

RCIA: The Initiation Process for Catechumens

On journey with a sponsor AND a Parish companion:

1. The first step: a time of initial conversion and expression of the desire to become a Catholic Christians: this involves a deepening of encounter and friendship with Jesus Christ. This encounter includes sharing in the faith life of Catholics. Acceptance as **catechumens** by the Church follows.
2. The second step involves a deepening in understanding of the teachings and doctrine of the Catholic Church as expressed in the Nicene Creed and in study of Catholic sacraments. An intense preparation for the sacraments of initiation completes this step. Participants become known as “**the Elect.**”
3. The third step: The Elect receive the sacraments of Christian initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist at the Easter Vigil and become known as “**neophytes**” (new in faith).
4. A life time of study of the mysteries follows: **mystagogia!**

Immaculate Parish RCIA Team

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Parish of the Immaculate

Welcome Home!

*RCIA
process,
the role
of the
Sponsor,
and parish
companion*

*Parish of the Immaculate
Owensboro, KY*

Why a sponsor? Why a “parish companion”?

- A “parish companion” is selected by the parish to assist an individual/family in feeling at home among Catholics.
- A godparent or a sponsor is chosen by the individual and is a personal witness of conversion, growth in knowledge of the Catholic faith as well as a model of practice in charity.
- A sponsor is a personal faith companion to help the individual with conversion of heart.
- A sponsor is a model: a sponsor continues to be open to growth in faith and putting into practice what that faith requires.



What are the responsibilities of a sponsor? Of a “parish companion”?

- A “**parish companion**” assists an inquirer with invitations and accompaniment to a variety of church activities. A “parish companion” works with the sponsor, but DOES NOT take the place of the sponsor/ godparent.
- A **sponsor** supports an individual through prayer.
- A sponsor attends (when possible) the sessions with an inquirer.
- A sponsor shares in the Liturgy of the Eucharist weekly and is available for the Rites and the Scrutinies (during Lent).
- A sponsor meets regularly with the individual. This is for the purpose of:
 - Assisting the individual with learning about the practices of the Catholic faith
 - Reflecting on the Sunday Scripture
 - Providing time for personal support of the individual who is seeking to become a member of the Catholic Church.
 - Learning to pray as a Catholic

What are the qualifications?

- A sponsor must be a practicing Catholic who shares in Mass on a weekly basis.
- A sponsor must be confirmed.
- A sponsor must be 16 years of age or older.
- A sponsor should model their faith through words and actions.
- A parent cannot act as sponsor.

What can a sponsor expect?

- Many times sponsors will note that they get more out of the RCIA process than individuals. Sponsors learn through the group gatherings and by sharing with the individual in their one-on-one meetings.
- Sponsors can expect their own spiritual journey to be enlightened and their faith nurtured as well.
- Sponsors practice “service”. They share their time and talent, knowledge and wisdom with one another.
- Sponsors can expect support and help from the RCIA team.