

# Becoming Catholic

## Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

### WHAT IS RCIA?

The Catholic Church is always grateful to share its faith and understanding of God with interested people. The process of examining and entering into the Catholic Church is called the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). An individual gradually enters into the prayer, worship, scripture, teachings, and moral spirit of the community to judge their willingness to share its Way, Truth, and Life.

### MUST ONE BECOME A CATHOLIC?

There is no obligation to remain in the RCIA process. The process exists to assist an individual to understand the Church and to judge if it is good for them.

### WHAT IS THE RCIA PROCESS?

The process is a one year effort that invites an individual (a) to inquire about and become comfortable with basic ideas about God, faith, community, and prayer, (b) to investigate the life of the Church by entering into it as a “catechumen” (examiner), (c) to elect membership in the Church and prepare to participate in its sacramental life, and (d) to enter the Church and find a place in supporting its mission in one’s life, the parish life at St. Maria Goretti’s, and around the world.

### WHEN DOES THE RCIA MEET?

The RCIA group meets on most Tuesday evenings, 7:00-8:30 pm, at the Parish Center at St. Gabriel meeting room.

### WHAT ARE THE MEETINGS LIKE?

Members of St. Maria Goretti’s faith community are part of an RCIA team that shares in presenting input, leading discussions, and planning prayer services. There are many opportunities to ask questions, share your own faith, dialogue in small groups, and join in prayer. Each meeting attempts to assist the group to learn what it means to be a Catholic.

### ARE THERE OTHER REQUIREMENTS?

Besides offering information about the Church, the RCIA process invites a person to worship (formation) in the faith.

### WHAT IF ONE IS ALREADY BAPTIZED?

An individual who is already baptized is received into full communion with the Catholic Church. When active in one’s own Christian faith tradition, such a person may need less or more involvement in the RCIA process. Individual needs are taken into account as is the movement of the Spirit in the person’s life.

## CAN SOMEONE ACCOMPANY ME TO MEETINGS?

Each individual has a companion, or sponsor, to accompany them throughout the RCIA process. An individual may choose their sponsor, who must be an actively practicing Catholic, or the RCIA team will assign an appropriate sponsor to assist you. Sponsors are key persons in an individual's faith journey. They are encouraged to attend RCIA meetings and other functions with you.

## IS THE RCIA FOR AN INTERESTED CATHOLIC?

The RCIA process can be a source of adult enrichment for a Catholic who feels called to explore their faith. Meeting topics are published in the parish Sunday bulletin. Catholics are welcome to attend a single evening or a series of meetings. An adult who wishes to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation may also benefit by joining in the RCIA process in preparing to be confirmed.

## WHEN IS ONE BAPTIZED, RECEIVED INTO FULL COMMUNION, OR CONFIRMED IN THE RCIA?

The RCIA is arranged to celebrate an individual's initiation into the Catholic Church during the Easter Vigil. People ready to proceed are baptized, received into full communion if already baptized, confirmed, and share in communion during the Eucharist.

## CAN ONE MEET AND GET TO KNOW OTHER CATHOLICS (ST. MARIA GORETTI PARISHIONERS)?

Yes. Welcoming others to life in the Church is central to St. Maria Goretti's purpose as a community of faith. Parishioners not only attract individuals to consider the Catholic Church, but also take an active part in expressing and handing on to others their own search for God and Catholic faith throughout the RCIA process.

## AN INVITATION

The faith community of St. Maria Goretti's invites you to explore the Roman Catholic tradition. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults provides you with an opportunity to study and reflect on Sacred Scripture and Church teaching, to learn about Catholic tradition and practice, and to pray and worship with us. Your presence among us is welcome. For more information, call 916-647-4538.