



## What are the phases of RCIA?

There are four phases of the journey through RCIA:

### Period of Inquiry

The **Period of Inquiry** is a time for: Asking questions about the Catholic faith; Building community within the group; Developing a trusting atmosphere

More importantly, it is a time for: examining God's presence in our lives, past and present; learning about prayer; fostering conversion of the heart; developing and/or improving our relationship with God; getting to know the Catholic Church

We discuss such topics as: what brought you to RCIA; what is your image of God; prayer and the liturgy

**Rite of Acceptance** – closes the **Period of Inquiry**; normally celebrated at the first Sunday of Advent; participants are welcomed into the parish and introduced to the community who then pledge to support and pray for the Catechumens and Candidates during their period of study for entry into the Church



## Period of the Catechumenate

The **Period of the Catechumenate** (study) is a time for: Reading and discussing the Gospel (Breaking Open the Word-BOW); continuing to build community within the group and begin to build relationships within the larger parish community; learning about the basic teachings and beliefs of the Catholic church

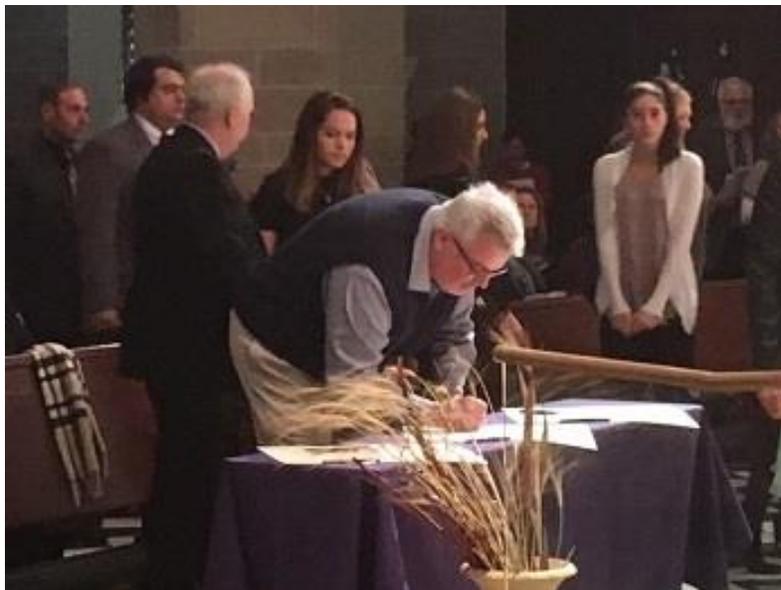


More importantly, it is a time for: continuing to examine God's presence in our lives; deepening of prayer life and entering the communal worship of the parish; deepening conversion of the heart; deepening our relationship with God particularly with the Son, Jesus Christ, and his Church

We continue to read the Sunday Gospel and what it means in our lives and develop an understanding of: the seasons of the church; who Jesus is; Mary & the rosary; Sacred Scripture; sin, evil and guilt; morality; the

Catechism

**Rite of Election** – closes the Period of the Catechumenate; normally celebrated with the first Sunday of Lent; participants and their sponsors affirm their intention to join the Church in the presence of the Bishop; Catechumens sign the Book of the Elect at the cathedral as a pledge of fidelity, after this point until the reception into the Church at the Vigil they are known as “The Elect”





## **The Period of Purification and Enlightenment**

This is a time for intense preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation; on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays, three Scrutinies (rites of self-searching and repentance) and the presentations of the Creed and Lord's Prayer take place; this time is spent in reflection and takes place in the Chapel where quiet time is provided to just sit in God's presence and allow him to know our heart; it is a time for repentance, examining areas of sinfulness in our lives, asking for God's help in healing these areas, prayer/fasting/almsgiving.

The Elect experience three Scrutinies during this period: special rites which seal their break with evil in preparation for baptism. Primarily, they have a spiritual purpose as they are meant to uncover, then heal, all that is weak, defective and sinful in the hearts of the Elect and to bring out, then strengthen, all that is upright, strong, and good.

This period concludes with the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil.



## **The Period of Mystagoga**

This is a time for: living a sacramental life; living the Gospel way of life; and becoming more involved with the parish.

We also discuss evangelization, stewardship, and lay ministry.

This period ends with a pot luck and good-bye event.

