

What is the RCIA?

The RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults), also called the Catechumenate, is a process of initiation into the Catholic Community of Faith for persons who are experiencing a conversion in their lives and seeking either Christian baptism in the Catholic Church or full Communion with the Catholic tradition of Eucharist and Confirmation.

It is a process which enables the study of the Gospels, Catholic Christian teaching, the acceptance of Christian values and morality, the development and deepening of a life of prayer and action with the support and involvement of the local Christian community. The RCIA is more than a course of instruction. **It is a process of conversion**, designed to meet the unique and individual needs of the participants.

Who is RCIA for?

- Non-Catholics who want to find out more about the Catholic Faith
- Those who want to join the Catholic Church through Baptism, or Profession of Faith
- Those who were baptized Catholic as infants but never received religious education, First Eucharist, or Confirmation

Why an RCIA Process?

Wasn't the old Inquiry Class good enough?

Christians are made, not born. There is nothing automatic or instant in the Rite of Christian Initiation. The development of faith takes time; it cannot be rushed. The candidates must be allowed sufficient time for their faith to ripen. Ordinarily, this means anywhere from one to two years of formation depending, of course, on the background and spiritual maturity of the candidates.

In the past (in fact, hundreds of years ago), a person desiring reception into the Christian Community studied, prayed, fasted and did good works for three years. Initiation takes time. Initiation is more than doctrinal instruction. It is a way of coming to know the traditions, the people, the prayer and the actions of the community.

2. The Catechumenate

It is during this time that most of study of Scripture, doctrine, traditions and meeting with the community takes place.

3. Purification & Enlightenment

For those preparing for baptism, this stage takes place during the Lenten season where they reflect upon their own faith experiences in a more intense, prayerful way. Other times during the year, baptized candidates reflect more deeply upon the meaning of their baptism and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

4. Sacraments of Initiation

Candidates for baptism celebrate their initiation into the Church on the holiest of nights-the Easter Vigil - where they are baptized, confirmed and receive Eucharist. Candidates for full communion may celebrate their Rite of Reception several other times throughout the year.

5. Mystagogia

This is a time for candidates to reflect upon their experiences of being new Catholic Christians and find their place in the ordinary life of the Church.

Some Common Questions

Must I make a commitment to Catholicism to participate in this program?

No! We realize that many people are searching and need to know more about the Church before they make such a commitment. We also realize that Catholicism is not for everyone. We ask no firm commitment until the beginning of Lent.

I was baptized a Methodist, Baptist, etc. Must I be re-baptized in order to join the Catholic Church?

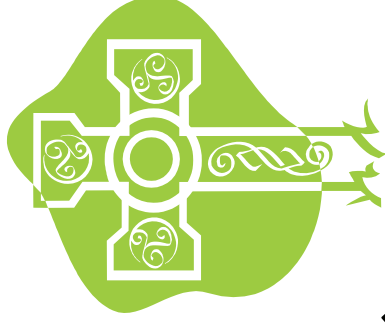
No! There is only one Baptism. Candidates seeking full Communion within the Catholic Church will not be baptized again. They will simply make a Profession of Faith and receive the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation.

What steps do I need to take to begin the process of Inquiry?

Call Carmella Barger, Director of Adult Faith Formation, at 425-338-0400 for information regarding registration, dates and places.

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RCA



Holy Cross

An overview of the
**Rite of Christian
Initiation of Adults**

at Holy Cross
Catholic Church –
Lake Stevens –
Granite Falls