

RCIA

(THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS) AT SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER CHURCH

First step: INQUIRY

- This step is for anyone interested in the Catholic faith until he or she becomes a catechuman or a candidate.
- This step can take months or even years.

Second step: RITE OF ACCEPTANCE INTO THE CATECHUMENATE

- Anyone seeking Baptism into the Catholic church is called a *catechumen*.
- Baptized Christians seeking Confirmation (communion with the Church) are called *candidates*.
- The Rite of Acceptance celebrates the inquirer's commitment to continue the journey of faith toward Baptism and/or Confirmation. Godparents or a sponsor are assigned to each catechumen or candidate for this rite and to accompany him/her for the rest of the faith journey of becoming a Catholic.

Third step: RITE OF ELECTION

- This signifies the step into the period of "Purification and Enlightenment," which is the Season of Lent - a period of reconciliation, prayer and renewal.
- Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and the Rite of Election is the second Sunday after Ash Wednesday at the Cathedral of the Madeleine.
- Three "Scrutinies" are held with the parish community on the last three Sundays of Lent. The Scrutinies are prayers for deliverance from evil and strength to be faithful to the gospel.

Fourth step: INITIATION

- At the Easter Vigil (the night before Easter Sunday), catechumans are initiated into the Catholic Church by receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.
- Candidates are confirmed at the Pentecost Vigil at the Cathedral of the Madeleine.
- At this point, the new initiates are considered "neophytes" (new sprouts).

Fifth step: MYSTAGOGY - COMMITMENT OF SELF

- The period after Easter is called "mystagogy," because from ancient times, neophytes have entered into the deeper mysteries of faith and the Church. This means you will seek to find your own unique place of ministry (service) in the Body of Christ.
- During this time you will discover where you fit in God's plan of stewardship.