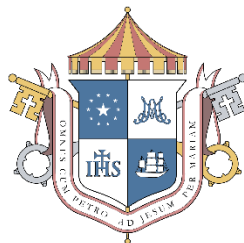


Basilica of Saint Mary
Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA)
Handbook
2022-2023



**THE BASILICA OF
SAINT MARY**
Founded 1795 - Alexandria, Virginia

PARISH CLERGY

Very. Rev. Edward Hathaway, Rector
Rev. Joseph Townsend, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Peter Clem, Parochial Vicar

PARISH OFFICE

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Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) Overview

RCIA Terms:

Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Eucharist

Inquirer: Anyone who is seeking to learn more about Christ and His Church.

Catechumen: After an inquirer participates in the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens, he/she becomes a 'Catechumen'. This is someone who has not been baptized and is preparing to receive the Three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist.

The Elect: Once catechumens participate in the Rite of Election they become "the Elect" because they have been chosen (elected) to enter into the final period of preparation for initiation, and called by the bishop, their shepherd, to the holy mysteries to be celebrated during the Easter season.

Candidates:

Candidate for Reception into Full Communion of the Catholic Church: After participating in the Rite of Welcoming, someone who has been baptized in another Christian tradition becomes a candidate for reception into full communion of the Catholic Church. He/she is preparing to make a Profession of Faith and receive Confirmation and first Holy Eucharist.

Candidate for Completion of the Sacraments of Initiation: This is someone who has been baptized Catholic but has not received catechesis and the other sacraments of initiation, and is thus preparing to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and first Holy Eucharist.

*the term "candidate" can also be used in its general sense to refer to anyone who is preparing to receive a sacrament (i.e. a Catechumen could be referred to as a candidate for the sacraments of initiation).

Following explanations taken from the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) - the Roman Ritual revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council and Published by Authority of Pope Paul VI.

General stages of RCIA for candidates/catechumens

1. Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate (a.k.a. the period of inquiry)
 - a. The general period of time when candidates are inquiring about the faith and when the Church evangelizes those who are seeking Christ. The precatechumenate is the period for hearing the first preaching of the Gospel (RCIA, 7).
 - b. In their own time, the candidate moves through the period of inquiry and then reaches a point of initial conversion and wishes to become Christian. They then participate in the Rite of Acceptance where they are accepted as catechumens by the Church. (RCIA, 6-7).
2. Period of the Catechumenate
 - a. Beginning with the Rite of Acceptance, this period is set aside for "thorough catechesis and for the rites belonging to this period". (RCIA, 7)
 - b. Once the catechumen moves through this period (depending on each catechumen's situation, the time spent in this period may vary) they participate in the Rite of Election which marks the end of the period of the catechumenate and the beginning of the period of purification and enlightenment which corresponds with Lent.
3. Period of Purification and Enlightenment
 - a. Ordinarily coinciding with the Lenten preparation for the Easter celebration and the sacraments of initiation, this period is "designed for a more intense spiritual preparation, which is assisted by the celebration of the scrutinies and presentations". (RCIA, 7)
 - b. After completing their spiritual preparation, the candidates then receive the sacraments of Christian initiation. (RCIA, 6)
4. Period of Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy
 - a. This period, after being initiated into the Church, is a period for "deepening the Christian experience, for spiritual growth, and for entering more fully into the life and unity of the community". (RCIA, 7)

Summary of Rites for Catechumens and Candidates:

(Generally held during a Sunday Mass at the Basilica of Saint Mary except for the Rite of Election/Call to Continuing Conversion. Please review the RCIA calendar available on our website, www.stmaryoldtown.org/apostolate/rcia)

Catechumens:

Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

- The unbaptized person is called an inquirer. The Gospel message is proclaimed.

Period of the Catechumenate

- Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens
- Minor Exorcism with Blessing and Anointing of the Catechumens

Period of Purification and Enlightenment

- Rite of Sending followed by Rite of Election (1st Sunday of Lent). Catechumens are called the Elect.
- 1st Scrutiny (3rd Sunday of Lent)
- Presentation of the Creed
- 2nd Scrutiny (4th Sunday of Lent)
- 3rd Scrutiny (5th Sunday of Lent)
- Presentation of the Lord's Prayer
- Preparation Rites on Holy Saturday: Ephphetha Rite, Recitation of the Creed, and Concluding Rites
- Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil Mass (Baptism, Confirmation, First Holy Eucharist)

Postbaptismal Catechesis/Mystagogy

- The newly initiated are called Neophytes.
- Pentecost generally closes the period of postbaptismal catechesis. The newly initiated makes his/her First Confession.
- The parish community and sponsors continue to pray for the Neophytes, encourages Mass attendance, and invites them to participate in church ministries, discipleship, evangelization, celebration of the sacraments.

Candidates:

Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

- The baptized person seeks further catechetical formation and conversion

Period of the Catechumenate

- Rite of Welcoming the Candidates

Period of Purification and Enlightenment

- Rite of Sending the Candidates for Recognition by the Bishop followed by Rite of Calling the Candidates to Continuing Conversion (1st Sunday of Lent)
- Penitential Rite (Scrutiny) (Second Sunday of Lent)
- Presentation of the Creed
- Presentation of the Lord's Prayer
- First Reconciliation
- Celebrations of the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil Mass (Profession of Faith, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist)

Postbaptismal Catechesis/Mystagogy

- Pentecost generally closes the period of postbaptismal catechesis.
- The parish community and sponsor continue to pray for the fully initiated, encourages Mass attendance, and invites them to discern participation in church ministries, discipleship, evangelization, celebration of the sacraments.

The following questions and answers are taken directly from the RCIA Leader's Manual - Copyright © 2007 Association for Catechumenal Ministry – and from the RCIA Roman Ritual when indicated.)

What is RCIA?

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is the process, established for the universal Church, for individuals to become Catholic and receive the sacraments of initiation – Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist. This initiation process also involves a parish community experiencing a renewal in faith as it prepares and welcomes new members into the Church. The Rite speaks of conversion as a “spiritual journey.” Centered on fostering a deep relationship with Jesus and the Church he founded, this journey takes place through distinct stages over a period of time suitable to bring about a thorough catechesis, significant experience of the parish community, and commitment to the liturgical and moral life of the Catholic faithful. The RCIA process is a restoration of the ancient catechumenate, arising within the first three centuries following the era of the apostles. It was the early Church’s way of Christianizing the pagan Roman Empire. The Second Vatican Council called for the restoration and use of this venerable and powerful method of initiation for the worldwide Church.

What is the RCIA Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens?

The Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens is for inquirers in the RCIA process who are preparing for their Baptism. They are now ready to publicly declare their intention to continue their journey toward becoming Catholics. At this Rite, they are asked to more fully embrace the Gospel message with the help of God, and are also signed with the Cross to show that they now belong to Christ, the Shepherd of souls. In this Rite, the parish community has the opportunity to more fully participate in and pray for those in the RCIA process. At Sunday Mass, some of the inquirers who are considering joining the Catholic Church are going through the Rite of Acceptance. This Rite places these catechumens in a formal relationship with the universal Church. By Church law, the Pope and all bishops are to pray for those who have gone through this Rite. We encourage all parishioners to pray for these souls as well, as they continue in the initiation process over the coming months, and to reach out to them as fellow members of the Household of the Faithful.

What is the RCIA Rite of Welcoming?

The Rite of Welcoming is for inquirers who have been previously baptized and are ready to publicly declare their intention to continue their journey toward full communion with the Catholic Church. At this Rite, they are asked if they are ready to listen to the apostles’ instruction, gather with the worshipping community in prayer, and join that community in the love and service of others. They are signed with the Cross to show that they belong to Christ.

Minor Exorcisms:

“The first or minor exorcisms have been composed in the form of petitions directly addressed to God. They draw the attention of the catechumens to the real nature of Christian life, the struggle between flesh and spirit, the importance of self-denial for reaching the blessedness of God’s kingdom, and the unending need for God’s help.” (RCIA, 90)

Blessings of the Catechumens:

“The blessings of the catechumens are a sign of God’s love and of the Church’s tender care. They are bestowed on the catechumens so that, even though they do not as yet have the grace of the sacraments, they may still receive from the Church courage, joy, and peace as they proceed along the difficult journey they have begun.” (RCIA, 95)

Anointing of the Catechumens:

“The anointing with oil symbolizes their need for God’s help and strength so that, undeterred by the bonds of the past and overcoming the opposition of the devil, they will forthrightly take the step of professing their faith and will hold fast to it unflinching throughout their lives.” (RCIA, 99)

What is the RCIA Rite of Sending?

Across the entire world, Catholic bishops on this first Sunday of Lent will welcome those sent by the parish to gather together with their godparents and sponsors in what is known as the Rite of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion. The Rite of Sending, ordinarily held earlier on the same day, offers the parish community an opportunity to acknowledge the spiritual progress the catechumens and candidates have made, express approval of their election or recognition, and send them forth to our bishop with assurance of the parish’s care and support. To send a catechumen or candidate to the bishop means that a parish has discerned that the person is ready to enter the Catholic Church. In Sacred Scripture, the Book of Revelation makes reference to a “Book of Life,” in which are written the names of those who have chosen to follow the Lord Jesus and be baptized. Those who are already baptized, as Catholics or in other denominations, had our names written in the Book of Life at our Baptism. In this Rite, those preparing for Baptism are invited to come forward and sign a book, which we call the “Book of the Elect,” as a sign of their desire to be numbered among the chosen of God.

What is the RCIA Rite of Election?

This Rite marks a key moment. For the catechumens this Rite signifies that they have been called by Christ and attests to the reality that only those mystically claimed by Christ will enter Heaven. St. John writes, “*If anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire*” (Rev 20:15). Throughout the RCIA process, catechumens should have become increasingly involved with the parish community. The community, with godparents representing the parish, will wholeheartedly acclaim the participants’ readiness. It is appropriate for the bishop to recognize them because he is the sign of unity of the particular Church, and it is the parish community’s responsibility to bring those in RCIA into the fullness of the life of the Church. The godparents give public testimony about the catechumens. The godparents’ role is very significant; they represent the community and are asked during this Rite to make serious statements about the catechumens. The decision of an RCIA participant to go through this Rite means that the judgment and decision-making (of both the catechumen and the parish) about whether to enter the Catholic Church has ended. From this point forward, they are no longer catechumens but are called the “elect.” They have been chosen to enter into the final period of preparation for initiation, and called by the bishop, their shepherd, to the holy mysteries to be celebrated that Easter.

What is the RCIA Rite of the Call to Continuing Conversion?

For all who have been baptized, the reality of being chosen and claimed by Christ took place at their Baptism. This is true for the baptized candidates as well. Therefore, the Rite of Election is inappropriate for them; they are already among the elect in Christ. Instead, the candidates are “called to continuing conversion,” and thus their intention to be fully initiated and share in the Eucharist is recognized. This Rite also takes place before the bishop, normally as part of the same liturgical event as the Rite of Election for those who are unbaptized. With their sponsors standing in support of them, the candidates are addressed by the bishop: “Hear the Lord’s call to conversion and be faithful to your baptismal covenant.” (RCIA 454) Together with the elect, the candidates are thereby moved by this Rite into a period of intense spiritual preparation.

What is the Penitential Rite?

For those baptized Christians seeking to enter full communion with the Catholic Church, this Rite helps them to prepare for the healing sacrament of Reconciliation. Normally occurring on the 2nd Sunday of Lent after the homily, this Rite calls the candidates to a deeper repentance and a total abandonment to the mercy of the Father who sent his only Son to die for our sins. Our prayer for these candidates, and for ourselves, is that the presence among us of Jesus who is the sum of the Law and the Prophets will transfigure all our lives with his redeeming grace, bringing us to conversion – a genuine desire to be holy as he is holy.

What are the Scrutinies?

These Rites are celebrated to help deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (RCIA 141). The Rites of Scrutiny are meant to uncover, and then heal, all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the elects' hearts and to bring out through repentance all that is upright, strong, and good. Three Scrutinies are celebrated in the parish community on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of Lent, after the homily. The Scripture readings for the Scrutinies ordinarily come from Cycle A of the Lectionary: the Gospel story of the Samaritan woman at the well for the 1st Scrutiny, the Gospel story of the healing of the man born blind for the 2nd Scrutiny, and the Gospel story of the raising of Lazarus for the 3rd Scrutiny. The celebrations of the Scrutinies also remind the whole parish community of the need to reflect on their own sins and the need for God's help.

What is the Presentation of the Creed for those in the RCIA process, and when does it occur?

This Rite, which can be done at Mass or during an RCIA session, entrusts the words of the Creed to those seeking to enter the Catholic Church. Nearly seventeen centuries old, the Creed is recited by the faithful at every Mass, and summarizes what we believe as Catholics. For those coming into the Church this Easter, this Rite symbolizes that our parish community is passing on and sharing the beliefs of our Catholic faith with them, so that these new initiates may embrace and treasure these venerable words as we do.

What is the Presentation of the Lord's Prayer for those in the RCIA process, and when does it occur?

This Rite, which can be done at Mass or during an RCIA session, entrusts to those seeking to enter the Catholic Church the precious words of our Lord on prayer. This prayer of hope is to Catholics a summary of the entire Christian life, and a model of that relationship of trust that we are invited to enter as children of our Heavenly Father. For those coming into the Church this Easter, this Rite symbolizes the passing down of our heritage of prayer, learned at the feet of the Savior, and nurtured in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit that is the Church.

Preparation Rites: Ephphetha Rite, Recitation of the Creed, and Concluding Rites

The Ephphetha rite, or rite of opening the ears and mouth, "impresses on the elect their need of grace in order that they may hear the word of God and profess it for their salvation". Mark 7:31-37 (RCIA, 134)

"The rite of recitation of the Creed prepares the elect for the profession of faith they will make immediately before they are baptized; the rite also instructs them in their duty to proclaim the message of the Gospel." (RCIA, 193)

The celebration of the preparation rites are concluded with a prayer of blessing over the elect and a dismissal. (RCIA, 203)

Guidelines for Choosing a Sponsor

The Church desires that you would have someone who is able to support you in your journey of faith and present you for the Rites, attesting to the fact that you are prepared to participate in the Rite. A godparent/sponsor must:

- Be a Catholic who has been baptized, received the Eucharist and been confirmed, and who is currently living a sacramental life (e.g., attending Mass regularly, making use of the sacrament of Reconciliation) and is not in an irregular marriage, is not living a life of habitual sin, and is living in accord with the Church's teaching on sexuality;
- Be at least sixteen years of age;
- Lead a life of faith in harmony with the ministry they are undertaking, and have the intention of undertaking the ministry of a godparent or sponsor;
- Not be a parent, or step-parent, of the individual to be confirmed.

Role of the Sponsor:

- a model of how a person of faith lives in today's world
- a companion on the journey of faith
- a friend or relative who knows the candidate and can witness to the maturing faith of the candidate before the community
- a guide, a confidant, and a listener
- a learner who is interested in personal growth as she or he walks the faith journey with the candidate
- one who will continue after Confirmation to walk the faith journey with the candidate and invite him or her into fuller participation in parish life and service

The Responsibility of the Sponsor:

- to present the candidate for the Sacrament
- to present the candidate to the minister for anointing
- to help the candidate to fulfill his or her Baptismal Promises faithfully under the influence of the Holy Spirit

Some common questions about sponsors:

1. **Can a parent be a sponsor?** No. Parents are already given the role of primary catechist and sponsor to their children. As in baptism with godparents, at Confirmation the sponsor serves as witness to the reception of the sacrament, but also is another person that can pray for and guide the candidate in their faith.
2. **Can a godparent be the sponsor?** Yes, in fact, the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation) used to be received all at once in the first centuries of the Church. Therefore, each candidate would have one godparent/sponsor that served to help prepare them to receive the sacraments and then live out their faith. As much as possible, a godparent is the ideal sponsor still today. However, given that the Sacraments of Initiation are spread out today, it is possible that one no longer has a standing relationship with their godparent or their godparent no longer practices their Catholic faith. Therefore, it is not uncommon to choose someone new as one may have developed a relationship with someone else since baptism who is better suited to be a sponsor at the time of Confirmation.
3. **Can a lapsed Catholic be the sponsor?** Like the godparents who are no longer practicing Catholics mentioned above, they would not be suitable as a sponsor because they do not bear witness to the Catholic Christian life. This may present a challenge if your friends and family no longer attend Mass regularly or perhaps were married outside of the church. If this is the case, we're happy to help your friends or family come back into full communion with the Catholic faith through adult education classes, encouraging them to go to confession (no matter how long ago this was) and if

married outside the Catholic faith to contact a priest to seek guidance on what to do. Should you need help finding someone else, we are happy to help you find a sponsor from within the parish, perhaps one of the schoolteachers, a catechist, or someone else in the parish.

4. **What if the sponsor cannot be present at the Rites or Easter Vigil Mass?** If a sponsor is unable to attend a Rite or the Easter Vigil Mass, say because they live far away and cannot make the trip or they are obligated to be somewhere else that night, another person can stand as proxy for them. The proxy must meet all the same requirements listed above for a sponsor. We will need both a sponsor form for the sponsor and a proxy form for the proxy.
5. **Can a priest or deacon be a sponsor?** Yes! In fact, we welcome any visiting priests and deacons who are here to be a sponsor and to con-celebrate the Mass. They will need to submit a letter of good standing from their diocese, or religious order, directly to the parish office with contact information so we can contact them about details of the Mass.
6. **What does the sponsor do at Rites or Easter Vigil Mass?** When the Pastor calls the elect and then the candidates forward, the sponsor will come forward with their candidate and stand behind them, their right hand on their right shoulder, in their left hand they will hold a note card that has the candidates saint name over the candidates left shoulder, visible to the Pastor. If the sponsor is a priest or deacon con-celebrating Mass, they will come down at the appropriate time. If the sponsor has physical needs that require special seating, we will work out the details beforehand.

Sponsor Forms (see attached):

If your sponsor is a parishioner at the Basilica of St. Mary, ask your sponsor to complete the sponsor form. You can turn it in to the Religious Education Staff who will review and sign the form.

If your sponsor is registered at another parish, you can send them a copy of the sponsor form for them to fill out and have their Pastor, or his delegate, sign it, seal it, and mail it to the Basilica at the address below. If you're in a time crunch you can send us a picture of the signed and sealed form before sending it in the mail. If you are unable to get the form to your sponsor, you can have them ask their Pastor can write a "Letter of Good Standing" for them and mail it to the Basilica.

*If you do not know of anyone who meets these requirements, please let us know - we are here to help!

*If your sponsor is unable to attend any given Rite, please also let us know, and we'd be happy to connect you with someone who could stand in as their proxy.

Guidelines for choosing a saint

There is a common custom in the Church of choosing a saint as your patron/patroness and to be confirmed using the name of that saint. You can choose to be confirmed using your own name if you'd like, but we strongly encourage you prayerfully befriend a saint who inspires you in your journey towards Heaven and implore their help in the Christian life. On your path to Heaven, you'll have help from the 'Church Militant' through your sponsor, and the 'Church Triumphant' through your patron saint. (Just so you know, even though you can only be confirmed using one saint's name, you can have as many saints as you want praying for you! I've heard people refer to a group of saints they commonly implore for help as their personal 'sanctity squad'.)

To reflect on this custom, recall that Confirmation is the Sacrament of strengthening ("confirmare" in Latin literally means "with firmness"). It is the sacrament by which God, through His minister, seals the faithful with the fullness of His Holy Spirit, first given in baptism. Due to this, it is also known as the "sacrament of sending" in that it perfects the gift of the Holy Spirit in us so we are strengthened to go out and bear witness to Christ in the world. We believe that the Scriptural example of Confirmation occurs at Pentecost (celebrated on the fiftieth day of Easter), when the Apostles received an outpouring of the Holy

Spirit so profoundly that history was forever changed. If you haven't read this account yet, I would highly encourage you to. It can be found in Acts of the Apostles chapter 2.

As we see from this event, before God sent the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles, they were "huddled together" in the upper room of a house for "fear of the Jews" (the ruling class who still saw Jesus as a heretic and his followers as a threat). After the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, they were able to speak in various languages "as the Spirit enabled them." This is the great undoing of Genesis 11, when, due to man's desire to "make a name for himself" by "building a tower to the Heavens" (without God's help), God scattered man across the world and "confused his tongue" (separated us by language). Now, through God, men from "all over the world" are able to speak and understand one another.

Peter, in particular, went from abandoning Jesus on Good Friday to a zealous proclaimer of Christ on Pentecost, as noted by his speech to the community later in that chapter. In this event, Peter truly became the "rock" upon which Christ would "make firm" His Church. Thus, in confirmation we have the option of selecting a new name to signify our intention of being a "new creation" or apostoloi (Greek for "sent one") for Christ.

Some quick tips for choosing a saint:

- **Pray** about the saint you are considering. God has given us the saints to guide us. Saints, are ordinary men and women who, cooperating with God's grace, conformed their lives to God's law of love, and in some cases radically bore witness to this love through martyrdom. ("Martyr" is a Greek word for witness, although now we use the term to signify someone who died for the faith, e.g. Thomas More, Joan of Arc, or Maximilian Kolbe.) Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in choosing your patron/patroness and to lead you to whomever He desires you to meet and learn from!
- **Make it personal:** this saint will be "yours" for the rest of your life (interceding for you and serving as an example for you to imitate). Pick someone whose life captivates you.
 - There are patron saints of many professions and/or afflictions. If you would like, you may pick a saint who is the patron (lead) intercessor for those in a certain profession or suffering from a certain illness or trial.
- Learn about several saints and their lives before making your choice. You can choose a saint of either gender.
- Once you have chosen your saint, please let us know who you've chosen.

Here are a few resources to look up Saints of the Catholic Church:

Books:

[Butler's Lives of the Saints](#)

[Saints for Young Readers \(series\)](#)

[Lives of the Saints \(Illustrated box set\)](#)

Websites:

www.ewtn.com

www.vatican.va

www.catholic.org

<https://catholicsaints.info/>

[Catholic Saint of the Day - General Roman Liturgical Calendar](#)

For a list of Patron Saints by patronage: <https://www.catholic.org/saints/patron.php>

RCIA Classes

RCIA classes are held from September to May. Classes meet in the Basilica Lyceum Auditorium (313 Duke Street, 2nd Floor, Alexandria, VA) from 7-8:30 p.m.

2022-2023 Calendar:

Our 2022-2023 RCIA Calendar attached below includes weekly topics/assigned readings, monthly special events, and future rites for those who intend to come into the Catholic Church this Easter. We'll talk much more about these events as we meet, but we want to provide you an overview of the year so you can have an idea of what to expect. We welcome you and any friends or family to all sessions and events.

Our first meeting will be on Monday, August 29, 2022 from 7-8:30 p.m. with doors opening at 6:30 p.m.

Reading Materials:

We provide a copy of *The Holy Bible* (Revised Standard Version, Ignatius Press), *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and *Outlines of the Catholic Faith*. Please note that we will provide all reading materials, so you don't need to purchase any books on your own. Most of the reading assignments will also be made available online in our weekly emails to the class.

Meeting Logistics:

RCIA sessions will be held in the Lyceum Auditorium which is located on the second floor of our main office building at 313 Duke St.

Each session will be from 7-8:30 p.m. One of our priests or seminarians (priest-in-training) or guest speaker will lead a 45 minute presentation. Generally, after the presentation, we have about 15-20 minutes for small group discussions, followed by 15-20 minutes of a "Q&A" session with the presenter.

We provide light snacks and refreshments at each session! If you have any dietary restrictions, please let us know.

Parking:

There are three lots that belong to St. Mary's: the lot at 300 Duke St. (this one is closest to the main office building), the lot located at 308 S. Pitt St. (this one is the largest), and the lot at 324 S. Royal St.

Virtual Learning Options:

Although we prefer all RCIA students attend our in-person classes, if you are not able to join us, please reach out directly to Hilary Munger or Susan Gray and we will happily coordinate virtual learning opportunities for you. We are prepared to offer both recorded podcast from current sessions and recordings of previous year's sessions to be watched at a later time.

Registration:

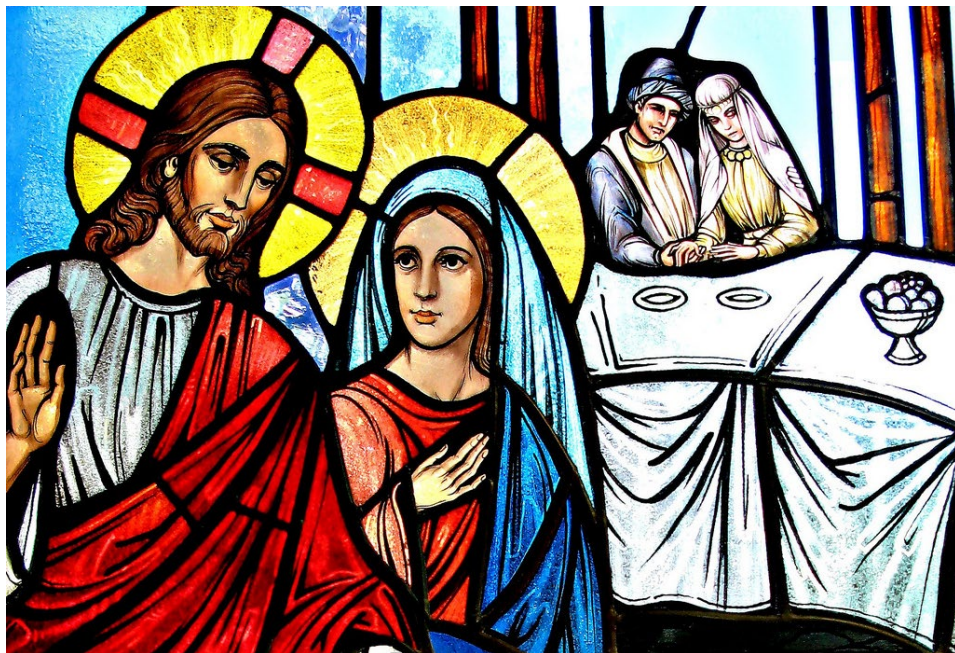
Registration for RCIA is available on our website: <https://stmaryoldtown.org/rcia-registration/> We ask that all inquirers and candidate register their interest in attending RCIA classes. This will include personal questions such as contact information, baptismal information (for anyone who was baptized Catholic or another Christian Tradition), marriage information (current and past marriage, civilian or religious, see Marriage for more details below) and other pertinent questions. Registration does not imply that you will become Catholic. It does however allow our staff, volunteers, and priests minister to your needs.

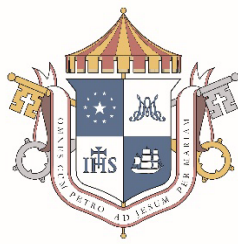
Marriage:

As you begin the RCIA process on entering the church or receiving sacraments, one of the biggest factors we need to know about is your marital status. It is not meant to cause worry or burden, but to ensure the road to full initiation is clear of any impediments. If impediments are present, we are here to assist the individual/couple in whatever process is required, and to pray with them throughout. Generally, meetings with the priest early on will need to be scheduled. We will go over your current marital status in the following ways:

1. Either you or your spouse is Baptized Catholic: Were you married in the Catholic Church by a Priest or Deacon? And Where? – If you were NOT and just married civilly, then you will need a Convalidation.
2. Divorced 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 and then a petition for an annulment will take place. If a formal petition is required on any prior unsuccessful marriage (either partner), the person will need to complete the required petition and receive a formal decree of nullity on the unsuccessful marriage(s) PRIOR to any reception of the sacraments of the Church. This could take a year (minimum) or more.
3. Divorced, but not remarried, you may enter into the church, however if you plan to remarry, then you must receive an annulment.
4. Engaged 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 is their partner, to the Rite of Election or Easter Vigil unless a formal decree of nullity granted by the Catholic Church.

Therefore, whichever state you are in, we are here to help. To begin the process towards Marriage, a Convalidation, or an Annulment, please contact one of our priests as soon as possible. Gather any paperwork related to the Marriage. Please note, that if you need a Convalidation or an Annulment, that must be completed before you become Catholic and enter into the church. The process may take some time to complete, and you are encouraged to start before the school year.





THE BASILICA OF SAINT MARY

Founded 1795 - Alexandria, Virginia

Certificate to Serve as a Sponsor:

Name of Candidate for reception into the Catholic Church, Easter 2022

I RECOGNIZE that a sponsor has a special relationship to the person who is to be confirmed. A sponsor serves as a model of Christian living for the individual he/she is serving, as that person is renewed and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit.

WITH THAT UNDERSTANDING, I recognize that in order to serve as a sponsor, a person must:

- Be a Catholic who has been baptized, received the Eucharist and been confirmed, and who is currently living a sacramental life (e.g., attending Mass regularly, making use of the sacrament of Reconciliation) is not in an irregular marriage, is not living a life of habitual sin, and is living in accord with the Church's teaching on sexuality;
- Be at least sixteen years of age;
- Lead a life of faith in harmony with the ministry they are undertaking, and have the intention of undertaking the ministry of a sponsor;
- Not be a parent, or step-parent, of the individual to be confirmed.

I HEREBY ACCEPT these responsibilities and testify that I fulfill the requirements to serve in the ministry of sponsor.

Signature of Sponsor

Date

I HEREBY TESTIFY that _____

(name of sponsor)

is a registered member of _____

(name of parish)

and affirm that he/she fulfills all the requirements to serve in the ministry of sponsor.

Signature of Pastor (or his authorized delegate)

Date

<< PARISH SEAL >>

Sponsor information

Name (First and Last): _____

_____ *Please initial after reading the following paragraph:*

I understand that as a sponsor I am to live a life in harmony with the nature of this responsibility, meaning, for example, that I regularly attend Mass; I receive the Eucharist regularly; I make use of the sacrament of Reconciliation; I am not in an irregular marriage; and I seek to the best of my understanding of my Catholic faith to be faithful to the teachings of the Church. I attest that I have received the sacrament of Confirmation and that I am at least 16 years old. I also understand that being a sponsor is a commitment of time. I will attend the celebrations of liturgical rites, and other initiation-related events to the best of my ability. I further understand that being chosen as a sponsor is a lifetime commitment to be, as I am able, a faithful witness of the Catholic way of life to the individual I am called to serve. If I am not a member of the Basilica of St. Mary, then I will have the Pastor from my own parish, or his authorized delegate, sign the appropriate Sponsor certificate attesting to the fact that I attend Mass regularly on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, follow the precepts of the Church, and possess no impediments for serving as a sponsor.

I. Contact Information

Full Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

II. Sacramental History

Place Where You Were Baptized: _____

(include church name (or hospital, etc.), city, region (state, province, etc.), and country)

Parish Where You Are Currently Registered: _____

Full Mailing Address: _____

Pastor's Name: _____

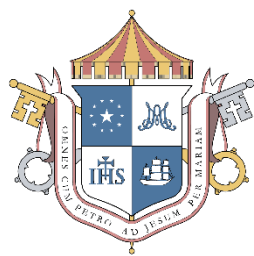
Phone: _____

For Office Use

Sponsor for: _____ Date: _____

If from another parish, Certificate or Letter of Good Standing received by Date: _____

Notes: _____



THE BASILICA OF SAINT MARY

Founded 1795 - Alexandria, Virginia

RCIA Calendar 2022-2023

Date and Time: Mondays, 7:00-8:30pm

Location: Basilica Lyceum Auditorium (313 Duke Street)

Materials: Bible, Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), Outlines of the Catholic Faith

*The Basilica will provide each participant with their own copies of each of these materials.

**Please note that CCC readings are assigned by paragraphs, not pages.

Contact Info:

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 Director of Religious Education
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 P: (703) 836-4100 ext. 3033

Susan Gray
 Assistant Director of Religious Education
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 P: (703) 836-4100 ext. 3023

2022:

August 29	Open House/What is the RCIA process?
September 5	No Session – Labor Day
September 12	Faith and Reason (CCC 144-165)
September 19	Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition, and the Magisterium (<i>Dei Verbum</i>)
September 26	Salvation History (CCC 51-67, 355-412, 702-730)
October 3	The Creed and One God (CCC 185-260)
October 10	No Session – Columbus Day
October 17	The Holy Trinity (CCC 430-478, 484-486, 687-741)
October 24	The Catholic Church (CCC 748-865)
October 31	No Session – All Saint’s Vigil Mass
November 7	The Sacraments/The Liturgical Calendar (CCC 1113-1130, 1210-1211)
November 14	Judgement, Heaven, Hell, and Purgatory (CCC 1020-1050)
November 20 (Sunday)	Rite of Acceptance/Rite of Welcoming (at the 11:30 am Mass)
November 21	No Session – Thanksgiving Week
November 27	First Sunday of Advent
November 28	The Mass Explained (CCC 1322-1344) <i>*meet in the Basilica</i>
December 5	The Blessed Virgin Mary (CCC 487-507)
December 12	Church Tour (CCC 1179-1199) <i>*meet in the Basilica</i>
December 18	<i>Basilica Advent Social (Lessons and Carols, Christmas Tree Lighting)</i>
December 19	No Session – Christmas Break
December 26	No Session – Christmas Break

2023:

January 2	No Session – Christmas Break
January 8 (Sunday)	Rite of Acceptance/Rite of Welcoming (at the 11:30 am Mass)
January 9	Baptism and Confirmation (CCC 1212-1314)
January 16	No Session – MLK Jr. Day
January 23	The Holy Eucharist (CCC 1345-1405) Minor Exorcism with Blessing of the Catechumens
January 30	Confession and Anointing of the Sick (CCC 1420-1532) Minor Exorcism, Blessing and Anointing of the Catechumens
February 6	Holy Orders and Holy Matrimony (CCC 1533-1666)
February 4	RCIA Retreat/Pilgrimage (Prayer, CCC 2558-2565, 2599-2615, 2697-2745 and Sacred Scripture and Spiritual Reading)
February 13	Morality – Formation of Conscience, Sin, and Grace (CCC 1700-1756; 1776-1794; 1846-1869; 1949-2016)
February 20	No Session – President’s Day
February 22	Ash Wednesday
February 26 1st Sunday of Lent	Rite of Sending at the Basilica of St. Mary at the 10:00 Mass / Rite of Election and Rite of Call to Continuing Conversion (TBD at Cathedral with Bishop Burbidge)
February 27	Commandments 1-3 (CCC 2083-2188)
March 5 2nd Sunday of Lent	Penitential Rite (Scrutiny) for baptized Candidates at 11:30 Mass
March 6	Commandments 4 and 5 (CCC 2196-2317)
March 12 3rd Sunday of Lent	First Scrutiny for the Elect within 10:00 Mass
March 13	Commandments 6 and 9 (CCC 2331-2391, 2514-2527) Presentation of the Creed
March 19 4th Sunday of Lent	Second Scrutiny for the Elect within 10:00 Mass
March 20	Commandments 7-8, 10 (CCC 2401-2503, 2534-2550)
March 26 5th Sunday of Lent	Third Scrutiny for the Elect within 11:30 Mass
March 27	RCIA Interviews
April 3	Confession talk followed by First Confessions for baptized Candidates <i>*meet in the Basilica</i> Presentation of the Lord’s Prayer
April 8 Holy Saturday	Easter Vigil Rehearsal @ 10:00am w/ Preparation Rites for Catechumens Easter Vigil Mass beginning around 8pm (for Catechumens and Candidates)
April 10	No Session – Easter Monday
April 17	Universal Call to Holiness, Vices, and Virtues (CCC 1762-1770, 1803-1832, 1865–1866)
April 24	Christian Discipleship/Sanctifying Daily Life
May 1	Evangelization – Final Meeting (CCC 849-856; 2044-2046; 2225; 2471-2474)