



Want to Learn More About the Catholic Church?

Are you interested in learning more about Catholicism, or are you thinking about joining the Catholic Church? If so, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) process is for you!

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." John 8:12

From the time of the apostles, becoming a Christian has been accomplished by a journey and initiation process in several stages. In the early days of the Church, when someone sought conversion to Christianity, he or she was given basic instruction as an inquirer into the faith. They entered into full union with the Mystical Body of Christ when they received the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) at Easter. The process itself is called the Rite of Christian Initiation, and takes place within the entire community of the faithful, the RCIA Team members, the Sponsors and the parishioners. At St. Pascal Baylon, this process takes place on Wednesday evenings and begins in October and concludes the week after Easter.

The first stage is called the Period of Inquiry or the Precatechumenate, which takes place from the middle of October to the middle of January. This is followed by the second stage, the Catechumenate (from the Greek meaning people who are being given instruction), which continues until the beginning of Lent. The third stage, the Period of Purification and Enlightenment, takes place during the 40 days of Lent, and the fourth stage, the Period of Mystagogia occurs after Easter through involvement in the parish community. Please read on for a further description of each of these periods.

PRECATECHUMENATE

October – January

A time of inquiry, searching, questioning, and responding to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit to seek life with Christ in the community of Catholic Christians.

- Meet on scheduled Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:00 PM at St. Pascal Baylon.
- A time to share your life's experiences with others.
- Attend weekly Sunday Mass with the community of St. Pascal Baylon.
- Hear the Good News of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- A time to ask questions about the Catholic faith.
- Receive an introduction to some of the basic Christian and Catholic teachings.
- A time to begin or deepen prayer and reflection on our relationship with God.
- Toward the end of this period, a Catholic sponsor who will complete the remainder of the RCIA journey with you will be recognized. It is possible for you to choose your own sponsor, see the RCIA Coordinator.
- This period reaches its end with the celebration of the Rite of Acceptance and Welcome; a time when, after reflection, the inquirer publicly requests membership in the Catholic Church and proclaims a desire to enter into the next phases of the RCIA process.

OVER

CATECHUMENATE

January - Ash Wednesday

A slow and gradual opening to the work of God in your life. Sharing of the way of life with members of the community.

- Continued attendance at weekly Sunday Mass with the community of St .Pascal Baylon.
- Focus in more detail on the many teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Pursue an even deeper prayer life.
- Reflecting on the weekly Sunday readings and applying them to our life experiences.
- The period ends with the Rite of Election and Recognition; a time when the Catechumens and Candidates publicly state their desire to receive the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation) in the Catholic Church.

PURIFICATION & ENLIGHTENMENT

Lent– Easter

A period of prayerful recollection and reflection, purification of the mind and heart with a deeper knowledge of Christ.

- Continued attendance at weekly Sunday Mass with the community of St. Pascal Baylon.
- Scrutinies – a period of three weeks during Lent; a deepening awareness of the graciousness of God’s love and becoming sensitive to the barriers of sin and evil. A raising up of the dimensions of life that welcome God’s love.
- Preparation for and celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation by those who desire to receive this sacrament.
- A retreat morning to prepare for the Easter Vigil.
- The RCIA process reaches its peak at the Easter Vigil, when all participants will be received into full communion with the Catholic Church; those who have not been, will be receive the Sacrament of Baptism at this time, and all will receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

MYSTAGOGIA

Our ongoing faith journey with a continued integration of faith into our lives.

- Sharing in our Lord’s death and resurrection through the Sacrament of Eucharist.
- Time to reflect on both the RCIA journey that has just been completed, and to begin to respond to the call of the Church, “to go out and proclaim the Good News.”
- Participate in the parish community as new members of the Catholic community of St. Pascal Baylon.

TO BEGIN:

- Call the parish office 651-774-1585 or email (richard.moore@stpascals.org), the RCIA Coordinator (Deacon Richard Moore)