



Becoming Catholic

for Catechumens
The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults
(OCIA)

OCIA is the period of formation and conversion for one to fully enter into the faith and life of the Catholic church. This journey is intentionally designed with multiple stages and liturgical rites, with no set time to complete any of them - each faith journey is unique! With that said however, we do offer a "typical" schedule which is detailed below for 2023-2024.

1st Stage: Inquiry

Inquiry is the first stage in the journey which begins when, prompted by the Holy Spirit, an individual reaches out to learn more about Jesus Christ and His church. This will look different for everyone, and various opportunities are offered to meet everyone right where they are.

- **Introductory Meeting**

Contact me anytime to arrange a time to talk.

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- **Website**

The OCIA page on our website will offer additional details about the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. There is also a link to an "initial information form" that you can submit. Its completion does not suggest any commitment but will help in directing our conversation. <https://www.stpatrickcatholicparish.org/rcia>

- **Small groups opportunities**

If you inquire about becoming Catholic during the spring or summer, when "formal OCIA" sessions are not being held, various small group opportunities are offered throughout the year. I am happy to direct you to one of the groups or studies being offered.

- **Parish Involvement**

In order to build relationships within our St Patrick community, you are invited to attend all of our parish liturgies and events. Please go to our parish website to learn more about our schedule and upcoming events: <https://www.stpatrickcatholicparish.org/>

2nd Stage: Pre-Catechumenate

Following Inquiry, and having discerned the call to continue the journey, the pre-catechumenate is a period of 4 weeks which prepares you to celebrate the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome. A Catholic sponsor is chosen to journey with you. We meet from 9:30 to 11:00 in the lower level of the church, room B1

Date	Topic
October 15	Welcome! The Good News
October 22	Scripture and Tradition
October 29	The Catholic Church
November 5	Elements of the Mass

The Rite of Acceptance and Welcome

The Rite of Acceptance is the threshold Rite of the OCIA. In this Rite a change of identity takes place; those previously identified as “inquirers” become “catechumens” or “candidates” if already baptized. They are officially welcomed by the church as members (albeit not yet full members) of the household of faith, and are marked with the cross of Christ as God’s own.

While no final commitment to enter the Catholic Church is yet made, the clear intention is to continue .

The Rite of Acceptance is celebrated
November 12 during the 9:30 Mass.

3rd Stage: The Catechumenate

The catechumenate is the second and often the longest stage, in the journey into the Catholic church. We begin each Sunday morning by attending 9:30 Mass. Dismissed following the homily, we gather again to reflect on Scripture, share in fellowship and learn about the beliefs, practices, doctrines and devotions of Catholicism.

2023 - 2024 Schedule

9:30 Mass with dismissal following the homily
 10:00 - 10:30 Scripture Reflection
 10:30 - 11:00 Hospitality
 11:00 - 12:30 Presentation/discussion/ Q and A

Date	9:30 - 12:30 (Beginning with 9:30 Mass)
November 19	Topic 1: Baptism
November 26	Happy Thanksgiving - No Session
December 3	Topic 2: The Eucharist - True Presence
December 10	Topic 3: Confirmation and the Holy Spirit
December 17	Topic 4: The Creed
December 24	Merry Christmas - No Session
December 31	Happy New Year - No Session
January 7	Topic 5: Mary
January 14	Topic 6: Prayer
January 21	Topic 7: Sacramentals and Saints
Saturday January 27	Convalidation workshop for those preparing to convalidate their marriage
January 28	Topic 8: Catholic Social Teaching
February 4	Topic 9: Open Q and A

The Rite of Sending

The Rite of Sending involves "sending" the Catechumens to the Bishop for "election." Their names are written in the "Book of the Elect" which will be presented to and signed by the Bishop during the Rite of Election. This Rite also allows the godparents, as well as the parish as a whole, to express their approval and assure the Catechumens of their continued care, prayer and support.

Sunday February 11	Rite of Sending during 9:30 Mass Topic: Lent, Prayer Fasting and Almsgiving
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The Rite of Election

The Rite of Election marks the beginning of the final and prayerful period of preparation to receive the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil. This step is called "election" because the acceptance made by the Church, through the Bishop, is founded on each catechumen's first election by God, in whose name the Church acts. The Catechumens now become the "Elect."

Saturday February 17	Rite of Election with the Bishop Time and Location TBD
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4th Stage: Purification and Enlightenment

Purification and Enlightenment is the third stage of the Order of Christian Initiation. This period aligns with the penitential season of Lent and includes opportunities for prayer and spiritual strengthening to prepare the Elect to receive the sacraments. We attend 9:30 Mass followed by a time of hospitality, prayer and reflection. The beautiful liturgies of Holy Week lead to the joy of the Easter Vigil.

	Attend 9:30 Mass Prayer and fellowship following until 12:00
February 18	The Four Last Things
February 25 Penitential Rite for candidates	Forgiveness, Healing and Reconciliation
March 3 First Scrutiny	Woman at the Well
March 10 Second Scrutiny	The Man born blind
March 17 Third Scrutiny	The Raising of Lazarus
March 23 Saturday Retreat 9:00 - 1:00	Day of Prayer and Reflection Triduum Liturgies
March 28 optional but encouraged	Chrism Mass St Mary's Cathedral 10:30 am Mass of the Lord's Supper St Patrick 7:00 pm
March 29 optional but encouraged	Good Friday Liturgy 3:00 pm

March 30	Morning Breakfast and Vigil Rehearsal 10:00 am - 1:00 pm Evening Easter Vigil 8:30 pm - midnight Reception following
March 31	Happy Easter!

5th Stage: Mystagogy

Mystagogy is the “official ” final stage of the OCIA journey - which is also just the beginning of a lifelong journey as a spirit filled missionary disciple.! Continuing to gather during the Easter Season, provides those who just entered the church (neophytes) with the opportunity to explore the depth and beauty of the sacraments while growing in relationship with our parish community.

	Sunday morning 10:30 - 12:00
April 14	Grace of the Sacraments
April 21	Discerning God's Will
April 28	Missionary Discipleship
May 5	St Patrick Ministries
May 18 Saturday	Evening of Outpouring Come Holy Spirit ...again!