

# Incarnating THE KERYGMA

## INTRODUCTION TO

## THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

### Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, you call us to relationship with you through the death and resurrection of your Son, and the guidance of your Holy Spirit. Open our minds and hearts as we begin this RCIA process that we may deepen our faith in you, our hope for eternal life, and our love for you and our neighbor. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Scripture Reading *1 Corinthians 15:1-11*

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he reminds the Christian community of what is of first importance, namely that Christ has died for our sins and raised on the third day. This central mystery of the faith is passed from apostle to apostle and generation to generation, handed on and received, to lead all to believe that Jesus is Lord. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults continues in this tradition of passing on what has been received to welcome new believers.

### What is the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults?

"The Rite of Christian Initiation is designed for adults who:

- after hearing the mystery of Christ proclaimed,
- consciously and freely seek the living God,
- and enter the way of faith and conversion
- as the Holy Spirit opens their hearts" (*RCIA*, §1).

### Who are the people invited to participate in RCIA?

- People who are not baptized, known as **catechumens**.
- People who have been baptized in another Christian tradition, known as **candidates for profession of faith and full communion**.
- People who were baptized Catholic, but did not receive any formal instruction, known as **candidates for full communion**.
- People who wish to accompany these individuals along their journey of faith, known as **sponsors**, and people who will present a catechumen or candidate to receive the sacraments and form a lifelong relationship with them, known as **godparents**.

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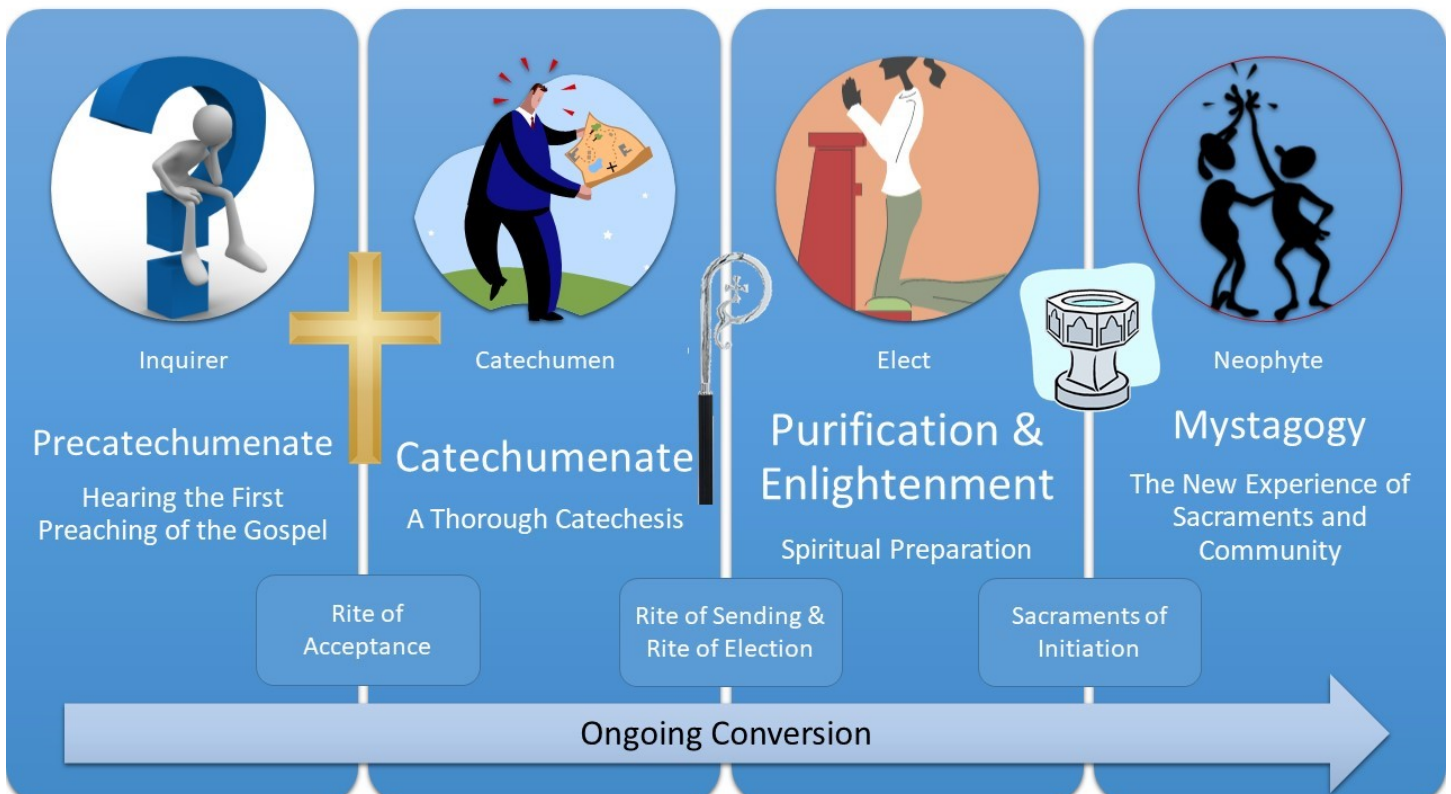
What are the four ways of formation in the RCIA process?

Following Jesus' way of teaching, the early Christian community developed a way of life which included:

- **Learning** "the teachings of the Apostles" - a gradual, but complete sharing of the teachings of the Church, rooted in the kerygma, or the heart of the Gospel message.
- **Living** "in the community life" - an apprenticeship of being part of the Christian community learning a way of prayer, witness, and service of neighbor.
- **Liturgy** "the breaking of bread and prayers" - a participation in the rites of the Church to be strengthened by God's blessing and preparing for participation in the Eucharist.
- **Evangelization** "adding to their number" - a joining in the missionary discipleship efforts of the Church through word and deed. (cf. *RCIA*, §75)

What is the process for RCIA?

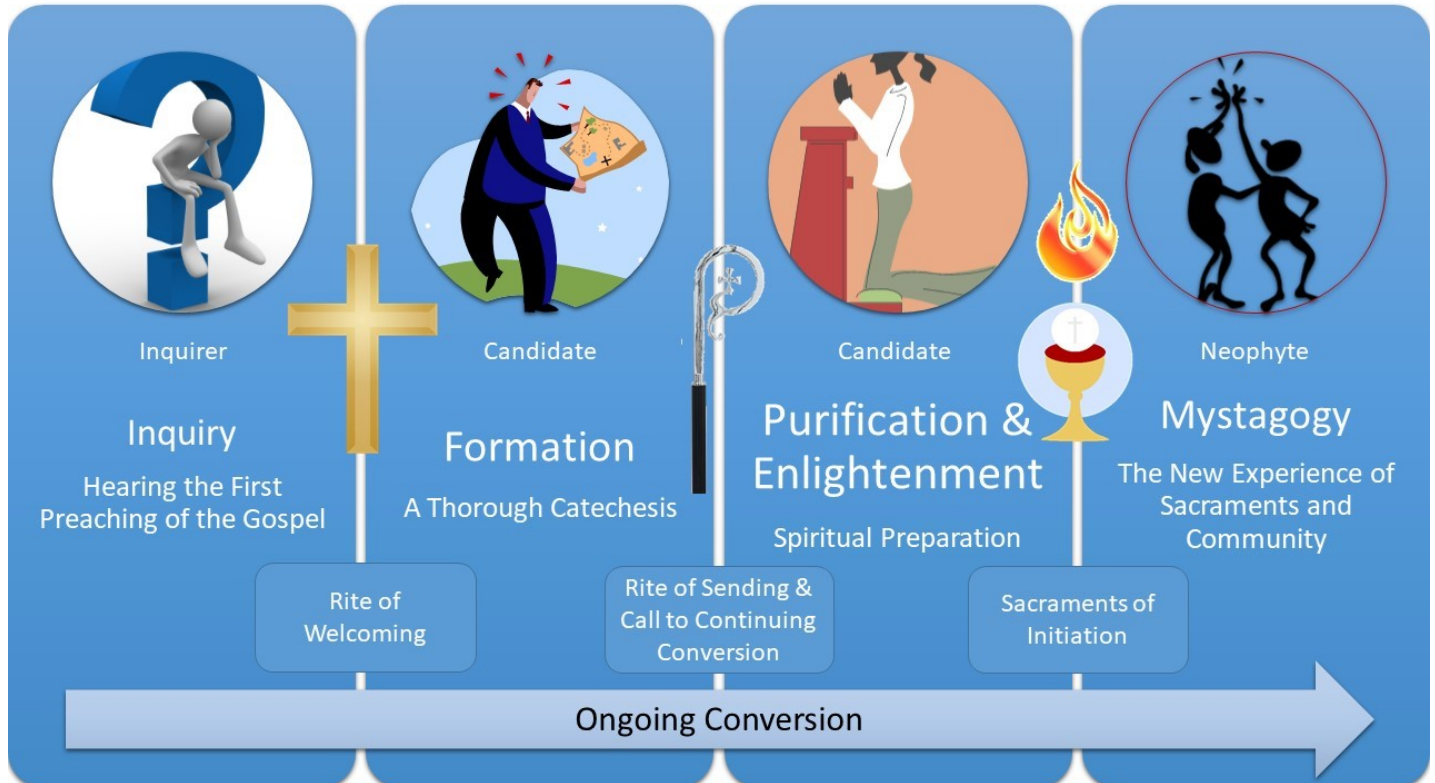
For those not Baptized:



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For those Baptized:



## What are the key themes of each stage of RCIA?

Precatechumenate or Inquiry Stage - Handing on the Kerygma

Catechumenate or Formation Stage - Handing on the Gospel

Purification & Enlightenment Stage - Handing on the Creed and the Lord's Prayer

Mystagogy Stage - Handing on the Mysteries (the sacramental life)

## What should I do to have a good experience in RCIA?

- Be open to the RCIA process. You will get out of the experience what you put in.
- Attend meetings and events.
- Meditate on the Sunday Gospel readings each week and review session notes and videos.
- Keep a journal of feelings, emotions, and questions.
- Pray for guidance and strength from the Holy Spirit.

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### Discussion Questions for Learning

1. What category of person do I belong as part of this Rite of Christian Initiation process?
2. What are the four ways of formation in the RCIA process? How do they connect with the way of life in the early Church? (*see Acts 2:42-47*)
3. What are the four stages or periods of the RCIA process? What is "handed on" in each stage of the process?

### Discussion Questions for Living

1. In what ways have I heard the proclamation of the Gospel in my life so far? In what ways do I want to commit to hearing that proclamation of the Gospel more frequently or more clearly?
2. In what ways can I commit to entering into the way of faith at this time? Who could help me in this process?

### Discussion Questions for Liturgy

1. How do I feel my prayer life is at this current time? In what ways can I commit to strengthening my prayer life throughout this process?

### Discussion Questions for evangelization

1. Who has been a witness to me to help me decide to begin this RCIA process? Who could I invite to join with me in this journey?

### Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, we ask your blessings on us as we aspire to join your Church. As we ponder your Word and share our stories, may we be made into a community of disciples who love with you with all of our hearts and find your goodness in others. May we be given the courage to proclaim you boldly and joyfully and the grace to walk this journey of faith. We ask this in your most Holy Name. Amen.