



## Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

### The First Step in the Process

The first period in the RCIA process is referred to as the period of **Evangelization** and **Precatechumenate**. As the RCIA is the norm for any process of initiation, it is not surprising that the period is paralleled in the adaptation of the Rite for the baptized. In the case of the baptized, the period is referred to as the period of **Inquiry**. Examining each of the highlighted words is the key to understanding what takes place during these periods.

#### Evangelization

Evangelization is a time for getting to know the person who is seeking initiation into the Roman Catholic way of life by introducing her to the Gospel message. It is important for the inquirer to have an opportunity to discover for herself who Jesus is or in the case of the baptized, to share her relationship with Jesus. This is a time of evangelization that lasts as long as is helpful without any commitment to become Catholic.

#### Precatechumenate

As this is the Precatechumenate period, the expectations for moving forward on the journey towards full initiation into the Roman Catholic faith are not the same as the expectations for becoming one of the elect.<sup>1</sup> In this period, the personal questions are more important than any pre-prepared catechesis. (see below)

#### Inquiry

Inquiry is a time for answering questions. The RCIA coordinator and/or team get to know the one who is interested in the Church by answering his/her questions. The importance of the initial encounters cannot be underestimated. It is an opportunity to get to know the personal story of the inquirer, to talk about his/her faith journey and his/her desire to know more about the Catholic faith. The reasons for inquiring can be varied, and so active listening and a willingness to respond to questions are paramount. It is this active listening which will enable the RCIA coordinator and/or team to assist the Pastor in completing the RCIA Form.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These expectations are clearly outlined in paragraphs 42 and 43 of The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

<sup>2</sup> Fill out form 612A

[https://caedm.ca/Portals/0/documents/policies/612A\\_eRiteofChristianInitiationOfAdultsRCIAForm4Feb14.pdf](https://caedm.ca/Portals/0/documents/policies/612A_eRiteofChristianInitiationOfAdultsRCIAForm4Feb14.pdf).

### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

Team RCIA suggests the following questions during the Evangelization and Precatechumenate or Inquiry Period.

1. Where have you been?
2. Where are you now?
3. Where do you want to go?



The marital status of an Inquirer is an essential part of the RCIA process.

To avoid frustration in the process with complications relating to a previous marriage, it is essential that the Pastor meet with the inquirer before the Rite of Welcome or the Rite of Acceptance. Too often, an oversight of a previous marriage has caused both pain and panic to a candidate/catechumen as well as the Pastor and/or the RCIA Coordinator. The Archdiocese of Edmonton has developed a policy to help in understanding the teaching of the Church as well as a form to assist the Pastor in assessing marital status.<sup>3</sup>

There is also a separate section entitled 2. RCIA Marriage and the Process of initiation which the Pastor may find helpful.

## ONE BAPTISM

“By the sacrament of baptism, a person is truly incorporated into Christ and into his Church, and is reborn to a sharing of the divine life.” This definition of baptism found in the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Eucharistic Communion* is one

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to Policy 749

[https://caedm.ca/Portals/0/documents/policies/749\\_PreviousMarriagesAndRCIA030Jun10.pdf?ver=2017-06-19-093438-513](https://caedm.ca/Portals/0/documents/policies/749_PreviousMarriagesAndRCIA030Jun10.pdf?ver=2017-06-19-093438-513) and fill out form 612D

[https://caedm.ca/Portals/0/documents/policies/612D\\_eRCIASupplementMarriageForm1Sep13.pdf](https://caedm.ca/Portals/0/documents/policies/612D_eRCIASupplementMarriageForm1Sep13.pdf) .