We are all thirsting for a purpose; a way to make a difference in this world; a place to belong.

The RCIA program is for those who are looking for that place and purpose.

Traditionally, the RCIA program is for the unbaptized, those baptized in a non-Catholic tradition, or Catholics who still need the sacrament of confirmation.

Sometimes, those of us who have been Catholic our whole lives forget to offer this information to others who may interested in becoming Catholic. Extending an invitation to relatives, friends, and neighbors, in a gentle way, might be just the opportunity that they are waiting for. Feel free to invite
-- Those who may be searching.
-- Those who have never been baptized as Christians.
-- Those who have been baptized in another Christian faith tradition and are now interested in the Catholic faith.
-- Those who were baptized in the Catholic faith, but did not receive First Communion and/or Confirmation.

Since Jesus invited His first followers to, “Come, follow me”, the image of journey has been used to describe Christian discipleship. For each of us faith is a journey marked with moments of conversion along the way …. we move from unbelief to initial faith, from sin to repentance, from painful isolation to the joyful experience of a loving community, from fear to love.

The first period of RCIA is called *inquiry*. During this period, inquirers form relationships with one another and with their catechists. The sessions are informal and often center upon life stories that have led each member there with questions such as:

* What is faith?
* Who is God, and why does God care about me?
* What are the roles of Mary and the Pope?
* Why are there statues in Catholic churches?

We will examine the Church and the way its members worship together and live the Christian faith. The period helps inquirers determine if they wish to continue onto the next step of Catechumenate.

As we continue our journey in the RCIA program, we begin to growand seek out new encounters and knowledge about Jesus and his church. We have accepted His invitation to “Come Follow Me”. We examine our beliefs and our commitment to become a true disciple of Christ.

The Catechumenate period is a period of study and reflection. During this time, candidates and catechumens:

* Are introduced to the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church
* Learn about early Church history and the people of God
* Become familiar with the social teachings of the Church and the dignity of life.

The next step in the RCIA journey is Enlightenment. This occurs in the season of Lent. It is a time for scrutinizing, repentance, and conversion. It is a time of preparation for the sacraments. It is a time for purification. It is a time to learn more about the graces and gifts of being a disciple of Christ. During this time, we experience certain Rites of the Catholic church, as we prepare for our entry into the church at the Easter Vigil.

After we have entered the church at the Easter Vigil, we enter the period of Mystagogy, or “entering into the mysteries”. This period serves as a time for today’s neophytes (newly converted) to:

* Continue to gather, pray, and nourish their faith.
* Deepen their experiential understanding of God’s word and the sacraments.
* Center more on the apostolic or social justice aspects of Catholic Christianity.
* Claim a new role of service in the community. (All Catholics are invited to active participation in parish life, which includes worship, stewardship, and fellowship.)

During our walk with Jesus we grow towards a true understanding of what it means to be a follower of Christ. We develop a heart for God and are willing to make sacrifices so that we may spread His Word to all the world. We strive to be faithful in the way we live our lives. We are called to serve.