



How to prepare for elections *and* stay spiritually sane

The U.S. general election is on Nov. 5, 2024. That is nine months from tomorrow. What are you doing to prepare for it? Here is my guess: You don't want to tune in, but you will, and you will do so in ways that unwittingly reinforce your desire to avoid politics. But how can you hope to be a good citizen that way?

Many Americans are trying to avoid thinking about the election this far out. But between now and next November there will be a parade of debates, town halls, interviews, negative ads, caucuses and primaries, and possibly a few October surprises. Most of us are not looking forward to that. Indeed, many of us are disillusioned by U.S. politics, or exhausted into apathy. It is not just that we find the campaigns distasteful or depressing; we may not think we have a meaningful voice in the process. Besides, most of us already know how we are going to vote, even if we are not happy about it.

And yet, we will get sucked in. We will enjoy it when a candidate we don't like falls into scandal. We will watch viral sound bites that simultaneously enrage and delight us. We will read a social media post and, worse, the comments, and then get into a pointless online fight with a stranger. We will catch

disturbing headlines that compel us to dive deeper into an article before we decide we don't want to know any more. Our conscience will push us to engage for a moment, only to be discouraged again.

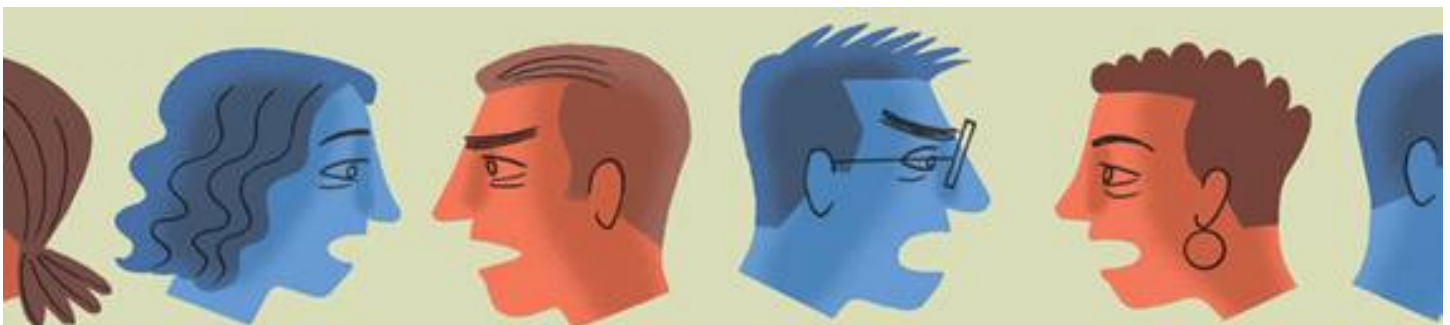
Having gone down the rabbit hole (sewer drain?) of U.S. politics, we may emerge no wiser but more frustrated, determined to leave all of it behind. Then we will repeat the cycle.

But does anything else in your life benefit from the boom-and-bust cycle that characterizes your political attention? Diet? Exercise? Cleaning?

Citizenship calls for discipline, or the training of our hearts and minds on what merits our attention, rather than on all things that distract us. Instead of oscillating between apathy and engrossment, what if we learned to follow political life in a sustained and sustainable way? If we elevated the campaign season into a period of discernment and encounter?

My suggestion: Take the next few months as an experiment. Pay attention to the campaigns, but decide how much attention you are going to pay, and stick to it. Escape the cycle

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Staying Spiritually Sane

Continued from page 1

of engagement and disillusionment. You will find that the discipline satisfies something human in you. Here are some steps on how to do it.

Read something about U.S. politics. And I really do mean read. It does not have to be directly about the election. You might read the U.S. Constitution, or Pope Francis' "Laudato Si'," or "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship" from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Perhaps there is an article or book you have been meaning to read on race, fiscal policy or American history. Now is a good time to do it. (If you want to get meta, read something about leisure and the need to think. Alan Jacobs' *How to Think* and Josef Pieper's *Leisure the Basis of Culture* are classics.)

Talk to someone about it. This is a reality check: Did you fully understand what you read? Either way, you may find this an opportunity to connect with someone whom you respect or admire, whether in person or by sending a letter to an author. This step helps you to make the move from ideas to persons. Come to grips with what is at stake and why someone would care, especially someone who thinks and lives differently from you.

Sit and think about it. This is the hardest part. Don't run away from the thoughts, however unpleasant they are. Create a space where these ideas can come into conversation with your experiences, where the opinions of those you admire can challenge you, or where some of the implications of those ideas for your life can come out. In the best-case scenario, you will discover some questions you want to pursue, or people you want to explore more of the topic with.

So read something, talk to someone about it, and sit and think about it. **Do this weekly.** As with physical exercise, the goal is to establish a routine. I promise: Engaging political life in a disciplined, sustained way will be more fruitful than an on-again, off-again attitude, and it will feel better. Then, when you do think about politics, you will be guided increasingly by a desire to learn more and to interact better with other people, rather than by more common motives of anger, envy or sloth.

These steps are also of value to people who like to stay "plugged in." Again, read about something new, and talk to someone you don't normally talk to. Try to establish the kind of solidarity with people different from you that allows you to see the world a bit differently.

Exercising virtuous citizenship is challenging even under the best circumstances. But like so much else in life, it helps to see it as a series of manageable tasks. **So I urge you: read something, talk to someone about it, then sit and think about it. Then do that again.** You have nine months to try it!

Written by Bill McCormick, S.J. for America Magazine, November 2023. For more, please visit americamagazine.org

Lent starts February 14th



- Lent is the liturgical season which runs from Ash Wednesday until the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.
- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of *total* fast and abstinence from meat.
- All the Fridays of Lent are days of Abstinence from meat.
- The **Law of Abstinence** from meat binds persons from the completion of their 14th year — from the day after their 14th birthday, throughout life.
- The **Law of Abstinence** forbids the use of meat, but not eggs, milk or products or condiments made of animal fat. Permissible are soups flavored with meat, meat gravy and sauces.
- The **Law of Fasting** binds persons from the completion of their 18th year to the beginning of their 60th year, i.e., from the day after their 59th birthday.
- The **Law of Fasting** allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food in the morning and evening, observing as far as quantity and quality are concerned — approved local custom. The order of meals is optional; i.e. the full meal may be taken in the evening instead of at midday. Also: (1) the quantity of food taken at the two lighter meals should not exceed the quantity taken at the full meal. (2) the drinking of ordinary liquids does not break the fast.
- In keeping with the spirit and meaning of the Lenten fast, Catholics are encouraged to observe the Good Friday fast through Holy Saturday and until after the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

All Things Considered

In most parishes, preparations for adults joining the Church this coming Easter have already been in session for months. The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults, in its purest form, can take anywhere from one to three years. The recovery of the ancient OCIA process is clearly some of the best work of our post Vatican II Church.

But this rich process is more like a menu than a recipe. Not everyone seeking to join the Church can be “plated” in the same way. I doubt if some of the great converts to Catholicism in recent decades – like Dorothy Day and Thomas Merton – would have ever made it through many parish OCIA programs today.

Which leads to the approach we endorse here at St. Ambrose. Under the skillful direction of our pastoral minister, Chuck Dropiewski, we are able to custom craft an OCIA process that fits the life-style and pace of the individual soul.

If you, or someone you know, is reluctant or unable to enter into a lengthy OCIA program, you need to talk with Chuck. Starting on Ash Wednesday, we will close this year’s Catechumenate group for those seeking initiation this coming Easter. Maybe you can still find it in your heart to make the Catholic plunge this Spring. You’re never late at St. Ambrose.

✠✠✠

The saga of a petrochemical being picked up in our ARK sump pump continues. The ARK sits lower than any other sump pumps on the parish property, and is apparently closer to the water table. Thus, our foundation sumps are acting almost like a monitoring well.

Testing that was done for us by **Brighton Analytical** on January 11th

showed there to be mineral solvents in a very high concentration in our sump. Two tests repeated last week on the 18th and 22nd by Brighton Analytical on the sump pump water continue to show mineral spirits present in high, but slightly decreased amounts. The report came in just as we were going to press, and we have not had time to review in detail all its findings, but the decrease in mineral spirits is a positive finding.

Upon the advice of our engineer, Steve Guyot, owner of **Environmental Services GPW**, we contracted to have our sumps completely cleaned so that we could establish a new baseline for environmental testing going forward from now. That work was scheduled for last Thursday.

It needs to be pointed out repeatedly that in the quarter century the ARK has been in operation, the sumps have never picked up any chemicals in the water – nor have they been handling a constant filling of water 24/7. Contaminants are one thing, but just as strange is the question as to where is this continuous flow of water coming from for months on end?

Testing that we ordered on the ARK air quality from **Enthalpy Analytical** was returned to us last Tuesday. This was a follow-up to the air test done by the Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy in Lansing (EGLE) on the 11th of January. Since that time, we have shut down work in the ARK out of a concern for the health of our subcontractors. The new test results showed “... *that Volatile Organic Concentrations were slightly above the normal range of 0-500 nanograms/liter (ng/L)*”. This would be consistent with fumes produced from paints and coatings – although there was no painting being done in the ARK.

While this test reading was not considered a threat to habitation, the lab wrote: “...*chemically sensitive persons may require lower levels and some effect on the occupants is possible. It is recommended that all individuals entering the area be made aware of VOC concentrations and informed to*

be aware of the environment and personal health and short-term health effects.”

To err on the side of safety: “*It is recommended that (a) lower-level main area air be exchanged with outside air; (b) sump well be sealed to prevent outgassing of apparent odor to the general air; and (c) an exhaust fan be installed in the sump well room (exhausted directly to the outdoors) to expel any sump well odors to the outdoor environment. Ultimately, any odors emitting from the sump well need to be identified and mitigated as soon as possible.*”

The comment was made by our contractor, Scott Levine, that our air sample was only slightly higher than most factory situations. That gives me little comfort – “almost factory fresh air!”

This past week, after this article went to press, our Environmental services ESGPW began taking ground samples on our property between the ARK and the new construction happening South of us. (That property line has been in motion over the past year or three.)

This soil test is an attempt to try to trace where the mineral solvents that came up in the ARK pit might have as their point of origin. This chemical has a pretty specific signature – different than heating oil, gasoline or diesel fuel. Although mineral solvents can be found in some household cleaning agents and some paints, in the volume we are seeing it, it is likely from an industrial type site that used a lot of the product.

But until we or someone else actually tests beyond our property, we cannot say with certainty what the source of the leaching may be. We do know that its appearance in our system began slowly months ago, reaching a high point in December/January.

I know that three weeks ago I wrote that I didn’t believe that the costs of tracking down the source of this problem should fall on St. Ambrose. But the only way to get anything done was to do it ourselves.

St. Ambrose Liturgical Choir

Now under the direction of Josh Bircroff, our Liturgical Choir is reconstituting itself. They sing at the weekly 11:15 a.m. liturgy and major feast days of the Church.

There's lots of great music at Mass that needs to be sung that just cannot reasonably be done by a congregation. By spending the time and effort to rehearse each week, the choir provides a great service to the congregation by opening up the amount of literature the Assembly can be exposed to. Used appropriately, this has significant theological and musical implications, broadening the congregation's experience of the divine. It's a real ministry.

For more information, contact Mr. Burcroff at burcroffjosh@gmail.com. or stop up in the loft before or after Sunday's masses.



Faith Formation Station

The students in St. Ambrose's Religious Education program who are preparing for First Eucharist and their families are invited to participate in a special Travelling Chalice Program. Each week one of our special sacrament students is called up to the altar to receive the Travelling Chalice and bring it home with them for the week. At home, families are invited to place the chalice on their dining room table or in a special prayer spot; they are encouraged to pass the chalice and say a prayer for vocations and thanksgiving during the week. This longstanding St. Ambrose tradition enriches the community preparation and celebration of the Eucharist. As you witness these special children receive the Travelling Chalice throughout the year, take time throughout the week to pray for them. Say your own special prayer of thanks for vocations. Thank God for the gift of the Eucharist. Thank you for being an active witness to their preparation and blessing them with your prayers.



Rite of Enrollment for First Communion

How the Travelling Chalice Came to Be:

- The chalice was a gift to Father Hamel from the parishioners of St. Ambrose where Father was an Assistant Pastor at the time.
- The chalice was not able to be located for almost ½ of a century.
- Peter and Judy Bommarito found the chalice in the middle of a busy intersection at 11 Mile Rd. and Hoover and took it to the nearest Catholic Parish: St. Sylvester.
- The staff of St. Sylvester returned the chalice to St. Ambrose when they read the inscription on the chalice.
- By this time, Father Hamel had passed away, and in an effort to contact relatives, the story of the chalice was printed in the Michigan Catholic Newspaper.
- Father Hamel's brother Joseph responded to the article and felt that the chalice should remain at St. Ambrose.
- Father Tim Pelc had learned of a program promoted by the Serra International, a group of Catholic laypeople whose goal it is to promote religious vocations. The group called the program the Vocation Chalice Program. In this program, the chalice is presented to a different family each week. The family keeps the chalice in their home for the entire week in order to bring vocation awareness into their own dining rooms.
- Father Tim offered the opportunity of "housing the chalice for a week" to the St. Ambrose parish families. The First Communicant class of students was among the first to have the privilege of housing the chalice in their homes.
- On March 10, 1996 Joseph and Elizabeth Hamel and Peter and Judy Bommarito attended the 11:15 A.M. Liturgy joined by a representative from the

Continued on next page

Serra International Vocation Chalice Program where the chalice was presented to Evan Breen, as the initial First Communicant to house the chalice.

As First Communion is a parish celebration, we invite the parish to pray for all of the children who are preparing to receive the Eucharist. Special bookmarks are available for anyone willing to take one home as a reminder to pray for one of our program students. Through the wonder and awe of these students, our entire parish will learn again what it means to taste and see the goodness of the Lord dwelling among us. If we open our eyes to witness them in their preparation, we too can be converted, evangelized, and transformed. These children are gifts to their families, to our parish, to the entire Church, to the whole world.

May God continue to bless the sacramental journey of our first communicants: Connor Bunch, Jack Campbell, Amelia Coppola, Brooks Daniell, Edward Girodat, Tate Hartung, Charlotte Kolar, Camille Krupp, Teodoro Lachuk, Matilda McKenzie, Valentina Paonessa, Eva Seng, Marietta Smith, Andrew Wachler, May Wilborn, and Julia Woodside.

Kelly Woolums

Ash Wednesday

Lent will begin Wednesday, February 14th. Ashes will be distributed at morning Mass at 8:30. There will be a Scripture Service at 12:00 noon and an Evening Mass at 7:00.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of total fast and abstinence from meat.

Ghirelli Rosaries

Six different custom designed rosaries were made by hand in Italy expressly for St. Ambrose Parish. The bead collection ranges from hard woods to various semi-precious stones.

The crucifix is modeled from the Ark Plaza sculpture and the center piece depicts the First and Second Coming of Christ from our sanctuary. The "Pater" bead is taken from details in our stained glass windows.

A Ghirelli Rosary is a perfect Christmas Gift, for someone joining the Church, or for a First Communion keepsake

To order, please visit our website, use the QR code below, or visit the parish office.



The Beehive

is the parish weekly bulletin of the St. Ambrose Catholic Community Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Priest in Solidum: Rev. Timothy R. Pelc
Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski
Religious Education: Kelly Anne Woolums
Minister of Music: Josh Burcroff
Office Manager: Peggy O'Connor
Secretary: Mary Urbanski

Sacramental Celebrations

Masses: On the Lord's Day –

Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:30 & 11:15 a.m.

Baptism: Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.

Penance: As announced and by appointment.

Marriage: Couples should contact the rectory office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

Funeral: Normally celebrated within one week after the deceased's passing.

Directory

Parish Office: 15020 Hampton
 Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230
Tel: (313) 822-2814 **Fax:** (313) 822-9838
Email address: stambrose@comcast.net
Religious Education: (313) 332-5633
Pastoral Ministry: (313) 332-5631
Ark Scheduling: (313) 822-2814
Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

What happens at Mass?

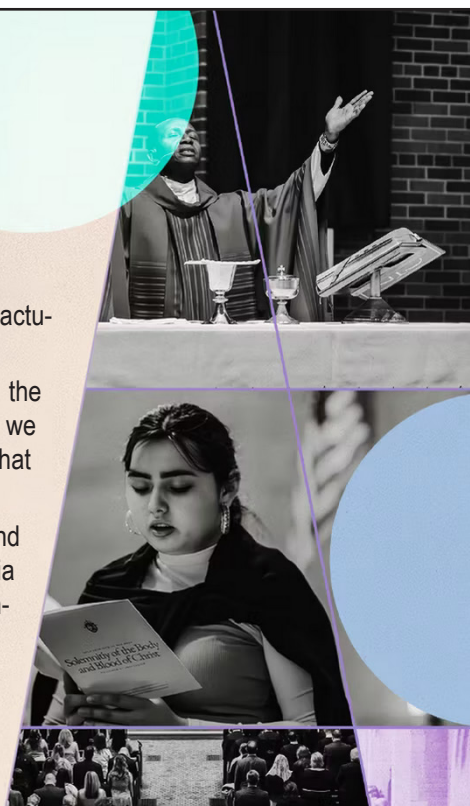
Daily Trivia
Challenge

Have you ever wondered what actually happens at Mass?

There are things the priest does, the things each one of us does, and the things we do as a community. And then, there is what God does ... what he really does.

Starting on Ash Wednesday and throughout Lent, join us for a daily trivia game to dive deeper into the Mass — turning learning into an adventure!

Join the challenge, at iamhere.org/lent to play the daily trivia, and explore the Mass together!



Liturgy Schedule

Monday, February 5

St. Agatha, virgin & martyr

Tuesday, February 6

St. Paul Miki & Companions, martyrs

8:30 a.m. – Mass – William Frtiscia

Wednesday, February 7

Weekday 5th week in Ordinary Time

Thursday, February 8

St. Jerome Emiliani

St. Josephine Bakhita, virgin

7:00 p.m. – Mass – Mary Ann Rice

Msgr. Dan Trapp

Friday, February 9

Weekday 5th week in Ordinary Time

12:00 p.m. – Mass – Patsy Mann

Saturday, February 10

St. Scholastica, virgin

4:00 p.m. – Mass – For All People

Sunday, February 11

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

8:30 a.m. – Mass – For All People

11:15 a.m. – Mass – For All People

Scriptures for the 5th Week of Ordinary Time

February 5

1 Kgs 8: 1-7, 9-13

Ps 132: 6-10

Mk 6: 53-56

February 6

1 Kgs 8: 22-23, 27-30

Ps 84: 3-5, 10-11

Mk 7: 1-13

February 7

1 Kgs 10: 1-10

Ps 27: 5-6, 30-31, 39-40

Mk 7: 14-23

February 8

1 Kgs 11: 4-13

Ps 106: 3-4, 35-37, 40

Mk 7: 24-30

February 9

1 Kgs 11: 29-32; 12-19

Ps 81: 10-15

Mk 7: 31-37

February 10

1 Kgs 12: 26-32; 13: 33-34

Ps 106: 6-7, 19-22

Mk 8: 1-10

February 11

Lv 13: 1-2, 44-46

Ps 32: 1-2, 5, 11

1 Cor 10: 31-11: 1

Mk 1: 40-45

Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time

February 3rd & 4th

Reference # in our Breaking Bread Hymnal or on your iphone using the QR code.

Entrance: Healing River of the Spirit #673

Responsorial: The Lord has done great things #813

Preparatory: This Day God Gives Me #634

Communion: We Are the Light of the World #601

Recessional: Now Thank We All Our God #200



To participate electronically, go to: facebook.com/stambroseparish or better yet, to
You Tube at www.youtube.com/channel/UCbymBGIQxUF6UqPct5xFg

Your Envelope Speaks ... the Inside Story

To operate, each week our parish requires a *minimum* of..... \$10,100.00

On Sunday, January 28, 2024

in envelopes we received \$3,817.05

in the loose collection..... \$1,705.00

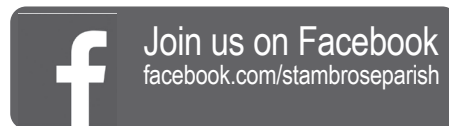
in electronic donations..... \$3,417.61

for a total of \$8,939.66

Under budget for the week..... \$1,160.34

Number of envelopes mailed 621

Number of envelopes used 67



Our Sick

Please pray for those who are seriously ill or who are hospitalized:
Pat Blake, Donald Miriani, Bonnie McKenna, Matthew Elias, Mary Martin, Emilie Kasper, Anna Noto Billings, Eileen O'Brien, Liz Linne, Donna Barnes, Charmaine Kaptur, Frank Gregory, Alex Billiu, Jackie Walkowski, Maria Simcina, Sharif Hannan, Shirley Whelan, Ricardo Hernandez Montoya, Albina Checki, Judy Sivanov, Matthew Brown, Lily Faith, Patty Freund, Janis Ramsey, Colette Gilewicz, Al LaHood, Valerie Hudson, Jeanene Maples, Angela Hansen, John Freund, Kevin O'Connor, Tiffany Saine, Nick Piccione, Ann Billiu, Nicole Lefevre-Wilson and Sharon Tenhoopen.

Our Dead

Douglas Alan Hedemark, a child of the "roaring 20s" was born in Cleveland in 1929 and died in St. Clair Shores last December 1st after a lifetime of adventures and occupations.

Raised a devout Lutheran, Doug became Catholic when, living in St. Philip Neri Parish, he married his neighbor from Coplin Street, Johanna Shannahan. They had 10 children, including back-to-back sets of twins.

Doug saw military service in the Army, stationed in occupied Germany after WWII. There he perfected his baseball skills – trying out for the Washington Senators until sidelined by a shoulder injury.

He received his Bachelors Degree in Education from Wayne State and taught high school special education for the Detroit Public Schools. He then gravitated toward the construction industry, using stone-mason skills he picked up over the years.

He combined his love of horses and metal work by becoming a farrier and did "house calls" for Veterinarians at MSU. He forged a sword honoring St. Joan of Arc, which he then took to France and left it there in a Cathedral dedicated to her. In later life, he began crafting violins.

A facile wit and curious mind, Doug was a lifelong learner and adventurer. And through it all he was faithful to his Catholic heritage. His funeral was celebrated here on February 2nd.



Welcome to St. Ambrose!

*St. Ambrose Parish continues to grow,
not only in spirit, but also in numbers.*

*On behalf of our parish community,
now beginning its 107th year of existence,
we warmly welcome all those who have
registered with us this past year.*

Mary Bailey on Park Place in the Park

Paige Barkume on Forest Ridge in Washington

Robert and Kathleen Bolya on Yorkshire in the Park

William and Marian Cuneo on Balfour in the Park

Stephen Forton and Mary White Forton on Beaconsfield in the Park

Keyley Craft on Buckingham in the Park

Jeremy and Elizabeth Gambrel on Buckingham in Lincoln Park

Pietro and Michelle Giovanco on Torrey Road in the Woods

Edward and Laura Girodat on S. Oxford in the Woods

Sean Graham and Allison Squatuito on Harcourt in the Park

Caryn Honn on Heather Lane in the Woods

Paul Kuligowski on Essex in the Park

Matthew McCabe on Roslyn in the Woods

Akiliiah Merriweather on Newport in Detroit

Michael Mocer on Norton Ct. in the Woods

Jeffrey and Katherine Perhogan on Martin in St. Clair Shores

Michael Posby and Katherine Fettig on Berkshire in the Park

Vernon Roy and Jozefa Chmielewski on Maryland in the Park

Jane Schmidt on St. Clair in Grosse Pointe City

Daniel Walz and Donna Kushner on Greater Mack in St. Clair Shores

*The Covid Pandemic took its toll on our parishioner
base, but we see strong signs of building a new base of
parishioners. If you have delayed joining the parish,
you're invited to do so in the new year. Even if you worship
in another community, you can become a member of St.
Ambrose Parish by registering your household. Call
313-822-2814 or email stambrose@comcast.net.*



Name

Home Phone

Work Phone

Email Address

- ☐ I would simply like to learn more about the Catholic Faith.
- ☐ I desire to prepare for my Baptism into Christianity.
- ☐ I've been Baptized as a Christian and now desire to join in Catholic Communion.
- ☐ I'm non-Catholic, but married to a Catholic, and now wish to join the Catholic Church.
- ☐ I'm Catholic and I would like to complete my initiation into the Catholic Church by celebrating Confirmation and/or Communion.
- ☐ I'm Baptized Catholic and would like to learn more about my faith and how to practice it.
- ☐ I want to propose someone for Catholic Church membership and offer to serve as their sponsor.
- ☐ I would be willing to help with an R.C.I.A. program.
- ☐ I have other needs, requests, and questions. Please contact me.

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