

Diocesan Pastoral Directives on RCIA (Revised 2020)

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is mandatory in every parish of the diocese. Full implementation of all aspects of the rite is required.

The Christian Initiation process (for those seeking to be baptized) involves 4 stages:

- a) Inquiry Stage: length depends on the needs of the individual.
- b) Catechumenate: Must span at least one liturgical year.
- c) Purification and Enlightenment: Begins with Rite of Election and continues until reception of the sacraments at Easter Vigil.
- d) Mystagogy: From Easter until Pentecost

The RCIA process will span well over one year. Permission to abbreviate the catechumenate must be granted by the bishop.

The four-stage process outlined above is not required of those who have already been baptized in another Christian denomination. The length of their period of preparation depends on their readiness for full communion in the Catholic Church. In addition, their reception into the Church may occur at a time other than Easter Vigil.

The ICEL text of Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults with the U.S. appendix is an essential text for those involved in implementing the rite in parishes. Members of the RCIA team should have a copy of the Study edition of this text to follow throughout the process. A Ritual edition of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is required for the presider/leader to use during the celebration of the rites.

RCIA team members are encouraged to attend workshops sponsored by the Office of Liturgy.

The confirmation of adults (previously unbaptized) properly takes place in the context of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and is subject to the directives relevant to that process. Their confirmation is not to be postponed until the next visit by the bishop.

Validly baptized non-Catholic Christians from other than the Orthodox churches are confirmed during the Easter Vigil, when they are received formally into full communion in the Roman Catholic Church.

The baptized Christian (candidates) is to receive both doctrinal and spiritual preparation, adapted to individual pastoral requirements and may benefit from some of the RCIA process but discernment should be made regarding the length of catechetical formation required. (RCIA nos. 477 & 478)

For non-baptized Christians Children who have reached Catechetical Age, formation as it with adults, should be extended over several years, if need before they receive the sacraments. Parish RCIA Coordinators, should work closely⁷ with the pastor and the Director of Children's Faith Formation to adapt the formation to meet the needs of the children, their families and the parish. The process of initiation should be adapted both to their spiritual progress and the catechetical instruction they receive. Their initiation is marked by several steps, including the Rites of Acceptance in the Order of Catechumens and the optional Rite of Election, Scrutinies and the Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation (RCIA no. 253).