

THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (OCIA) PROCESS



This is the period of Inquiry (Pre-Catechumenate and Candidates), in which the inquirers begin the basic exploration of the Catholic faith, while discerning if the time is right for the individual to take the next step. This time can vary in length and time based on each person's readiness to move on.

At the end of this period, there is a formal rite of Entrance, wherein each inquirer is welcomed into the local parish church and is presented to the congregation.

The Catechumens and Candidates now begin a period of deeper instruction in the Catholic faith.

Normally, this will involve the use of Scripture, prayer, church teachings (including the works of the Church Fathers), and parish community.

This time will normally begin in the Fall to the beginning of the following year's Season of Lent.

It concludes with the *Rite of Sending* by the local parish to the *Rite of Election and/or Enrollment of Names* with the diocesan Bishop.

The Elect and Candidates begin a more intense period of study during this period, which begins in Lent. We take a more in depth look at our spiritual preparation for the continuing journey. This period is intended to purify the hearts and minds of the individuals, as they search their conscience and perform penances (small sacrifices). It is also a time to enlighten the heart and mind with a more intimate knowledge of Jesus Christ, our Savior. During this period, we will celebrate 3 rites called the *Scrutinies*. These rites are intended to enhance exploration of the purification and enlightenment process and prepare us for our next step.

This period ends with them receiving the *Sacraments of Initiation or Full Reception* into Roman Catholic Church.

The *Neophytes*, as they are now called, begin a process more commonly now as "*Mystagogy*" (which is a Greek word meaning "lead through the mysteries").

This is a period of learning how to live their Catholic faith in the world and parish community.

The emphasis in this period is helping them enter into a deeper relationship with the Lord, through Scripture, frequent reception of Reconciliation and Eucharist, and prayer; while at the same time developing a full relationship with the parish community through ministries, stewardship, and ongoing or continuing faith formation.