

CATHEDRAL *of the* HOLY SPIRIT



RCIA Process

*Rite of Christian Initiation
of Adults*

Welcome

Welcome to Cathedral of the Holy Spirit's RCIA Process—the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, and our Adult Faith Formation classes. Consider this handbook as a guide to accompany your understanding of the process.

If you are not Catholic, we are excited to walk this journey of faith and discernment with you throughout the upcoming months. Coming into the Catholic Church can be a journey full of questions and challenges, but also of clarity and closeness with Christ. He desires your heart!

For those of you who are already Catholic and want to simply learn more about our faith, we welcome you also! Our faith is so rich and so vast, one can never exhaustively know it all—so it is beautiful for you to be present in your own journey of understanding Catholicism.

Please let me know if you have any questions as you embark on this expedition; the parish staff and I look forward to serving you in any way we can!

In Christ,

Deb Martinek

Director of Faith Formation
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701-222-2259



“Only in Christ can men and women find answers to the ultimate questions that trouble them. Only in Christ can they fully understand their dignity as persons created and loved by God.”

— Pope St. John Paul II

Checklist

Please provide the following documents (as they apply to your situation) to Deb Martinek at the parish office. Photocopies are acceptable in all cases except as noted for a Catholic baptismal certificate. Consider this checklist a guide for understanding the structure of what needs to occur prior to your reception and Confirmation in the Church.

NOTE: Your provision of these materials and attendance at classes does not a) presume you must become Catholic within the period of class offerings, or b) guarantee that you will become Catholic.

Baptismal Certificate

Please request a copy of your baptismal certificate. If you do not have one on hand, you can request it from the church where you were baptized. If they do not provide certificates, you may request that they submit a letter verifying proof of baptism. You may ask the church to send either the certificate or the letter directly to:

**Deb Martinek
519 Raymond St.
Bismarck, ND 58501**

If you were baptized Catholic, you must provide a certificate that has been generated in the last six months or less, from the parish where you were baptized.

Marriage Certificate

If you are married, please provide a copy of the marriage certificate, either civil (legal) or ecclesial (church). If you are divorced, please provide the following if they apply to you.

- Divorce Decree
- Decree of Nullity (Annulment)
- Marriage Certificate for Second Marriage

Sponsor

Per the Code of Canon Law (CIC, paragraph 892), insofar as possible, there is to be a sponsor for the person to be confirmed; the sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament.

A confirmation sponsor is there to guide you through this process of discernment. He or she must be a baptized, practicing Catholic who has been confirmed and is at least 16 years old.

If there is a Catholic friend or relative in your life that has been instrumental in your journey to Catholicism, consider asking them to serve in this role. It is recommended that they attend the sessions with you.

If you do not have a relationship with someone who could serve as your sponsor, we have parishioners ready to step in for that purpose.

Checklist

Saint Name

In the rich history of the Church, there are countless saints to whom we pray for intercession or look up to for the example of faith in the lives they lived. Candidates will choose the name of a saint for their Confirmation name: These saints are chosen as a person that the candidate wants to be like, and from whom we can ask their intercession and prayers.

Through the process of canonization, when someone is declared by the Church to be a saint, the Church is proclaiming that this member of the faithful practiced heroic virtue during their life on earth. It is important to remember that as members of the Church, we are never alone, as St. Paul said, *“We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses”* (Hebrews 12:1). These witnesses are the saints who continually intercede for us (CCC 956). In choosing a Confirmation saint, we are choosing a special friend to intercede for us in heaven and after whom we can model our lives while here on earth.

When you were born, your parents chose your name. At your baptism, you were called by name and entered into the Christian community with that name. As you prepare for confirmation, you have the privilege and responsibility to choose a new name—the name of a saint! This name should reflect your closer identification as a member of the Catholic Church. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you make this decision.

Consider these steps to choose a Confirmation name for yourself:

- Investigate your own first or middle name to see if there is a saint name that is the same as yours. If so, read about this saint to see if you relate to this person.
- Are there any saints that you have looked up to or have been inspired by?
- Do you have a vocation or interest that is a passion in your life? There are saints who are patrons of different careers and causes.

If you would like to use some of the resources about saints in the Office of Faith Formation, call or stop in to check out the books on our Saint Shelf.



***“Be who you
were created to
be, and you will
set the world
on fire.”***

— St. Catherine of Siena

Materials List

All candidates and catechumens will be provided with the following books and materials to aid their discernment in becoming Catholic.

The Catholic Answer Bible with Bible Tabs

No book in the history of the world has wielded as much influence on humankind as the Holy Bible. What makes The New Catholic Answer Bible so unique is the answers to questions about Catholic beliefs and practices and their foundation in Scripture. From *Where Did the Bible Come From?* and *Are the Seven Sacraments in the Bible?* to *Are Catholics Born Again?* and *Why Do Catholic Bibles Have Seventy-three Books?*, these eighty-eight diverse topics answer tough questions and common misconceptions about Catholicism.

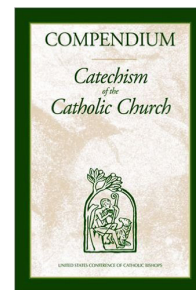
The rainbow-colored Bible tabs make navigating the Bible a much easier task. The colors are divided into the following major sections of the Bible:

- Rose: The Pentateuch (the first five books of the Old Testament)
- Peach: History
- Yellow: Poetry and Wisdom
- Green: The Prophets
- Blue: The Gospels
- Violet: New Testament Letters
- Lavender: Bible Helps (for charts, maps, dictionary, etc.)

The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Compendium is a faithful and sure synthesis of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It

contains, in concise form, all the essential and fundamental elements of the Church's faith, which allows believers and non-believers alike to behold the entire panorama of the Catholic faith. It consists of 598 questions and answers, echoing to some degree the format of the "Baltimore Catechism" which was a standard text in many Catholic parishes and schools from 1885 to the 1960s. It is structured in four parts, much like the widely-used Catechism of the Catholic Church. While the text does contain some direct quotes from the Catechism used in a sidebar fashion, the questions and answers themselves are original text.



In addition to the questions and answers, the Compendium also includes two appendices. The first is a list of Catholic Prayers including the Our Father and Hail Mary in English, side-by-side with the Latin version of the prayers. The second appendix contains "Formulas of Catholic Doctrine" including the Ten Commandments, Beatitudes, theological and cardinal virtues, and spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

The Compendium is far less intimidating for many readers because, of course, it is much shorter than the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It is a very attractive volume that includes reproductions of sacred art and commentary on the theological meaning of those pieces of art.

Materials List

The Good News About Sex And Marriage

In this easy-to-read, question-and-answer book, well-known theologian Christopher West offers a fresh, relevant, and convincing presentation of the Church's teachings on human sexuality and marriage rooted in Saint John Paul II's revolutionary Theology of the Body.

Guides for Confession

These guides aim to prepare you well—not only for your first confession but for every time you go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Binder of Hand-Outs

This is to aid in your preparation for classes and to provide further reading for your own self-study.

Terms to Know

Baptism: In order for baptism to be valid and recognized by the Church, the Trinitarian formula, “I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” and water must have been used.

Candidate: A baptized person seeking to be received into the Church (i.e. making a Profession of Faith), and to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.

Catechumen: A non-baptized person seeking the Sacraments of Initiation. After the Rite of Election, they are called ‘the elect’.

Eucharist: This sacrament is the source and summit of the Christian life; it is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine. The Eucharist

can be received by those in full communion with the Catholic Church and in a state of grace (i.e. no stain of mortal sin). It is not appropriate to receive the Eucharist until one is fully initiated/received into the Church.

Liturgy: The public ceremonies of the Church used for worship.

Mass: The greatest worship which the Church gives to God. In the Mass, the priest offers God the most precious gift we have: the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA): The process by which catechumens and candidates are prepared for full initiation or reception into the Church.

Terms to Know

Sacrament: A sacrament is an outward sign, instituted by Christ, that gives grace. There are seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony, and Holy Orders.

Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist: These sacraments are called the Sacraments of Initiation because they initiate us into the life of Christ.

Scrutinies (For Catechumens Only): The scrutinies, which are solemnly celebrated on Sundays and are reinforced by an exorcism, are rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose. The scrutinies are meant to uncover, then heal all that is

Because they are asking for the three sacraments of initiation, the elect must have the intention of achieving an intimate knowledge of Christ and his Church, and they are expected particularly to progress in genuine self-knowledge through serious examination of their lives and true repentance.

In order to inspire in the elect a desire for purification and redemption by Christ, three scrutinies are celebrated. By this means, first of all, the elect are instructed gradually about the mystery of sin, from which the whole world and every person longs to be delivered and thus saved from its present and future consequences. Second, their spirit is filled with Christ the Redeemer, who is the living water (gospel of the Samaritan woman in the first scrutiny), the light of the world (gospel of the man born blind in the second scrutiny), the resurrection and the life (gospel of Lazarus in the third scrutiny). From the first to the final scrutiny, the elect should progress in their perception of sin and their desire for salvation.

“I wish not merely to be called Christian, but also to be Christian.”

— St. Ignatius of Antioch



weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. The scrutinies are celebrated in order to 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. These rites, therefore, should complete the conversion of the elect and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all.

In the rite of exorcism, the elect, who have already learned from the Church as their mother the mystery of deliverance from sin by Christ, are freed from the effects of sin and from the influence of the devil. They receive new strength in the midst of their spiritual journey and they open their hearts to receive the gifts of the Savior.

Helpful Tips

How to be Catholic: Tips for those in RCIA

The Catholic faith is fun, beautiful, and true. It is also full of possibly odd traditions and what seems to be insider information. The list following includes some things I had to learn as an adult or have been asked repeatedly by converts and cradle Catholics alike.

- When you **genuflect**, your right knee touches the floor. Genuflect towards Christ in the tabernacle. If you cannot find the tabernacle or if the tabernacle is empty for some reason, bow towards the altar. You will know if the tabernacle is empty because the door will be open and the red candle that burns near it will be blown out.
- **Adoration** is an opportunity for prayer in front of Christ (under the appearance of bread—the consecrated Host) exposed in a monstrance.
- Make the **sign of the cross** with your right hand.
- The Church encourages you to go to **confession** once a year; just before Easter is a good time to do so. However, going six times a year is even better and going twelve times a year is better yet.
- After Mass you may see people kneel and pray instead of exiting immediately. They are “**making a Thanksgiving**” - saying a short prayer, from their heart, thanking God for the Mass and the Eucharist.
- **You should give to your parish and you should get involved.** Tithing ten percent but also join a Bible study, volunteer to tend some flower beds, teach Faith Formation, and attend special parish-sponsored activities. During RCIA you are part of a group that is helping you grow in your understanding of your faith and in holiness. When RCIA ends, find a new group who will help you continue in that manner.
- You can eat meat on Friday when it's not Lent, but if you do, then you need to do some **other kind of penance.**
- **Fertility Awareness or Natural Family Planning is also known as NFP.** NFP works. And it's not the rhythm method. And you are expected to use it if you are married and need to space your children.
- **Fast for an hour before Mass.** This means you may only have water. If you are pregnant, nursing, elderly, a child, or have a medical reason, you don't have to keep this fast. **Please do not chew gum at Mass;** if you do you are breaking the fast. If you break the fast, you should not receive Holy Communion.
- Generally speaking, at Mass in America we **sit** to listen, **stand** to pray and out of respect for the Gospel, and we **kneel** before the Eucharist. Some parishes stand during the Liturgy of the Eucharist, which is how it is done in some parts of Europe.
- **Strike your breast three times during the Penitential Rite** as you say “through my fault...” And don't just do it, but think about what it means. We're supposed to be truly sorry, so much so that we physically react by striking our breasts.
- **Bow during the Nicene Creed** at the words, “and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man”. At Christmas it is traditional to kneel at that line.

List courtesy of Bonnie Engstrom © 2015

At Home

Building a Catholic culture in your home is a great way to have a daily reminder of our great Faith. Give yourself time to figure out what works for you, your family, and your season in life. The following five things have all made a huge impact in how I and my family live out our faith and build a Catholic culture in our home. These items have been incorporated through all the liturgical seasons of the Church and have created a home that is distinctly different than non-Catholic homes. My hope is that it will help my household love and serve our Lord better.

An Advent Wreath

This can be as simple as one pink and three purple candles arranged in a circle on your kitchen table. You can add evergreen boughs or you can buy a wreath to use year after year.

Why: The Church uses the Advent Wreath to mark the four weeks of Advent. You should see one in your own church. The purple color reminds us of Christ's royalty, the pink color reminds us to rejoice for our Savior has come and will come again. The candles light up the dark, winter nights and remind us that "the people who walk in darkness have seen a great light."



Beginner: Light the candles of the Advent Wreath. Try to do it every night or at least once a week. We like to sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" while we light them.

More Advanced: Try using a prayer book to help guide your dinner conversation. We like *O Radiant Dawn* by Lisa Hendey.

Bonus: You can switch out the candles to four white ones for the Season of Christmas. We sing "O Come Let Us Adore Him" while we light the candles during the Christmas season.

even toy ones your kids can play with and you can use to reenact and explain the Christmas story.

Why: A nativity is a beautiful way to keep the Christmas story present in your home.

Beginner: Find a place of honor in your home, preferably in a place where the family frequently gathers, and set up the stable and figurines. Use it as a tool for prayer - meditating on the meaning of Christmas or reading Scripture in front of it.

More Advanced: Keep the stable empty and place the figures around your home or living room. On Christmas Eve bring Mary, Joseph, and the donkey to the stable. After Christmas Mass put the Baby Jesus in the manger and then bring the shepherds over. On the feast of Epiphany (January 6th) move the Magi to the stable.

Catholic Art

When I say Catholic art, I'm talking about print copies of old classics, statues, holy cards, or beautiful paintings by modern artists. Heirloom rosaries, family Bibles, and prayer books also fall in this category.

Why: Incorporating some pictures, statues, or even simply framed holy cards in your home's decorations is a really easy way to surround yourself with items that are beautiful *and* will help you refocus your day/thoughts/heart/inner dialogue/potentially gossipy conversation to something holier. It's hard to be a jerk when you're looking at Christ on the cross. Catholic art also serves as a



A Nativity

There are nativity sets to fit all kinds of preferences and decorating styles. There are



At Home

simple way to incorporate the liturgical calendar into your home.

Beginner: Hang a Crucifix, display an image of Mary, and keep on using all the seasonal decorations you already own.

More Advanced: Find images or statues for other saints who are important to you and display their image in a place of honor for their feast days. For example, May is the Month of Mary, so move your image of the Blessed Mother to a prominent place in your home and place a bouquet of flowers near it. For St. Patrick's Day in March use the green decorations you may already have but also pick up a holy card or statue of St. Patrick and display it on your mantel or other place of prominence.

Even More Advanced: Hang a crucifix in every room of the house, beginning with the bedrooms and family room.

Sacramentals

A sacramental is basically a holy object or action that leads you to more actively live out your faith and makes ordinary life more holy. Holy water, making the sign of the cross, a wedding ring, fasting, genuflecting, shrines, scapulars, a crucifix, statues, ashes, medals, blessings... all these things are sacramentals. They do not bestow grace like a sacrament does, but they do remind us of the sacraments.

Why: Sacramentals will help you incorporate your faith into your daily life and your family practices. They act as a constant reminder to pray, to strive for holiness, and to seek God who loves you.

Beginner: Get a Rosary and a guide on how to pray the rosary and a guide on how to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet. Use the guides to help you pray and be sure

to take your time! You may fumble your way through it for a while. Also, don't be afraid to ask a friend for help. The Divine Mercy Chaplet is also prayed on rosary beads and is often prayed during the 3 o'clock hour, which is when Christ died on the cross.

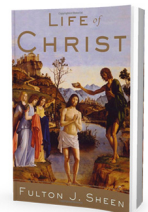


More Advanced: Find a holy water font to hang by your door and a Miraculous Medal to wear. You and your family and friends can now bless yourselves as you come and go. Wear the Miraculous Medal as a reminder to pray for conversion and grow in holiness. Mary will lead you and others closer to Christ - let her help you.

A Few Catholic Books

Why: There is so much to know about God and our Catholic faith - we are never done learning! Begin building a Catholic bookshelf for yourself and a book basket for your children.

Beginner: Make sure you have a good Catholic Bible, a copy of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Fulton Sheen's *Life of Christ* for yourself, and *The Weight of the Mass* by Josephine Nobisso for your kids. Also, if you're looking for a book with ideas to celebrate feast days without overwhelming you, I recommend *Feast!* by Haley Stewart.



More Advanced: More books to slowly add to your library include *Catholic Children's Bible*, *The Little Oratory*, *A Little Book About Confession*, and *33 Days to Morning Glory*. These titles will help you share the Catholic faith with your family, and *33 Days* is a fabulous book if you're looking to understand Mary.

List courtesy of Bonnie Engstrom © 2015

A Glimpse: Catholic Prayer

Have you ever wondered, “If I want to spend time with Jesus in daily prayer, what would it look like?”

This is what it would look like... Below is the general outline of what personal prayer looked like in the hearts of prayerful people throughout the centuries. Follow these suggestions for committing to daily prayer.

- Begin by meditating on the following quote from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “**God calls man first.** Man may forget his Creator or hide far from His face; he may run after idols or accuse the deity of having abandoned him; **yet the living and true God tirelessly calls each person to that mysterious encounter known as prayer. In prayer, the faithful God’s initiative of love always comes first;** our own first step is always a response.” (no. 2567)
- Then look in your heart; look at your life. What do you want? What do you *really* want from God? Tell God right now what you need from Him during this time of prayer.
- Now read a passage from the Bible. Maybe it’s a Psalm; maybe it’s the readings from daily Mass; maybe it’s the readings at the upcoming Sunday Mass. Simply find a passage from Scripture. Read the passage slowly. Get familiar with the text. Read the passage a *second* time, this time read it even more slowly. Very, very slowly read the passage a *third* time. Pay attention to which word, words, or phrases “tug” at your heart or get your attention.
- Take some time now to think about *your* life; think about the **reality** of your life. What word, words, or phrases from the Scripture passage speak to you? How does the Scripture passage connect to your life? Look deep within.
- Next, talk to God. Share everything with Him. Talk to Him as you would talk to your most trusted friend. Talk to God like Moses did: “The Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as one man speaks to another.” (Exodus 33: 11)
- Then listen. **God *will* speak to you.** Maybe God will speak to you through a thought in your head ... or a song in your heart ... or a memory ... or a desire in your body. Listen with all your senses.
- Return to the Scripture passage again. Read it slowly one more time. What word, words, or phrases speak to you again?
- Now think about what can you do today, this week, to act on what God has revealed to you? Practically speaking, in your real life, what can you do?
- Finally, thank the Lord. Blessings are specific and so should our gratitude be. Tell God specifically what you’re thankful for.

Please remember: Do not become discouraged if what you had hoped for didn’t happen during this time of prayer. Don’t give up. This is about having a friendship with Jesus. Continue to practice these steps as you cultivate your daily prayer life.

