

Christian Initiation of Adults

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Focus on the Rite—Welcoming the inquirers (unbaptized)

“Naturally, inquirers often have specific questions and concerns about Catholic belief and practice. There should therefore be an opportunity to them to ask these questions and have them answered respectfully. **The primary focus of the precatechumenate, however, is not on doctrine or information, but rather on evangelization.**

Evangelization and inquiry are year-round activities and are not restricted to a particular season. Since inquirers may appear at any time of the year, parish communities should always be ready to welcome them. **The precatechumenate is not a series of classes, and so should be approached in a different way than one might set up a course.** In a large parish it may be appropriate to have an inquiry group that meets at the same time each week throughout the year. In smaller communities, there may be a person or group designated to meet with inquirers whenever the need arises. The RCIA assumes that the *Rite of Acceptance* might be celebrated several times each year (see *RCIA*, no. 18), thus indicating a need for communities to provide precatechumenate ministry throughout the year.”

How many times a year does your parish celebrate the Rite of Acceptance? Is your parish involved in a year-round precatechumenate?

August 3, 2009

Rite of Election 2010

Saturday, February 20, 2010
Chester County and
Philadelphia-South at 6:30
p.m.

Sunday, February 21, 2010
Montgomery County and
Philadelphia-North at 2:30
p.m.

Sunday, February 21, 2010
Bucks & Delaware Counties
at 6:30 p.m.

Location: Cathedral Basilica
of Saints. Peter and Paul



Initiation library

Handbook for Catholics

by Mary Kathleen
Glavich, SND

Handbook for Catholics is a conveniently organized collection of all the essential information needed for lay Catholics to understand and practice the faith they profess.

Available from
loyolapress.com

“Like all the periods of the initiation process, the precatechumenate period calls for the participation of the whole community and for a variety of ministries. The rite specifically names “priests and deacons, catechists and other laypersons” who “are to give the candidates a suitable explanation of the Gospel” (*RCIA*, no. 38). In North America many parishes have formed an inquiry team or a small community to respond to this call.

While a few people may have special responsibility for ministering to inquirers, **the whole community is called to exercise a ministry of hospitality.** The rite asks communities to open themselves up to inquirers and to make them welcome. Some specific ways of extending this hospitality include inviting the inquirers into homes, engaging them in “friendly conversation” and inviting them to some community functions. They might also be invited to join in the gatherings of small groups or small communities which meet on a regular basis (*RCIA*, nos. 38-39)

What role do community members and the various ministries play during the precatechumenate period?

(*RCIA: A Pastoral Liturgical Commentary*, pp. 39, 40)