

## AN INVITATION

If you are interested in learning more about the Catholic faith, please consider RCIA.

In the RCIA, adults learn about the Catholic tradition and prepare for the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.

Non-baptized adults, baptized person from other Christian communities and baptized Catholics who have not received

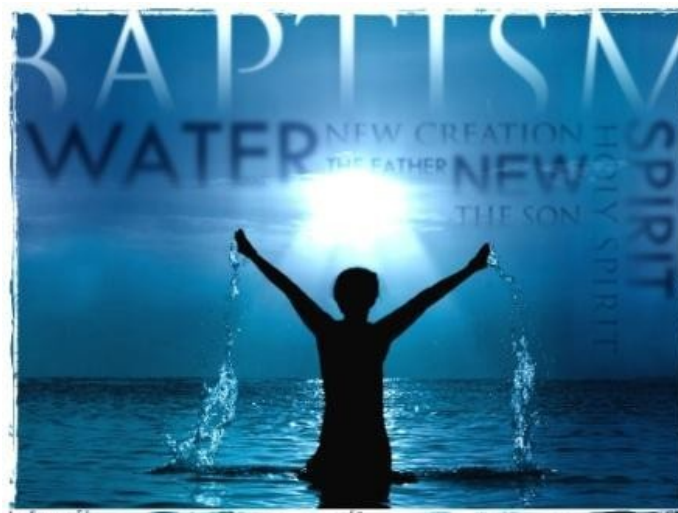
Eucharist and Confirmation are all welcome to be a part of our RCIA. If married, Catholic spouses are invited to come as well.

For further information, please contact Ms. Sharon A. Bogusz: [sbogusz@archbalt.org](mailto:sbogusz@archbalt.org)

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# *Becoming Catholic*



*Archdiocese of Baltimore*

## How Does One Become A Catholic?

Some people become Catholic gradually. They were baptized as infants, grew up in Catholic homes, received a religious education, and gradually shared in the sacraments and life of the Church.

Other Catholics came to the Church as adults, sometimes already baptized, sometimes having already received a religious formation in another faith. They have been contacted by a Catholic but they probably made the first move by talking to a priest or someone else at the Church. The Church wants to welcome all adults who are interested in the Catholic faith.

For those who think they might wish to become Catholic, the Church's Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) provides for the whole process of preparing adults for initiation into the Catholic Church. It is often referred to as the "Catechumenate."



### WHAT IS THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS?

The catechumenate is an extended period of instruction, of listening to Scriptures, of praying and of observing how Christians actually live in their faith. It is an apprenticeship in Christian life.

It provides an opportunity for deepening one's understanding of the Gospel message, for spiritual renewal and for direct contact with members of the local Church.

The Catechumenate is a process, which prepares persons for full membership in the Catholic Church. It includes various rites that are celebrated on the way to full membership in the Catholic Church. These rites mark the spiritual growth of the candidates and visibly express the community's concern for them.

## HOW IS THE CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS ORGANIZED?

Each parish is responsible for designing a format of formation that is appropriate for the formation of candidates and catechumens. **The following stages are included in the catechumenate process.**

### Period of Inquiry: (initial Evangelization)

The first stage is the period of inquiry. During this time, Inquires reflect on the Gospel message and the ways in which they can apply it to their own lives. It is a times for questions and finding out more about the Catholic Church and the value of faith.

### 2. Period of Formation:(Catechumenate)

Those who profess their faith in Jesus and desire to continue their journey toward full membership in the Catholic Church then move onto the next phase where most of the formation takes place. With the help of a sponsor and members of the community, the candidate learns about the Church as a community. This period begins with a rite, which marks the formal entrance into the catechumenate.

### 3. Purification and Enlightenment

At the beginning of Lent the Church calls those who are ready to make final preparation for the sacraments of initiation. This calling takes place in the special Rite of Election.

*Ordinarily the sacraments on Initiation, Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are celebrated at the Easter Vigil liturgy. Christians who are already baptized may be formally received into full communion with the Catholic Church at this liturgy.*

### 4. Post Baptism Catechesis (Mystagogy)

A period of fifty days from Easter to Pentecost completes the Initiation process. This is the time for unfolding the meaning of the Easter Sacraments.

