



**Baptism, First Communion,
Confirmation**

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Parish Offices:

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Become Catholic

Our tri-parish extends an invitation to all. Whether you are beginning to explore the Catholic faith or have been considering becoming Catholic for a long time, we are here to walk with you on your journey of faith. Our goal is to help everyone on their spiritual journey, with the hope that you will discover your call to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in the Church.

Full initiation into the Catholic Church is constituted by participation in the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. The normative process to prepare for the reception of these sacraments is the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) - a process of spiritual and educational formation that has been handed down to us from the early Church.



1st Stage: Inquiry - Faith exploration within the church community

The inquirer asks God for guidance as he prayerfully discerns the decision to enter the Catholic Church. Time is spent exploring the Catholic faith by talking to a trusted Catholic, by asking questions, and by listening to Catholic content on reliable websites. Links can be found on the parish website: ourblcc.org.

When the decision is made to enter OCIA, the OCIA Initial Interview Form and Sponsor Form should be filled out online and emailed to Colleen Schiltz (bschiltz9@gmail.com). Forms can be found on the parish website. The inquirer may attend Mass to take part in community worship. While others receive Communion, inquirers are invited to approach the priest with arms crossed on the chest to receive a blessing. Communion is not received until OCIA is completed.

What should I be doing?

Attend Mass every weekend.

Attend all OCIA meetings.

Spend time daily praying to God.

Read about God in the Bible or watch videos about Jesus to learn His story.

Ask your sponsor any questions you may have.

Consider ways in which your deepening faith calls you to change your life.

Find ways to help others in your family and community.

Contact Colleen Schiltz with questions: bschiltz9@gmail.com

2nd Stage: Catechumenate - Learning from the support team

Beginning in September, those involved in OCIA will attend Sunday 9:00 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph in Lyons. After Mass, the candidates/catechumens, sponsors, and support team meet in the St. Joseph Parish Center for catechesis (instruction in the faith and moral life), prayer, guidance, encouragement, and fellowship.

3rd Stage: Lent - Final Preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation

This stage begins with Ash Wednesday Mass. Candidates/Catechumens decide how they will fast, pray and give alms during Lent. Attendance at Sunday Mass continues, followed by meetings in the Parish Center. The focus is now on interior reflection, a deepened relationship with Jesus, and conversion. During Holy Week, participation in Holy Thursday Mass and Good Friday service will help them prepare for the reception of Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion at the Easter Vigil.

4th Stage: Mystagogy - Entering into the life and unity of the community

During the time between Easter and Pentecost, the fully initiated Catholic grows spiritually by participating in the sacramental life of the Church and by reflecting on the effect of the sacraments in their life. The new Catholic will be prepared for First Reconciliation and will receive the sacrament before Pentecost.

Common Questions

What if I was baptized in another Christian denomination? The Catholic Church recognizes the validity of Baptism by other Christian ecclesial communities when water is poured on the baptized, or they are immersed and the minister says, *"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."* Examples of valid baptisms include Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and many others. Proof of valid baptism is required to continue with conversion to Catholicism.

Does the preparation for receiving the Sacraments of Initiation cost anything? No! We do not charge a fee for this program.

How do I choose a Sponsor/Godparent? Choose a Sponsor or Godparent who is a confirmed, practicing Catholic, age 16 or older who is a good example of Catholic living. If the Sponsor/Godparent meets all the requirements, he/she will be asked to complete a form and have it signed by the pastor where they are registered parishioners.