

An abstract background featuring a dark, almost black, space on the left that transitions into a bright, white light source on the right. From this light source, several sharp, white rays of light extend across the frame, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall effect is dramatic and high-contrast.

# Know the Process

*The Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate  
and The Period of the Catechumenate*

# RCIA Glossary for Common Terms

Archdiocese of Baltimore

RCIA Glossary

May 13, 2011

## RCIA GLOSSARY FOR COMMON TERMS

**BAPTISM:** The first of the seven sacraments, and the "door" which gives access to the other sacraments. Baptism is the first and chief sacrament of forgiveness of sins because it unites us with Christ, who died for our sins and rose for our justification. Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist constitute the "sacraments of initiation" by which a believer receives the remission of original and personal sin, begins a new life in Christ and the Holy Spirit, and is incorporated into the Church, the body of Christ. The rite of Baptism consists in immersing the candidate in water or pouring water on the head while pronouncing the invocation of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**BOOK OF THE ELECT:** The book the catechumens for election are to sign for the Enrollment of Names in the Rite of Election. In the Diocese of Richmond, this is done at the parish Rite of Sending just prior to the Rite of Election. Godparents may sign the book, and the name of the bishop is inscribed as well. Candidates do NOT sign the Book of the Elect.

**CANDIDATE:** One who is already baptized in another Christian faith and who is now preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. At the time of full reception, he or she will make a profession of faith, be confirmed, and receive Eucharist. In the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, "candidate" is also used for those participating in the pre-catechumenate (baptized and unbaptized). It is also used for an uncatechized Catholic who has received neither Confirmation nor Eucharist.

**CATECHESIS:** Catechesis is the process of transmitting the Gospel, as the Christian community has received it, understands it, celebrates it, lives it and communicates it in many ways. Catechesis (Greek "to echo the teaching") is an interactive process in which the Word of God re-sounds between and among the proclaimer, the one receiving the message, and the Holy Spirit! It is a life-long process of initial conversion, formation, education, and on-going conversion. Through word, worship, service and community, it seeks to lead all God's people to an ever deepening relationship with God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**CATECHUMEN:** An unbaptized person who has entered the order of catechumens in the Church through celebration of the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens. Catechumens are preparing for full initiation at the Easter Vigil through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

**CATECHUMENATE:** Second period of Christian initiation of adults and children, which involves intense preparation in word, worship, community life, and apostolic works. This should last at least one year, so as to experience a full liturgical year.

**CHRISM:** Oil mixed with balsam and consecrated by the bishop, used to anoint newly baptized persons, confirmands, and newly ordained priests and bishops. Sacred Chrism is also used in the consecration of churches and altars.

**CONFIRMATION:** One of the ensemble of the Sacraments of Initiation into the Church, together with Baptism and Eucharist. Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which seal or "confirm" the baptized in union with Christ and equip them for active participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church.

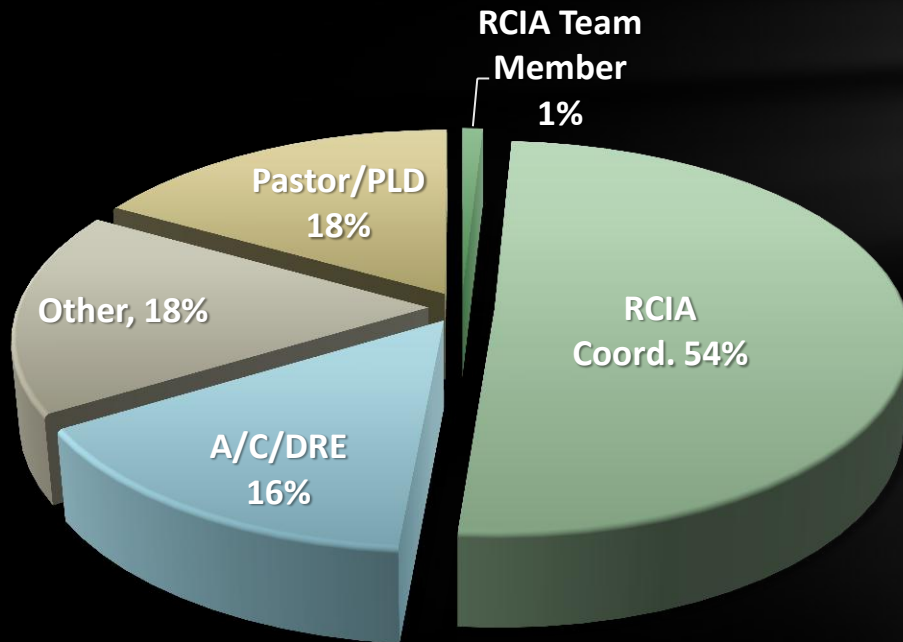
**DOCTRINE:** The formal teachings of the Church.

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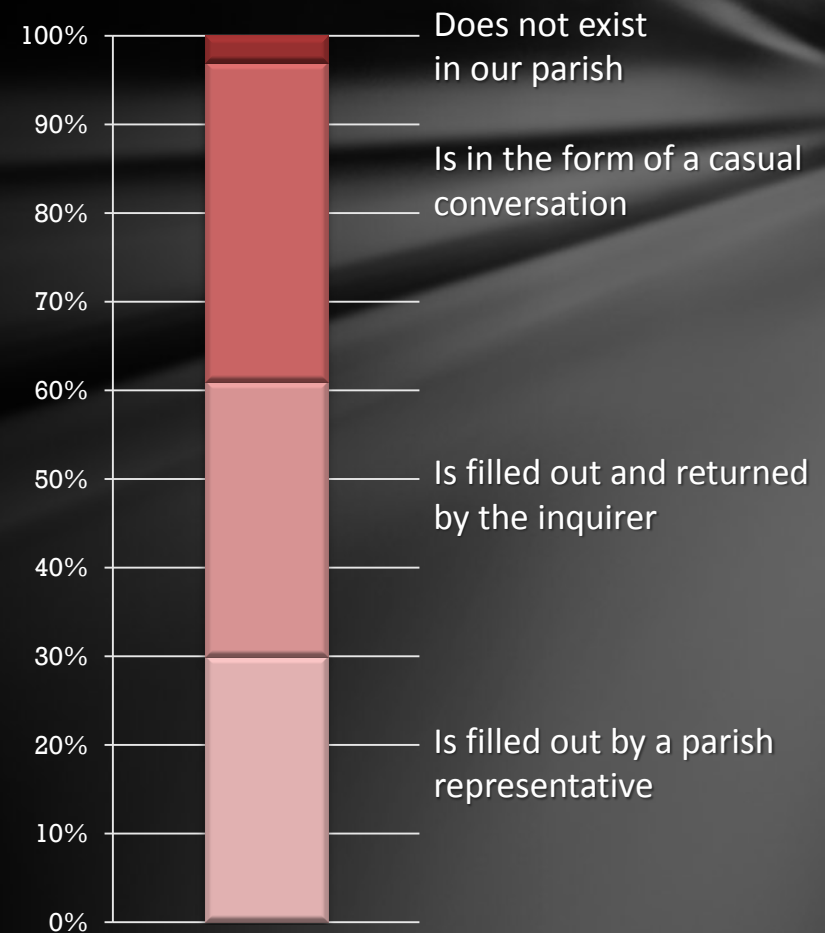
- Year-Round Precatechumenate
- Year-Round Catechumenate
- Year-Long Catechumenate

# Precatechumenate: Time for Initial Conversion

The person of first contact  
is usually...

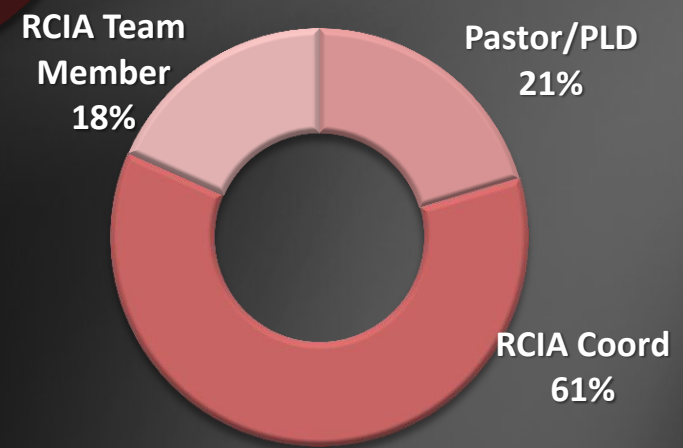
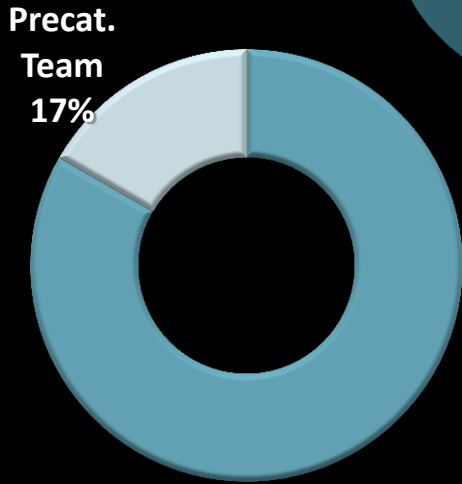
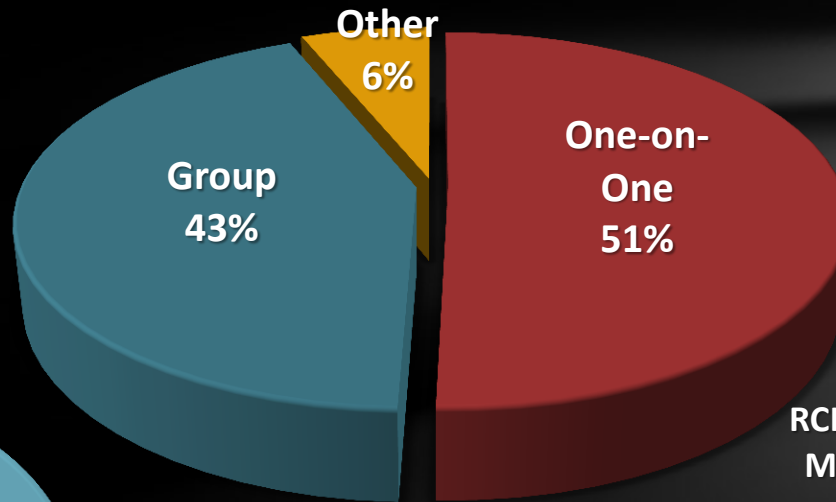


An "intake interview"



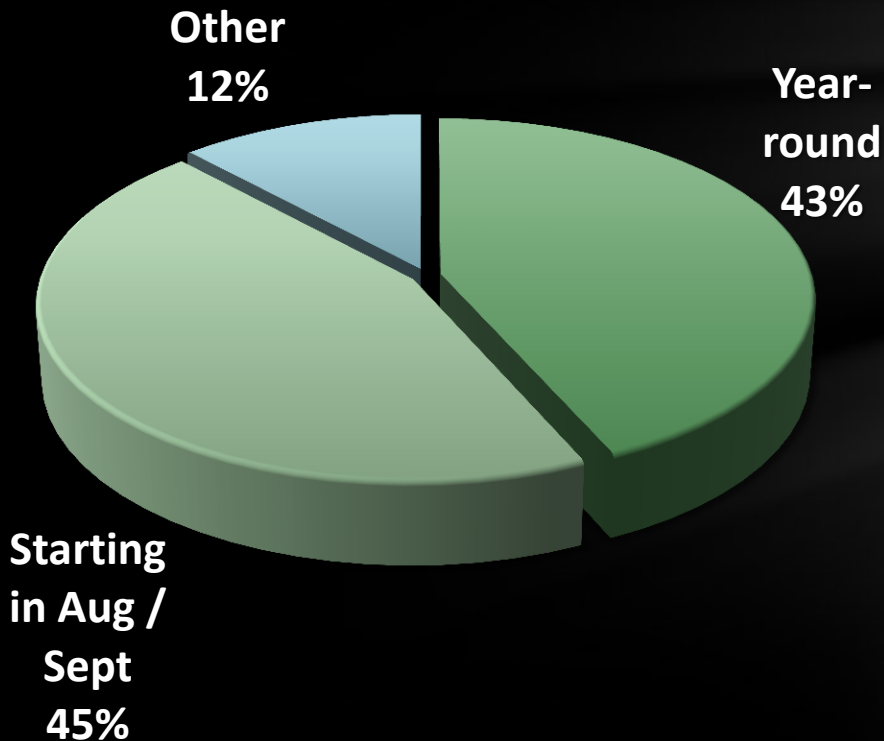
# Inquiry

The following type best describe the inquiry we offer during the Period of the Precatechumenate...

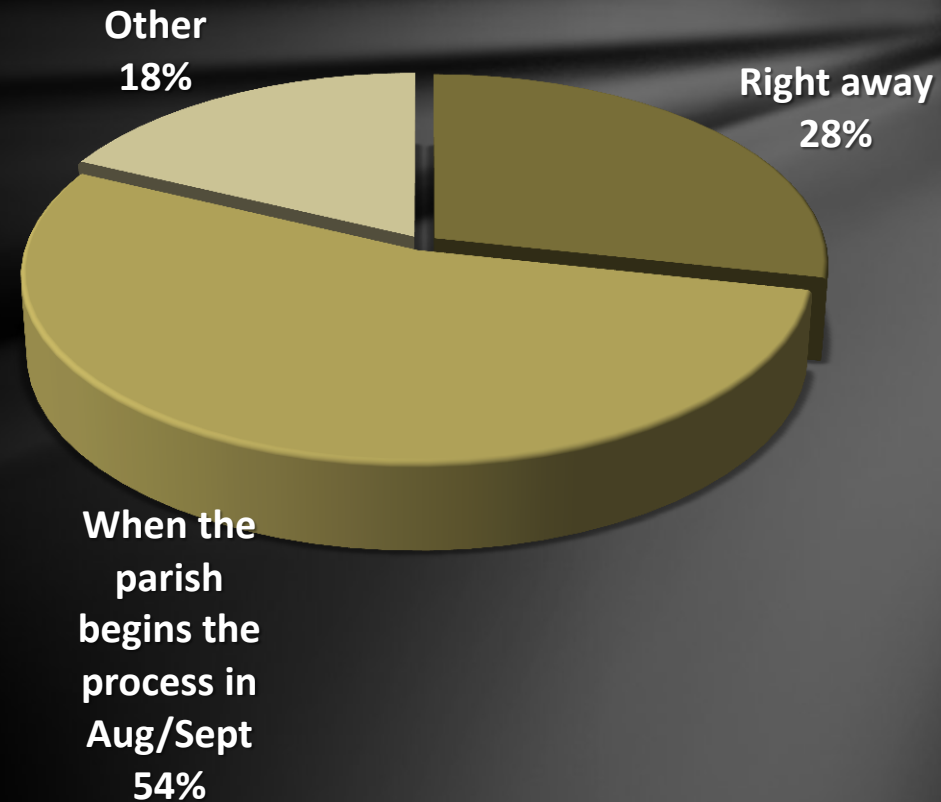


# Inquiry

We invite inquirers into the RCIA...



Our inquirers begin the process...



# Precatechuminate: Time for Initial Conversion

## Personal conversion story.

1. Select an experience that has brought you some kind of significant change
2. Recall the overall experience
3. Was there an event or person which triggered the experience
4. Were there any people involved? How? (People who helped/people who were obstacles?)
5. How were you feeling before, during, after?
6. Did any questions about your life arise out of the experience?
7. Did the overall experience enable you to embrace the Cross in discipleship?
8. Did this experience change you? Change your behavior?

# Dynamics of the Precatechumenate

**FOCUS:** Welcome, building relationships, sense of hospitality and community

**ELEMENTS:** Appropriate setting, prayer, music, storytelling, eliciting questions, faith-sharing, initial “content”

**INQUIRIES:** Life questions, religious or faith questions, intellectual or theoretical queries, curiosity, casual or purposeful interest

**RESPONSES:** Connections with stories from personal experience or Scripture or Tradition, basic and brief information on Church teaching or practice

**INVITATION TO GROW:** Inquiry leads to deepening faith, satisfaction of initial search, growing into acceptance of challenge to live the faith

**PRAYER:** An element of each gathering leading into the richness of the Church and Scriptures.

**PLANNING AND PREPARATION:** Who, what, when, where, how? Know your team members and all other resources.

# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

**#36** Although the rite of initiation begins with admission to the catechumenate, the preceding **period of precatechumenate is of great importance and as a rule should not be omitted**.

It is a time of evangelization: faithfully and constantly the living God is proclaimed and Jesus Christ whom he has sent for the salvation of all.

Thus those who are not yet Christians, their hearts opened by the Holy Spirit, may believe and be freely converted to the Lord and commit themselves sincerely to him.

For he who is the way, the truth, and the life fulfills all their spiritual expectations, indeed infinitely surpasses them.

# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

**#37** From evangelization, completed with the help of God, come the faith and initial conversion that cause a person to feel called away from sin and drawn into the mystery of God's love.

The whole period of the pre-catechumenate is set aside for this evangelization, so that the genuine will to follow Christ and seek baptism may mature.

# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

**#38** During this period, priests and deacons, catechists and other laypersons are to give the candidates a suitable explanation of the Gospel (see no. 42).

The candidates are to receive help and attention so that with a purified and clearer intention they may cooperate with God's grace.

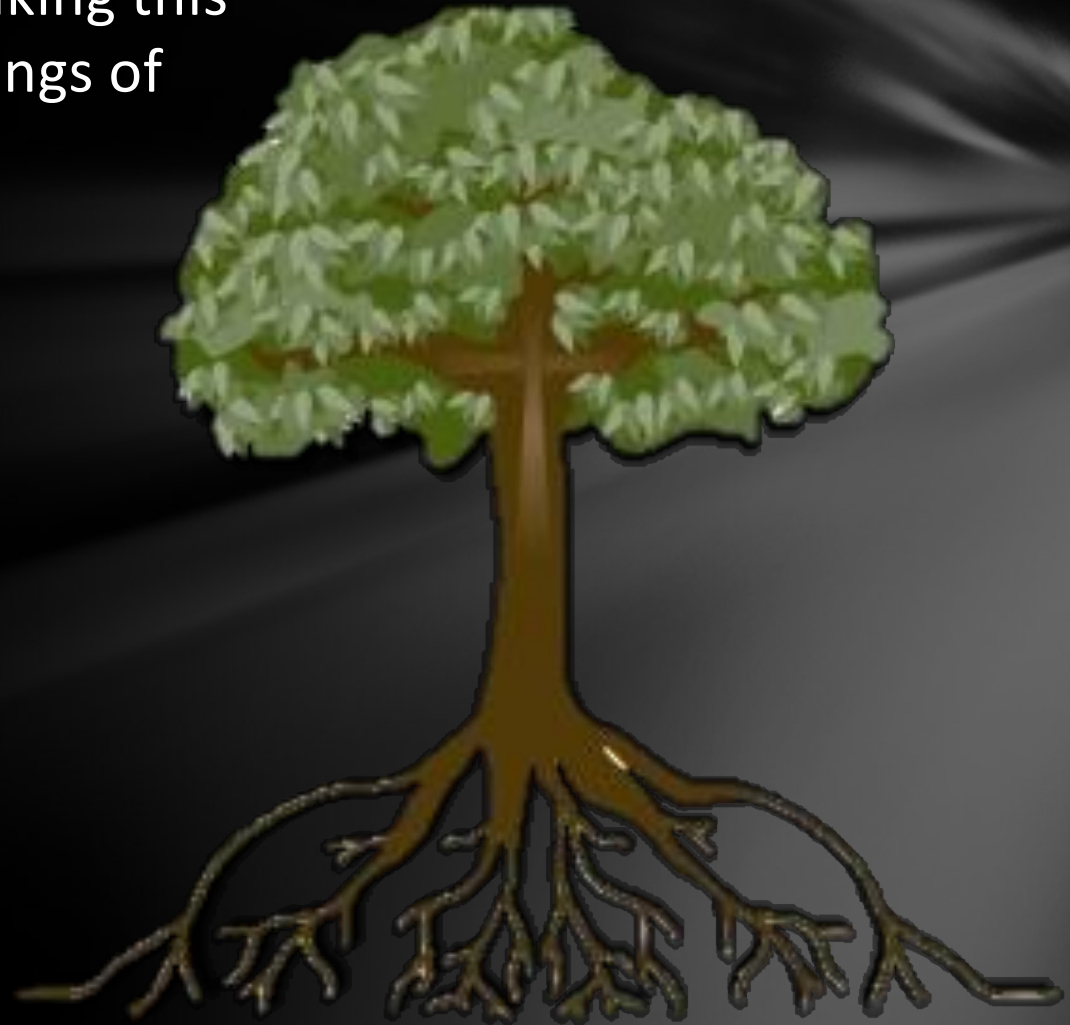
Opportunities should be provided for them to meet families and other groups of Christians.

# Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate

**#40** During the precatechumenate period, parish priests (pastors) should help those taking part in it with prayers suited for them, for example, by celebrating for their spiritual well-being the prayers of exorcism and the blessings given in the ritual (nos. 94, 97).

# First Step *Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens*

**#42** The prerequisite for making this first step is that the beginnings of the spiritual life and the fundamentals of Christian teaching have taken root in the candidates.



# Prerequisites for the First Step

*Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens*

**#42** The prerequisite for making this first step is the...

- **Beginnings of the spiritual life**
- **Sense of the spiritual journey**
- **Fundamentals of Christian teaching have taken root**
- **Evidence of first faith**
- **Initial conversion**
- **Intention to enter into relationship with God**
- **Start of the practice of calling upon God in prayer**
- **First stirrings of repentance**
- **Intention to change lives**
- **Sense of the Church**
- **Experience of the community**
- **Experience of the spirit of Christianity**
- **Instruction on the liturgical Rite of Acceptance**



# Resources for Precatechumenate Ministry

- Questions from the inquirers – finding responses together
- Follow-up from life stories – theirs and yours
- Persons in the community – eventual sponsors and companions
- Variety of prayer experiences and their meaning
- Introduction to God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, the liturgical life of the parish, sacraments, commandments, beatitudes
- Places in the parish's life – a level of familiarity with the church and the parish site
- Activities in the parish – beginning to become involved
- Activities of the people – music, movies, programs
- Handouts, updates, booklets, materials for that will help inquirers know how and where to find information
- Households / families / persons who are willing to host inquiry sessions
- One-on-one time spent with pastoral ministry leaders, director, parishioners and team – reflecting, learning, evaluating
- Insights from the Rite

# Prerequisites for the First Step

*Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens*

## #43 Therefore...

- What length of time is needed?
- What do inquirers need to grow into readiness?
- Who in the parish community would be part of the journey at this time?
- What actions, behaviors, choices would be evident?

# Elements of the Celebration

## *Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens*

- **Public assembly and ritual**
- **Ready to declare their intention to the Church**
- **The Church accepts them as intending to become members**
- **God showers grace, as evidenced by prayer, blessings and affirmation**
- **The first consecration by the Church**
- Exorcisms, renunciation of false worship or receiving a new name (if appropriate and needed) #44
- **Companion / Sponsor to accompany them on the journey #45**
- **Inscription of their names in a parish register of catechumens #46**



# Period of the Catechumenate

*Paragraph 75*

# Period of the Catechumenate

**#75** The catechumenate is an extended period during which the candidates are given suitable pastoral formation and guidance, aimed at training them in the Christian life. In this way, the dispositions manifested at their acceptance into the catechumenate are brought to maturity. This is achieved in four ways...

**SCRIPTURE-BASED /  
LECTIONARY AS GUIDE**

**PRAYER, LITURGY AND RITES**

**COMMUNITY CONNECTION**

**SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT**

# Period of the Catechumenate

**#75** The catechumenate is an extended period during which the candidates are given suitable pastoral formation and guidance, aimed at training them in the Christian life. In this way, the dispositions manifested at their acceptance into the catechumenate are brought to maturity. This is achieved in four ways...

The faith of the Church  
is proclaimed and shared.

Understanding is evidenced.

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**PRAYER, LITURGY AND RITES**

**COMMUNITY CONNECTION**

**SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT**

# Period of the Catechumenate

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These are integral elements of formation. Homilies are important! Rituals are celebrated throughout the period. The use of the Rites belonging to this period.

Conversion is evidenced.

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# Period of the Catechumenate

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The catechumenal community connects with the larger community in sharing the traditions and customs and life of the parish.

Membership and relationship is evidenced.

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PRAYER, LITURGY AND RITES

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT

# Period of the Catechumenate

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SCRIPTURE-BASED /  
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This is to be done in the parish and the community. Witnessing with the community and within the community is necessary.

PRAYER, LITURGY AND RITES

Commitment is evidenced.

COMMUNITY CONNECTION

SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT

# National Statutes for the Catechumenate

## Catechumenate

**NS-2** The term “**catechumenate**” should be strictly reserved for the unbaptized who have been admitted into the order of catechumens; the term “**convert**” should be reserved strictly for those converted from unbelief to Christian belief and never used of those baptized Christians who are received into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

**NS-3** This holds true even if the elements of catechumenal formation are appropriate for those who are not catechumens, names, (a) baptized Catholic Christians who have not received catechetical instruction and whose Christian initiation has not been completed by confirmation and eucharist and (b) baptized Christians who have been members of another Church or ecclesial community and seek to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

# National Statutes for the Catechumenate

## Catechumenate

**NS-4** If the catechumenal preparation takes place in a non-parochial setting such as a center, school or other institution, the catechumens should be introduced into the Christian life of a parish or similar community from the very beginning of the catechumenate, so that after their initiation and mystagogy they will not find themselves isolated from the ordinary life of Christian people.

# National Statutes for the Catechumenate

## Catechumenate

**NS-6** The period of the catechumenate, beginning at acceptance into the order of catechumens and including both the catechumenate proper and the period of purification and enlightenment after election or enrollment of names, should extend for at least one year of formation, instruction, and probation. Ordinarily this period should go from at least the Easter season of one year until the next; preferably it should begin before Lent in one year and extend until Easter the following year.

**NS-7** A thoroughly comprehensive catechesis on the truths of the Catholic doctrine and moral life, aided by approved catechetical texts, is to be provided during the period of the catechumenate (see RCIA, no. 75).

# Period of the Catechumenate

## #75.1

A suitable catechesis is provided...

*by priests or deacons, or by catechists and others of the faithful*

...planned to be gradual and complete in its coverage,

accommodated to the liturgical year, and

solidly supported by celebrations of the word.

This catechesis leads the catechumens not only to an appropriate acquaintance with dogmas and precepts but also to a profound sense of the mystery of salvation in which they desire to participate.



# Period of the Catechumenate

## #75.2

As they become familiar with the Christian way of life and are helped by the example and support of sponsors, godparents, and the entire Christian community, the catechumens learn to turn more readily to God in prayer, to bear witness to the faith, in all things to keep their hopes set on Christ, to follow supernatural inspiration in their deeds, and to practice love of neighbor, even at the cost of self renunciation.

# Period of the Catechumenate

## #75.2

Thus formed, “the newly converted set out on a spiritual journey. Already sharing through faith in the mystery of Christ’s death and resurrection, they pass from the old to a new nature made perfect in Christ. Since this transition brings with it a progressive change of outlook and conduct, it should become manifest by means of its social consequences and it should develop gradually during the period of the catechumenate. Since the Lord in whom they believe is a sign of contradiction, the newly converted often experience divisions and separations, but they also taste the joy that God gives without measure.”

# Period of the Catechumenate

## #75.3

The Church, like a mother, helps the catechumens on their journey by means of suitable liturgical rites, which purify the catechumens little by little and strengthen them with God's blessing.

**Celebrations of the Word of God**

**Minor Exorcisms**

**Blessing of the Catechumens**

**Anointing of the Catechumens**

# SONG

Reading

Psalm

Gospel

Homily/Reflection

Minor Exorcism

Blessing

Song

**The Summons**



1. Will you come and fol - low me If I but  
2. Will you leave your - self be - hind If I but  
3. Will you let the blind - ed see If I but  
4. Will you love the 'you' you hide If I but  
5. Lord, your sum - mons ech - oes true When you but

call your name? Will you go where  
call your name? Will you care for  
call your name? Will you set the  
call your name? Will you quell the  
call my name. Let me turn and

you don't know And nev - er be the same?  
cruel and kind And nev - er be the same?  
pris - 'ners free And nev - er be the same?  
fear in - side And nev - er be the same?  
fol - low you And nev - er be the same.

## Celebrations of the Word of God

### Minor Exorcisms

### Blessing of the Catechumens

### Anointing of the Catechumens

# Celebrations of the Word of God

## Minor Exorcisms

### Blessing of the Catechumens

Song

READING

Psalm

Gospel

Homily/Reflection

Minor Exorcism

Blessing

Song

*Job 38:1,8-11*

The LORD addressed Job out of the storm and said:

“Who shut within doors the sea,  
when it burst forth from the womb;

When I made the clouds its garment  
and thick darkness its swaddling bands?

When I set limits for it and fastened the bar of its door,  
and said: Thus far shall you come but no farther,  
and here shall your proud waves be stilled!

# Celebrations of the Word of God

## Minor Exorcisms

### Blessing of the Catechumens

Song

Reading

PSALM

Gospel

Homily/Reflection

Minor Exorcism

Blessing

Song



Give thanks to the Lord, his love is ev-er-last - ing.

Some sailed to the sea in ships  
to trade on the mighty waters.  
They saw the deeds of the LORD,  
the wonders he does in the deep. R.

Then they cried to the LORD in their need  
and he rescued them from their distress.  
God stilled the storm to a whisper;  
all the waves of the sea were hushed. R.

For God spoke and summoned the gale,  
tossing the waves of the sea  
up to heaven and back into the deep;  
their souls melted away in distress. R.

They rejoiced because of the calm  
and God led them to the haven they  
desired.  
Let them confess the love of the LORD,  
the wonders God does for the people. R.

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# Celebrations of the Word of God

## Minor Exorcisms

### Blessing of the Catechumens

Song

Reading

Psalm

**GOSPEL**

Homily/Reflection

Minor Exorcism

Blessing

Song

*Mark 4:35-41*

On that day, as evening drew on, Jesus said to his disciples:  
“Let us cross to the other side.”

Leaving the crowd, they took Jesus with them  
in the boat just as he was. And other boats were with him.

A violent squall came up and waves  
were breaking over the boat, so that it was already filling up.  
Jesus was in the stern, asleep on a cushion.

They woke him and said to him,  
“Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

He woke up, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea,  
“Quiet! Be still!”

The wind ceased and there was great calm.

Then he asked them,  
“Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?”

They were filled with great awe and said to one another,  
“Who then is this whom even wind and sea obey?”

# Celebrations of the Word of God

## Minor Exorcisms

### Blessing of the Catechumens

Song

Reading

Psalm

Gospel

Homily/Reflection

**MINOR EXORCISM**

Blessing

Song

Lord Jesus Christ,  
after calming the storms and freeing the possessed,  
you gave us a sign of your mercy  
by calling Matthew, the tax collector, to follow you.  
You chose him to record for all time  
your command to teach all nations.  
We pray for these your servants  
who confess that they are sinners.  
Hold in check the power of the evil one,  
and show them your mercy;  
heal in them the wounds of sin  
and fill their hearts with your peace.  
May they delight in the discovery of the Gospel  
and generously follow your call,  
for you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

# Celebrations of the Word of God

## Minor Exorcisms

### Blessing of the Catechumens

Song

Reading

Psalm

Gospel

Homily/Reflection

Minor Exorcism

**BLESSING**

Song

Lord,  
look with love on your servants,  
who commit themselves to your name  
and bow before you in worship.  
Help them to desire what is good;  
arouse their hearts,  
that they may always remember  
your works and your commands  
and eagerly embrace all that is yours.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Celebrations of the Word of God

## Minor Exorcisms

### Blessing of the Catechumens

Song  
Reading  
Psalm  
Gospel  
Homily/Reflection  
Minor Exorcism  
Blessing  
**SONG**

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of three staves of music in G major (one flat) and 2/4 time. The lyrics are: "No storm can shake my in-most calm, While to that rock I'm cling - ing. Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth, How can I keep from sing - ing?" The score includes a key signature change from 2/4 to 4/4 for the final phrase.

No storm can shake my in-most calm, While to that rock I'm  
cling - ing. Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth,  
How can I keep from sing - ing?

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899

Tune: HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING, 8 7 8 7 with refrain; Robert Lowry, 1826-1899; harm. by Robert J. Batastini, b.1942

# Period of the Catechumenate

## #75.3

Celebrations of the word of God are arranged for their benefit, and at Mass they may also take part with the faithful in the liturgy of the word, thus better preparing themselves for their eventual participation in the liturgy of the eucharist.



# Period of the Catechumenate

## #75.3

Ordinarily, however, when they are present in the assembly of the faithful they should be kindly dismissed before the liturgy of the eucharist begins (unless their dismissal would present practical or pastoral problems). For they must await their baptism, which will join them to God's priestly people and empower them to participate in Christ's new worship.



# Period of the Catechumenate

## #75.4

Since the Church's life is apostolic, catechumens should also learn how to **work *actively* with others** to spread the Gospel and build up the Church by the witness of their lives and by professing their faith.



# Period of the Catechumenate

**#76** The duration of the catechumenate will depend on the grace of God and on various circumstances,

- such as the program of instruction for the catechumenate,
- the number of catechists, deacons, and priests,
- the cooperation of the individual catechumens,
- the means necessary for them to come to the site of the catechumenate and spend time there,
- the help of the local community.

**Nothing, therefore, can be settled *a priori*.**

# Period of the Catechumenate

- #76** The time spent in the catechumenate  
should be long enough — several years if necessary —  
for the conversion and faith of the  
catechumens to become strong.  
By their formation in the entire Christian life  
and a sufficiently prolonged probation  
the catechumens are properly initiated into  
the mysteries of salvation and the practice  
of an evangelical way of life.  
By means of sacred rites celebrated at successive  
times they are led into the life of faith,  
worship, and charity belonging to the people of God.

# Period of the Catechumenate

**#78** The instruction that the catechumens receive during this period should be of a kind that while **presenting Catholic teaching in its entirety** also...

- enlightens faith,
- directs the heart toward God,
- fosters participation in the liturgy,
- inspires apostolic activity,
- and nurtures a life completely in accord with the spirit of Christ.



# Period of the Catechumenate

**#79** The rites belonging to the period of the catechumenate

- celebrations of the word of God (nos. 81-89)
- the minor exorcisms (nos. 90-94)
- the blessings of the catechumens (nos. 95-97)
- the anointings of the catechumens (nos. 98-102)
- the presentations of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer may be anticipated (see nos. 103-104).

# Period of the Catechumenate

**#80** During the period of the catechumenate, the catechumens should give thought to choosing the **godparents** who will present them to the Church on the day of their election.

(see no. 11; also *Christian Initiation*, General Introduction, nos. 8-10)

Provision should also be made for the entire community involved in the formation of the catechumens

**-priests, deacons, catechists, sponsors,  
godparents, friends and neighbors-**

to participate in some of the celebrations belonging to the catechumenate, including any of the optional

‘rites of passage.’ (nos. 98-104)

# Brainstorming / Sharing Best Practices

*GROUP ONE*

**Precatechumenate**

*GROUP TWO*

**Catechumenate**

- **List things to do in a given period.**  
*Who, what, where, when...?*
- **What have you done? Why?**
- **New ideas to implement? Why?**