

RCIA RITE of WELCOME/ACCEPTANCE
5:30 p.m. Mass Saturday, Dec 1, 2018
OR
9:00 a..m. Mass Sunday Dec 2, 2018

This rite or ceremony is two-fold: It is the seekers' public statement of seeking a relationship with God in the Catholic Church through formation and parish interaction, and it is an opportunity for the parish to see, welcome, and offer prayerful support to you. Being Catholic is being a part of community. It is not considered a commitment to join the Catholic Church. Some of you may decide to join the Church at Easter; some may not.

RCIA Seekers and Sponsors will attend the Mass chosen and communicated to Irene. PLEASE ARRIVE 30 minutes ahead of start time and meet at the ramp near the main entrance of the church. Sponsors obtain a small cross that will be passed to the Seeker during the Rite.

The Catechumen (those seeking Baptism) will be first in line processing in to Mass. All seekers will line up at the foot of the stairs around the altar, sponsor behind the seeker. The deacon will ask each catechumen individually, "What is your name?" and then "What do you ask of God's Church?" You can get creative on that second question, but usually, the answer is "Baptism." That's it.

Addressing the Catechumen, the priest says, "God is our Creator and in him all living things have their existence.

He enlightens our minds, so that we may come to know and worship him. He has sent his faithful witness, Jesus Christ, to announce to us what he has seen and heard, the mysteries of heaven and earth.

Since you acknowledge with joy that Christ has come, now is the time to hear his word, so that you may possess eternal life by beginning, in our company, to know God and to love your neighbor. Are you ready, with the help of God, to live this life?"

Catechumen respond: "I am."

Addressing the Candidates (those already baptized), the priest says, "Those of you who seek to complete your Christian initiation (or: be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church), are you prepared to listen to the apostles' instruction, gather with us for prayer, and join us in the love and service of others?"

Candidates respond: "I am."

Sponsors will be asked, "Are you, and all who are gathered with us, ready to help these candidates follow Christ?"

Sponsors and assembly respond: "We are."

The priest will ask Seekers to face their sponsors. At the priest's direction, the sponsor makes the sign of the cross on the Seeker's forehead, the ears, eyes, lips, heart, shoulders, hands, and feet.

The cross will be exchanged from Sponsor to Seeker.

Then we all sit down for the first part of the Mass, the Liturgy of the Word.

After the homily, the clergy (priest or deacon) will call the RCIA catechumen and candidates (not those seeking Confirmation) forward to the step around the altar. Children in the RCIA for Children class will also be called forward. Sponsors will stand behind each Seeker, placing a hand on the Seeker's shoulder as a sign of parish support. After a blessing, the class is dismissed to go Break Open the Word. Sponsors return to their pews.

The RCIA catechumen and candidates will be led by a facilitator up the stairs, past the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, to the Commons for further direction. Children in the RCIA for Children program usually dismiss down the center aisle.

Break Open the Word is held in the classrooms in the lower level of the Great Hall. Typically, the session is over within 15 minutes of the end of Mass, so family can meet you in the Commons.