

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

Introduction. *The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (USCCB, 1988) and the National Statutes for the Catechumenate (hereafter called NSC) contained within it are particular law for all dioceses in the United States. As such, it is mandatory in the administration of the RCIA process in the Diocese of St. Augustine. This document expounds more fully on these laws.

The RCIA process is for:

Unbaptized adults and children over the age of reason

Baptized, but uncatechized adults and children over the age of reason

The RCIA process is not for:

Fully initiated adults and children returning to the Catholic faith

Catholics who have not been confirmed.

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. All avenues must be exhausted in searching for evidence and testimony. (Canon 869) Note that NCS #37, mandates that conditional baptisms are conducted privately. They are not to be publically noted or integrated into any other parish liturgical celebrations. The Conditional Baptism can be administered as soon as it has been determined that the uncertainty of baptism has been firmly established.

Pre-Evangelization Inquiry Period. During the inquiry period prior to the Rite of Acceptance (Pre-Evangelization, RCIA #36 – 40) it is important that questions of inquirers be adequately addressed. This will require RCIA team members to be knowledgeable of the Church's teachings and have completed formation in a standardized program. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* should be considered as a resource for the catechist - team member, but not a textbook 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 the diocese. A Spanish version is included. These are interview forms and so these should be filled out in dialogue with the potential catechumen or candidate. Candidates should not fill out the form as an application.

If There is a Need for Combining Programs between Parishes

Where it is pastorally appropriate, a local (inter-parish) form of catechetical sessions

during the catechumenate period may be offered. This could be true in smaller parishes or to assist a community whose first language is not English. In such cases, the person's domicile parish is responsible for the welcome, pastoral care, and the celebration of the rites for its community. The recording of sacraments is also the role of the domicile parish.

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 have been completed for each catechumen and candidate for full communion, and
2. questions about the canonical status of any prior marriages should have been identified and addressed. If a formal annulment process will be necessary to resolve any irregular marriage situations which would preclude full initiation, this should already have been 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 in the process to prevent disappointment and misunderstanding.
3. Sponsors are persons who walk the faith journey with the catechumen or candidate. They are from the parish community and are known to meet the qualifications found in Canons 872-874. Sponsors should be assigned or named early in the RCIA process and certainly before the Rite of Acceptance/Welcoming of Candidates for Full Communion.

The precise form of the Rites of Acceptance / Welcoming will be determined by the composition of the particular RCIA group.

- If all people are unbaptized refer to RCIA #41 - 68
- If all people are already baptized in non-Catholic Churches or ecclesial communities, refer to # RCIA 400 - 433
- If the group includes a combination of unbaptized and baptized people, refer to RCIA #505 - 529

These Rites may also be celebrated homogeneously with unbaptized at one celebration, those baptized Catholic at another, and those baptized in another faith tradition at a third. Care should be taken that those who have traveled a faith journey together over a year may want to celebrate initiation together.

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

Once the Rite of Acceptance /Rite of Welcoming has been celebrated, there exists a mutual bond between the Church and the participant; this bond carries with it certain rights and responsibilities explained in RCIA # 47.

Rite of Acceptance (Catechumens) - Parish Records. Each parish must have a permanent register wherein they record the following:

- the name of each person taking part in the Rite
- the date of the Rite
- place of the Rite
- the person's sponsor.

The Rite of Acceptance is not repeated and so 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. (RCIA #46) A person who has celebrated the Rite of Acceptance has certain rights within the Church as members of the household. (RCIA #47)

The Catechumenate. The period of the catechumenate for the unbaptized is at least one liturgical year which is considered to be from one Lent through Lent of the following year. Suitable catechesis consists of: introduction to the dogmas and precepts of the faith, familiarity with the Christian way of life, experiences with the liturgical life of the Church, and an introduction to the missionary activity of the Church. (RCIA #75) The period of formation for the baptized has these same 4 main focuses, but depending on circumstances, may be shorter in length.

Rites of Sending Forth, Rite of Election, Call to Continuing Conversion. 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/Call to Continuing Conversion for all those involved in a full RCIA process. The celebration of this Rite at the parish is very important, as the Rite of Election celebrated at the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Augustine 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 the tribunal that their annulment will be affirmative and in prior to Holy Week in order to participate in the Rites of Sending Forth and Rite of Election/Call to Continuing Conversion.

Regarding the Rite of Sending Forth:

- if there are only catechumens in a particular parish program # 106 - 117 of the RCIA is to be used.
- if a parish program has only candidates for full communion #434 - 445 in the RCIA) is to be used.
- if there are both catechumens and candidates for full communion in the parish program # 530 - 546 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 during the Rite of Sending in the parish. Please note, however, that the distinction between these two groups must be clearly indicated in the Book of the Elect. All adults and children, including those baptized but uncatechized Catholics, participating in the RCIA process are also included in the Rite of Election/Call to Continuing Conversion and they, too, 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.

During the Rite of Election, RCIA catechumens, candidates and sponsors are addressed by group, and they answer by group.

Unbaptized Children of Catechetical Age. Children who have reached the use of reason, determined to be around age seven, are considered, for the purposes of initiation, to be adults (Canon 852:1, NSC #18-19) 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 # 331 - 332, RCIA). Once the period of catechesis has been completed, such children are to be fully initiated in one celebration. It is forbidden to delay Confirmation and First Eucharist until a later date. (Canon 866)

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 into a parish religious education program or parish school. Regular gatherings with parents and the children should occur that introduce them to the Mass as well as concepts outlined in RCIA paragraph 75. The number of these gatherings depends on the time deemed necessary by the RCIA team. The period of the catechumenate for children follows the diocesan norm of a minimum of two years of preparation 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. (NSC#18-19, 28-29 and Canon 884.1)

Time for Receiving Candidates into Full Communion. The reception of a candidate or candidates into full communion of the Church ordinarily takes place at either the Easter Vigil utilizing the combined ritual (#566-594) or at a Sunday Eucharist wherein the faith community is present. (#487-498) The RCIA ritual gives sound direction as to what might be appropriate for the groups. Of importance are the people being initiated and their desires. (#562-565), as well as ecumenical issues, attentiveness and local conditions. The ritual calls for pastoral sensitivity to the journey that the candidates have made with the catechumens. If the combined ritual is used at the Easter Vigil, care must be taken to honor the distinction between the baptized and the unbaptized.

The Rite of Reception into Full Communion can be celebrated throughout the liturgical year whenever an individual is deemed ready. 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...." (NCS #30-31) These candidates are brought in at a Sunday celebration of the Mass. Those not completing a full RCIA process are not presented to the Bishop at the Rite of Election/Call to Continuing Conversion.

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. It is forbidden to delay Confirmation and First Eucharist until a later date. 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 cannot be delayed until another time. The Bishop, by virtue of his office, reserves the right to confirm all baptized Catholics himself and so a pastor who has baptized Catholics in his RCIA process needs to request delegation to confirm. The Office of Christian Formation provides a form letter for this.

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.

Approved
Bishop Felipe J. Estevez, August 30, 2017

Enclosures to Diocesan RCIA Policy.

Three enclosures follow:

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 & Call	Purification & 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 & questions of meaning. Time to proclaim message of salvation & 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 & sacramentary.	Full initiation into Church.	Deepening of sacramental life with emphasis on gospel, Eucharist & works of charity.
NAME	Inquirers		Catechumens		Elect		Neophytes
AIM	Awakening of faith		Deepening initial conversion & passing on of Church Tradition.		Eliminate what is weak & sinful. Affirm what is holy.		Celebration of faith & sharing of faith in ministries.
rites	No specific rites or prayer suggested.	Rite of Acceptance into the Catechumenate	Celebrations of Word; minor exorcisms & blessings. (Optional: Presentation of Creed & Lord's Prayer; other minor rites)	Rite of Sending Forth, Rite of Election	Scrutinies & Exorcisms. Presentation of Creed & 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extended catechumenate required - full initiation (baptism, confirmation, first Eucharist) - single celebration of all of these sacraments at the Easter Vigil - priest who baptizes has the faculty to confirm granted by the law itself (Code of Canon Law); this faculty must be used - confirmation & first Eucharist <u>may never be postponed</u> to a later date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - adjusted catechumenal experience - Profession of Faith - completion of initiation with confirmation and First Eucharist - 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) - 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 - confirmation & first Eucharist <u>may never be postponed</u> to a later date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extended catechumenate required - Profession of Faith - completion of initiation with confirmation and first Eucharist - 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) - journey similar to that of the catechumen - 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 - confirmation & first Eucharist <u>may never be postponed</u> to a later date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extended catechumenate required - clear distinction must be made between the uncatechized Catholic & the returning non-practicing Catholic - 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. <u>Exceptions</u> (no. 28, National Statutes) - priest may confirm: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In case of readmission to communion of a Catholic who has been apostate from the faith, & 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 to be Valid. Baptisms in the following non-Catholic ecclesial communities are presumed to be 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 to be valid.

Baptisms Considered to be Invalid. Baptisms in the following non-Catholic ecclesial communities are presumed to be invalid and persons from these ecclesial communities should be considered to be 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 to be 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 to be 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 to be 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, x135).

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS Inquiry – Initial Interview Form

(Confidentiality will be upheld at all times)

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

Home Address: _____ 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 Total number of marriages _____

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 INICIACIÓN CRISTIANA PARA ADULTOS Cuestionario – Formulario para Entrevista Inicial
(Información Confidencial)

Nombre: _____ (Nombre de pila si aplica): _____ Teléfono casa: _____

Dirección, Ciudad, Estado, Zip: _____

E-mail _____ Teléfono Celular: _____

Fecha de nacimiento: _____ Lugar de nacimiento:(ciudad y estado) _____ Bautizado (si/no) ___ si SÍ:

Iglesia y fecha del bautismo: _____ Ubicación: _____

Nombre del padre: _____ Afiliación de iglesia: _____

Nombre y apellido de la madre: _____ Afiliación de iglesia: _____

Marque por favor (√) todos los que se apliquen a su circunstancia:

_____ soltero(a) _____ divorciado(a) _____ fui casado(a) en una iglesia católica _____ iglesia no católica

_____ comprometido(a) para casarme _____ divorciado(a) vuelto a casar _____ fui casado(a) en una ceremonia civil

_____ casado(a) _____ fui casado(a) en la iglesia Católica _____ tengo una anulación

_____ viudo(a) _____ soy viudo(a) y vuelto a casar _____ numero de matrimonios

Nombre del esposo (apellido de soltera si es aplicable): _____ Fecha de nacimiento: _____

Lugar del nacimiento (ciudad y estado): _____ Afiliación de iglesia _____ Bautizado (si/no): _____

¿Su esposo(a) ha sido casado(a) antes? (si/no) _____ SÍ: Civil _____ Iglesia _____

¿Usted tiene niños? _____ (si/no) Si la respuesta es SI, enumere, por favor los nombres, las edades y si están bautizados las fechas. Anotarlos detrás de esta hoja.

¿Inicialmente, cómo usted se enteró del programa RCIA? _____

Para uso de la oficina solamente

Patrocinador de RCIA: _____ Información Contacto: _____

Requiere Validación _____ Necesita Anulación: _____ Papeleo comenzado: _____

Rito de la aceptación / bienvenida: _____ Rito de la elección: _____ Reconciliación: _____ Certificado de Bautismo en archivo: _____