



# BECOMING CATHOLIC

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

Saint Mary of the Assumption - Lancaster, Ohio



## For whom is the R.C.I.A. Process?

- Unbaptized adults who wish to learn about following Jesus Christ with an openness to entering His Church through Baptism and the other sacraments of Initiation;
- Baptized Christians from Christian Communities who wish to learn about the catholic & apostolic faith with an openness toward entering full communion with the Church and completing their Christian Initiation;
- Baptized Catholics who have not completed their Christian Initiation with Confirmation and/or Communion & Confession

## A brief overview of the R.C.I.A. Process

Through weekly Monday evening sessions beginning in late August, inquirers are given the opportunity to encounter God through a presentation of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic faith and deepen their personal relationship with Him through prayer and worship at holy Mass.

The development of faith takes time; it cannot be rushed. The inquirers must be allowed sufficient time for their faith to ripen and begin to manifest in Christian living and a life of conversion. Ordinarily, this means anywhere from one to two years of formation depending, of course, on the background and spiritual maturity of the inquirer. The R.C.I.A. process cannot be reduced to classes for doctrinal instruction; it is about taking up a new way of life in our Lord Jesus Christ.

If you'd like to begin the RCIA process, please contact:

**Brian McCauley,**  
R.C.I.A. Director  
[bmccauley@stmarylancaster.org](mailto:bmccauley@stmarylancaster.org)  
Parish Office: 740.653.0997

### RCIA Information & Inquiry Sessions:

- ▶ Sunday, 23 August 10 am, Spirit Center - or -
- ▶ Monday, 24 August, 7 pm, Spirit Center

There will be several one-on-one sessions throughout the process with the R.C.I.A. Director, and one with the Pastor, to guide and support inquirers on their journey of seeking and conversion; to discern their intentions; and individual readiness for the sacraments of Initiation.

## Is there any commitment by starting the process?

Absolutely not. God has given each person the gift of free will and the Church respects that gift and will not pressure you on your journey in any way. If you intend to work toward becoming Catholic however, we do ask you commit to faithfully attending the RCIA sessions, Rites, and in attending Mass each Sunday later in the process.

## Sponsors - Your Companion on The Way

With the help of the R.C.I.A. Director each inquirer will be joined with a Catholic who will attend the R.C.I.A. sessions with you, attend Mass with you, and support you with friendship and prayer along your journey.

## Marriage and the R.C.I.A. Process

The Church holds that when a man and woman freely express informed consent at the time of their wedding vows they are in a valid marriage that only ends in death. If you are married and divorced, or in a second marriage, please be sure to share that information so we can guide you on how to proceed.



## Some Recent Testimonials

Being a cradle Lutheran, I already had a fairly good grasp about the Catholic Church — at least I thought I did. About two and half years ago I started listening to Catholic radio, AM 820. What I heard and found was a deeper understanding of all aspects of the Christian faith. For me it was like being struck with a hammer when I heard Father John Riccardo, Dr. Scott Hahn and most notably Jimmy Akin. Their knowledge, faith and understanding of the Catholic Church and Catholicism was amazing and there was no doubt that the Holy Spirit was at work with these men. They and others reignited a flame within me and I wanted to know more. What really sparked my interest were the early Church Fathers, I had never heard of the Church Fathers before and I am in my mid-50's. After reading several books concerning the Church Fathers I realized that these men that laid the foundation of the Catholic faith had in fact got it right. The Holy Spirit was moving me and I made the decision to begin the RCIA process. The RCIA process allowed me to get a bird's eye view into the Catholic faith all while deepening my spiritual growth, which resulted in ultimately and truly knowing that the Catholic Church got it right. Praise be to the Church Fathers and Martyrs, some of whom laid down their lives so that we would know the truth. Over the past year my faith has grown, like at no other time in my life. I am still growing in my faith, still learning the mysteries of the Church and all the while deepening my relationship with the Triune God.

Bret Shafer - Entered Full Communion in 2018

From a very young age I was attracted to the Catholic faith. Though, I was born into a Protestant family and the only one in the family that had not been baptized, I do believe I have been searching for a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and understanding of my life's purpose for quite a long time. I just knew there had to be a life without the constant feeling of an absence being present. A close friend and member of Saint Mary mentioned the RCIA program. I was nervous but excited to learn what it meant to me to be baptized and to participate in the Christian way of life. Once present at RCIA sessions the nervousness went away and I was able to meet new friends and learn that I am not alone in this search for deeper meaning to life. I found much comfort in getting to know the clergy and staff. In going through this process, I have learned so much to help me grow in my spiritual life. I gained much relief in being baptized and becoming anew, with guidance how to maintain this relationship and be a part of the body of Christ. I am ever so grateful! Thanks be to God!

Amanda Walls - Baptized and fully Initiated in 2016

Being a protestant Christian all my life who attended church regularly, I held the stereotypical beliefs about Catholicism. As I grew older I found myself desiring a deeper relationship with God that I couldn't quite grasp through several denominations. I found myself listening to Catholic radio and being attracted to the teachings. After several months, a friend invited me to an RCIA class at St. Mary. I felt at home almost right away. I was presented with an environment in which I could ask questions and challenge leaders interactively as opposed to listening to a radio program. The leader, Brian McCauley, and other teachers, priests, and deacons were welcoming and encouraging while softly challenging me in my walk with Christ. Other seekers quickly became like family; sharing our questions, life experiences, doubts, and excitement about seeking God through the Catholic Church. The atmosphere was relaxed and comfortable and over time slowly evolved into a humbling and personal worship experience. I decided to join the Catholic Church after learning and discerning in the RCIA for two years. I am at home! I encourage all people seeking Christ (or more of Him) to put aside any reservations they may have and find out how quickly they become family in the RCIA program at St. Mary Church.

Aaron Reedy - Entered full Communion in 2015

Although I have had the Catholic Church on my radar for many years, I didn't think I would ever become Catholic. There were too many doctrinal obstacles. My church of thirty years closed it's doors about two years ago. I was without a church home during this period. I was miserable and began to pray "Jesus, please give me a simple faith." A few months later I found myself enrolled in RCIA. There are many ways to explain how this happened. I believe it was an answer to prayer. My experience in RCIA has been a great adventure into faith. As I learned about the Church and it's teachings the obstacles began to dissolve. Once I began to see the bigger picture and how things fit into it I was amazed at the beauty of the Church. I experienced the rebirth of my prayer life. Something I had been missing greatly. When I first attended Mass I found it to be beautiful but very confusing. As I continued in RCIA the Mass opened up to me in ways I never could have imagined. RCIA has led me to appreciate how full, beautiful and simple the Catholic faith is.

Mark Ebert - Entered full Communion in 2015

Lord, my God and my loving Father  
You have made me to know You, to love You, to serve You,  
And thereby to find and fulfill myself.  
I know that You are in all things,  
And that every path can lead me to You  
But of them all, there is one especially  
By which You want me to come to You.  
Since I will do what You want of me,  
I pray You, send Your Holy Spirit to me: into my mind,  
To show me what You want of me; into my heart,  
To give me the determination to do it,  
And to do it with all my love, with all my mind,  
And with all my strength right to the end. Amen.

“The essence of Christianity it not an idea,  
not a system of thought, not a plan of action.  
The essence of Christianity is a Person:  
Jesus Christ Himself.”

Benedict XVI,  
Pontiff Emeritus



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