

“Consequently, there must also be evidence of the first stirrings of repentance...” [#42 RCIA continued]

What are the things in my life that I am sorry for?

“...a start to the practice of calling upon God in prayer...”

What are my habits of prayer right now? What would I like them to be? When and where do I pray?

“...a sense of Church...”

Do I participate every week in the Mass? How fully? What do I know about the Catholic Church across the world?

“...and some experience of the company and spirit of Christians through contact with a priest or with members of the community.” [#42 RCIA continued]

Who have I met so far at St. Monica? What drew me here? What would I like to be involved in at St. Monica outside of RCIA?

What have I learned about being Catholic from these people?

Background for Understanding Rite Acceptance & the Rite of Welcome *The first major Rite of the RCIA*



Zaccheus in the Sycamore Tree
Luke 19:1-10

“This is eternal life: to know the one true God and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent. If, then, you wish to become his disciples and members of his Church, you must be guided to the fullness of the truth he has revealed to us. You must learn to make the mind of Christ Jesus your own. You must strive to pattern your life on the teachings of the Gospel and so to love the Lord your God and neighbor. For this was Christ’s command and he was its perfect example.”

“Is each of you ready to accept these teachings of the Gospel?”
RCIA #52, Rite of Acceptance

The rite of Christian initiation presented here is designed for adults who, after hearing the mystery of Christ proclaimed, **consciously and freely seek the living God and enter the way of faith and conversion as the Holy Spirit opens their hearts.**

RCIA #1



About the Rite of Acceptance

41. The rite that is called the rite of acceptance into the order of catechumens is of the utmost importance. Assembling publicly for the first time, the candidates who have completed the period of the precatechumenate declare their intention to the Church and the Church in turn, carrying out its apostolic mission, accepts them as persons who intend to become its members. God showers his grace on the candidates, since the celebration manifests their desire publicly and marks their reception and first consecration by the Church.

43. Before the rite is celebrated, therefore, sufficient and necessary time, as required in each case, should be set aside to evaluate, and if necessary, to purify the candidates' motives and dispositions.

47. From this time on the Church embraces the catechumens as its own with a mother's love and concern. Joined to the Church, the catechumens are now part of the household of Christ, and since the Church nourishes them with the word of God and sustains them by means of liturgical celebrations. The catechumens should be eager, then, to take part in celebrations of the word of God and to receive blessings and other sacramentals.

“Thus there must be there must be evidence of the first faith...of an initial conversion and intention to change their lives and to enter into a relationship with God in Christ.”

[#42 RCIA continued]



Is there enough evidence to “convict” me of the beginnings of faith? Have I put my trust in the Lord in some new way? What changes have I already had to make in my life

Evidence of “first faith” in me...

Changes I have already made in my life so that I might follow Christ better...

Ways I have begun to “trust in God”...

Necessary Pre-dispositions for Rite of Acceptance/Rite of Welcome

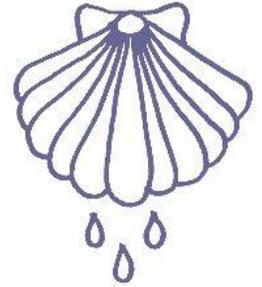
from paragraph # 42 of the RCIA

“The prerequisite for making this first step is that the beginnings of the spiritual life and the fundamentals of Christian teaching have taken root in the candidates.”

What aspects of the spiritual life or Catholic teaching have “taken root” in me so far?



Make some lists ...



1. Some things I have learned in RCIA that I really like...
2. Some things I now do differently because I come to RCIA every week...
3. My favorite prayers...
4. Now that I know God better, I am sorry for...
5. Some of the people I have met at Church are...
6. What I would do to get CLOSER to Jesus...
7. My time and place for prayer is...
Do I go to Mass every Sunday?

What teachings do I know now? What teachings do I like the most??

Have any of the teachings caused me to change my mind or my life in any way?

Sponsor~Candidate Dialogue or Parent~Child Dialogue

The Cross stands as the center of Christian life



Zacchaeus did not start out from an experience of hardship; he was a tax collector and most likely got rich by cheating the people. We can only guess that Zacchaeus had a healthy case of curiosity. Maybe he was lonely. But whatever the reason, he climbed a tree.

What happened next was a surprise – Jesus saw him, looked at him (REALLY looked at him, and SAW HIM), and then Jesus made an invitation that completely delighted Zacchaeus: he invited himself to the home of Zacchaeus (don't try this with your friends!).

Nothing was the same for Zacchaeus after that. Jesus ate with him. At that dinner, “little” Zacchaeus stood up and made some very BIG promises – he announced BIG changes he would make in his life.

We can imagine that the changes Zacchaeus promised were not easy. He must, at times, been tempted to go back to his “former ways.” I wonder what would have kept him

faithful to his promises – what kept him from giving up on these BIG promises made at the spur of the moment...

Changes are never easy. Faith requires a change of life – but the moment we feel Jesus looking at us with love, the changes become possible, maybe even easy. And, like Zacchaeus, we can always go to Jesus for help and forgiveness when we fail: we can always start again!

How are you like Zacchaeus in this story?

What is different about your story?

Are you curious? List some things about Jesus or the faith that you are curious about.

Do you feel loved, “seen”??

What do you really want from your faith??

