

# INITIATION 2016

Find God. Love Christ.  
*Become Catholic.*



St. Anthony  
*of Padua*  
CATHOLIC PARISH

Handbook of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults  
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church

# WELCOME TO INTIATION 2016!

We are excited to walk with you on this journey of faith. We believe that God has led you here at this time and we are thankful for the privilege of being a part of it. The upcoming months will be spent growing spiritually with God, connecting relationally with one another, and learning what it means to follow Christ. This handbook will help you navigate the *Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults* (RCIA).

Even though this is mapped out on calendars and classrooms, we know this is a deeply personal journey. The RCIA Ministry Team is here to help you out, answer your questions, pray and support you every step of the way. Please do not hesitate to reach out and get in touch with any of us throughout this journey.

## EXPECTATIONS

### THURSDAY CLASSES

Classes are held weekly on Thursday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00pm. These cover a range of topics with different presenters in order to give you a big picture view of the Catholic Church and her teachings. Class starts promptly at 7:00pm, so please plan to show up a little bit early.

### MASS and BOW

You will also attend the Sunday 9:00am Mass as a class. After the homily, the whole class will leave Mass and go to *Breaking Open the Word* (BOW). BOW takes you through the Scripture readings for the Mass through study and life application. This is an integral part of the process and is required for those in the RCIA.

### ABSENCE

We understand that life happens and maybe you will miss a session. All we ask is that you inform us ahead of time, if possible, and then do a make-up session that we can arrange. Email Nadine Romero at [pingersoll@staoptw.org](mailto:pingersoll@staoptw.org) when an absence occurs.

### GODPARENTS AND SPONSORS

This is someone (not a parent!) who is an example of a great Catholic either in your life or in our parish. This is someone who lives their baptismal vows and is a disciple of Jesus Christ in the Catholic Church. They will stand with you through the process of becoming Catholic and encourage you to grow in your faith after you enter the Catholic Church.

### PAPERWORK

We need certain important documents from you, like birth certificates, baptismal records, and marriage certificates. Please make sure you are turning them in quickly. All documents can be emailed to Paige Ingersoll, faxed to our parish at [281-296-7238](tel:281-296-7238), or text a clear picture to me on my iPhone at 713-294-6258.

# GODPARENT OR SPONSOR

[www.STAOPTW.org/Your-RCIA-Sponsor](http://www.STAOPTW.org/Your-RCIA-Sponsor)

**A godparent** is a man or woman representing the Catholic Church for a catechumen that is entering the Church through Baptism, Confirmation and Communion.

**A Sponsor** is a man or woman that represents the Catholic Church to a candidate who already received Christian baptism and is now entering the Church through making a Profession of Faith, receiving Confirmation and Communion.

## WHO CAN BE A GODPARENT or CONFIRMATION SPONSOR?

- Must be Catholic: baptized, confirmed, and receive Communion in the Catholic Church
- Cannot be your parent or guardian
- Must live a life consistent with their baptismal vows, i.e. follow Jesus

This means that they must be practicing the faith, cannot be engaging in notorious sin, and cannot have taken public positions in opposition to Catholic faith or morals. If a godparent or sponsor is married, their marriage must be recognized by the Catholic Church. A person who is not Catholic, or who is not living in a way consistent with the faith, obviously cannot provide the example that is needed for this role.

# SAINT NAME

[www.STAOPTW.org/InitiationSaint](http://www.STAOPTW.org/InitiationSaint)

All people entering the Church through the sacraments of baptism and/or confirmation are to take a Saint's name that is special to them and relevant to their life. Some people choose the name of a saint that is a patron of a particular activity or career, like a patron saint of firefighters, or soldiers, artists, or musicians. There is a special bond between you and your chosen saint.

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith" (Hebrews, 12:1).*

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**If you're a candidate, you have both options.**

**If you're a catechumen, you have the second option only.**

**Option 1:** Choose your present, baptismal name (your first name or middle name only if it is a Saint name). Choosing your Baptismal name demonstrates that you feel there has been a continual growth in your faith and that you now wish to make this formal through Confirmation and First Eucharist.

**Option 2:** Choose a saint's name that symbolizes a new beginning in your faith life and a connection to that particular saint. The taking of a new name symbolizes this commitment to follow Christ. This new name would be used after your present middle name and before your family name.

**Research:** All you need to do is Google: **Catholic Saint Names** and **Catholic Patron Saints** and a ton of resources will come up to help you select the right one.

# RCIA CALENDAR

## INITIATION 2015

### MONTH OF JULY

23 Pre-Cat #1 Inquiry  
30 Pre-Cat #2 Inquiry

### MONTH OF AUGUST

06 Pre-Cat #3 Inquiry  
13 Pre-Cat #4 Inquiry  
20 Pre-Cat #5 Inquiry  
27 Pre-Cat #6 Inquiry

### MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

03 Pre-Cat #7 Inquiry  
10 Pre-Cat #8 Inquiry  
**13 Mass Rite of Acceptance at 9:00AM Mass and B.O.W.**  
17 Cat #1 Jesus Christ: The Starting Point  
24 Cat #2 Jesus Christ: Fully Human and Fully Divine

### MONTH OF OCTOBER

01 Cat #3 Jesus Fully Reveals God to Man  
08 Cat #4 Jesus Embraces the Cross  
15 Cat #5 Jesus Conquers Death  
22 Cat #6 Beriyth: God's Covenant Plan of Salvation  
29 Cat#7 Qahal: The Movement of the People of God

### MONTH OF NOVEMBER

05 Cat #8 Cephas: Jesus Builds His Church  
12 Cat #9 Koinonia: Community Life in the Church  
19 Cat #10 Mysterium: The Sacramental Life  
**26 No Class Thanksgiving**

### MONTH OF DECEMBER

03 Cat #11 Love Poured into our hearts: A Theology of Grace  
10 Cat #12 For Theirs is the Kingdom: Beatitudes and Morality  
17 Cat #13 Love God and Neighbor: Commandment Living  
**24 No Class Christmas Break**

### **BREAKING OPEN THE WORD**

*BOW* starts on September 13 at the 9:00am Mass. All of the Candidates and Catechumens will be dismissed for *BOW* each Sunday at the 9AM Mass *after the homily*. This is as much a requirement as the Thursday evening classes. *BOW* ends at the conclusion of the 9AM Mass.



# RCIA CALENDAR

## INITIATION 2015

### MONTH OF JANUARY

02	No Class	Christmas Break
07	Cat #14	The Least, My Brothers: Duties of Social Justice
14	Cat #15	The Two Become One Flesh: the Theology of the Body
21	Cat #16	Personal Prayer in the Christian Life
28	Cat #17	The Our Father in Christian Prayer

### MONTH OF FEBRUARY

04	Cat #18	Mary and the Communion of Saints
11	Cat #19	Your Life in the Spirit
13	<b>Mass: Rite of Sending at the 5PM Mass</b>	
14	<b>Mass: Rite of Election with the Cardinal</b>	
18	P&E #1	Session 01
25	P&E #2	Session 02
28	<b>Mass: First Scrutiny at 9AM Mass (Catechumens <i>must</i> attend)</b>	

### MONTH OF MARCH

03	P&E #3	Session 03
06	<b>Mass: Second Scrutiny at 11AM Mass (Catechumens <i>must</i> attend)</b>	
10	P&E #4	Session 04
13	<b>Mass: Third Scrutiny at 6PM Mass (Catechumens <i>must</i> attend)</b>	
17	P&E #4	<b>SPRING BREAK – SymbolonCatholic.org Class</b>
19	Retreat	<b>Day of Prayer and Reconciliation for baptized</b>
26	Rehearsal in Church, 10:00AM (Catechumens only) <b>Easter Vigil Mass, Catechumens enter the Church, 8:00PM</b>	
31	Candidate Rehearsal for Rite of Reception, 7:00pm	

### MONTH OF APRIL

03	<b>Mass: Candidates enter the Church, 11:00AM Mass</b>	
07	Myst #1	Baptism: True Regeneration in the Spirit
14	Myst #2	Confirmation: Born in the Spirit
21	Myst #3	Eucharist: Prefigured in the OT
28	Myst #4	Eucharist: Sign of the New Covenant

### MONTH OF MAY

05	Mystagogy #5 Reconciliation: The Practice of Repentance	
12	Closing party and giving of certificates	

## **Period of Inquiry (Pre-Catechumenate): discover and learn**

In this first period of the RCIA journey, many who come are discerning whether they truly want to enter into communion with the Catholic Church. How someone comes to consider joining the Church is unique to each individual. Everyone is given the opportunity and time to tell their own stories. There is never any pressure put on anyone to continue; rather, all are simply invited to "Come and see." Foundational instruction about the Catholic faith is given at the weekly sessions and there is always opportunity for all participants to ask questions.

**RITUAL:** The Pre-catechumenate concludes with the Rite of Acceptance for the Catechumens and the Rite of Welcoming for the Candidates.

## **Catechumenate: formation and learning**

Catechumenate means "time of serious study". This period is the first step in commitment leading to full membership in the Catholic Church and is the longest of the four phases. This is an apprenticeship in Christian discipleship through learning the doctrines of the Church, service, liturgical worship, prayer, and community life. Each catechumen and candidate has a sponsor who accompanies him/her during the RCIA process. Sponsors can be someone you have chosen, or someone from our parish that we can find for you. All catechumens and candidates attend the 9:00am Mass on Sundays for only the Liturgy of the Word. Before the Liturgy of the Eucharist, they are "dismissed" with a priestly blessing to break open the Word with the RCIA team. This is a time of prayer, study and personal application of God's Word.

**RITUAL:** The Catechumenate concludes with the Rite of Sending from St. Anthony's and the Rite of Election at an Archdiocesan site with the Archbishop that Sunday afternoon.

## **Purification & Enlightenment: preparing the heart**

This final period of preparation, which encompasses six weeks of Lent, is an intense time of prayer, fasting and reflection. The Elect undertake a series of self-examinations called the Scrutinies and they participate in special purification rites or Exorcisms. These self-examinations and rites strengthen them in grace and open their hearts to receive God's unconditional love. Included in this phase are spiritual retreats, and smaller rituals intended to support and assist each person. This phase occurs during Lent.

**RITUAL:** For those who are not Baptized, they will receive all three Sacraments of Initiation - Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist- on Easter Vigil. For those baptized outside of the Catholic faith, they will do a Profession of Faith and receive Confirmation and the Eucharist. For those who were baptized Catholic but never received the other sacraments, they will receive Confirmation and the Eucharist.

## **Mystagogia: the journey of the neophyte**

The Mystagogia phase is meant to bring the neophyte into the life of the parish community. It is a time of reflection, celebration, and active participation in the life and mission of the Church. Here at St. Anthony's, it is three sessions long.

# Marriage: Christ's Teaching and Its Implications

Jesus Christ's vision of marriage was a revolutionary concept in the ancient world. He shattered the widespread practices of polygamy and also of divorce and remarriage, which were both common in the Roman Empire and in Judaism in the time of Christ.

*Some Pharisees approached him, and tested him, saying, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause whatever?" He said in reply, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate."*

Jesus' vision of marriage is that of a lifelong covenant. The vows exchanged at most weddings—religious or not—in the Western world were forever changed by his teachings. Hence we say the words "till death do you part", meaning that nothing other than the death can end a marriage.

## IMPLICATIONS

### Marital Status

For those who are currently married, we will inquire into the marital history of *both spouses*, and into the current marriage at the time the vows were made.

### Divorce and Remarried

Individuals or couples who have one or more prior unsuccessful marriages between them, and are *currently re-married* will have any past/current marriages reviewed to determine if an ANNULMENT or CONVALIDATION is required prior to the person(s) advancing to the Rite of Election or Easter Vigil. This overview will occur at the initial interview.

### Engaged

All individuals seeking to marry in the Catholic Church, and in which one or both partners are seeking to become Catholic will have any prior marriages reviewed (of both partners). An engaged person that needs an annulment on a former unsuccessful marriage may not advance, nor their partner, to the Rite of Election or Easter Vigil unless a formal decree of nullity is granted by the Catholic Church.

## NEXT STEP

### Annulment

If you or your spouse are re-married, then we will need to start the process for the formal petition for an annulment. If you know you will need this, contact our clergy assistant, Carol Doutel, at [cdoutel@staoptw.org](mailto:cdoutel@staoptw.org) to set up a meeting time with a deacon who will help you along this process.

### Convalidation

If you or your spouse were baptized Catholic but *not* married in the Church, you will need a Convalidation. A Convalidation is a beautiful little ceremony whereupon you declare your wedding vows and the Church elevates your marriage to the level of a Sacrament. Contact Carol Doutel to arrange a meeting with our clergy to discuss Convalidations at [cdoutel@staoptw.org](mailto:cdoutel@staoptw.org).

For more information about annulments, head over to the great Catholic marriage resource "For Your Marriage" at: <http://www.foryourmarriage.org/catholic-marriage/church-teachings/annulments/>