

## Becoming Catholic

**B**ecoming Catholic means undertaking a spiritual journey. This will normally take about 12 months depending on the readiness of each individual. It is called Christian Initiation and there are ceremonies or 'Rites' at each stage to signify the steps along the way. The whole journey is called the 'Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults' or RCIA for short.

The journey is a gradual process of realising God's call and becoming aware of God's presence in your life. Initiation into the Catholic Church is done through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. If you are seeking Baptism, you begin a process called the Catechumenate, and if you are already baptised in another Christian tradition you follow a process of continuing conversion leading up to Reception, Confirmation and First Communion.



The Easter Vigil is usually the time of celebration of these Sacraments of Initiation and is a time of great joy for you and your family.

Essentially you will be joining a community, and hence you will be accompanied along the way by members of that community who share with you their own Faith. These accompanying persons are called the RCIA team, and it is their role to assist you in understanding the Scriptures, the practice of worship, and the Sacraments according to the Catholic tradition. In order to get started you inform the parish office that you wish to begin the RCIA Enquiry. (There is no cost attached, and you may withdraw at any point along the journey). The parish office will then put you in touch with the RCIA team and from there you begin the journey.

You may wish simply to make enquiries at this stage and you are most welcome to do so.

Inside is a reflection from a person who made this journey recently.

## Who is invited?

Friends, family members, new family members, intending marriage partners, and others, either non-baptised or baptised in other Christian churches. In fact, anyone who may be interested in learning more about the Catholic Faith. All are welcome.



## What is the first step?

Contact your parish directly or the Diocesan Office for Worship and ask for the RCIA co-ordinator, leaving return contact details.

## Interested in helping on the RCIA Team?

Parishioners may wish to help on their parish RCIA team, as sponsors, catechists etc., after some suitable training. We would welcome your enquiry. Contact your parish directly or the RCIA co-ordinator at the Office for Worship.



Visit Our Home Page

<http://www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/our-faith/becoming-a-catholic>

# Becoming a Catholic

Office for Worship



Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults  
Adult Catechumenate

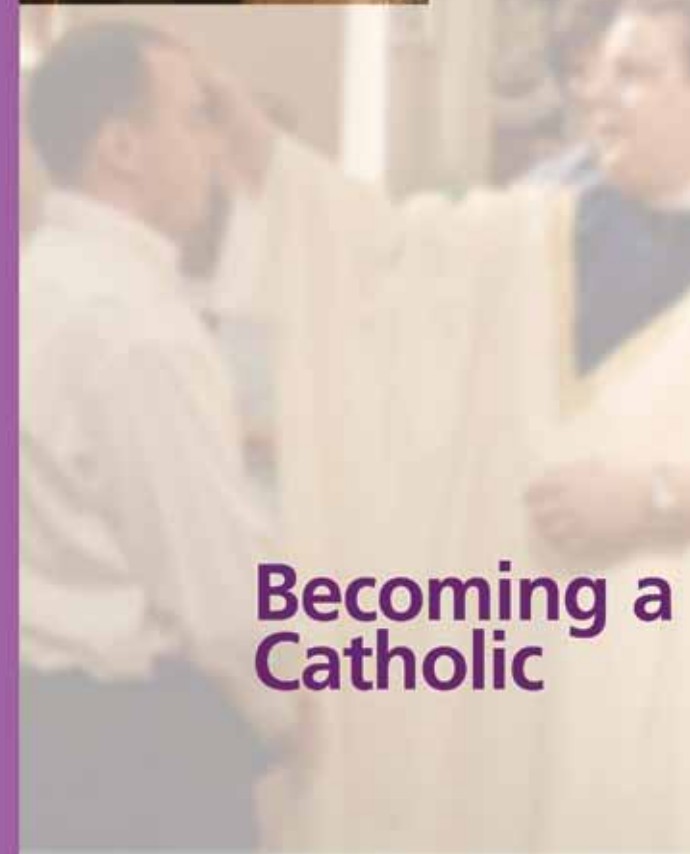
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*Photos courtesy of St Mary's Immaculate Conception Church, Alton, Illinois*



# Becoming a Catholic

Archdiocese of Adelaide  
South Australia

## Enquiry Through the RCIA



- ✿ I would like to enquire about the RCIA process
- ✿ I have never been baptised and would like to prepare for the Sacraments
- ✿ I have been baptised in another Christian tradition and would now like to become Catholic
- ✿ I have been baptised as a Catholic and would now like to prepare for the other Sacraments

My Contact details *(treated confidentially)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this in to your Parish Office or to Office for Worship: PO Box 270, Torrensville Plaza SA 5031  
OR email pconin@ow.adelaide.catholic.org.au



## The Journey of a Catechumen

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### “Joyful in hope and faithful in service”

I rejected all forms of spirituality in my teens, going on to study Philosophy at University where I tried to analyse the existence of God through logic. This fierce ‘scientific’ stance persisted right through my adult years. I focussed on what I saw to be the shortcomings of organised religion, blaming it for many of the ills in the world; poverty, war, famine. Vehemently independent, I strode through the challenges of life, proud of the fact that I needed no help from anyone.

Then, when I least expected it, I was diagnosed with MS; multiple sclerosis. I was shocked, scared, incredulous and very angry. This couldn’t be happening to me, I was a fitness freak, a bodybuilder, a mother in her 50’s raising a child more or less on her own.

I realised that I wasn’t invincible; I did need help from someone, somewhere. And so began my journey.

I also realised my journey had already begun long before my diagnosis. I had made enquiries some years before, when I was married to a Catholic man, but it all seemed too hard at the time so I didn’t pursue it. I had been to Mass many times, two of my children went to Catholic schools, I even sang in the choir of a well-known Catholic church! But I always felt “on the outer”, like I didn’t fully



belong. I now longed to belong.

I went to see Father Paul to see if it would be possible given my circumstances had

changed. He informed me that of course I could “become a Catholic” and gave me details of the RCIA groups that were about to start in his parish. I must say I was astonished at the joy those words gave me.

Discussions began, and right from the start I was made welcome even though I felt as though I knew

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nothing. Indeed, it was an interesting experience, as a teacher, to have the roles reversed. I had not even been baptised so I had a long way to go. I was determined to put in 100% effort so I did all my “homework”, reflecting on scripture readings and learning a whole new vocabulary; sacraments,



liturgy, initiation, confirmation, reconciliation, the list seemed endless! I even started to understand prayer.

I enjoyed the open-ended question/answer structure of the sessions; we were encouraged to reflect and discuss rather than be told “the right answer”. Much to my surprise, I found myself looking forward to the sessions, and in between, going to Mass and it all starting to make sense. I was starting to feel as though I was part of a community, made possible by God’s unending love.

The Easter Vigil came at last, along with my baptism, confirmation and communion. What an amazing experience; I really did feel reborn and ready to do God’s will in the spirit of Right Judgement and Courage. I am still excited by the question posed at Pentecost, “What sort of a person might I become if I allow myself to be moved by the Holy Spirit?” I am constantly rewarded by using my talents for good.

I now know I have someone to trust, to count on, to be my guide, but above all someone who loves me and will go on loving me: “lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age”.  
MATTHEW 28:20

I am blessed with the love of God, the life of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

