



RCIA: 4 Stages in the Journey to Becoming Catholic

Thinking of joining the Catholic Church? The Catholic RCIA stages are a good model of basic faith development. This article provides some detailed guidance for that process.

Where do you begin?

Well, you just begin from where you are now! Many adults entering the Catholic Church, or those just thinking about it, follow a process known as the RCIA – the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

The RCIA process has several distinct stages. These Catholic RCIA stages are a **good model** of faith development itself, so this article will fit you whether or not you're actually in the RCIA process.

- **Inquiry:** the initial period before you decide to enter the Catholic Church. You're asking questions and checking it out, but aren't yet ready to commit.
- **Catechumenate:** those who decide to enter the Church and are being trained for a life in Christ are called *catechumens*, an ancient name from the early Church. In this stage, you're developing your faith and are being "catechized" – learning catechism, or the basic points about Catholic faith and life.
- **Purification and preparation:** The Church will help you focus and intensify your faith as you prepare to commit your life to Christ and be received into the Church at Easter. This is a time for personal reflection and making a commitment to removing sinful inclinations in your life.
- **Initiation** itself, the culmination of the whole process! You're received into the Church during the Easter Vigil Mass, where you'll receive the sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist. (If you already have a valid baptism, you won't be baptized again.)
- **Mystagogy:** after reception into the Church at Easter, this period lets you reflect and learn more about the mysteries of the Mass and the Sacraments that you now participate in fully.

Laying a strong foundation

Faith will be the foundation of your life. Go slowly, make sure you've developed the basics well. That will help you avoid discouragement and frustration, two big enemies of faith development. Make sure that you're satisfied with your own faith development in each of the Catholic RCIA stages before moving on to the next. Don't let pressure from anyone else make you move on. Also watch out for calendar-based pressure – don't say things like, "If I don't start catechesis now, I won't be done this Easter!" That's the wrong basis for making a decision about your faith and your life!

RCIA stage 1: Just Looking

In the inquiry stage, you're just finding out about Jesus, Christianity, and the Catholic Church. Your main task here is to explore and develop your faith enough so you can make an informed *initial* decision about entering the Catholic Church. The final decision won't come for a long time, when you actually enter the Church at Easter and receive the sacraments of initiation.

RCIA stage 2: Learning about the Faith

In the catechumenate, your faith has begun to develop. Now you need to learn and grow more. You focus on catechesis in this stage: learning about the faith, how to live as a Christian, and developing your interior life. Your job now is to come into closer contact with the Living God and learn more about the Catholic Faith.

RCIA stage 3: Getting ready for rebirth

This period of purification and enlightenment is the final stage before receiving the Easter sacraments of initiation into the Church: baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist. (Those already baptized with a valid baptism in another Christian church aren't baptized again.) This stage of intense reflection calls you to deeper conversion in preparation for your renewal at Easter. This is what the season of Lent is for, but it has a special intensity for you this year as you're entering the Church and receiving the sacraments of initiation.

RCIA stage 4: Reflecting on the mysteries of the Mass

This stage of mystagogy during Easter is for continued reflection on the sacraments you have received at Easter, especially the Eucharist. The Mass and the Eucharist are the "source and summit" of the Christian life in the Catholic Church, and this period is designed to help you understand, appreciate, and live more deeply this center of Catholicism. There may be some differences in the way RCIA is carried out in different parishes. These stages are a model of basic faith development, so you can learn a lot from them even if you're not in the RCIA process.

www.beginningcatholic.com

RCIA Classes begin this weekend Sunday, Sept 22. It's not too late to register. Call the parish office for info or pick up a registration form in the church, parish office or school office. If you would like to support those in RCIA as a sponsor, please contact Bertilla. Email: bwatanabe@rcav.org.

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OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

September 22, 2019

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

We All Have A Role in Sharing the Faith with Newcomers

Dear Parishioners,

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, often simply referred to as RCIA, begins this weekend. . The goal is to foster or deepen one's personal conversion to Jesus Christ, live the Gospel proclaimed by Jesus, and participate in the life of the faith community. It is specially designed for those who have yet to know Christianity, have not had a personal encounter with the Lord, were baptized in another Christian denomination and would like to become Catholic or those who were baptized in the Catholic church but missed out on receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation when they were younger.

RCIA gatherings take place on Sunday mornings at 9am, starting in the church and then continuing in the Madonna Room for further talks and faith-sharing. If you know of friends or relatives who might be interested, please let them know that it's not too late to sign up.

I am grateful for the dedicated members of our RCIA team who will lead the seekers and newcomers in their journey. However, helping others in understanding the Faith is not just the responsibility of the RCIA team. The entire parish has a role in welcoming, supporting and praying for the group. Your help is also needed as sponsor. The role of the sponsor is to bear witness to the Faith and accompany catechumens in prayer. You are not expected to attend all RCIA sessions but you can make yourself available as a companion to catechumens at important milestones in their journey.

I urge all of you to pray for our teachers too who play such an important role in imparting the values of the Faith to our children. We are blessed to have so many talented professionals on the staff. I wish them all a fulfilling academic year.

May our Blessed Mother be a guiding hand to lead all of us into a deeper knowledge and experience of our faith through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R



Praise the Lord who lifts up the needy. - Psalm 113

MASSES & SERVICES

- Saturday Anticipated Mass: 5pm
- Sunday Masses: 9am, 11am & 5pm
- Monday – Wednesday Masses: 8am
- Thursday Mass/OLPH Novena: 8am & 7pm
- 1st Thursday: 8am Mass & 12pm Mass/Novena/Healing Prayer
- Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am Mass
- Fridays in July & August: 8am
- Children's Mass: 9am 1st Sunday of the month Oct-June
- Children's Liturgy: 11am All Sundays except the 1st Sunday from Sept- June
- Reconciliation Saturday: 4pm - 4:45pm
- Adoration Saturday 9:30-10am

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

STAFF

Pastor

Babu Mathew, CSsR

Associate Pastor

Joseph Horo, CSsR

Office Manager

Virginia Fong

Pastoral Coordinator

Bertilla Watanabe

Bookkeeper

Corinna Siy

Youth Ministry Coordinator

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NEWS & NOTICES

Weekly Collection: Sunday Mass Offering Sept 7 & Sept 8: \$6,657.20. Offering for the Needy: \$1,353. CSsR Pension: \$60. Thank you for your faith-filled generosity.

Youth Ministry Pies for Sale: OLPH Youth will be selling pies again this year! We have pumpkin, apple and blueberry-peach pies. What better way to welcome Autumn with the scent of pies baking in your own kitchen at home! Funds raised will go to youth ministry initiatives. Please show your support by buying a pie (or two!) available after all masses over 2 weekends: October 5 and 6 & October 12 and 13. Don't miss out -- have some pies to serve with your Thanksgiving family dinner. We will be selling them in the church foyer. All pies are going for \$15. If you would like to pre-order pies, please email Theresa. olphyouthmin@gmail.com.

Sunday Morning Coffee Cancelled: Due to maintenance and repair work in the hall, and the start of RCIA which will be in the Madonna Room, there will be no coffee social after the 9am Sunday Mass. Sincere apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Becoming Catholic: If you are interested in finding out more about the Catholic faith, you are welcome to register for the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). The journey of getting to know Jesus and finding out more about the Catholic church begins this weekend, Sunday Sept 22. We gather between 9am and 10:30am. Registration forms are available in the church foyer and the parish office. You can email your completed form to Bertilla. Her email: bwatanabe@rcav.org.

PREP: The Parish Religious Education Program (PREP) is for elementary school aged children who are not attending Catholic school. PREP begins on Tuesday Sept 24th. Please contact Elizabeth Towers at 604-440-8809 or email prep.olph@rcav.org for information.

PREP Teachers & Teaching Assistants Needed: If you are a registered parishioner or high school student needing volunteer hours and would like to help with teaching Catechism, please contact Elizabeth Towers at 604-440-8809 or email prep.olph@rcav.org.

Newman: A Saint for Our Times – A Panel on the Life and Thought of Cardinal Newman: Blessed John Henry Newman will be canonized as a saint of the Catholic Church on Oct. 13, 2019. His life has inspired so many people around the world and continues to do so up to now – attested primarily by the numerous Newman Clubs, Centres, and Associations today. Join us this evening as our panellists address different aspects of Cardinal Newman's achievements and legacy. Hear the story of how his life can be a role model for us and our journey towards holiness. Join us for this free event on Wednesday, Oct. 2, at 7 p.m. at the John Paul II Pastoral Centre in Vancouver.

Fall Institute: Archdiocesan Institutes are dedicated to the Church's mission of life-long faith formation. Our one-day courses equip Catholics with the knowledge, skills, and spiritual foundation necessary for active participation in the life of the Church. Faith formation courses include: Building Blocks to Holiness and Basics of the Faith. Cost \$40, includes lunch. Everyone is welcome. Saturday, Sept. 28, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Notre Dame Regional Secondary in Vancouver. Register online at rcav.org/oc-fall.

Pro-Life Mass and Prayer Vigil: Join us for a peaceful, prayerful vigil for unborn children and their parents. Saturday, Oct. 5. Mass is at 9 a.m. at St. Paul Parish in Richmond followed by the Rosary. For upcoming dates, visit rcav.org/pro-life-mass-and-prayer-vigil

Garden of Gethsemani Open House: Come and explore. There will be guided and self guided tours available. Light refreshments. The two-day event will run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 27, and Saturday, Sept. 28. Take advantage of the 10% discount off pre-arrangement burial spaces, valid during event only. Limited appointment times available during event days. Please bring this ad to receive discount. Does not apply to services or memorial markers. Cannot be combined with any other promotions or discounts.

PROJECT ADVANCE Live gratefully, give generously.

You can make a donation to Project Advance by filling out the pledge form you received in the mail or using the detachable envelope on the leaflet. You can also go to www.rcav.org. Just indicate that your parish is OLPH.



Stewardship Reflection

"No servant can serve two masters. He will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (wealth)." (Luke 16:13)

Is money a "god" that you put before God? Giving money to support the Church and other charity is a pillar of our faith, just like attending Mass every Sunday and participating in parish ministry. Giving money frees us from being a slave to money. It increases our dependence on God and our trust that God will provide all that we need.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

SEPT/OCT

OLPH GOLF OUTING

The OLPH Parish will be hosting their 1st Annual Family Golf Day on Saturday, September 28, 2019. We invite parents, students, staff and parishioners to participate in this new event that will be both a community builder and fundraiser for the Parish.

Don't golf? No problem! Come socialize with the OLPH community by joining for lunch. Since golf rounds will be staggered, we recommend an 11:30am arrival time if you are joining for the lunch only portion.

Musqueam Golf Course
3904 West 51 Avenue, Vancouver
Tee Time: 9:00 AM - RAIN OR SHINE
Ticket Prices: Adult \$85/ Student \$80
Lunch Only Option \$35
With the exception of the "lunch only option", your ticket purchase includes: a 9-hole golf round, a bucket of practice golf balls (used at the driving range), pull cart, and a burger lunch: french fries, salad, dessert & beverage included.

OTHER EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES
50/50 Tickets - \$20
Longest Drive - \$20
Raffle Tickets - \$20

CHILDREN'S MASS

Children's Mass will resume again on Sunday October 6 at 9am and will be held on the 1st Sunday of the month during the school year. There are occasional changes to the first Sunday schedule so please check the bulletin for updates. If you'd like your children to help with tasks for this Mass, please visit our website: www.olphchurch.ca/serve/ministries/childrensmass/



Meet the New Teachers at Our School

We asked new teachers of Our Lady's School to tell us a little about themselves, their impressions so far and how they see the year ahead.



Dwayne Thorburn

My wife and I recently moved to beautiful Vancouver after living in Calgary for a year and a half. In Calgary, I worked in a Catholic school that supported students with severe behaviour, mental illness and who were impacted by trauma. I grew up in Queensland, Australia and prior to moving to Calgary I taught for twelve years in the Catholic school system around Brisbane and the Gold Coast, predominantly in grades 5, 6 and 7.

The OLPH community has been friendly and welcoming. I am very appreciative of the many staff, parents, students and parish members who have taken the time to come by and say hello and see how I am settling in. OLPH school is a busy place with a lot of opportunities for students and staff. I've increased my coffee intake somewhat in order to take advantage of all the awesome things happening around the school. After spending most of last week with the Grade 7's at the Outdoor Ed camp, I am very excited to spend the year ahead with such a great bunch of students! I look forward to meeting many other students and families during the events and activities happening in at OLPH throughout the year.



Lauren McGill

I just moved from Unity, Saskatchewan where I taught for the past 4 years. Unity is a small rural town of around 2500 people. I taught at St. Peter's Elementary School. The first two years there I taught grade 5 and the last two years I was teaching grade 1&2.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help staff, students and parents have been very welcoming! I am excited for this upcoming year!

The first week was busy, exciting and exhausting! It was so great to finally meet my students and we had a fun week of getting to know each other and slowly easing back into the swing of things!

The students at OLPH are so great, so I have no doubt this will be a really fun year! I am looking forward to all the new opportunities and challenges that this year will bring. As long as I have coffee in hand, we can do anything!



Zack Belcastro

This is my fourth year teaching. I taught for two years in London England followed by one year in a private international school in Abu Dhabi. My experience working abroad has exposed me to many different teaching practices and philosophies that are transferable to OLPH.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first two weeks at OLPH. The staff has been extremely welcoming and I feel as though the school has an excellent sense of community. I am very excited moving forward.

Ornat Maynes

I am coming from Ireland with years of experience working with and teaching children.

My first impressions of the school have been that everyone here is so friendly, so supportive and so welcoming! I am really looking forward to teaching this year and meeting everyone in the OLPH community. It's sure to be a great year!