There is some flexibility, and the Inquiry Team will work with you on a schedule. There are approximately six to seven meetings held over a two-three month period, after which a commitment to continue is made. If you need more time, that is okay, also, and we will work with your individual needs.