

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT SACRAMENTS FOR ADULTS

I am interested in becoming Catholic. What should I do?

The normal way for a person to join the Catholic Church is to participate in the program called RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults). This is a program of about 1 year in length.

I am already Catholic and just want to receive Confirmation or First Eucharist. What should I do?

RCIA is also the program for anyone who is a baptized Catholic and wants to receive Confirmation or First Eucharist. For these people, RCIA is a way to get back in touch with the Bible and the basic teachings of the Christian faith. Confirmation and Eucharist signify a commitment to live according to these teachings with God's help.

A year is a long time. Can't I do it faster?

The Catholic Church considers that the decisions you make about your religious beliefs are the most important decisions of your life. Receiving the sacraments is a sign that the person receiving them fully accepts and affirms the Christian faith. The Church does not want to pressure anyone into accepting Christian teaching and wants everyone joining the Church to have a good understanding of the Christian faith. If you do not feel ready to make a commitment to explore your religious beliefs in depth, then it may be better to wait a while before going on with this process.

I'm planning to get married within the next year. Don't I need to receive all the sacraments before then?

The only sacrament needed to get married in the Catholic Church is the sacrament of Baptism. If you have been baptized in any Catholic or Protestant church there is no barrier to marriage in the Catholic Church. The sacraments are signs of the commitment of the person receiving them. Just as you would probably not make a marriage commitment before a time of dating and engagement, it is not a good idea to receive any other sacrament before taking the time to understand what you are doing.

WHAT IS RCIA?

RCIA is a support for your spiritual journey.

The purpose of RCIA is to provide resources and support to you as you explore your relationship with God and the decision to join the Catholic Church. The purpose of RCIA is not to pressure anyone to become Catholic. You are encouraged to express doubts, questions and concerns about Christianity and the Catholic Church as part of the process.

RCIA is a process of joining a community.

RCIA means **Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults**. A Rite is basically an action of a community. Joining the Church is a decision to become part of a church community and being received by that community. It is also a process of becoming sure that you feel comfortable joining a particular parish community.

RCIA is a process of learning about the Christian faith.

There is also a part of RCIA that is devoted to teaching about the Christian faith as it has been understood by the Catholic Church. It is a time of learning about the teachings of the Church through study of the Bible and other resources.

RCIA is a group process.

All RCIA meetings will be group meetings. Since Christianity is basically about how to live a life of love in community, we can only learn about it with others.

RCIA requires a serious commitment to a spiritual journey.

RCIA means committing yourself to a meeting each Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. and attending Mass each Sunday. It is important to be sure that you are able to make this commitment.

For more information: Please the parish office at (847) 473-4079. Provide your name, address and phone number and the sacraments about which you are inquiring.