

WELCOME TO RCIA AT ST. PETER CATHOLIC CHURCH

Church Mission Statement

The duty of the Church and the faithful is to bring everyone into communion with God through Christ, and in the fullness of his kingdom. The Church in obedience to the command of Christ its founder, preaches the Gospel to all men. Matthew 28:19-20 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

All that we have is a gift from God. We should always turn to Him with sincere and deeply felt gratitude. This group will become a community, a family that you will be able to turn to during the next several months and beyond. God will send his Holy Spirit to guide you on this journey. You will not be alone. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit may we always strive to do God's will.

You were each called by God and chose to answer: "Here I am Lord"

Outline of the RCIA process:

Creed

We begin our profession of faith by saying: "I believe" or "We believe". Before explaining the Church's faith, as declared in the Creed, celebrated in the liturgy and lived in observance of God's commandments and in prayer, we must first ask what "to believe" means. Faith is man's response to God, who reveals himself and gives himself to man, at the same time bringing man a superabundant light as he searches for the ultimate meaning of his life. Thus we shall consider first that search, then the divine Revelation by which God comes to meet man, and finally the response of faith.

Sacraments

The saving words and deeds of Jesus Christ are the foundation of what he would communicate in the Sacraments through the ministers of the Church. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church recognizes the existence of Seven Sacraments instituted by the Lord. They are the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist), the Sacraments of Healing (Penance and the Anointing of the Sick), and the Sacraments at the Service of Communion (Marriage and Holy Orders). Through the Sacraments, God shares his holiness with us so that we, in turn, can make the world holier.

Life in Christ / Moral Life

"Christian, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God's own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning. Remember who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of the Kingdom of God."

CCC 1692 The Symbol of the faith confesses the greatness of God's gifts to man in his work of creation, and even more in redemption and sanctification. What faith confesses, the sacraments communicate: by the sacraments of rebirth, Christians have become "children of God," "partakers of the divine nature." Coming to see in the faith their new dignity, Christians are called to lead henceforth a life "worthy of the gospel of Christ."

Prayer

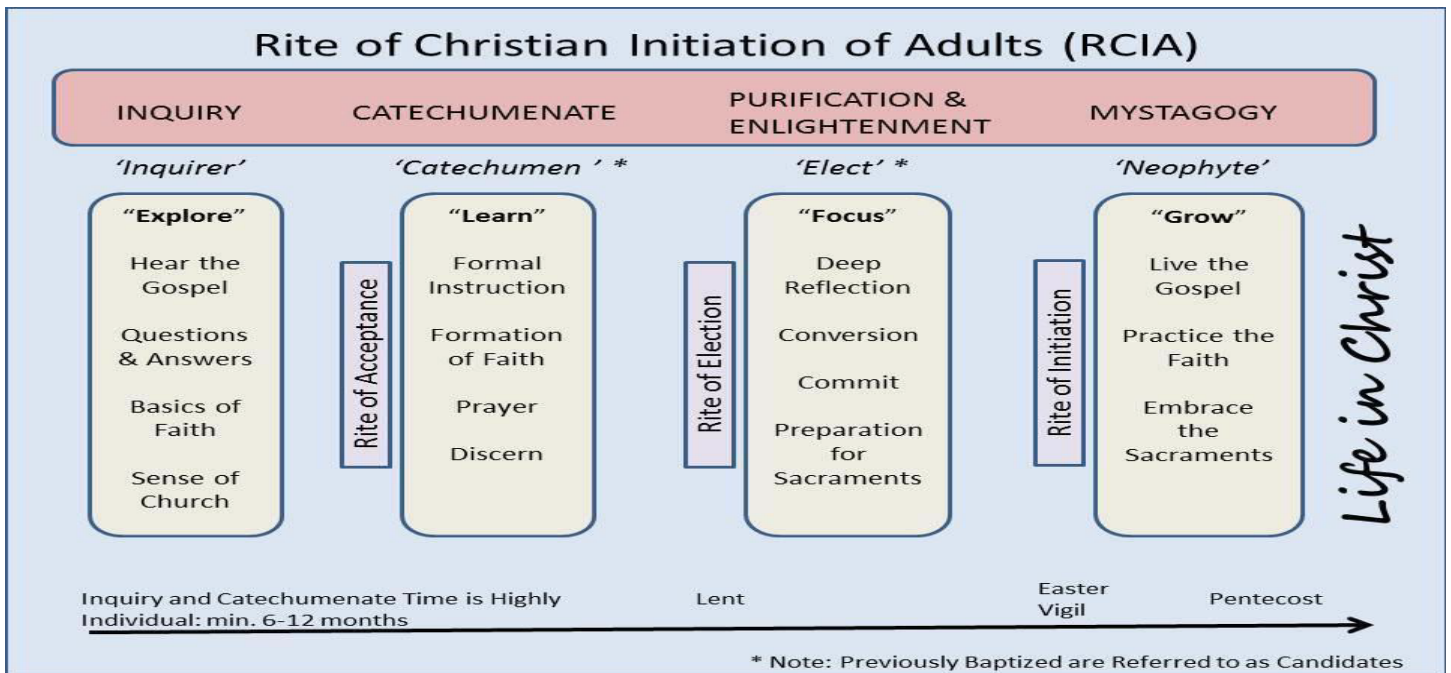
An essential component of our relationship with God. Prayer is a conversation with God; we speak through words, thoughts and desires. God speaks through our hearts, our conscience, the scriptures and the Church. We will explore the tradition of prayer, guidelines of prayer, different types of prayer, and the struggle of prayer and work to develop a disciple of prayer life.

History of RCIA

RCIA is a process and not a program or academic course. It is a spiritual journey of conversion as well as learning about the Church. It is a process of gradual learning. Everything we discuss tonight will be covered again more than once.

Being a Catholic is not simply about having knowledge Jesus does not say, “know this” and “do that”; He says, “come and see” and “follow me.” A very important part of our time will be to grow in relationship with Jesus. This personal knowledge leads to love. Love begins by receiving his love which he offers freely. His love for us should overflow in our love for others.

This process unfolds in stages:



RCIA stages

Period of Evangelization and (Precatechumenate)

This is the period before a firm decision or commitment has been made to join the Catholic Church. This is the time to ask questions, express doubts, and check things out before a decision is made. Each inquirer/candidate will examine the Church and the ways its members worship together and live their Christian faith.

Period of the Catechumenate

Those who decide to enter the Church and are being trained for a life in Christ are called catechumens. The term catechumen finds its origin in the early Church. In this stage, you are developing your faith and are being "catechized". This period entails a more intense preparation for the sacraments of initiation

Period of Enlightenment and Purification

During this stage you will be known as the "Elect." This is a stage of more intense spiritual formation and conversion: A time for prayer and spiritual discernment. This stage coincides with the liturgical season of Lent when all Catholics are called to pray, fast and give alms or offerings. We are called to practice self-discipline. We are called not only to abstain from luxuries during Lent, to strip away anything that tempts us away from our Lord and into sin, but to a true inner conversion of heart as we seek to follow Christ's will more faithfully.

Mystagogia

During the Period of Mystagogia where we concentrate on the mysteries of the Church. The newly initiated experience being fully a part of the Christian community by means of both pertinent catechesis and particularly by participation with all the faithful in the Sunday Eucharistic celebration

Each of these stages is separated by a liturgical rite:

Rite of Acceptance and Welcome

The candidates express and the Church accepts their intention to respond to God's call to follow the way of Christ.

Rite of Election

The Church formally ratifies the catechumens' readiness for the sacraments of initiation and the catechumens, now the elect, express their will to receive these sacraments.

Rite of Initiation

This is the liturgical rite by which the elect are initiated through Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. This is the beginning of a life-long conversion process, not a one-time experience.

May God inspire you on your journey!