

## **WHAT IS THE OCIA** **Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (previously called RCIA)**

The OCIA is a process of spiritual growth and learning leading up to initiation into the Catholic Church.

**For those not previously baptized as Catholic** initiation means Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist (Communion), all of which are usually received the night before Easter (the Easter Vigil).

**For those previously baptized as Catholic**, but who have not completed their initiation, this means receiving Confirmation and First Eucharist (if not received already), at the Easter Vigil.

**For those previously baptized in another Christian church.** This means making a solemn profession of faith and receiving the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

### **The OCIA process is divided into four major periods of time:**

**The Inquiry Period** in our parish lasts one year, from August through to December of the following year. It is a time of introduction to the gospel of Jesus Christ, of introduction to the Catholic Church and of deciding if one is ready to profess faith in Jesus Christ and begin the second period of the OCIA preparation to become a Catholic.

**The Catechumenate Period** from December (of the second year) until Lent of the second year. It begins with the *Rite of Acceptance* and is a time of more spiritual growth and learning about Christian beliefs and life as understood and practiced by Christians.

**The Period of Purification and Enlightenment**, from the beginning of Lent (of the second year) until Easter (of the second year). It begins with the *Rite of Election*, held at the Cathedral of Santa Fe. The Bishop acknowledges the readiness of the Catechumens to receive the Sacraments of Initiation. During this period there is more intense preparation and prayer.

**The Period of Mystagogy**, is the 50-day time following Easter to Pentecost. The newly initiated Christians continue to reflect on their spiritual journeys and learn more about living the new life they have begun.

### **Who is involved in the OCIA process:**

Those who are preparing to receive the Sacraments of initiation, called Candidates or Catechumens.

**The OCIA team**, a group of Catholic men and women who lead the weekly meetings and assist those preparing for initiation on their journeys. Other members of the parish, such as priests, deacons and other will occasionally lead the weekly meetings and discussions.

**Sponsors are spiritual companions** for those preparing for initiation. Each person needs to have

a sponsor by the Catechumenate Period. This person is a practicing Catholic chosen by the person or provided by the parish and attends the weekly meetings with person to be initiated. The sponsor may not be a spouse or parent of the adult.

**For more information contact your Parish Office:**

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