

## The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA)

RCIA is a process of preparation for the lifetime commitment that comes with reception into the Catholic Church. The process of initiation into the Church involves discernment and conversion. Each stage of the process is marked by rituals leading up to full initiation through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

- Baptism incorporates us into the Church, the Body of Christ, and forms us into God’s people. This first sacrament pardons all our sins, rescues us from the power of darkness, and brings us to the dignity of adopted children.
- By signing us with the gift of the Spirit, confirmation forms us more completely in the image of the Lord and fills us with the Holy Spirit so that we may bear witness to God before all the world. The Spirit works in us to bring about the Kingdom of God here on earth.
- The Eucharist is a sacred meal in which the priest consecrates bread and wine. By the power of the Holy Spirit, bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. Jesus says, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day” (Jn. 6:54).

The process of initiation helps to empower you for a life of service, charity and justice in the Church. The parish community assists in the process through their prayer and sponsorship.

RCIA is for three groups of people, those who were never baptized those who were baptized in another faith and wish to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church, and those baptized Catholics who were not fully initiated into the Church as they grew to adulthood. Because each person’s journey of faith is different, some people will need more time than others to prepare for full initiation into the Church. The usual length of preparation is from one to two years.

**Inquiry-** This is the introductory period of questioning, of listening to the stories of one another, and of learning some of the unique characteristics of the Catholic faith. Do I have a desire to be in a relationship with God? Do I recognize that my life will change because of God? Do I desire to leave behind all that is inauthentic? Do I really want to be fully initiated into the Catholic Church?

Topic	Date	Read Before class
Class Registration & Introduction	Sept. 13	Come with questions.
THE JOURNEY OF FAITH: Trinity, Faith, and the God Who is Love	Sept. 20	<i>Compendium: Paragraphs 1-17, 25-32</i>
DIVINE REVELATION: God Seeking Us and the Compass for Our Lives	Sept. 27	<i>Compendium: Paragraphs 33-49</i>
THE BIBLE: God’s Love Letter to Humanity	Oct. 4	<i>Compendium: Paragraphs 18-24</i>
THE STORY OF SALVATION: Creation, Fall, and Redemption	Oct. 11	<i>Compendium: Paragraphs 50-78</i>
WHO IS JESUS: Just a Good Man or Lord of Our Lives?	Oct. 18	<i>Compendium: Paragraphs 79-111</i>
THE PASCHAL MYSTERY: The Mystery of Jesus’ Death and Resurrection	Oct. 25	<i>Compendium: Paragraphs 112-135</i>
<p><i>Meet individually with Heather before Oct. 31!</i>  <i>Baptismal and marriage certificates due on or before Oct. 31. See p. 5 for details.</i></p>		

Topic	Date	Read Before class
<b>All Saints Day</b>	<b>Nov. 1</b>	<b>Holy Day of Obligation</b>
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE LIFE OF GRACE: God's Divine Life Within Us	Nov. 1	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 136-146
WHY DO I NEED THE CHURCH: The Mystery of the Catholic Church	Nov. 8	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 147-176
MARY AND THE SAINTS: Our Spiritual Mother and the Communion of Saints	Nov. 15	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 194-199
<i>Thanksgiving</i>	Nov. 22	No Class – Try To Attend Mass
THE LAST THINGS: What Happens After We Die	Nov. 29	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 202-217

**Catechumenate**- This is a prolonged period of formation in the Christian life. Catechumens begin to recognize their growing faith through lives of apostolic service that flows from the experience of the gospel. The time spent in the catechumenate should be long enough for the conversion and faith of the individual to become strong.

Topic	Date	Read Before Class
<b>Rite of Acceptance</b>	<b>Dec. 1/2</b>	<b>Attend Mass with Your Sponsor</b>
THE SACRAMENTS: Baptism & Confirmation	Dec. 6	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 224-232, 250-270; <i>Watch Session 1 of REBORN</i>
<b>Feast of the Immaculate Conception</b>	<b>Dec. 8</b>	<b>Holy Day of Obligation – Attend Mass</b>
THE EUCHARIST: Source & Summit of Christian Life	Dec. 13	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 271-294
WALK THROUGH THE MASS: Exploring the Sacred Liturgy	Dec. 20	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 218-223, 233-249
<b>Christmas Day</b>	<b>Dec. 25</b>	<b>Holy Day of Obligation- Attend Mass</b>
<i>Christmas Break</i>	<i>Dec. 27</i>	<i>NO CLASS – Christmas Break</i>
<b>New Year's Day – Mary, Mother of God</b>	<b>Jan. 1</b>	<b>Holy Day of Obligation- Attend Mass</b>
<i>Christmas Break</i>	<i>Jan. 3</i>	<i>NO CLASS – Christmas Break</i>
PENANCE & ANOINTING OF THE SICK: God's Mercy Revealed	Jan. 10	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 200-201, 295-320, 434-454
MATRIMONY & HOLY ORDERS: The Sacraments of Service & Communion	Jan. 17	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 177-193, 321-350; <i>Watch Session 1 and 2 of BELOVED: Mystery &amp; Meaning of Marriage</i>
A CATHOLIC MORAL VISION: Virtue, Grace, & the Path to Happiness	Jan. 24	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 351-400, 422-433
A LOVE THAT LASTS: Discovering Authentic Love	Jan. 31	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 455-486, 503-526, 531-533
A LOVE THAT LASTS: God's Plan for Sexuality	Feb. 7	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 487-502, 527-530

*During the Catechumenate, choose a saint and complete a research project on your saint by **March 30<sup>th</sup>**. You may either present a 5 minute oral presentation to the group or turn in a two-page type written report on the saint's name you would like to take for confirmation and why you have chosen him or her.*

**Purification and Enlightenment-** Lent is a period of reflection intensely centered on conversion marked by the celebration of the Scrutinies and preparation for Easter.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Read Before Class</b>
CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: Building a Civilization of Love	Feb. 14	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 401-414
NFP: Natural Family Planning	Feb. 21	
CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: Protecting the Dignity of the Human Person	Feb. 28	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 415-421
<i>Ash Wednesday</i>	<i>Mar. 6</i>	<i>Try to Attend Mass</i>
AMAZED & AFRAID: The Revelation of God Become Man	Mar. 7	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 534-540; <i>Catholicism</i> Lesson 1: Pages 3-5, 11-16, 22-23
<b>Rite of Sending from St. Nicholas</b>	<b>Mar. 10</b>	<b>Come to Mass at St. Nicholas with Your Sponsor</b>
<b>Rite of Election with Bishop Chad Zielinski at Sacred Heart Cathedral</b>	<b>Mar. 10</b>	<b>Attend the Ritual at Sacred Heart Cathedral; Time TBD</b>
<p><b>1ST SUNDAY OF LENT:</b> Catechumens celebrate the Rite of Sending at St. Nicholas Church &amp; the Rite of Election at Sacred Heart Cathedral (2501 Airport Way, Fairbanks).</p> <p><b>SENDING:</b> The Church community hears testimony from sponsors and catechists on how the catechumens have responded to God’s call. The Catechumen is then asked to accept or say yes by stating his/her desire to join the Church and writing their names in the book of the ‘elect, the chosen.’</p> <p><b>ELECTION:</b> The Rite of Election begins the final stage of the journey called Purification and Enlightenment. Election comes from a word that means “choose,” and the whole ceremony reflects this theme. God has chosen us and called us. How have we chosen to respond to that call? You’ve inquired about the Church and you’ve become part of the community. Now it’s time for you to examine your life in relation to what Christ asks you. Christ has called you, how will you respond?</p>		
<i>Spring Break</i>	<i>Mar. 14</i>	<i>Video Night: I Confess</i>
HAPPY ARE WE: The Teaching of Jesus	Mar. 21	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 541-545; <i>Catholicism</i> Lesson 2: Pages 3-15, 23-24
THE INEFFABLE MYSTERY OF GOD: That than Which Nothing Greater Can Be Through	Mar. 28	<i>Catholicism</i> Lesson 3: Pages 3-15, 22-23
OUR TAINTED NATURE’S SOLITARY BOAST: Mary, the Mother of God	Apr. 4	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 546-547; <i>Catholicism</i> Lesson 4: Pages 3-15, 22-23
<i>Chrism Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>Attend the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral</i>
<i>Palm Sunday</i>	<i>Apr. 14</i>	<i>Attend Mass</i>
<b><i>Practice for the Easter Vigil</i></b>	<b><i>Apr. 16</i></b>	<b><i>Sponsor Needs to Attend with You</i></b>
<i>Holy Thursday</i>	<i>Apr. 18</i>	<i>Attend Mass of the Lord’s Supper</i>
<i>Good Friday</i>	<i>Apr. 19</i>	<i>Attend Good Friday liturgy with Veneration of the Cross</i>
<b><i>Easter Vigil – Christian Initiation</i></b>	<b><i>Apr. 20</i></b>	<b><i>Attend Vigil Mass with Sponsor</i></b>

**Mystagogia:** Fabulous! You are a member of the Church. This isn’t the end, but rather the beginning! Now what? This is a period of post-baptismal catechesis, continuing the growth that started during the RCIA process. It comes to us from Scriptures – particularly the letters of Paul. During this time we are going to go deeper into what the Church teaches.

Topic	Date	Read Before Class
THE INDISPENSABLE MEN: Peter, Paul, and the Missionary Adventure	Apr. 25	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 548-556; <i>Catholicism</i> Lesson 5: Pages 3-12, 20-21
A BODY BOTH SUFFERING & GLORIOUS: The Mystical Union of Christ & the Church	May 2	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 548-556; <i>Catholicism</i> Lesson 6: Pages 3-12, 20-21
WORD MADE FLESH, TRUE BREAD OF HEAVEN: The Mystery of the Liturgy and the Eucharist	May 9	<i>Catholicism</i> Lesson 7: Pages 3-13, 21
THE FIRE OF HIS LOVE: Prayer and the Life of the Spirit	May 16	<i>Compendium</i> : Paragraphs 557-598; <i>Catholicism</i> Lesson 9: Pages 3-12, 19-20
<b><i>Pentecost</i></b>	<b><i>June 9</i></b>	<b><i>Attend Mass – Pentecost Sunday</i></b>

**Requirements:**

- **Baptismal Certificate-** If previously baptized, obtain a copy of your baptismal certificate from the church where you were baptized. If baptized Catholic this must be a current copy with annotations of any sacraments received. Turn in baptismal certificate to Heather by October 31.
- **Marriage Certificate-** If married, bring your certificate of marriage (and annulment decision if applicable) to Heather by October 31.
  - If Catholic or married to a Catholic but not married in the Catholic Church, begin preparation for a sacramental marriage immediately.
- **Annulments-** Some Pharisees approached him and tested him, saying, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?” He said in reply, “Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female; and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate” (Matthew 19:3-6).
  - If you or your spouse were previously married and there has not been an annulment, begin annulment process immediately.
- **Attendance**
  - Regularly attend Thursday evening class at 7:00 pm.
  - Attend Mass every weekend and on Holy Days of Obligation.
  - Participate in special rites as indicated by the schedule.
- **Cost:** \$40.00 is requested to defray the cost of materials.
- **Service Hours-** Complete 20 hours of documented community service hours between the beginning of November and the end of May. Service hours should help St. Nicholas Church in some way. Turn in a log of your service hours at the end of each month.
  - This is to give you the opportunity to get to know more members of the St. Nicholas Community.
  - See Heather if you are unsure of where and how you can help.
  - See Heather if you want a Service Hour Log

Sample Service Hour Log:

Date	Hours Served	Where	Type of Service	Authenticated By

- **Sponsors-** A sponsor is a practicing Catholic who walks the journey of faith with an individual going through the Rites of Initiation for RCIA. You may have a sponsor in mind or there may be a member of our community who would like to assist you as a sponsor.
  - Sponsors must be fully initiated Catholics, baptized, received first communion, and confirmed. The Church recommends that one's spouse or fiancé not be one's sponsor.
  - Sponsors must be practicing their faith. This means among other things, being formally registered in a local parish, participating in Sunday Mass regularly, receiving the sacraments of Eucharist and Confession regularly, and being truly committed to living according to Catholic values. If married, their marriage is recognized and blessed in the Catholic Church.
  - Sponsors must be willing to attend weekly classes with you beginning in early November and extending through the beginning of May.
  - Sponsors must be willing to pray for you each day.
  - Sponsors are encouraged to attend weekend Mass with you as often as possible.
  - Sponsors must be present for the various Rites at St. Nicholas, especially the Easter Vigil and at the Cathedral for the Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion.

**Temperature Considerations:** During the winter the temperatures or road conditions may not be conducive with class. To determine whether or not class will be taking place, call 488-1111 at 5:00 pm the day of class. The temperature cut-off for class is **-40 below zero**. We will also cancel class if the roads are particularly icy due to freezing rain. A Flocknote will be sent out. Please note that Mass is never cancelled due to weather.

**Heather Pariera Kimmerling**

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