

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

What is the RCIA?

- RCIA stands for the **R**ite of **C**hristian **I**nitiation of **A**dults.
- It is the process that people participate in to become Catholic.
- It is also for people who are thinking about becoming Catholic or aren't sure about becoming Catholic but want to learn more about it.
- Who would be in these classes?
 - People who have never been baptized.
 - People who have been baptized in another Christian Faith.
 - People who were baptized Catholic but did not complete their Sacraments of Initiation (Confirmation, Eucharist).
 - And...sometimes for people who have been inactive in their Catholic faith for a long period of time and want to get reconnected. (These folks are welcomed as visitors—like 'auditing' a class!)
 - Other folks involved are...
 - Team members who teach about the faith and provide hospitality (there are always good snacks available).
 - Godparents & sponsors (which are Catholics who act as mentors to you along the way).
- The whole Catholic Community is also 'present' (offer prayers and try to be good examples to support you on your journey).

How do I begin?

- Pray, reflect, think, study, pray, and pray some more! (Notice that study is only a part of the process, because this is a journey—a piece of a longer journey you've already been on. The journey involves taking who you are already with your own life experiences, incorporating them into what we'll teach and discuss about the Catholic faith. It's a life-long commitment of both the head *and* heart! Prayer will be your guiding light on the journey!)
- Discuss with family and/or friends.
- Call/email for an appointment to register or ask further questions*.
- Attend some pre-inquiry classes about the Catholic Faith to help you decide (offered in the Spring and over the Summer).

What is the time commitment?

- Sunday mornings from September until Pentecost (exception holidays).
- That's ~9 months....why so long?!?!?
 - This is a journey of faith that not only involves learning material in your head, but most importantly absorbing it into your whole self (head and heart). It takes time to develop and grow on this journey. Deciding to become Catholic is a major life choice and not something to be rushed. Much like we cannot force a rose to open before it is ready to open on its own, or force a baby to develop faster than 9 months, this process takes time too. Think of it as an engagement. Many people get engaged and wed about a year later. Why? To have the time to prepare for that special day because to make the most out of that special moment takes a lot of time and preparation.
 - There are several steps along the way (see Steps for RCIA)

*To register, or find out more, contact Mary Peacock at mpeacock@stgerard.org; 323-2379.