

Diocese of St. Augustine Supplement to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

Introduction. The National Statutes for the Catechumenate (hereafter, National Statutes) are particular law for all dioceses in the United States. Certain of those statutes are of particular importance and are summarized and/or supplemented as follows.

All provisions of the National Statutes, as well as the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (hereafter, the RCIA), as approved for use in the dioceses of the United States by United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, are to be followed in the administration of the RCIA process in the Diocese of St. Augustine.

Overview of the RCIA Process. See chart at enclosure 1 to this policy.

RCIA Program Categories of Persons. See chart at enclosure 2 to this policy.

Status of Baptisms and Confirmations Received in Other Christian Denominations. See enclosure 3.

Manner of Administering Conditional Baptism. When it is not able to be clearly established that a person has been baptized, or when it is uncertain that the baptism was a valid baptism, the person is to be conditionally baptized. Note that no. 37, RCIA, mandates that conditional baptisms are conducted privately. They are not to be publicly noted or integrated into any other parish liturgical celebrations.

Pre-Evangelization Inquiry Period. During the inquiry period prior to the Rite of Acceptance (Pre-Evangelization, nos. 36 - 40, RCIA) it is important that questions of inquirers be adequately addressed. This will require RCIA team members to be knowledgeable of the Church's teachings. In this regard, the Catechism of the Catholic Church should be considered as a resource for the catechist - team member, rather than as a text book for the inquirer.

Pre-Catechumenate Inquiry Interview Form. At enclosure 4 is the Inquiry Initial Interview Form to be used for all persons who are seeking entry into any parish RCIA process within this diocese. Stocks of this form should be reproduced as needed from enclosure 4.

Rites of Acceptance into the Catechumenate / Welcoming of Candidates for Full Communion.

Prior to the celebration of these rites:

1. the Initial Interview Form (encl. 4) must be completed for each catechumen and candidate for full communion, and
2. questions about the canonical status of any current and/or prior marriages should have been identified and addressed.

If the formal annulment process will be necessary to resolve any irregular marriage situations which would preclude full initiation, this should already be well under way. Note that a formal annulment case may take as much as one year to process once the tribunal has received all of the required documentation. RCIA participants must be informed of this early on in order to prevent disappointment and misunderstanding.

The precise form of the Rites of Acceptance / Welcoming will be determined by the composition of the particular RCIA group. If all are unbaptized refer to nos. 41 - 68 in the RCIA (First Step, Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens). If all are already baptized in non-Catholic Churches or ecclesial communities, refer to nos. 400 - 433 in the RCIA (Preparation of Uncatechized Adults for Confirmation and Eucharist). If the group includes a combination of unbaptized and baptized, refer to nos. 505 - 529 in the RCIA (Celebration of the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens & the Rite of Welcoming Baptized, etc.).

Prior to the actual celebration of the Rite of Acceptance the RCIA coordinator should explain to the participants what will be taking place, as well as the significance of the various elements of the rite.

The Rite of Acceptance is made more meaningful when it is mutually experienced by the RCIA participants as well as by the parish community. An effective way to foster this is by having the inquirers spread throughout the church (in aisle seats) and prepared to answer "with full voice" at the appropriate time in the rite. Further, the participants' dismissal from the assembly is more significant for all concerned once the parish community has experienced the dialogue and the presentations of Bibles and crosses which accompany the rite.

Once the Rite of Acceptance / Welcoming has been celebrated there exists a mutual bond between the Church and the participant; this bond carries with it certain rights and responsibilities as explained in no. 47, RCIA.

Rite of Acceptance - Parish Records. It is very important that a parish record be kept of those who have participated in the Rite of Acceptance. The name of each person taking part in the rite, the date of the rite, place of the rite, and the person's sponsor should be recorded in a parish register or other official parish record. As the Rite of Acceptance is not repeated, this information will be important if a participant moves from the area or chooses to drop out of the RCIA program for a period of time. See no. 46, RCIA.

Rites of Sending Forth and Election. It is the policy of the Diocese of St. Augustine that the Rite of Sending Forth be celebrated in the parish community prior to the celebration of the Rite of Election at the cathedral. The celebration of this rite at the parish is very important, as the Rite of Election builds upon the Rite of Sending Forth.

RCIA participants who are in need of annulments to resolve marriage issues must at least have received an affirmative decision from a tribunal of first instance in order to participate in the Rites of Sending Forth and Election.

Regarding the Rite of Sending Forth, if there are only catechumens in a particular parish program nos. 106 - 117 of the RCIA (Sending of the Catechumens for Election) is to be used. If a parish program has only candidates for full communion nos. 434 - 445 in the RCIA (Rite of Sending the Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop & for the Call to Continuing Conversion) is to be used. If there are both catechumens and candidates for full communion in the parish program nos. 530 - 546 (Parish Celebration for Sending Catechumens for Election & Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop) is to be used.

In the Diocese of St. Augustine both catechumens and candidates for reception into full communion are to sign the Book of the Elect in the parish. Please note, however, that the distinction between these two groups must be clearly indicated in the Book of the Elect. Any children participating in the RCIA process are also included in the Rite of Election and sign the Book of the Elect.

Catechumens and candidates need only sign their names in the Book of the Elect; no other information need be included. Accordingly, the Book of the Elect format strongly preferred in this diocese is one which provides only one line for a signature.

Because of the large numbers of RCIA participants, the dialogue with sponsors and participants during the celebration of the Rite of Election at the cathedral is formal rather than spontaneous. Sponsors and RCIA participants are addressed by group, and they answer in groups.

Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age. Catechetical age is considered to be the age of reason, which in turn is presumed to be seven years old. Unbaptized children of catechetical age are to take part in an extended catechumenate process unless exceptional circumstances warrant the use of an abbreviated catechumenate (see nos. 331 - 332, RCIA). Once the period of catechesis has been completed, such children are to be fully initiated in one celebration. Delaying Confirmation and First Eucharist until a later date is forbidden.

All Baptized Children of Catechetical Age--- But Uncatechized. All children baptized as infants but who have not been instructed in the Catholic faith, should be placed in the parish RCIA process. These children should also be enrolled in a parish religious education program or parish school. The period of the catechumenate for children should follow the diocesan norm of two years prior to the reception of the sacraments. In the Rite of Christian Initiation, the Sacrament of Confirmation precedes the reception of First Eucharist. The ritual states that these are to be received during a single ceremony and in this order. If the child was baptized Catholic and the priest lacks the faculty to confirm, the priest must seek faculty from the diocesan bishop prior to administering the Sacrament. (*National Statutes for the Catechumenate #18-19, 28-29 and Canon 884.1*) (Bishop Estévez--- August, 2011)

Time for Receiving Candidates into Full Communion. The National Statutes express a strong preference that candidates for reception into full communion should not be received into full communion at the Easter Vigil. Rather, the reception of persons into full communion should ordinarily occur sometime during the Easter Season at a Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. See no. 33, RCIA. Accordingly, it is the policy of this diocese that this preference of the National Statutes be honored unless there are exceptional reasons for not doing so.

When baptized persons are received into full communion at the Easter Vigil the critical distinction between catechumens and those already baptized, albeit in another ecclesial community, is blurred. Additionally, this practice has resulted in unduly lengthy Easter Vigil liturgies.

It should be noted that the Rite of Reception into Full Communion can be celebrated at other times during the year. The timing of reception into full communion should be determined "according to the individual case," and the extent to which the baptized person has "led a Christian life" and has been "appropriately catechized."

Thus, those who have lived a Christian lifestyle and only need instruction in Catholic traditions and a period of time to adjust within a Catholic parish community "should not be asked to undergo a full program...." Nos. 30 and 31, RCIA.

Ministers of Confirmation. As noted above (**Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age**), when a child of catechetical age (7 to 14) is baptized after a period of catechesis has been completed, the child is to be fully initiated in one celebration. Delaying Confirmation and First Eucharist until a later date is forbidden. In this case the minister of Confirmation is the priest who baptizes the child.

Similarly, baptized adults and baptized children of catechetical age who are received into full communion are to receive Confirmation and First Communion at the time of their reception into full communion. The minister of Confirmation is the priest who receives the person into full communion. This priest - and only this particular priest - has the faculty to confirm the person he receives into full communion by the law itself. This faculty must be used; Confirmation may not be put off until another time.

Parish Record Keeping. In the Diocese of St. Augustine both the baptism of catechumens and the reception of candidates into full communion are recorded in the appropriate parish baptismal register. In the case of those received into full communion, the place of their non-Catholic baptism should be noted in the baptismal register along with the place and date of their profession of faith. Appropriate entries must also be made in the parish confirmation and first Eucharist registers for both catechumens and those received into full communion.

This is a compilation of policies previously approved or affirmed by bishops between 1993 and 2011.

Enclosures to Diocesan RCIA Policy.

Four enclosures follow:

1. RCIA Process Overview
2. RCIA Categories of Persons
3. Status of Baptisms and Confirmations in Non-Catholic Churches, Ecclesial Communities
4. RCIA Inquiry / Initial Interview Form (English and Spanish)

Enclosure 1 – RCIA Process Overview

	1 st PERIOD	1 st STAGE	2 nd PERIOD	2 nd STAGE	3 rd PERIOD	3 rd STAGE	4 th PERIOD
	Pre-Catechumenate Inquiry	Entrance Into Catechumenate	Catechumenate	Discernment And Call	Purification And Enlightenment	Sacraments Of Initiation	Mystagogia
TIME	Unlimited		One to a few years		Lent	Easter Vigil	Paschal Time
CONTENT	Time to build trust, share personal stories and questions of meaning. Time to proclaim message of salvation and foster initial conversion.	First welcome into household of the Church.	Time to deepen faith / conversion within the living community through catechesis, fellowship, prayer. Introduction to apostolic life.	Admission to those elected for initiation.	Spiritual direction. Preparation for Easter sacraments. Time of recollection. Making use of lectionary and sacramentary.	Full initiation into Church.	Deepening of sacramental life with emphasis on Gospel, Eucharist and works of charity.
NAME	Inquirers		Catechumens		Elect		Neophytes
AIM	Awakening of faith		Deepening initial conversion and passing on of Church Tradition.		Eliminate what is weak and sinful. Affirm what is holy.		Celebration of faith and sharing of faith in ministries.
rites	No specific rites or prayer suggested.	Rite of Acceptance into the Catechumenate	Celebrations of Word; minor exorcisms and blessings. (Optional: Presentation of Creed and Lord's Prayer; other minor rites)	Rite of Sending Forth, Rite of Election	Scrutinies and Exorcisms. Presentation of Creed and Lord's Prayer. Pre-Vigil rites.		Sunday Eucharist. Eucharist with bishop. Anniversary celebration. Festival time in parish.

Enclosure 2 – RCIA Categories of Persons

Unbaptized Adult Or Child Of Catechetical Age	Baptized In Non-Catholic Ecclesial Communities	Adult Or Child Of Catechetical Age Baptized <u>Non-Catholic</u> But Uncatechized	Adult Or Child Of Catechetical Age Baptized <u>Catholic</u> But Uncatechized
<p>- extended catechumenate required</p> <p>- full initiation (baptism, confirmation, first Eucharist)</p> <p>- single celebration of all of these sacraments at the Easter Vigil</p> <p>- priest who baptizes has the faculty to confirm granted by the law itself (Code of Canon Law); this faculty must be used - <u>confirmation and first Eucharist may never be postponed to a later date</u></p>	<p>- adjusted catechumenal experience</p> <p>- Profession of Faith</p> <p>- completion of initiation with confirmation and first Eucharist</p> <p>- single celebration of confirmation and first Eucharist in conjunction with profession of faith (may be at Easter Vigil, but normally more appropriate during a Sunday Mass in Easter Season)</p> <p>- priest who receives person into full communion has the faculty to confirm granted by the law itself (Code of Canon Law); this faculty must be used - <u>confirmation and first Eucharist may never be postponed to a later date</u></p>	<p>- extended catechumenate required</p> <p>- Profession of Faith</p> <p>- completion of initiation with confirmation and first Eucharist</p> <p>- single celebration of confirmation & first Eucharist in conjunction with profession of faith (may be at Easter Vigil, but normally more appropriate during a Sunday Mass in Easter Season)</p> <p>- journey similar to that of the catechumen</p> <p>- priest who receives person into full communion has the faculty to confirm granted by the law itself (Code of Canon Law); this faculty must be used - <u>confirmation and first Eucharist may never be postponed to a later date</u></p>	<p>- extended catechumenate required</p> <p>- clear distinction must be made between the uncatechized Catholic and the returning non-practicing Catholic</p> <p>- NOTE: confirmation is reserved to the bishop for a baptized Catholic who has never practiced any faith; the faculty to confirm such a person must be obtained from the bishop.</p> <p><u>Exceptions</u> (no. 28, National Statutes) - priest may confirm:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In case of readmission to communion of a Catholic who has been apostate, and, 2. In case of those baptized Catholic but raised in non-Catholic faith through no fault of their own

Enclosure 3 – Status of Baptisms and Confirmations in Non-Catholic Churches and Ecclesial Communities

Baptisms Considered Valid. Baptisms in the following non-Catholic ecclesial communities are presumed valid unless evidence to the contrary appears:

African Methodist Episcopal, Amish (including Mennonites), Anglican (Episcopalian and Church of England), Assembly of God, Baptist, Evangelical United Brethren, Church of the Brethren (formerly called Dunkers), Church of God, Congregational Church, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Evangelical Churches, Lutheran Church, Methodist Church, Liberal Catholic Church, Church of the Nazarene, Polish National Catholic Church, Presbyterian Church, Reformed Churches, Seventh Day Adventist, and United Church of Christ.

Baptisms in all Orthodox Churches are presumed valid.

Baptisms Considered Invalid. Baptisms in the following non-Catholic ecclesial communities are presumed invalid and persons from these ecclesial communities should be considered catechumens:

Apostolic Church, Bohemian Free Thinkers, Christian Science, Church of Divine Science, Quakers, Universalists, Unitarians, Salvation Army, Pentecostal Churches, Peoples' Church of Chicago (Dr. Preston Bradley), Christadelphians, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons), Radio Church of God, and the Holy Order of Mans.

Baptisms in the Philippine Independent Church (a.k.a. Iglesia Filipina Independiente) may be valid, but each baptism must be inquired into on a case by case basis to assure validity.

Additionally, any baptism in any church or ecclesial community not administered using the Trinitarian formula (in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), accompanied by the pouring of, or immersion in water, is presumed invalid.

Confirmations Considered Valid. Confirmations (also known as chrismation) administered in all Orthodox Churches (administered to infants at the time of baptism) are always considered valid. Candidates for reception into full communion from Orthodox Churches **may not** be re-confirmed.

Confirmations Considered Invalid. All confirmations administered in any Christian denomination other than an Orthodox Church are presumed invalid. Baptized Christians received into full communion from any denomination other than the Orthodox Churches must, therefore, be confirmed. Though several non-Catholic ecclesial communities administer confirmation, notably Episcopalians and Lutherans, their confirmations are not considered valid as the orders of Episcopal and Lutheran ministers are invalid.

Questions. For questions about the validity of non-Catholic baptisms or confirmations contact the chancellor's office (904-262-3200, x. 135).

Enclosure 4 (Following two pages: English and Spanish) – RCIA Inquiry / Initial Interview Form
(Should be completed by parish RCIA coordinator, legibly)

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS

Inquiry – Initial Interview Form

(Confidentiality will be upheld at all times)

Name: _____ (Maiden Name if applicable): _____ Home Phone: _____

Mailing Address, City, State, Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: (city and state) _____ Baptized (yes/no) _____ If YES:

Church and Date of Baptism: _____ Location: _____

Father's Name: _____ Church Affiliation: _____

Mother's First & Maiden Name: _____ Church Affiliation: _____

Please check (√) all that apply to your circumstance:

- I am single I am divorced I was married in a church other than a Catholic Church
- I am engaged to be married I am divorced and remarried I was married in a civil service
- I am currently married I was married in the Catholic Church I have an annulment
- I am a widow I have been widowed and have remarried

Spouse's Name (Maiden name if applicable): _____ Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth (city and state): _____ Church Affiliation _____ Baptized(yes/no): _____

Has your spouse ever been married before?(yes/no) _____ If YES: Civil _____ Church _____

Do you have any children? (yes/no) _____ If yes, please list names, ages and whether they are baptized on the back of this sheet.

How did you first become interested in the RCIA? _____

For Office Use Only

RCIA Sponsor: _____ Contact Info: _____

Convalidation needed: _____ Annulment needed: _____ Paperwork started: _____

Rite of Acceptance/Welcome: _____ Rite of Election: _____ Reconciliation: _____ Baptism Certificate on file: _____

RITO DE INICIACION CRISTIANA PARA ADULTOS

Cuestionario –Formulario para la Entrevista Inicial

(Trataremos la información en confidencialidad, en todo momento)

Nombre: _____ (Apellido de soltera, si aplica): _____ Teléfono casa: _____

Dirección: _____ Correo electrónico: _____ Celular: _____

Fecha de Nacimiento: _____ Lugar de Nacimiento: (ciudad y estado) _____ Bautizado (Si/No) _____

Nombre de la Iglesia y Fecha de Bautismo: _____ Lugar: _____

Nombre del Padre: _____ Afiliación Religiosa: _____

Nombre de la Madre (use apellido de soltera): _____ Afiliación Religiosa: _____

Seleccione (✓) todas las que apliquen a su circunstancia:

____ Soltero/a ____ Divorciado/a ____ Estuve/estoy casado/a por una iglesia no Católica.

____ Estoy comprometido/a ____ Divorciado/a, casado/a en segundas nupcias ____ Estuve/estoy casado/a en ceremonia civil

____ Casado/a ____ Estuve/estoy casado/a por la Iglesia Católica ____ Tuve una anulación

____ Viudo/a ____ Viudo/a, casado/a en segundas nupcias

Nombre de Conyugue (Apellido de soltera si aplica): _____ Fecha de Nacimiento: _____

Lugar de Nacimiento (ciudad y estado): _____ Afiliación Religiosa _____ Bautizado/a (Si/No): _____

¿Ha tenido su conyugue matrimonios previos al actual?(Si/No) _____ Seleccione la que aplique: Civil _____ Iglesia _____

¿Tiene hijos? (Si/No) _____ Escriba los nombres, edades y si han sido bautizados, en la parte de atrás de esta hoja.

¿Cómo usted se interesó en el RICA? _____

Sólo para uso de la oficina

Esponsor del RICA: _____ Información de Contacto: _____

Necesita Convalidación: _____ Necesita anulación: _____ Comenzó los formularios: _____

Rito de Aceptación/Bienvenida: _____ Rito de Elección: _____ Reconciliación: _____ Entregó Certificado de Bautismo: _____