

Order of Christian Initiation for Adults (OCIA)

What is it?

The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults or OCIA is the result of the directive of Vatican Council II for the restoration of the ancient practice of initiation in the church. It is an ongoing communal process of spiritual and educational formation for adults who seek to become full members of the Roman Catholic Church through their conversion of mind and heart.

The OCIA is divided into four stages that respect the individual journey of faith. **The Precatechumenate** or period of inquiry and evangelization is the time when people ask questions about the Catholic Faith. In this period, they learn about the Scriptures, Salvation, Jesus and the kingdom message. **The Period of the Catechumenate** is the second period of the order of Christian Initiation of Adults which is a time of serious and dedicated formation meant to deepen a person's faith/conversion within the community. During this time of study a person learns more about the sacraments, ritual and the life of the church. **The period of Purification and Enlightenment** corresponds to the beginning of Lent. This period lasts for forty days and is primarily a time of prayer and reflection. It is a time when the candidates are called a special name, "*the Elect*" and are encouraged to develop and increase their prayer life. **The period of Mystagogy** completes the initiation process. It begins after Easter Sunday and continues to Pentecost. It is the time following the Easter Vigil and the celebration of the Initiation Sacraments where the newly initiated are called Neophytes and are encouraged to reflect on their experience and their new life in the church.

Who is it for?

The Order of Christian Initiation for Adults is the process through which adults (and children/teens) become full members of the Catholic Faith. If you have never been baptized or, if you have been baptized in another Christian church and would like to consider your faith journey in the Catholic Church, you are invited to attend. There is absolutely no pressure to become a catholic. This is your time and your decision. If you were baptized as a Catholic but never received any formation or never received the remainder of the sacraments of initiation (i.e., Confirmation/and or Eucharist) this process is for you as well. You can begin the process now by filling out the web inquiry form and dropping it off at the Gorette Education Center, mailing it back to the parish office, or email to dengary@smgazorg.