

GOD'S CALL



Mark 1:14-20

- God called us into existence.
- God calls you to know and love Him, through Jesus, His Son.
- God calls you to forgiveness, healing, and a change of life.
- God calls you to receive His love, which He showed in the greatest way when Christ died for us.
- God calls us to new and eternal life through the Resurrection of Christ.
- God calls us to holiness of life through the Holy Spirit.
- God calls us to be reconciled to one another.
- God calls us into one family, the Church.
- God calls us to the truth that sets us free.
- God knows you personally and calls you by name.
- God knows you more than you know yourself, and He calls you into a living relationship with Him in daily prayer.
- God has worked in your life.
- God wants to work in your life in a deeper way: He has so much in mind for you.
- God is calling you to live your ordinary life in an extraordinary way.
- God calls you to be a witness to His love, truth, and mercy. He wants to work through you, and He calls you to be a special instrument of His in reaching others.
- God calls you to always seek good and turn away from evil.
- God calls you to say 'yes' to Him and all He wants to give you.

RCIA at St. Dominic's

What is RCIA?

R.C.I.A., which stands for "Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults," is:

- A journey into relationship with God through Christ
- An embracing of all He wants to teach and give us
- A guided entrance into the Catholic Church
- A prepared reception of God's grace in the Sacraments

Why go through RCIA?

Our hearts are restless until they rest in God. By embracing the RCIA journey, we find all that we are looking for: we find God and all He wants for us.

What are the Stages of this Journey?

PRE-CATECHUMENATE (Sept 12 to Nov 27)

STEP 1: CATECHUMENATE (Nov 27 to March 5)

STEP 2: ELECTION & PURIFICATION (March 5 to April 15)

STEP 3: CELEBRATION & MYSTAGOGY (April 15 to May 22)

IMPORTANT SPECIFIC DATES: MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- Meetings every Monday from 7-8:30pm from Sept 12 to May 22
- An activity about once a month or every other month (TBD)
- RITE OF ACCEPTANCE: Sun, Nov 27, 10:30am Mass @ St. Dominic's
- RITE OF SENDING: Sun, March 5, 10:30am Mass @ St. Dominic's
- RITE OF ELECTION: Sun, March 5, 3pm @ National Basilica of IC
- 1st SCRUTINY & CREED: Sun, March 19, 10:30am Mass @ St. Dominic's
- 2nd SCRUTINY: Sun, Mar 26, 10:30am Mass @ St. Dominic's
- 3rd SCRUTINY & LORD'S PRAYER: Sun, April 2, 10:30am Mass @ St. Dominic's
- Confessions arranged before or during Holy Week (except for those to be baptized)
- EASTER VIGIL: Sat, April 15, 7:30pm @ St. Dominic's (Rehearsal earlier)
- Last RCIA Class: Mon, May 15

Holy Expectations for You!

RCIA is a blessed journey that comes with its expectations and responsibilities. These expectations / responsibilities are basically three, but each has a few essential components to it. In order to truly be faithful to Christ, to enter the Catholic Church, and to receive the Sacraments at the Easter Vigil, it will be necessary to meet these basic expectations to complete the journey that is RCIA.

1. Catholic Belief

Being Catholic means saying ‘yes’ to Jesus Christ and to all that He desires for us. The Catholic Faith is simply the fullness of the Faith that Jesus has given to us. Because of this, there is a beautiful *wholeness* to the Catholic Faith, and it only makes sense to become Catholic when one is ready to sincerely embrace this wholeness, when one is ready to truly believe and embrace all that the Catholic Church believes and officially teaches. It is not expected that everyone would be ready to embrace this fullness from the beginning. It is good to learn what something is about before consenting to it, and you will have many questions. However, it will be necessary to say ‘yes’ to Christ and embrace the Catholic Faith in its fullness, from the heart, at sometime before the Easter Vigil in order to formally enter the Catholic Church and receive her Sacraments. At the beginning, all we ask is that you that you come with an open mind and heart, open and willing to say ‘yes’ to all that God wants for you. Faith is a gift that God wants to give you. God will help you say ‘yes’ to Him, and to grow in your faith through the journey of RCIA and beyond.

2. Catholic Practice

We are called to live what we believe. Practicing the Catholic Faith means seeking to follow Christ in all areas of life. Following Christ involves: daily prayer, growing in our relationship with God through our Catholic Faith, pursuing God’s will, seeking forgiveness and turning away from sin, going to Confession regularly, attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and receiving the Eucharist, living virtuously, and serving others. In a particular way, one’s romantic relationships must be in conformity with the Gospel. All are expected to reserve sexual intimacy to marriage and to make sure one’s marriage situation is aligned with the teaching of Jesus and the Church. The priest will be happy to help people as much as possible in the situation in which a marriage not recognized by the Catholic Church needs to be “blessed,” or when an annulment is necessary before a marriage can be blessed. Lastly, it is very important to have the firm intention to persevere in your Faith for the rest of your life. Saying ‘yes’ to God means entrusting your whole life journey to Him, not just one stage of the journey.

3. Commitment to RCIA

RCIA is a year of grace and formation in the Catholic Faith. It is very important that persons commit themselves and give top priority to this journey. Specifically, one is expected to make the weekly meetings on time, the activities, and the important dates that bless one’s journey along the way. People are also expected to study and do the weekly assignments on their own. Please notify Fr. Hyacinth early concerning any classes or activities you cannot make. It will be necessary to make arrangements with him to make up any missed classes. On a practical note, it will be necessary to provide Fr. Hyacinth with the records of any sacraments you have received already.

Participating in Mass

The *Mass* is a celebration of Christ's love. In the Mass, the family of Christ's believers, the Church, gathers together all over the world with the risen Christ to offer worship through Him to the Father in the Holy Spirit. It is a celebration of joy, involving two basic parts: a hearing of the Word of God, and the offering and partaking of a Sacred Meal. Sunday is the principal day for the celebration of Mass, since it is on Sunday that Christ rose from the dead. Sunday is also associated with Creation and the Sending of the Holy Spirit on the Feast of Pentecost. It is the joy, but also the obligation and duty, of Catholics to attend Mass every Sunday. There are also six Holy Days of Obligation during the year that often fall outside of Sunday when Catholics are expected to attend Mass as well. Churches offer Masses at various times on these days to accommodate people's work schedules.

Mass is also offered daily for those who are able and desirous of benefiting from the blessings of the Mass more often than just once a week.

In the early Church, *Catechumens* (those learning to be disciples of Christ and preparing to enter the Church through the reception of the Sacraments) would attend the first part of the Mass, but would leave for the second part of Mass. They would only be admitted to the second part of the Mass once they were baptized and received Confirmation and First Communion at the Easter Vigil. Here at St. Dominic's, since we do not have a formal program of instruction to offer catechumens after they attend the first part of Mass, we invite you to come every Sunday and stay for the whole Mass.

Those who haven't yet received their First Communion in the Catholic Church will have to wait till the Easter Vigil before receiving Holy Communion. In the meantime, we invite you to come forward at Communion time to receive a blessing from the priest. To do this, make sure to get in the Communion line where a priest is distributing Holy Communion. When you come up to the priest, put your hands on your shoulders by crossing your arms. This will indicate to the priest that you would like to receive a blessing instead of receiving Holy Communion. Many find it hard to wait until Easter before receiving Holy Communion, especially if they have regularly received communion in their own church for a while. We invite you see this time as an opportunity to appreciate what is unique about Holy Communion in the Catholic Church, namely, that it is the Body and Blood of Christ that we receive, and to patiently and lovingly long for this great Gift you will soon receive.

We realize that the Mass might be very new and a little confusing for those who are not used to it. With time, however, we will help you to understand, more greatly appreciate, and fall in love with the Mass. Please never hesitate to ask us questions or to bring us concerns. In the meantime, we invite you to open your heart to being enriched in your own way by the Mass.

Your Sacramental Records

As soon as possible, we need to receive updated sacramental records of all who are preparing to receive any Sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion) at the Easter Vigil.

How do I obtain my Sacramental Records?

If you were baptized Catholic, contact the Church where you were baptized and request that a new copy of your baptismal certificate (including all notations) be sent us (St. Dominic Church, Attention: Fr. Hyacinth Marie Cordell, OP). Note that, if everything was done correctly, notification of any sacraments received after baptism should have been sent to your church of baptism when you received those sacraments. Therefore, in your baptismal registry, there should be notes about when and where you received any other sacraments. When you contact the church of your baptism, be sure to ask that all notifications in your baptismal registry be included in the new baptismal certificate sent to us.

If you are not Catholic, we will need proof of your baptism sent to us from the church where you were baptized.

See Fr. Hyacinth right away about any questions or concerns.

Finding a Sponsor

Each person in RCIA chooses a person to sponsor him/her, namely a faithful Catholic you can look to for support, and as a mentor, guide, and an example of how to live out one's Christian Faith. Talk with Fr. Hyacinth about whom you would like to ask. The requirements of a sponsor are the following:

- Practicing Catholic
- Having Received Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion
- In Good Standing*
- At Least 16 Years Old
- Not One's Own Parent
- Who Will Come to the Weekly RCIA Meetings (as much as possible)
- Who Will Come to Your Special Liturgical Ceremonies

After you have consulted with Fr. Hyacinth about the sponsor you have decided upon, make sure that your sponsor is given the sheet on the privileges and expectations of being a sponsor, and that he/she completes and returns the sponsor form to Fr. Hyacinth as well.

* A Catholic in "Good Standing" is a Catholic whose work, membership in organizations, volunteering, advocacy, and marriage (or romantic relationship before marriage) are all in conformity with the teaching of Christ and the Catholic Church. Examples of Catholics not in good standing would include those who work for an immoral company (e.g., Planned Parenthood), those who belong to an organization that is contrary to the Church (e.g., the KKK or Freemasons), those who advocate for causes contrary to the Gospel (e.g., "gay marriage"), and those who are in a romantic relationship at odds with the norms of Christ and the Church (e.g., sexually active outside of marriage—whether heterosexual or homosexual, or married outside the Church).

Choosing a Patron Saint

It is Catholic tradition that those preparing for the sacraments of Baptism or Confirmation would choose the name of a patron saint. The idea is that you would choose a saint you look up to as an example and a special intercessor on your behalf, and a saint you feel a special connection to. You will be called by this name when you are baptized or confirmed. However, there is no expectation that you seek a legal name change or that you would change the way you are normally called by family and friends.

You may choose any saint you like. Some choose a favorite biblical saint. Some choose a saint who is similar to them (same country of origin or profession or interest, etc.). Don't hesitate to ask for ideas. You can also search for ideas online.

