

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF

#  SAINT ANTHONY OF PADUA CATHOLIC CHURCH

156 Maxwell Ave., Hightstown, NJ 08520. Tel. 609-448-0141

### THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

 **(RCIA)**

 ***OUR MISSION STATEMENT*** *is to inspire all to know and love Christ*

 *by inviting them to have a relationship with Him and to transform*

 *them into missionary disciples.*

 The head of the R.C.I.A. Ministry is the Pastor of the Parish**.** In addition to the Pastor, the Director is responsible for working with the Pastor and the Catechumenate team to see that the ministries of the Catechumenate are carried out and that the norms and directives of the Rite are observed. She/he arranges the team’s training and ongoing development, provide resources for the team, and serve as the contact person for the Diocese.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is not a Religious Education Program or Adult Faith Formation Program. It is a **PROCESS of conversion and transformation** filled with Liturgies and Rites for both non-Christians seeking to formally enter the Catholic Church and for those already baptized as Christians seeking to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. According to Canon Law, children who have attained the age of 7 and have not been baptized are to be included into the RCIA Process.

The RCIA Process is a spiritual journey made up of several Steps/Stages and each Step/Stage has its own instructions and functions. The actual training process depends on the individual’s personal background and knowledge of the Faith. Each individual is guided by the RCIA Team through the process according to his/her pace.

All of our materials are approved by the Diocese of Trenton and our speakers are very knowledgeable on the topics of the Roman Catholic Church. We practice a Year-Round Catechumenate, that is, we welcome new participants throughout the year. St. Anthony’s Parish has two RCIA Processes. One is in English and the other is in Spanish. The sessions are held every Sunday morning beginning in September of each year.

The Steps/Stages are:

First Step Inquiry Period (Pre-Catechumenate) - getting to know the faith

Second Step Catechumenate Period - focus on the formal instructions of the faith

Third Step Purification and Enlightenment - based on the examination of your life

Fourth Step Mystagogy – a period to reflect and to deepen your spiritual life

And within these Steps/Stages, we celebrate many **Rites**. These are:

A) **Rite of Acceptance** - those accepting the Word of God for the first time

 *Celebrated during the period of the first step within a Mass. When the Candidates are ready.*

B) **Rite of Welcoming** - welcoming those who have returned to the Church

 *Celebrated during the period of the first step within a Mass. When the Candidates are ready.*

C) **Rite of Sending** - sending catechumens to the Bishop for Election

 *Celebrated during the period of the second step within a Mass. When on the First Sunday of Lent.*

D) **Rite for the Call to Continuing Conversion** - for those who have returned

 *Celebrated during the period of the second step within a Mass. When on the First Sunday of Lent.*

E) **Rite of Election** - Catechumens are elected into the Catholic Church

 *Celebrated during the period of the second step within a Mass. When on the First Sunday of Lent.*

F) **Penitential Rite** - purification of the Baptized. For those already Baptized.

 *Celebrated during the period of the second step within a Mass. When Second Sunday of Lent.*

G) **Three Scrutinies** – a time for self-searching and repentance to uncover and heal

 *Celebrated during the period of the second step within a Mass. When on the Third, Fourth and Fifth Sundays of Lent.*

H) **Easter Vigil** – All three Sacraments of Initiation are received.

 *Celebrated during the period of the third step. When it is usually integrated into the Easter Vigil.*

I) **Confirmation ONLY** for adults may be celebrated on Pentecost Sunday.

*For further information please call: Rosemarie Constable – 609-448-0974 (English)*

 *Email:* *recangel12@aol.com*

 *Gloria Enriquez – 609-937-8026 (Español)*

 *Email:* *gloriaenriquez8@msn.com*

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