

What are the meetings like?

The meetings are informal. They include prayer, song, scripture, brief presentations, and frequent opportunities to share faith stories and ask questions in large and small group settings. Their central focus is on the Gospels. But of course, the best way to find out what meetings are like is to come to one and see.

What are all those different things that happen at Mass with people going through the Rite?

Most Sundays at the 10:30 Mass there is a dismissal of participants after the homily. With a catechist, they proceed to another room in the church and reflect prayerfully on the scripture readings of the day. Several major rites occur throughout the year. The first is the Rite of Welcome or Rite of Acceptance when people interested in joining our community (inquirers) are ready to commit themselves to following Jesus. By this time, the inquirers have been attending meetings for six to eight weeks to learn more about the faith and determine where God is leading them. This rite can occur at any time of the year. The second rite is the Rite of Election. It occurs on the first Sunday of Lent and includes a celebration at the Basilica where people from all over the Archdiocese come and the church formally recognizes their readiness for the sacraments of initiation.

During Lent there are three Scrutinies when the congregation prays with these aspiring new community members for healing, forgiveness, and wisdom. At the Easter Vigil, the unbaptized receive Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist, and those already baptized receive Confirmation and the Eucharist.

Who do I contact?

For more information, please phone:
Phil Birch 440-0248
Rae Edmondson 462-5203
Sharon Keichinger 462-2867
Genevieve Kelemen 437-8011

Remember that you are always welcome to drop into one of our regular meetings. We'd all be glad to see you!

"I was baptized in a protestant church many years ago. My spouse is Catholic, and I feel like something is missing in my life. How can I find out more about the Catholic faith?"
"I have never been baptized but I'd like to find out more about the Catholic faith. What can I do?"
I'm a regular member of the community at St. Theresa's. I'd like to become more involved, but I don't think I know enough about my faith to share it with others. Would I fit into the RCIA?"

"Come and See." (John 1:39)

Revised September 19, 2005

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

The Rite is an opportunity for people interested in our faith to learn about it, to grow in faith, and to join our community. It is a spiritual journey involving our entire parish. Through it we all grow in the love of Christ.

**St. Theresa's Parish
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Who is it for?

The Rite is open to everyone over 14 years of age, who is not a full, confirmed member of our faith and who wishes to find out more about it. As they proceed through the Rite, many of them are attracted more and more to our faith and decide to embrace our faith as their own. Representatives of the parish accompany them week to week at regular meetings as catechists or sponsors. The entire community of St. Theresa's supports them in prayer and by participating with them at special liturgies incorporated into our Sunday celebrations. The whole parish experiences spiritual growth and renewal as a result.

I'm not Catholic, but I'm interested in the Catholic faith. What do I do?

Please phone one of the people whose names are listed on the back of this brochure. Someone will talk to you about initial questions you may have, set up a meeting to discuss your situation with you, and talk to you about the Rite. If you would rather drop into one of the meetings, someone will welcome you and talk to you at that time.

What am I committing myself to if I express interest in the Catholic faith?

You are not committing yourself to anything. A key principle of the Rite is that everyone proceeds at their own pace and nobody pressures anyone into anything.

How long does it take?

That largely depends on you. It usually takes at least 12 to 18 months. The Rite can take up to three years or more for some people. The normal time for adults to be received into the church is at the Easter Vigil, and so that is a central point in the Rite, as is Lent. For those becoming members of the church at Easter, the Rite continues for two more months.

I'm a regular church - goer, but there are some things about my faith I don't understand. Is there a place for me?

Absolutely, the parish needs people like you to be companions for people beginning the Rite. If you can sponsor someone, you would gain at least one friend and strengthen your own faith as well. To be a sponsor you need only be a Catholic in good standing with the church, be willing to share your faith with others, and make a commitment to regular attendance at meetings. You are not expected to be an expert on church teachings. Please phone one of the contact people

What is a catechist?

Catechists are members of the parish community who have committed themselves to a leadership role in the Rite. They lead the weekly meetings, help find sponsors, welcome everyone to the meetings, and plan the special liturgies, each according to their own talents. They also take a personal interest in the faith journey of everyone in the group. You don't need a degree in theology to be a catechist, but you do need to make a commitment both of time and energy to the Rite.

When are the meetings?

Meetings occur every Thursday evening year-round at 7:30 in the MacDonald room. Regular attendance is very important.

It's a big commitment

It's a big commitment, but you'll get much more out of it than you put in. Everyone who has been through it will tell you that it has changed their lives for the better.

When can I start?

We welcome new people at any time of the year.