

IT TAKES A PARISH TO RAISE A NEW CATHOLIC!

The **R**ite of **C**hristian **I**nitiation of **A**dults (**RCIA** for short) is the process for welcoming new adult members into the Catholic faith community. Because RCIA is tailored to the needs of the individual participants, it is a challenging process and requires the gifts and talents of the whole community to provide the spiritual and religious formation necessary for newcomers to become fully mature disciples. During every step of their faith journey, those seeking communion with the Catholic Church need the whole parish to support them through prayer, example, hospitality and inclusion in parish activities, to celebrate with them the rites that mark their progress, and to offer their specific talents to the formation process. Below are some of the formation aspects of RCIA that are seeking your specific gift and a brief description of the responsibilities involved. Where do you recognize yourself?

I. Sunday Dismissal Leader - great fit for one who loves Scripture and desires to lead others to a deeper appreciation of how God shapes us through his Word. Resource materials and training available. Responsibilities include:

- Leading a reflection on the Sunday readings with the RCIA candidates when they are dismissed from Sunday liturgy ("dismissed" because they cannot yet partake of the Eucharist)
- Serving on a rotating schedule to lead the dismissals. Dismissals will rotate between the Saturday 5 P.M., Sunday 8:30 A.M. and Sunday 11:00 A.M. liturgies so that the whole community can see and get to know the RCIA candidates.

II. Sponsor - most suited to friendly and engaged parishioners who can introduce RCIA newcomers to parish life and activities. A sponsor is one who will:

- Befriend an RCIA candidate & offer the gifts of presence, emotional support, prayer, listening, & the personal witness of faith
- Introduce their candidate to the wider community by inviting them to participate in parish events
- Maintain regular contact with their assigned candidate, attend as many of the RCIA sessions as possible with their candidate
- Participate in the public rituals that celebrate their candidate's deepening commitment to Jesus Christ and his Church

III. Hospitality Minister - is your particular talent that of creating a welcoming ambience and planning parties worthy of celebrating conversion? Responsibilities include:

- Preparing and delivering a healthy snack to one or more of the Thursday evening RCIA sessions
- Planning a celebration in honor of the newly baptized/professed members of the Catholic faith following the Easter Vigil.

IV. RCIA Team Member - do you have a healthy basic knowledge of Catholic beliefs and practices or at least know what resources to utilize in formulating them? Are your gifts those of a teacher? **WARNING!** Many team members become so touched by this powerful process that they never want to quit! Responsibilities include:

- Assisting in passing on the teachings and practices of the Catholic faith at weekly RCIA gatherings
- Facilitating discussion and sharing, respecting the adult learning process (incorporating the existing wisdom and experience of adults), speaking comfortably about your own personal faith
- Sharing responsibility for preparing and leading discussions on a rotating basis with other team members

If one of the above categories speaks to your heart and you would like to offer your specific gifts to the RCIA this year, or if you would like to discuss a commitment further, please contact Therese Carroll-Caruso at 897-5207 or tcaruso@htparish.org. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.