

RCIA **GUIDELINES**



**Archdiocese of
Hartford**



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THE ARCHBISHOP

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It has been about three decades since Pope Paul VI promulgated the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. Since then scores of catechumens and candidates, graced by the power of the Holy Spirit, have entered the Rite of Christian Initiation on their pilgrimage toward membership in the Catholic Church.

The entire community of the faithful participates in the privilege of the Christian Initiation process. The Sunday Mass provides the context and direction for the Initiation process. This process leads catechumens and candidates “not only to an appropriate acquaintance with dogmas and precepts but also to a profound sense of the mystery of salvation in which they desire to participate.” (RCIA, 75.1)

There are still some questions and concern about how best to implement the rite. Some priests, deacons, coordinators, catechists and sponsors appear intimidated by the breadth and scope of the overall program. In order to establish a clear, concise understanding of the implementation of the RCIA in the Archdiocese of Hartford, guidelines have been prepared to be used as a ready reference by all those overseeing this process.

The text of these guidelines was in large part produced by a group of priests, liturgists, catechists and canonists of the Diocese of Springfield, Massachusetts, as well as dioceses in New Jersey. I am grateful to the Office of Religious Education and the Archdiocesan RCIA Advisory Committee for their work of adaptation and the preparation of the current text for the Archdiocese of Hartford. It is my hope that it will help you and your RCIA teams come to a clearer understanding of the mind of the Church concerning the process of Christian Initiation, and that the guidelines will provide a standard for usage in the Archdiocese of Hartford.

With every prayerful good wish, I remain

Sincerely in Christ,

+ *Daniel A. Cronin*

Archbishop of Hartford

**LITURGICAL AND CANONICAL
GUIDELINES FOR THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS
FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE OF HARTFORD**

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

1. Purpose of these Guidelines
2. *The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Eng. Trans.*
3. Initiation into the Christian life
4. Persons who can be included in the RCIA
5. Those who do not belong in the RCIA

PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES

In response to the provision in the RCIA document for bishops “to set up the formation program of the catechumenate and to lay down norms according to local needs”¹ the Archdiocesan RCIA Advisory Committee offers the following guidelines for implementing the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in the Archdiocese of Hartford.

These guidelines are designed to help in implementing and interpreting the catechumenate in the Archdiocese of Hartford. They include adaptations for children of catechetical age.

These guidelines are not intended to be a presentation or explanation of the RCIA.

There can be no substitute for reading the official document, the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, mandated in 1988 by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the United States.

Parish priests, deacons, RCIA coordinators, catechists, sponsors and other team members have a special responsibility to see to it that the liturgical, catechetical and pastoral norms of the RCIA and the Church law governing it are observed. They must understand the spirit of the Rite, be familiar with its directives and pay special attention to the particular needs of those seeking initiation.

THE RITUAL

The revised ritual for the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (referenced in these guidelines as “RCIA” with #) was first published in 1972 for the universal Church. The provisional English translation appeared in 1974. The edition published in 1988 for the dioceses of the United States is normative.

The Ritual explains each of the periods of the Initiation process as well as all of the rites. It is an indispensable guide for every pastor, for deacons, for coordinators, for catechists, as well as for other ministers working in the RCIA process.

A Spanish translation of the 1988 version specifically for use in the dioceses of the United States is also available. In Spanish-speaking communities this edition should be used in preference to the one published by the Episcopal Conference of Spain.

The *National Statutes for the Catechumenate* (referenced in these guidelines as NCCB with #) are included within an appendix in both the English and Spanish versions of the RCIA Ritual. They are applicable in all dioceses of the United States.

Relevant **Canon Laws** are included as an Appendix III in the Ritual.

Parishes in the dioceses of the United States, which worship in languages other than English should obtain authorized vernacular translations of the Rite.

INITIATION INTO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Initiation into the Christian life as a Roman Catholic involves acceptance into a parish. A serious and consistent effort should be made to implement the RCIA process fully in all parishes of the Archdiocese of Hartford.

The goal of the RCIA process is initiation into living the Christian life in the Catholic Tradition. Reception of the Sacraments of Initiation should normally be accompanied by conversion.

The Code of Canon Law requires that before an adult is baptized he or she must normally be admitted to the catechumenate, be led through its various stages, be sufficiently instructed and tested in the Christian life by means of the catechumenate, and should be urged to have contrition for personal sins². *The Code of Canon Law* also affirms that, through instruction, together with an apprenticeship in the Christian life, participants in the RCIA are initiated “into the mystery of salvation and introduced to the life of faith, liturgy, charity of the people of God, and the apostolate”.³

The RCIA offers an inquirer guidance during the pilgrimage toward Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist, together with knowledge of and a desire for the Christian way of life. Consequently its principal characteristics are the Bible as read within the Church, authentic preaching, sound catechesis, liturgical involvement and spiritual enrichment.

The liturgical rites of the RCIA are integral elements of Christian Initiation. They provide both the setting and the venues to the Sacraments of Initiation; specifically, Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. In the case of baptized Christians seeking full communion with the Catholic Church, the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Penance is available. These liturgical rites are meant to be celebrated in the midst of the parish assembly and according to the norms set forth in the RCIA Ritual.

WHO MAY ENTER THE RCIA PROCESS

1. **Unbaptized adults**

Unbaptized adults (catechumens) are normally led through the full-length catechumenate as described in Part I of the RCIA Ritual. Ideally, **the combined length of the catechumenate period and the period of purification and enlightenment is expected to be twelve months or more.**⁴ While a shorter duration may be pastorally acceptable in some cases, parishes should set a standard of twelve months or more and take care not to create the expectation that a shorter period of time will be sufficient.⁵ However, in extraordinary situations, the catechumenate can be completed in one abbreviated rite.⁶ Catechumens are normally baptized, confirmed and receive Holy Communion by a priest at the Easter Vigil.⁷

2. **Those baptized in a non-Roman Christian Church; e.g. Protestant, Anglican, and who are seeking full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.** (Members of Separated Eastern Churches; e.g., Eastern Orthodox Churches, whose sacraments are valid, do not enter the RCIA process.) The term “Orthodox” generally refers to “those Eastern Churches which accept the decisions of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. In recent times, it has also been applied, for historical reasons, to those Churches that did not accept the dogmatic formulae of one or other of these Councils. To avoid confusion, the general term ‘Eastern Orthodox Churches’ is used ‘to designate all those Churches of the various Eastern traditions which are not in full communion with the Church of Rome.’”⁸

These baptized aspirants should be clearly distinguished from catechumens (No.1 above), who are unbaptized. The Ritual provides special rites for them. Prior to the Easter Vigil, they should celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation;⁹ during the Easter Vigil, they make a profession of faith, are confirmed, and receive the Eucharist from a priest.¹⁰

3. **Those baptized as Catholic**

These may have received first Communion, or may *not* have received the Eucharist. Those who have *not* received Holy Communion are considered uncatechized. They may participate in some aspects of RCIA as Candidates (Rites of Continuing Conversion-preparing to receive Holy Communion and Confirmation.) They may also be catechized in an alternative program. They may receive First Communion at the Easter Vigil but may not be confirmed by a priest unless the priest receives the faculty to do so from the Ordinary. This faculty is not given in the Archdiocese of Hartford. If these have received the Holy Eucharist, they are catechized. These people should not be in the RCIA but in an adult Confirmation program. These may only be confirmed by a bishop.¹¹

4. **Unbaptized children of catechetical age**

These children are normally enrolled in a catechumenate for children, catechized in a manner appropriate for their age level, and eventually receive the Sacraments of Initiation.¹²

THOSE WHO DO NOT BELONG IN THE RCIA

1. Adult catechized Catholics seeking Confirmation

Instead of being in a catechumenate, these adults belong in a special program of preparation for Confirmation. They are confirmed by the Archbishop at an adult Confirmation at the Cathedral, or else by the Archbishop when he confirms in their parish churches.

2. Alienated Catholics

These are adults who are interested in exploring the possibility of a return to the Church and the practice of their faith and they do not belong in a catechumenate. Their experiences of the Church, their questions, and their pastoral needs are different from those of catechumens and candidates and require a different pastoral response on the part of the Church. There are programs available to parishes to help them work with returning Catholics.

3. Catholics Seeking Updates

These are committed Catholics who desire to learn more about their church and the practice of their faith. They may receive ongoing education from parish adult education programs.

CHAPTER TWO

GENERAL PATTERN FOR ADULTS

1. Terms of address
2. The Precatechumenate or Period of Inquiry
3. The Rite of Acceptance (and Welcome)
4. The Catechumenate Period
5. The Rite of Election (and Call to Continuing Conversion)
6. The Period of Purification and Enlightenment
7. The Scrutinies
8. Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
9. Presentation of the Creed
10. Presentation of the Lord's Prayer
11. Preparation rites on Holy Saturday
12. Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation
13. Postbaptismal Catechesis/Mystagogy

TERMS OF ADDRESS

During the Precatechumenate or period of inquiry, both the unbaptized and those who are baptized but uncatechized may be called **inquirers**.

During the Catechumenate period, the **unbaptized** are called **catechumens** and the **baptized** are called **candidates**.

During the period of Purification and Enlightenment, the **unbaptized** are called the **elect** and the **baptized** continue to be called **candidates**.

During the period of Mystagogy, the **newly baptized** are called **neophytes**.

THE PRECATECHUMENATE OR PERIOD OF INQUIRY

The Initial Interview

Each inquirer is to be interviewed by a member of the catechumenate team who is thoroughly familiar with the Initiation process, is able to answer questions which may arise, and who has the ability to make the inquirer feel comfortable and at ease.

The interviewer must also have a basic knowledge of the Church's marriage laws, so that if there are any irregularities in terms of a marriage situation, the inquirer can and should be **directed to**

the pastor for clarification and resolution. The interviewer is not to make any evaluation of the marriage situation in the interview.

By way of reminder, in the Archdiocese of Hartford it is not permissible for a person in an irregular marriage situation (a marriage not recognized by the Church or a situation of living together) to be accepted into **any** level of the process leading to reception into the Church. Individuals must have their marital status regularized prior to being accepted into any such process. Any questions in this regard should be directed to the Office of the Chancellor.

A sample interview is included in the appendices of these Guidelines.

The information needed will include:

1. **Religious background:** To what religion, if any, does the inquirer belong? Has the inquirer been baptized? When and in what Church?
2. **Catechetical background:** Has the inquirer received any religious education? What are the sources of his or her understanding of the Catholic faith?
3. **Marital history:** Is the inquirer married? Is he or she living with another in a marital situation? Are there any previous marriages of either the inquirer or the inquirer's spouse or fiancé (e)?
4. **Motivations and expectations:** Why has the inquirer expressed interest in the Catholic Church at this time? What is he or she hoping to find?

The Precatechumenate or period of inquiry has no set time frame. Duration depends on the readiness of each individual and ordinarily should not be abbreviated.

SPONSORS AND GODPARENTS

The introduction to the Rite¹³ makes a distinction between the sponsor and the godparent. The **sponsor** accompanies the catechumen (unbaptized) through the Rite of Acceptance and the Catechumenate. The **godparent** accompanies the catechumen through the Rite of Election, the periods of purification and enlightenment, the celebration of Initiation and the period of Mystagogy. Actually one person can serve in both roles. In the case of candidates (already baptized) for full communion, the sponsor may serve through the entire process since there is usually no need for a godparent.

The role of the **sponsor** is an active one that includes:

1. Presenting the inquirer to the parish community at the Rite of Acceptance/Welcoming;
2. Participating with the catechumen/candidate at all the liturgical rites of the Catechumenate;
3. Offering support, encouragement and explanations, when appropriate, for the catechumen/candidate;
4. Witnessing to the catechumen's/candidate's moral character, faith and intention;
5. Providing a link with the parish community;
6. Assisting in the discernment process of the catechumen/candidate.

In order to fulfill these roles adequately, the sponsor should participate regularly in catechetical sessions (excluding Sunday dismissals) with the catechumen/candidate. It is recommended that

the catechumenate team select sponsors. It is necessary that sponsors be identified and in place well in advance of the Rite of Acceptance since sponsors must attest to the candidates' readiness, etc.

The role of the **godparent** begins with the Rite of Election and continues through the catechumen's baptismal life. It is outlined in the Rite.¹⁴ As with the sponsor, it includes active involvement with the elect, while offering support and encouragement.

Since the role of the **godparent** is one defined by canon law, he or she must be fully initiated in the Roman Catholic Church (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist), not be a parent of the catechumen, and be living a life consistent with the faith and responsibility of a godparent.¹⁵

Pastoral needs suggest that the same standards should apply to sponsors.

Since both the sponsor and the godparent act as witnesses to the Christian faith, their example should be evident in a life of prayer, participation in the liturgical life of the parish, especially Sunday Mass, and a life of gospel values.

Group meetings

During the Precatechumenate, group meetings should be a part of the process. Those invited to attend (in addition to the inquirers and a catechist) should include some members of the parish and perhaps some people who have gone through the process. If a sponsor has been chosen at this stage, the sponsor should attend the meetings.

The format of these meetings should be informal and flexible and adapted to the needs of the inquirers. The setting should be hospitable so that the inquirers will be encouraged to share their stories and questions. It is important to facilitate the sharing process so that the group begins to build a community of trust. The setting also provides an opportunity to discern the needs and faith questions of the inquirers. **The need for confidentiality is essential and should be made clear from the outset.**

The **goal of the Precatechumenate** is evangelization. Inquirers benefit from hearing the Good News proclaimed in Sacred Scripture and in hearing the witness of parishioners who take part in the process. There is also an opportunity for those participating in this part of the process to refine, deepen and strengthen their faith.

The **time frame of the Catechumenate** will vary from person to person and from year to year. Individuals need time to learn what it means to be a Catholic and to discern what God's call to them at this time means in their lives. **The time frame is not to be decided in advance and individuals are not to be urged to make a hasty decision about whether or not to continue.**

Ideally, parishes should have a year-round inquiry group so that any time an inquirer comes forward he or she may immediately be received into the Precatechumenate. A year-round Precatechumenate also ensures that inquirers may pursue the inquiry at their own pace.

Discernment for the Rite of Acceptance (and welcome)

Second interview

Several weeks before the parish celebrates the Rite of Acceptance (and Welcome for the baptized candidates), there should be another interview with each inquirer. The purpose of this interview is to discern whether the inquirer is ready to proceed to the next period of the process. The criteria for discernment are found in the Ritual.¹⁶

RITE OF ACCEPTANCE (AND WELCOME)

The rite should ordinarily be celebrated in the context of Sunday Mass so that parishioners can have the opportunity to offer their support and prayers to the catechumens and candidates. If this rite is not celebrated at Sunday Mass, every effort should be made to see that the people of the parish who attend the celebration offer their support to the catechumens and candidates.¹⁷

Not all inquirers need to be included at the same time. **The Rite is celebrated as individuals are ready, and it may be done more than one time in a year. Children should be included in the ceremonies, appropriately adapted for them.**

If there are baptized as well as unbaptized inquirers who are ready to make this transition, the combined Rite should be used. **Clear distinctions** are to be maintained between the unbaptized and the baptized during the celebration of this Rite.

THE CATECHUMENATE

The catechumenate period is the lengthiest period of the whole initiation process. “The duration of the catechumenate period will depend on the grace of God and on various circumstances...Nothing, therefore, can be settled a priori. The time spent in the catechumenate is to be long enough - several years if necessary - for the conversion and faith of the catechumen to become strong.”¹⁸

The combined period of the catechumenate and period of purification and enlightenment should extend for at least one year of formation, instruction and probation. Ordinarily this period should extend from at least the Easter season of one year until the next; preferably it should begin before Lent in one year and extend until Easter of the following year.¹⁹ There are several parts to the Catechumenate period. Of utmost importance is the first; namely the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens; it includes the candidates’ First Acceptance of the Gospel and the signing of the candidates with the cross. It also includes the dismissal of the catechumens.²⁰

The Rite of Dismissal takes place at Sunday Mass and is a powerful experience for both the catechumens and the community. Candidates for full communion are also encouraged to

participate in the Dismissal Rite since they cannot receive the Eucharist at this time. Those baptized Catholics who have not received First Holy Communion can also benefit by taking advantage of the Dismissal Rite to continue their formation in the faith. The Rite takes place at the conclusion of the Liturgy of the Word. Following the General Intercessions (during which a petition is offered for them), the catechumens and the candidates along with a catechist are dismissed with a prayer of blessing. They do not disperse but meet together to receive the Word that they have just heard. The length of this session should be timed so that it ends at or close to the end of the Eucharistic celebration. This is not a doctrinal session but a sharing of God's Word and exploring the impact of that Word in their daily lives.

The **doctrinal sessions** are held sometime during the following week. They may also be held following the dismissal rite and the reception of the Word on Sunday. The Sunday Lectionary readings should set the tone for the catechesis that takes place at the weekly instructional sessions. It is strongly suggested that at least the Gospel be the text for prayer that precedes the catechetical session and that the catechist have the texts in mind in preparing the doctrinal material to be presented each week.

The doctrinal sessions should include teaching in the four major areas as defined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* – what we believe, how we celebrate, how we live, how we pray.

Participation in parish life

Catechumens and candidates should be given the opportunity to meet members of the parish community and to take part in parish activities. Participation in parish activities, where appropriate, and in the mission of the Church, should not be unduly delayed until after sacramental initiation, but can begin during the catechumenate period under the guidance of the godparent/sponsor.

The Rite of Sending

This rite takes place in the parish at the end of the catechumenate. It provides an opportunity for the parish community to express its support of the elect and for the godparents/sponsors to offer personal testimony about them. In the Rite, the parish sends the elect to the Archdiocesan Rite of Election, during which the Archbishop will formally admit them to the period of purification and enlightenment. For the candidates, as well as the catechumens, the Rite of Sending is significant in that it provides an occasion for them to be recognized by the Archbishop, formally in the Cathedral, and to receive their call to continuing conversion by him. In the Archdiocese of Hartford the catechumens (including the children) sign the book of the Elect in the parish during the Rite of Sending. (Candidates are to be reminded that the Book of the Elect symbolizes enrollment for baptism). A similar scroll is filled out for candidates for the convenience of the Presenter at the Rite of Election and Continuing Conversion. This is a further confirmation on the part of the candidate and the parish of readiness for full communion.

The celebration of the Rite of Sending is highly recommended. It must take place at some time prior to the Archdiocesan celebration of the Rite of Election. Each parish inscribes the name(s) of their elect on a scroll that is brought to the Cathedral to be acknowledged by the Archbishop.²¹

THE RITE OF ELECTION

The Rite of Election celebrates the Church's recognition of the readiness of the catechumens to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation. It is normally celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent for those who will be received into the Church during the Easter solemnities. This Rite marks the beginning of a final and more intense preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation.

The Archdiocese of Hartford celebrates a combined Rite of Election of catechumens and Call to Continuing Conversion of candidates preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist, or reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.²²

All adult catechumens are expected to participate in the Archdiocesan celebration with their godparents. All candidates for full communion, as well as baptized uncatechized Catholics who are completing full Initiation, are also strongly encouraged to participate in this Rite along with their sponsors. Children in the catechumenate process and their godparents/sponsors are encouraged to participate as well.

This solemn rite is the focal point of the Church's concern for the catechumens and candidates. It is the Archbishop who presides at the Rite of Election, which is normally celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Joseph. **Only with serious reasons and with the permission of the Archbishop, is this Rite to be celebrated in the parish.**

THE PERIOD OF PURIFICATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

This period coincides with Lent and "is a period of more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction, and is intended to purify the minds and hearts of the elect as they search their own consciences and do penance. This period is intended as well to enlighten the minds and hearts of the elect with a deeper knowledge of Christ the Savior."²³

There are several rites that are intended to help in this process.

1. The Scrutinies
2. Presentation of the Creed
3. Presentation of the Lord's Prayer

The Scrutinies

The Scrutinies are normally celebrated on the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent. At the Masses at which the Scrutinies are celebrated, the Cycle A readings are to be used.²⁴

“They are rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose.”²⁵ **The Scrutinies are for the elect;** for those preparing to receive the three Sacraments of Initiation. Candidates, as well as the congregation, should join in heart and mind with elect, so as to pray for the elect, and should reflect with the elect on their meaning of these Rites.

In place of the Scrutinies, candidates celebrate a similar rite called a Penitential Rite²⁶ on the second Sunday of Lent. The Scrutinies and the Penitential Rite are separate and are meant to be separate; there is no combined Rite.²⁷

Celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation

The Elect (both adults and children) do not receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to baptism since baptism takes away all sins, personal as well as Original sin.

Catechesis during the doctrinal sessions of the catechumenate must include a presentation on the Sacrament of Reconciliation and its positive spiritual value of confession, along with the pertinent teaching of the Church²⁸ that all Catholics are “bound faithfully to confess their grave sins at least once a year.” This teaching should be reviewed during the period of Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy.

Candidates (both adults and children) are also to receive catechesis on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Candidates should celebrate this sacrament prior to their reception into full communion **if they are guilty of serious sin**, first informing the confessor that they are about to be received into full communion.²⁹ All candidates should be encouraged to celebrate this sacrament prior to reception.

The Presentations

The presentations are for the elect only.³⁰

Presentation of the Creed takes place during the week following the first Scrutiny.³¹ “The Creed, as it recalls the wonderful deeds of God for the salvation of the human race, suffuses the vision of the elect with the sure light of faith.”³²

Presentation of the Lord’s Prayer normally takes place during the week following the third Scrutiny. “The Lord’s Prayer fills them with a deeper realization of the new spirit of adoption by which they will call God their Father, especially in the midst of the Eucharistic assembly.”³³

PREPARATION RITES ON HOLY SATURDAY

The elect should be encouraged to refrain from their usual activities, engage in prayer and reflection, and, if possible, to fast.³⁴

When it is possible for the elect and the candidates to gather together for prayer and reflection on Holy Saturday, there are several rites that may be celebrated as a preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation.³⁵

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

The sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are normally celebrated during the Easter Vigil Liturgy.

During the service of light, the elect do not carry lighted tapers as the baptized do because they have not been enlightened yet by Christ in Baptism. Because they have been baptized, candidates carry lighted tapers if allowed by town fire laws.

After the elect have been baptized, they may be clothed in a baptismal garment such as a robe. Traditionally this is a simple white flowing garment that clothes the whole person. Full-length poncho-like garments are sometimes used. The baptismal garment should not be decorated with symbols. It is itself the symbol, and anything added to it will detract from its effectiveness. Stoles are not baptismal garments. The Presentation of a Lighted Candle follows.³⁶

When the elect are baptized, the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist are to be conferred immediately thereafter, unless a grave reason prevents it.³⁷

It is not permissible at one celebration for one priest to baptize and another to confirm. It is not permissible for a deacon to baptize and a priest to confirm. If there are a large number to be confirmed, the presiding minister may invite other priests to assist him in confirming, provided the norms of the RCIA are followed.³⁸

In the Archdiocese of Hartford, priests who exercise a pastoral office in the Archdiocese are automatically granted faculties by the Archbishop to receive into full communion of the Catholic Church adults and children of catechetical age, and they may confirm those not baptized as Catholics. This may take place at any time of the year.

In the Archdiocese of Hartford, by law, the faculty to confirm candidates seeking full communion with the Church who were baptized as Catholics is reserved to the Archbishop.

THE PERIOD OF POSTBAPTISMAL CATECHESIS/MYSTAGOGY

The period of Mystagogy refers to:

1. The fifty days of the Easter season, concluding at Pentecost³⁹
2. The first year of the neophyte's life as a baptized Christian⁴⁰ During the Easter season, the neophytes and their godparents should participate as a group at Sunday Masses. Special places in the assembly should be reserved for them.⁴¹ These Masses for neophytes are the main settings of the postbaptismal catechesis.⁴² Following the immediate mystagogy during the Easter season, the program for the neophytes should extend until the anniversary of their Christian initiation. The mystagogy that takes place during the first year is called "extended Mystagogy". This period may include monthly meetings with the neophytes.⁴³ Individuals who were received into full communion with the Church and those who celebrated continuing conversion may participate as well.

CHAPTER THREE

GENERAL PATTERN FOR CHILDREN

1. Intent of the Rite for children
2. Age of the children
3. Who does not belongs in the RCIA
4. Who does belong in the Catechumenate
5. Special needs of the children
6. Role of the family
7. Role of Catholic peers
8. Adapting the Rites for children
9. Mystagogy/Postbaptismal Catechesis

INTENT OF THE RITE FOR CHILDREN

This form of the Rite of Christian Initiation is intended for children, not baptized as infants, who have attained the use of reason and are of catechetical age.⁴⁴

AGE OF CHILDREN

Children of catechetical age are those who have reached the age of reason, which is generally considered to be age seven.⁴⁵ The category of ‘children of catechetical age’ extends to the end of the fourteenth year.⁴⁶ The initiation of young people fifteen years and older is governed wholly by the norms for adults.

WHO DOES NOT BELONG IN THE CATECHUMENATE

Unbaptized children below the age of seven are to be baptized according to the *Rite of Baptism for Children*, which is the rite used for infant baptism. Their Confirmation and Eucharist normally is to be deferred until a later age, according to parish and Archdiocesan policy.

Baptized (not Catholic) children younger than seven whose parents are being received into the Catholic Church do not participate in the catechumenate process. They are received into the Church on the same date as their parents with no rite required of them. Notation of their reception and record of the date and place of their baptism should be made in the parish baptismal register at the time of their parents’ reception. They are to participate in catechesis for the sacraments and are to receive the remaining sacraments of Initiation with their Catholic peers.

Baptized children younger than seven who were baptized in another Christian Denomination and whose parents are Catholics, are considered to be received into the Church at the time of their reception of first Eucharist, with no rite required of them. The date of their first Eucharist should be noted in the parish baptismal register as their date of reception into full communion. A record of the date and place of their Baptism should also be entered. They are to participate with their Catholic peers in catechesis and the reception of the sacraments, and need not take part in a formal catechumenate.

WHO BELONGS IN THE CATECHUMENATE

Unbaptized children of catechetical age

This is the primary group of children involved in the catechumenate. Their special concerns are addressed in Part II, Chapter 1 in the Ritual. **Without exception, they are to participate fully in the children's catechumenate and celebrate all three of the sacraments together.**⁴⁷ "At this third step of their Christian initiation, the children will receive the sacrament of baptism, the bishop or priest who baptized them will also confer confirmation, and the children will for the first time participate in the liturgy of the Eucharist"⁴⁸

Baptized (not-Catholic) children seeking reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church

Under canon law,⁴⁹ children who have reached the use of reason are to be considered adults and their formation is to follow the general pattern of the adult catechumenate with appropriate adaptations for children as permitted.⁵⁰ The priest who presides at the reception of these young candidates receives from the law the faculty to confirm them.⁵¹ Therefore, children who are received into the Church and who have not been validly confirmed are to be confirmed (excluding baptized Catholics, and those from Churches whose Confirmation is deemed valid in the Roman Catholic Church) at the same time as their reception.⁵²

Confirmations In Other Faith Traditions

The formation of these baptized children may follow the catechumenate process, clearly understanding that they are candidates, not catechumens. Just as the participation of baptized adults is allowed in the adult catechumenate, so the participation of baptized children is allowed in the children's catechumenate. If the parents of these children are also being baptized or received into the Church, their children should be received at the same time.

Baptized but uncatechized CATHOLIC children of catechetical age

These children are to be included in the catechumenate if this is thought to be pastorally prudent and desirable. The fact that they may be out of the grade level at which the sacraments are usually celebrated should not be seen a barrier to receiving the Eucharist with children of other ages, since the celebration of these sacraments should always be based on readiness and not on chronological age or grade level. **These children receive Confirmation with their peers when the Archbishop comes to his/her parish for Confirmation**

SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE CHILDREN

Children of catechetical age are old enough to hear and understand the call of Christ and to respond with faith at their own age level. Consequently, their initiation is not based, as is the baptism of infants, entirely on the commitment of the parents and the faith of the Church, but requires a genuine faith response on the part of the child. At the same time, the child is still dependent on his or her parents and needs continuing nurturing in faith.

Those responsible for the Christian Initiation of children of catechetical age must therefore take special care to evaluate the following elements of the child's conversion so the child's special needs may be met.

1. What is the attitude of the child's family? Is there a commitment on his or her part to help the child grow in faith and in the community of the Church? Can this commitment be deepened?
2. What is the child's relationship to the parish community and to Sunday worship? Is there an ongoing relationship? Can such a relationship be developed?
3. Has the child expressed faith in Christ? Does the child or youth want to belong to the Church? Can a personal relationship to Christ and to the Church be developed?

ROLE OF THE FAMILY

The catechumenate for children strives to incorporate ways for the family of the young catechumen to be involved in the process of Initiation. The pastor or his representative is to meet with the family and enlist their active support from the beginning of the process. A commitment to bring the child to the catechumenate gatherings is essential. The pastor should make clear either personally or through a delegate, what the process involves for the child and for the family. The family is expected to participate with the child in the rites and the catechetical process.

For children who are minors to be initiated into the Church, it is necessary to have the consent of the parents, or at least one of them, or those who lawfully take their place. Children who have the consent but not the active involvement of their parents in the process of Initiation should not on that account alone be barred from the process. The parental role may be assumed by grandparents, responsible older siblings, or other key family members who will consistently support their conversion.

ROLE OF CATHOLIC PEERS

The support of the child's community of peers will strengthen the young catechumen's experience of the Church and of conversion and should be sought whenever possible.

The special role of a “peer companion” is to be used judiciously. It does not substitute for an adult sponsor but it can provide a helpful informal support for the catechumen. See Chapter 4 of these guidelines under schools/institutions.

ADAPTING THE RITES FOR CHILDREN

When celebrating the rites for children, the Ritual is to be adapted to the needs of the particular children who will participate.⁵³ Those who are involved in preparing the rites should keep the following principles in mind.

1. It is the goal of any adaptation to preserve and highlight the central symbols of the rites.
2. It is important to avoid adding additional layers of symbolism to the symbols that are already in the rite.
3. It is necessary to understand the structure of the rites and to keep this structure intact.
4. The Rite as it appears in the Ritual is always to be the reference point when implementing the rite.

When children celebrate the rites together with adult catechumens, the adult rite is followed with some adaptations for the children. In order to accomplish this successfully, the presider is to prepare carefully, perhaps using a specially prepared text that combines the adult rite with the adaptations for children.

MYSTAGOGY/POSTBAPTISMAL CATECHESIS

Children with their godparents/sponsors should also participate in “neophyte” Masses during the Easter season.

Care needs to be given that children initiated at the Eater Vigil are fully incorporated into the ongoing parish religious education program (being mindful that these children have already been confirmed).

CHAPTER FOUR

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR INITIATION

1. Use of the short form of adult Initiation in exceptional circumstances
2. Christian Initiation of persons in danger of death
3. Persons with disabilities
4. Illiteracy
5. Schools and institutions

USE OF THE SHORT FORM OF ADULT INITIATION

The period of the catechumenate and the period of purification and enlightenment are ordinarily to last at least one full year. All parishes should be working toward the implementation of this.

However, until this can become a reality in the Archdiocese of Hartford, a nine-month process is acceptable. In working to accomplish this, one possibility is to complete the pre-catechumenate during the summer months so that the catechumenate period can begin in September. The use of this abbreviated form is to be as limited as possible.⁵⁴

CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF PERSONS IN DANGER OF DEATH

Priests and chaplains must become familiar with the form of Initiation to be used in the case of a person in danger of death.⁵⁵

Persons who have already been accepted as catechumens must make a promise that upon recovery they will complete the usual catechesis.⁵⁶

When a person initiated in this way recovers and returns to complete the catechumenate, the norms for the formation of baptized but uncatechized adults are to be followed.⁵⁷

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Provisions should be in place so that persons with disabilities seeking Initiation can be warmly welcomed by the parish community. Their participation in the catechumenate and their celebration of the sacraments of Initiation is to be encouraged to the fullest degree possible.

Since one of the goals of the catechumenate is to integrate the person into the Church, persons with disabilities are ordinarily to be taken into the catechumenate process with others, rather than

as a separate group. If a separate group is deemed necessary, persons with disabilities should participate in the common liturgical rites and undergo a common course of catechesis (adapted to the person's abilities. Every effort should be made to emphasize the fact that they are one with their fellow catechumens and candidates. They should also be provided with the same opportunities to meet other member of the parish community and to participate in parish life and the mission of the Church to the extent that they are able to do so.

Special efforts by the parish may be required in order to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities during the catechumenate process. Since disabilities and individuals vary widely, catechists with special skills may be needed (e.g. education teachers, sign language interpreters, Braille or audio-taped resources, speech or language specials). Transportation to the catechetical sessions or the Sunday liturgy may be needed.

The catechumenate team must develop sensitivity to the needs of persons with disabilities and find ways to meet them creatively within the resources of the parish.

ILLITERACY

The RCIA presumes literacy on the part of the ministers of the Rite but not of the catechumens, candidates or other participants in the process.

Care should be taken to ensure that adults who cannot read are nonetheless welcomed and included in the process of Initiation.

SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS

Catholic elementary and high schools

The Catholic school principal has a special responsibility to identify needs and encourage families to pursue the Initiation process through the parish catechumenate.

After the initial period of inquiry, the catechumenate must always be connected to the Sunday worship experience. Enrollment in a Catholic school, therefore, is never sufficient in and of itself to fulfill the requirements of the catechumenate.

Catholic school personnel, nonetheless, have an important role to play in facilitating the faith journey of the students who are catechumens and candidates.

Teachers are to encourage the Catholic peers to support and affirm the faith journey of the young catechumens and candidates in their midst. Although the major rites always take place at parish liturgies, some of the minor rites may be celebrated with the classmates of catechumens and

candidates in various settings where school prayer is conducted. These rites are to be planned collaboratively with catechumenate ministers to assure continuity and avoid duplication.

Colleges and universities

Catholic campus ministry personnel may conduct a catechumenate adapted to the needs of resident students, commuting students and faculty families who participate regularly in the worship and community life of the campus ministry. **If the catechumenate preparation takes place in a non-parochial setting, catechumens and candidates are to be introduced into the Christian life of a parish or similar community from the very beginning of the process.**

None of the regular features of the catechumenate are to be abridged because of the institutional setting. The academic calendar, however, may make necessary the adaptation of a time frame for the catechumenate and the celebration of various rites.

The records of Baptisms, receptions, Confirmations and First Communions are to be kept in the registers of the parish in whose territory the campus ministry is authorized and the sacraments are celebrated.

Nursing homes, residences, correctional facilities

Those charged with the pastoral care of people in nursing homes, residences and correctional facilities are to adapt the catechumenate to the needs of those who seek Initiation in these settings. They are to observe the norms contained in the national statutes for obtaining faculties and permissions required by the Rite.

Those catechumens and candidates who will reside in these institutions for but a brief period, or who begin the catechumenate near the end of their stay, should be helped to find a parish catechumenate in which to continue their formation after they depart.

CHAPTER FIVE

SPECIAL SITUATIONS/QUESTIONS

1. Marriages, Annulments, and Convalidations
2. Baptisms in Other Faith Traditions
3. Conditional Baptisms
4. Confirmations in Other Faith Traditions
5. Eastern Orthodox Candidates
6. Eastern Catholic Churches
7. Funeral of a Catechumen
8. Record Keeping

MARRIAGES, ANNULMENTS, AND CONVALIDATIONS

Pastors and catechumenate directors are to work closely together to assure that irregular marriage cases are identified at the initial interview. **In the Archdiocese of Hartford, those in irregular marriages may not begin the RCIA process until the situation is rectified.** Clear instruction on Catholic teaching regarding cohabitation, as well as utmost pastoral care, must be provided for those couples living together without benefit of marriage. Catechumenate personnel handling inquiries should direct the individual to the parish priest or deacon to determine what steps need to be taken to proceed.

Annulments

Those who minister to people in the RCIA process should always refer annulment cases to those who are professionally competent to assess them. Any questions about the annulment process or about anyone seeking to begin the annulment process should be referred to the parish priest or to the Archdiocesan Tribunal Office.

Rules concerning the marriage of a catechumen

Once a person has become a catechumen (the result of celebrating the Rite of Acceptance) that person is a member of the household of faith and has certain rights in the Church. Among them is the right to be married according to the Catholic Rite of Marriage.⁵⁸

The language of the rite of marriage for a catechumen is adapted to reflect the fact that the catechumen is unbaptized. The marriage should take place in the context of a celebration of the Word and not a Mass. The Nuptial Blessing may be used.⁵⁹

When a catechumen wishes to marry an unbaptized person, consult the Chancery.

When a catechumen wishes to marry a baptized person, a dispensation is needed for disparity of cult; hence the Chancery must be consulted.

Divorced but not remarried individual seeking the sacraments of Initiation

A person who is divorced but not remarried may celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation. That person should clearly understand, however, that the Church considers him or her bound by the bond of the previous marriage and that a future marriage would not be possible unless the previous marriage was 1) dissolved by death; 2) declared invalid *ab initio* through a declaration of nullity due to defective consent, lack of form, or the existence of a diriment impediment. A non-sacramental union may be dissolved by the Pauline Privilege or Privilege of the Faith (Petrine Privilege). A non-consummated marriage may be dissolved by a Papal Dissolution. In all cases except the death of the previous spouse, the pastor should consult the Tribunal immediately.

Convalidation of marriages

Convalidation of an irregular marriage of one wishing to become a catechumen or candidate must take place prior to the beginning of the RCIA process.

BAPTISMS IN OTHER FAITH TRADITIONS

There are three criteria for determining the validity of any Baptism: the use of water, the use of the Trinitarian formula, and the intention to do what the Church does when it baptizes.

If the Ritual of a church or communion in another faith tradition prescribes Baptism by water (by immersion, or pouring) and the Trinitarian formula, the only way that one can question the validity of the Baptism in such a church or communion is to have reasonable proof that the minister did not use proper matter or form or did not intend to baptize; or in the case of an adult recipient, that the proper intention was lacking on the part of the baptizing minister or the one being baptized.⁶⁰

Inability to obtain a baptismal certificate from a particular Church or communion does not in itself constitute reasonable proof that a Baptism was invalid. Ordinarily a certificate is to be obtained, but sometimes there are reasons that written records do not exist or have become unavailable. Each case is to be considered individually. The Chancery is to be consulted in doubtful cases. The certificate of Baptism should ordinarily be obtained before the Rite of Acceptance.

If, however, there is a doubt about the fact of validity of Baptism, and the doubt remains after serious investigation, Baptism is to be conferred conditionally.

CONDITIONAL BAPTISM

Conditional Baptism must be celebrated privately rather than at a public liturgical assembly of the community and with those limited rites, which the diocesan bishop determines.⁶¹ The

doctrine of the Sacrament of Baptism and the reasons for the doubtful validity of the Baptism should be explained to the person before conditional Baptism is conferred.⁶² Each case should be handled separately.

CONFIRMATIONS IN OTHER CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

The only other Christian traditions whose Sacrament of Confirmation is accepted as valid by the Catholic Church are: the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Polish National Church, and the group under the leadership of the late Archbishop Lefebvre. Candidates from Christian churches other than these generally must be confirmed when they are received into the Catholic Church. In doubt, consult the Chancery.

EASTERN ORTHODOX CANDIDATES

In all cases involving Orthodox Christians and their spouses or children, the pastor should consult the Office of the Chancellor BEFORE proceeding with the process.

They do not participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

Orthodox Christians

Orthodox Christians (e.g., Greek Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, etc.) normally should seek membership in the corresponding Eastern Rite. If they desire membership in the Latin Rite, the Eparch/Bishop of the corresponding Eastern Church and the Latin Rite Bishop must each approve. This process is intended to protect the integrity of and to show respect for their Churches. They do not participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

EASTERN RITE CATHOLICS

Eastern Rite Catholics should be referred to the Church in which they were baptized. If they desire membership in the Latin Rite, consult the Chancery. **They do not belong in the RCIA.**

FUNERAL OF A CATECHUMEN

Once unbaptized individuals have celebrated the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens, they become “part of the household of Christ”.⁶³ They may receive blessings and sacramentals and may also be buried as Christians. Within the funeral rites, catechumens are to be considered members of the Christian faithful.⁶⁴ The language of the *Order of Christian Funerals* that refers to Baptism is to be adapted.

RECORD KEEPING

Register of Catechumens

Since unbaptized individuals who are accepted into the Order of Catechumens have a standing in the Church, their names should be kept in a formal register, along with the names of their sponsors, the minister, the date and the place of the celebration.⁶⁵

The register of catechumens is not a ceremonial book. It is solely a record book.

If for any reason someone who is enrolled in the catechumenate drops out and later returns (e.g., for marriage, to resume his or her formation for Baptism, or is brought back for burial), the Register of Catechumens provides a record of the person's status in the Church.

The names of the baptized candidates are not written in the Register of the Catechumens. Their status in the Church is determined by their Baptism and this is recorded in the Church of their Baptism.

The Book of the Elect

The Book of the Elect is both a ceremonial book and a record book. It is used ceremonially when the catechumens sign it at the Rite of Sending and it is kept by the parish as a record of those who will approach the waters of Baptism at the Easter Vigil. The books also record the date of the celebration of the Rite of Election and the name of the president.

If godparents are asked to sign the Book of the Elect along with the elect, it should be made clear who are the elect and who are the godparents. Children as well as adults preparing for Baptism may sign the book.

A catechist or godparent may write the name of the elect if for any reason the elect cannot sign his or her name personally.

Candidates do not sign the Book of the Elect. Candidates may sign a scroll signifying their commitment to continue toward full communion and continuing conversion. A clear distinction should be made between candidates and catechumens.

CHAPTER SIX

MINISTRIES

1. The community
2. Catechumenate Coordinator
3. Catechists
4. Sponsors/Godparents
5. Team Development

THE COMMUNITY

The primary importance of the parish community in the catechumenate cannot be overemphasized. This ministry is described in detail in the Ritual.⁶⁶ The parish community must be consistently and sufficiently catechized so that it recognizes its responsibility to help and support the catechumens/candidates throughout the process of Initiation. Members of the parish community should be made aware of the importance of giving witness to their faith and its impact in evangelizing and nurturing conversion. They should be encouraged to pray for the Catechumens/Candidates, socialize with them, and by their example, encourage them to participate in the life of the parish and the ongoing mission of the Church.

CATECHUMENATE COORDINATOR

A coordinator to help the pastor, clergy and catechists in the RCIA process is often desirable. A person in this position is to have appropriate educational preparation as well as pastoral experience with the catechumenate process.

CATECHISTS

The catechists in the catechumenate must have a thorough knowledge of and love for the teachings of the Church as well as the practical skills necessary to work effectively with adults and/or children. Catechists who work with adults should understand the principles of adult learning. Those who work with children should apply teaching skills that are appropriate to the age group of the children. The catechumenate is intimately bound up with the liturgical life of the Church and draws substantially on the Scriptures proclaimed in the Sunday Mass. Therefore catechists need to have solid grounding in good principles of liturgy, Scripture, basic Catholic doctrine and spirituality.

The catechist who works in the catechumenate must have a special responsibility of witnessing to the principles of ecumenism and interreligious cooperation and worship.

A commitment to ongoing formation is essential for the catechumenate catechist. Special presentations, workshops and institutes sponsored by the Archdiocese and by surrounding dioceses can help the catechist grow in this ministry.

SPONSORS AND GODPARENTS

For adults, see Chapter 2

For children, see Chapter 3

TEAM DEVELOPMENT

From year to year the catechumenate team will need to incorporate new members and provide ongoing education for those who continue to minister in the catechumenate process. Some of the orientation of new team members and ongoing education of experienced team members can be accomplished in the parish under the guidance of the pastor and coordinator. Participation in workshops, seminars and courses offered by the Archdiocese and other organizations will also provide valuable help to team members. The parish is to encourage team members to grow in their ministry and to support their participation in outside events and workshops that will enrich their understanding of the RCIA process.

The following personnel are important for the RCIA team helping the pastor and clergy:

1. A coordinator who is actively involved in helping organize the process and coordinate the work of various team members;
2. Catechists who are formally trained in catechetics, especially adult learning models and the lectionary.

The following roles can be helpful on the RCIA team:

1. A liturgy coordinator who helps prepare the various liturgies of the Rite in conjunction with the pastor and parish musicians;
2. A coordinator of sponsors who acts as a liaison between the team and the sponsors;
3. A hospitality coordinator who assists in preparing a welcoming environment for all activities.
4. Publicity coordinator to keep the parish informed via bulletin, local media, pictures, etc.

As the team organizes under the pastor's leadership, it needs to set goals and establish communication with the parish staff, the parish council and the entire parish community. Some of the items to attend to are:

1. The training and formation of its members;
2. Organizing itself according to tasks and responsibilities;
3. Educating and informing the parish community about the RCIA;

4. Establishing a calendar of its own activities as well as a time line for beginning the Precatechumenate and potential dates for celebrating the Rite of Acceptance/Welcoming

The ongoing tasks of the team include:

1. Establishing an atmosphere of hospitality and openness in the parish to provide a basis for evangelization;
2. Ongoing spiritual renewal;
3. Ongoing formation of team members;
4. Evaluation of the entire parish RCIA process;
5. Discernment with and for those who approach the various steps of the Rite.

Endnotes

CHAPTER 1

- ¹ RCIA, #34
- ² *Code of Canon Law*, Canons 851 § 1, 865 § 1
- ³ *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 788 § 2
- ⁴ NCCB statute #6
- ⁵ RCIA, #76
- ⁶ RCIA, #331 and #332
- ⁷ Information Bulletin (attachment) of Archdiocese of Hartford, 21 November, 2001
- ⁸ *Directory of Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, 25 March 1993; note #28, Section 18, also, *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 844, § 3
- ⁹ RCIA, #482
- ¹⁰ Information Bulletin (attachment) of Archdiocese of Hartford, 21 November, 2001
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² RCIA Part II

CHAPTER 2

- ¹³ RCIA, #10, 11
- ¹⁴ RCIA #11
- ¹⁵ CCL, #872-874
- ¹⁶ RCIA, #42
- ¹⁷ RCIA, #45
- ¹⁸ RCIA, #76
- ¹⁹ NCCB, #6
- ²⁰ RCIA, #41 sqq.
- ²¹ RCIA, #106 sqq.
- ²² RCIA, #547-561
- ²³ RCIA, #139
- ²⁴ RCIA, #146
- ²⁵ RCIA, #141
- ²⁶ RCIA, #459-463
- ²⁷ RCIA, #463
- ²⁸ CCL, #989
- ²⁹ RCIA, #482
- ³⁰ RCIA, #147
- ³¹ RCIA, #148
- ³² RCIA, #147
- ³³ RCIA, #147
- ³⁴ RCIA, #185.1
- ³⁵ RCIA, #185.2
- ³⁶ RCIA, #209
- ³⁷ CCL, #866, cf. RCIA #215, NCCB #14
- ³⁸ RCIA, #14
- ³⁹ RCIA, #249
- ⁴⁰ NCCB #24
- ⁴¹ RCIA, #248
- ⁴² RCIA, #247
- ⁴³ NCCB, #24

CHAPTER 3

- ⁴⁴ RCIA #252 sqq.

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- ⁴⁵ RCIA #252
⁴⁶ CCL, #111 § 2, RCIA #12
⁴⁷ RCIA, #305
⁴⁸ CCL, #852 § 1
⁴⁹ CCL, #852 § 1
⁵⁰ RCIA Part II, Chapter 1, Part II, Chapter 5
⁵¹ CCL, #883 § 2
⁵² Archdiocesan RCIA Guidelines, “Confirmations in other Christian Traditions”, Appendix D
⁵³ RCIA, Part II, Chapter 1

CHAPTER 4

- ⁵⁴ NCCB, #20
⁵⁵ RCIA, #s 370-374
⁵⁶ RCIA, #371
⁵⁷ RCIA, #374; also #s 411-415

CHAPTER 5

- ⁵⁸ NCCB, #10
⁵⁹ *The Rite of Marriage* Chapter I, #33
⁶⁰ CCL, #869 § 2
⁶¹ NCCB, #37
⁶² CCL, #869 § 3
⁶³ RCIA, #47, cf. CCL, #1183
⁶⁴ CCL, #1183 § 1
⁶⁵ RCIA, #46, cf. CCL, #788 § 1

CHAPTER 6

- ⁶⁶ RCIA, #9

APPENDIX A

RESOURCES

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APPENDIX B

INQUIRY INTERVIEW

(This form serves as a guide for the initial interview. It is intended to be completed by the interviewer, not the inquirer. Confidentiality should be assured to the inquirer.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Occupation: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

When and where do you prefer to be called? _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Any other pertinent family background or issues that would be helpful to the RCIA team:

SACRAMENTAL STATUS

Baptized: _____ Yes (Baptismal certificate required) _____ No

Denomination: _____ Date (if known): _____

Where: _____

Confirmed: _____ Yes _____ No Where: _____

If Catholic, have you received Eucharist? _____ Yes _____ No

MARITAL STATUS:

_____ Married _____ Single _____ Living with someone in marital situation

_____ Engaged _____ Separated _____ Widowed _____ Divorced

_____ Annulled by Church

If married, name of spouse: _____

Church/place of marriage: _____

Married by: _____ Priest _____ Minister _____ Justice of Peace

If married or engaged, is this your first marriage? _____ Yes _____ No

(If no) --- Name of previous spouse: _____

Church/place of marriage (of spouse): _____

Additional Information for Children Seeking Initiation Sacraments

Name of Father: _____

Religion of Father: _____

Name of Mother: _____

Religion of Mother: _____

Marital Status of Parents: _____

Siblings:	Age	Baptized?

Any other pertinent family information:

APPENDIX C

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE RCIA COORDINATOR

- **Puts forth the vision of the Christian Initiation process for the parish community, its leadership and the team**
- Provides or arranges for training of all ministers
- Coordinates all the ministries within the RCIA
- Convenes meetings for the team coordinators
- Communicates with all members of the team and oversees communication with the parish, the coordinators, the catechumens and the candidates
- Keeps abreast of diocesan and regional events for team members and communicates these to the team and the other Initiation ministers as needed
- Enables, encourages and supports the Christian Initiation team in their ministry
- Oversees the keeping of appropriate records of catechumens, candidates and neophytes

Remuneration for Certified Coordinators

Christian initiation of adults and children is the responsibility of all the baptized. This assumes that the parish fully understands its mission to initiate so that enough ministers are available to assist the coordinator.

A fully involved coordinator needs extensive training and invests a great amount of time in the implementation of the *Rite* in the parish. Therefore, a just remuneration is appropriate for those who meet the following criteria:

- They are fully trained and/or certified through our Diocesan Lay Ministry Formation program or hold an appropriate degree.
- They spend a substantial amount of time in coordinating the Initiation process over and above what can be expected of a volunteer.

APPENDIX D

COMMUNION IN FAITH WITH THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Recognized as Valid

African Methodist Episcopal
Amish (and Mennonites)
Anglican (Episcopalian and
Church of England)
All Eastern non-Catholic Churches
(Orthodox)
Assembly of God
Baptists
Evangelical United Brethren
Church of the Brethren
(formerly called Dunkers)
Church of God
Congregational Church
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Evangelical Churches
Liberal Catholic Church
Lutheran Church
Methodist Church
Old Catholic Church
Old Roman Catholic Church
Church of the Nazarene
Polish National Church
Presbyterian Church
Reformed Churches
Christian and Missionary Alliance
Seventh Day Adventist
United Church of Christ

NOT recognized as Valid

Apostolic Church
Bohemian Free Thinkers
Christian Community
Church of the New Jerusalem
Masons (no baptism at all)
Christian Scientists
Church of Divine Sciences
Quakers
Universalists
Unitarians
Salvation Army
Pentecostal Churches
People's Church of Chicago
Christadelphians
Jehovah's Witnesses

***MORMONS Church of Jesus
Christ of Latter Day Saints
In matrimonial cases, their
baptism is presumed valid.
In cases of baptism of those
desiring to become Catholic, their
baptism is considered doubtful
but nevertheless, permits conditional
baptism.*

For information about other churches or communions not listed above, please contact the Chancery.

Taken from Pastoral Companion; John M. Huels, O.S.M., Franciscan Press 1995, Ch.15, page 342