



# O.C.I.A

## Order of Christian Initiation of Adults

**DIOCESE OF TRENTON, JANUARY 2025:**  
DEPARTMENT OF CATECHESIS AND OFFICE OF WORSHIP

# Why are we changing from the R.C.I.A. to the O.C.I.A.?

-The real question:

Why are we here today?



# *Liturgiam Authenticam (2001)*

## FIFTH INSTRUCTION “FOR THE RIGHT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONSTITUTION ON THE SACRED LITURGY OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL”

Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the  
Sacraments

The Triumph of Literal Translations:  
*AKA: We need to talk to the English speaking Americans*

# A Comparison: “RCIA” vs. “OCIA:

## Rite of Acceptance:

Lord, we have signed these catechumens with the sign of Christ's cross. Protect them by its power, so that faithful to the grace which has begun in them, they may keep your commandments and come to the glory of rebirth in baptism.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

## Rite of Entrance into the Catechumenate:

Mercifully hear our prayers, we ask, O Lord, for these catechumens (n. and n.) whom we have signed with the Cross of the Lord, and guard them with its power so that, treasuring what they have come to know of your glory, they may, by keeping your commandments, merit to attain the glory of rebirth.

Through Christ our Lord.



ORDO  
INITIATIONIS  
CHRISTIANÆ  
ADULTORUM



The ORDER of  
CHRISTIAN INITIATION  
*of* ADULTS

RITUAL *de la*  
INICIACIÓN CRISTIANA  
*de* ADULTOS

# Beyond Translation: An Opportunity

1. Looking back since the implementation: How have we done?
2. Newly translated language can still alter understanding



# History of Adult Initiation: Credit Team RCIA

## HISTORY OF RCIA

"Go and make disciples"  
(Mt 28:19)

Catechumenate begins  
to take shape

Golden age of  
the catechumenate

ca 70

150

3<sup>rd</sup> c



TEAM  
RCIA  
2024

## HISTORY OF RCIA

Constantine converts,  
legalizes Christianity

Catechumenate  
expands

Theology of original  
sin develops

315

4<sup>th</sup> c

5<sup>th</sup> c



many converts

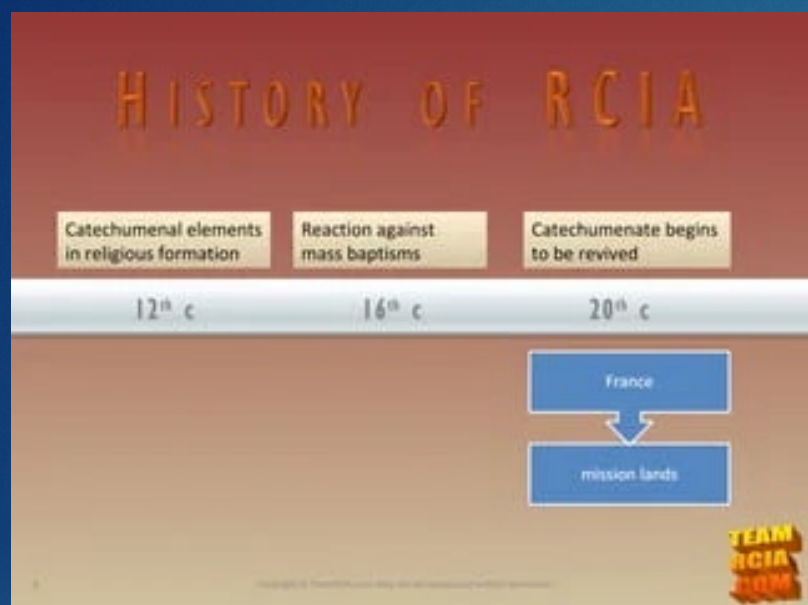
quality of catechesis  
suffers

many infant baptisms

catechumenate  
becomes impractical

baptism becomes  
integrated into society

TEAM  
RCIA  
2024



# **The Mandate for a renewed Catechumenate:**

*Sacrosanctum Concilium:*

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, December 4, 1963

*Paragraph 64:*

The catechumenate for adults, divided into several stages, is to be restored and put into use at the discretion of the local Ordinary. By this means the time of the catechumenate, which is intended as a period of well-suited instruction may be sanctified by sacred rites to be celebrated at successive intervals of time.

# Order of Christian Initiation of Adults

- November Meeting 2021: New ritual book approved by the USCCB
- February 14, 2024: Confirmed by Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments
- November 1, 2024: Date of Publication
- December 1, 2024: Date of First Possible Use
- March 5, 2025: Mandatory Use
- New National Statutes: Approved 11/15/2023, Recognitio 1/9/2024, effective date 12/1/2024

# OCIA: The Target Audience

**The Primary Focus of the Adult Initiation process in the Church is the unbaptized.**

- The Renewal of the Catechumenate vs. The Combined Rites
- The Importance of terminology:
  - Inquirer
  - Catechumen
  - Elect
  - Newly Baptized
  - Neophyte

Versus- Candidate

Practical concerns of catechesis, balanced with the liturgical markers.

Baptized Catholics, first Baptized Non-Catholic Christians!

# The Easter Vigil

Baptismal importance

To Combine or not to Combine?





Questions so far:

More to come.

# What has not changed?

The four periods in the Christian Initiation Process for the Unbaptized

1. Period of Evangelization and Pre-catechumenate
2. Period of the Catechumenate
3. Period of Purification and Enlightenment
4. Period of Mystagogy

# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

This is a time, of no fixed duration or structure, for inquiry and introduction to the Gospel values, an opportunity for the beginnings of faith. –*OCIA outline of Part 1*

## **OCIA Paragraph #36-40**

the Precatechumenate is of great importance and should not normally be omitted.” (OCIA 36)

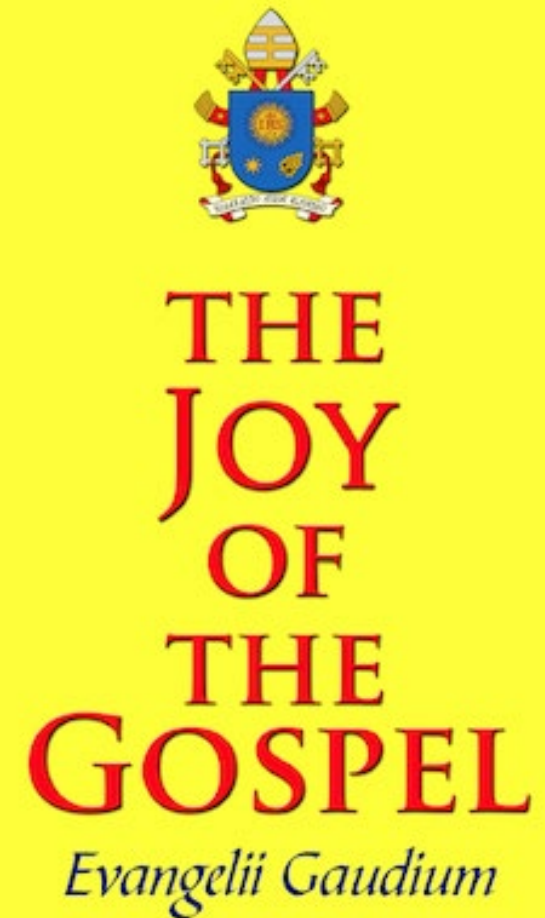
the entire Period of the Precatechumenate is devoted to evangelization (OCIA 37)

a suitable explanation of the Gospel should be given to the inquirers by Priests, Deacons, or catechists and other lay people (OCIA 38)

## Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

“All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization....Every Christian is challenged, here and now, to be actively engaged in evangelization”

(Joy of the Gospel, 120)

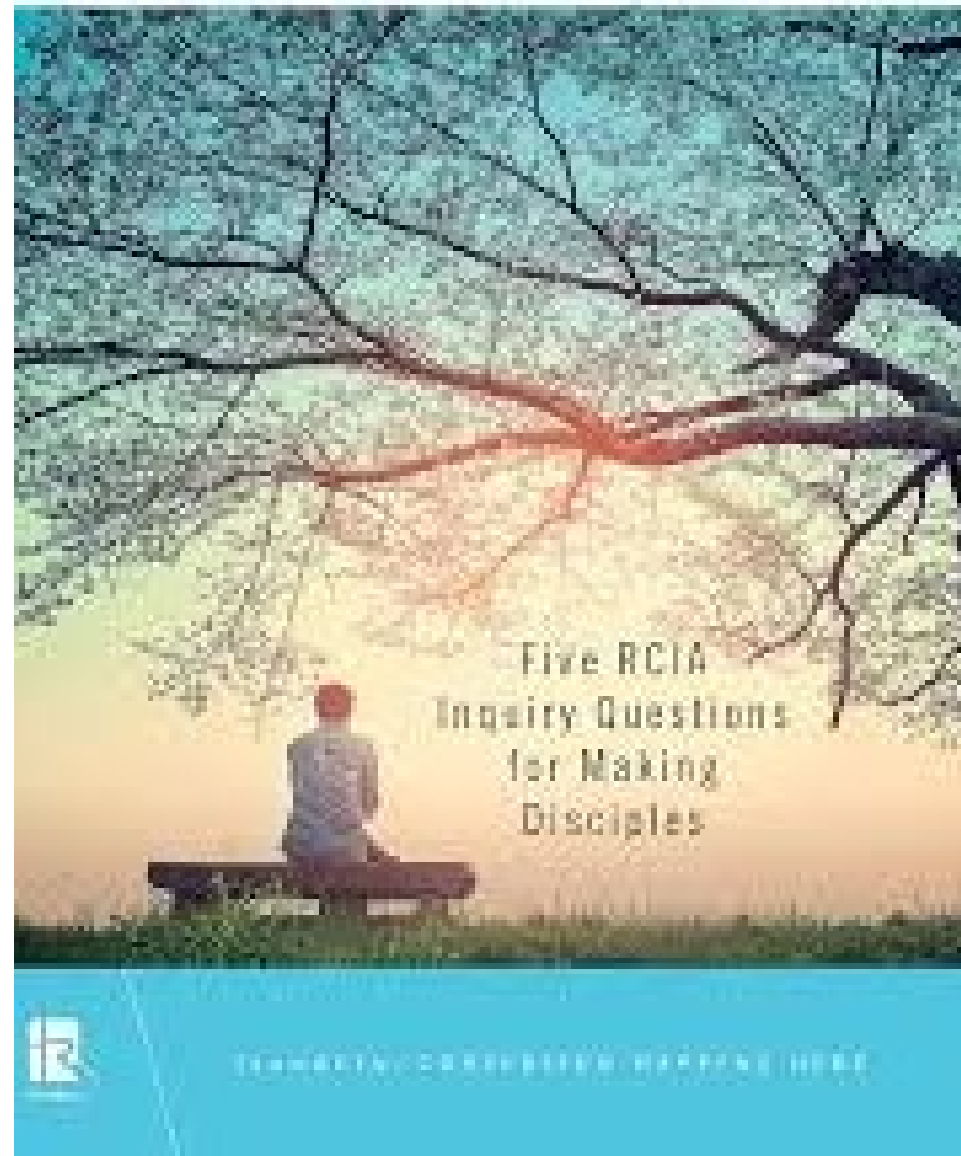


Pope Francis

# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

Five questions for inquirers based on the book  
*Seeking the Living God* by Nick Wagner

## Seek the Living God



# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

Question #1

## Where have you Been?

- a. When did you first become aware of God?
- b. Have you ever felt close to God? When did you feel closest?
- c. What religion, if any, were you raised in?
- d. What was your family experience of faith?
- e. For Children and families: Have you heard any stories about God? Tell me one.



# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

Question #2

**Where are you now?**

- a. Who inspires you? Can you say why?
- b. Where does your happiness come from?
- c. What makes you peaceful?
- d. What is your image of God
- e. For children and families: Do you ever talk to God? Does God ever talk to you?



# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

Question #3

## Where do you want to get to?

- a. What do you most hope for in your relationship with God?
- b. Describe what you hope to find in our parish.
- c. What are your hopes for your family's faith?
- d. What do you hope to learn from this process?
- e. For children and families: Are you afraid of anything? What do you think God can do about that?



# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

Question #4

**How are you going to get to where you want to go?**

- a. In what ways do you need to develop your faith practices to get where you want to go?
- b. In what ways do you need to develop your relationship with God?
- c. What are some resources you think you may need along the way?
- d. What the next three steps you have to take to get you to where you want to go?
- e. For children and families: If you wanted to get to know God better, what would you do?



# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

Question #5

**How will you know you have arrived?**

- a. How will you know you have met your goal?
- b. How will your family know?
- c. What changes will you see in your prayer life?  
Family life?
- d. How will your values have changed?
- e. For children and families: Do you think you  
would act differently if you knew God was with  
you all the time?



# National Statutes For The Christian Initiation of Adults

## Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

**Norm 1** The evangelization of unbaptized persons during the Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate will lead them through **Scripture, prayer, and friendly conversation** to an **encounter with the person of Jesus Christ** as the fullness of God's revelation.

**Norm 2** Early in the Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate, a parochial minister will meet inquirers individually to hear of their "first faith" (see The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults [OCIA] 42), discern the continuing impact of their encounter with the Lord, and discuss any issues (e.g., an irregular marriage) that could affect their eventual celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation.

# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate



Practical Steps to consider....

1. Recruit and train a small team to facilitate on ongoing precatechumenate; one person cannot do this alone.
2. Invite members from the OCIA team to meet the inquirers and use the five-question technique or another way to listen to the inquirer
3. Create a welcoming atmosphere
4. Introduce inquirers to scripture (the Gospel) and prayer.
5. Once the inquirers express a firm desire to prepare for Initiation, schedule the Rite for Entrance into the Catechumenate

# Period of the Catechumenate

This is the time, in duration corresponding to the progress of the individual, for the nurturing and growth of the catechumen's' faith and conversion to God; Celebration's of the Word and Prayers for Exorcism and Blessings are meant to assist the process. *-outline of part 1*

## Period of the Catechumenate

**Norm 3** The term “catechumen” is to be strictly reserved for the unbaptized who have entered the catechumenate and who are joined to the Church in a special way while they strive to lead a life of faith, hope, and charity (CIC c. 206 §1).

**Norm 4** Ordinarily, a person who has entered the catechumenate is to remain in it from **at least the Easter Time of one year until the beginning of the Easter Time of the next year**; preferably it should begin before Lent in one year and extend until Easter of the following year.

# Period of the Catechumenate

The Catechumenate is a lengthy period during which catechumens receive pastoral instruction and practice appropriate disciplines (#75)

Appropriate Catechesis (#75.1)

Become familiar with the practice of Christian Life (#75.2)

Grow in life of prayer (#75.3)

Catechumens participate in the life of the parish (#75.4)

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT RITE



CATECHUMENS <i>(unbaptized)</i>	CANDIDATES <i>(Baptized, Uncatechized Catholics for Confirmation and Eucharist or Uncatechized Christians)</i>	COMBINED RITES (USA)
Rite for Entrance into Catechumenate (OCIA #41-74)	Rite of Welcoming the Candidates (OCIA #411-433)	Rite for Entrance into Catechumenate and of Welcoming the Candidates (OCIA #505-529)
Celebrations of the Word of God (OCIA #81-89)		
Minor Exorcisms (OCIA #90-94)		
Blessings of the Catechumens (OCIA #95-97)		
Anointing of the Catechumens (OCIA # 98-103)		
Handing On of the Creed (OCIA #104-105, 147-148 and 157-163)		
Handing On of the Lord's Prayer (OCIA #104-105, 147, 149 and 178-184)		

# Period of Purification and Enlightenment

This is the time immediately preceding the elects' Initiation, usually the Lenten season preceding the celebration of the Initiation at the Easter Vigil; it is a time of reflection, intensely centered on conversion, marked by the celebration of the Scrutinies, the Rites of Handing On of the Creed, and of the Lord's Prayer, and the Rites of Immediate Preparation on Holy Saturday. -outline Part 1

<b>CATECHUMENS</b> <i>(unbaptized)</i>	<b>CANDIDATES</b> <i>(Baptized, Uncatechized Catholics for Confirmation and Eucharist or Uncatechized Christians)</i>	<b>COMBINED RITES (USA)</b>
Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election (OCIA #106-117)	Rite of Sending the Candidates for the Calling to Continuing Conversion (OCIA #434-445)	Rite of Sending Catechumens for Election and Candidates for the Calling to Continuing Conversion (OCIA #530-546)
Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names (OCIA #118-137)	Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion (OCIA #446-458)	Rite of Election of Catechumens and of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion OCIA #547-561)
First Scrutiny (3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent) (OCIA #141-146, 150-156) Second Scrutiny (4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent) (OCIA #141-149, 164-170) Third Scrutiny (5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent) (OCIA #141-146, 171-177)	Penitential Rite (Scrutiny) <i>Second Sunday of Lent</i> (OCIA #459-472)	
Rites of Immediate Preparation (RCIA #185-199)		

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT RITE



CATECHUMENS <i>(unbaptized)</i>	CANDIDATES <i>(Baptized, Uncatechized Catholics for Confirmation and Eucharist or Uncatechized Christians)</i>	COMBINED RITES (USA)
Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation (OCIA #206-243)	Order of Reception into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church of Those Already Validly Baptized (OCIA 473-504)	Celebration at the Easter Vigil of the Sacraments of Initiation and the Rite of Reception (OCIA #562-594)

# Period of Mystagogy

This period usually during the Easter Time, follows the celebration of Initiation, during which the newly initiated experience being fully a part of the Christian community by means of pertinent catechesis and particularly by participation with all the faithful in the Sunday Eucharist. - Outline of Part 1

Unpacking the Mysteries from the lived experience

