

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH

(200 Ware Avenue, Towson, Maryland 21204)

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults ~~ 2011-2012

On behalf of our Pastor, Rev. Joseph F. Barr, the pastoral staff, and parishioners of Immaculate Conception Church, we welcome you to the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (“RCIA”). The RCIA Team consists of parishioners who are interested in sharing and broadening their knowledge of the Catholic Church with you during this process. The team consists of lifelong Catholics and members who became Catholics through the RCIA process.

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What is the RCIA?

RCIA is the process by which an adult is received into the Catholic Church through the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.

We will meet on **Monday evenings, 7:15 pm – 9:00 pm**, in the Immaculate Conception Convent from **September 19, 2011** through **May 21, 2012**. At these sessions you will have the opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith from RCIA Team members and guest presenters. We will provide you a schedule of Monday session topics, and will also advise of other important dates.

Who will be attending RCIA?

- **Catechumens** are persons who have not been baptized. They will receive all three sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil.
- **Candidates** for full communion with the Catholic Church have been baptized in another Christian tradition and would like to be in full communion with the Catholic Church. They will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance) before the Easter Vigil. During the Easter Vigil, they will make a profession of faith and receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. The Catholic Church considers any person who has been baptized with water by infusion (pouring of water over the head) or by immersion in the name of the Triune God as a Christian. They do not have to be baptized again. If there is some doubt about the validity of the baptism, then we will celebrate a conditional baptism.
- **Catholics who have been baptized but not catechized** (i.e., were not prepared to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist). After renewing their baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil, they will receive the sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist.

What will happen at the Monday evening RCIA sessions?

- **Prayer and Scripture** reading will begin each session. The Scripture will be the same Gospel reading as read at the Sunday Mass the day before. Catechumens, candidates and team members, will have an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the Gospel from their own life experiences.
- **Discussion of the session topic** will then be led by Fr. Stew, by a member of the RCIA Team, or by a guest presenter. Each presenter will be especially knowledgeable of the evening's topic and will share that knowledge with the group. Catechumens, candidates and team members, will have an opportunity to ask questions and to reflect on the meaning of what they learn for their own lives.
- **Closing prayer.** Each session will end with a prayer.
- **Inclement weather policy:** We will follow the policy of Baltimore County Public Schools in regards to canceling because of weather emergencies. If the County schools are closed for the day or close early RCIA will be cancelled. If, for some reason, we need to cancel RCIA on a particular evening you will be notified in advance or via e-mail.

What else should I know about RCIA?

- **Choosing a Sponsor:** Each catechumen and candidate should have a sponsor who will be with them during this process. A sponsor is a *practicing Catholic 18 years of age* who is willing to share with another person her/his faith, love and commitment to Jesus Christ, and to accompany that person in their journey of faith. Your sponsor should accompany you to as many Monday evening sessions as possible, and, in particular, should be with you for important rites that will occur at Mass (*see RCIA Calendar for dates*).
- **RCIA Team Partner:** You will also be partnered with one of the RCIA Team members. This is the person that you can contact with any questions you might have about anything that occurs during the RCIA process. Your partner will also be in touch with you from time to time to remind you of important events or fill you in on sessions you were not able to attend. If you have no one in mind for your sponsor, you may ask your RCIA partner to be your Sponsor.
- **Baptismal Certificate:** Candidates and un-catechized Catholics need to give Fr. Stew a record of their baptism **as soon as possible**. You may give him a copy of your baptismal certificate from your files or you can request a record from the church of your baptism. If you are Catholic, then you should call the parish of your baptism and request a certificate.
- **Catechumens/candidates in second marriages:** A person who has been previously married and now in a new marriage (after divorce) may have to go through the annulment process before he/she is received into the Catholic Church. In obedience to the teachings of Jesus (cf. Matthew 19:1-9; Mark 10:9-12), the Catholic Church views every marriage as valid unless proven otherwise. If you are in this situation, please make an appointment with Fr. Stew **as soon as possible**.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

September 19, 2011

- R.C.I.A. Program begins.

October 24, 2011

- Catechumens and Candidates to turn in the *Catechumen/Candidate Information and Marital Information* sheets to Fr. Stew.

November 7, 2011

- Catechumens and candidates provide the names of their sponsors.

November 27, 2011

- 10:00 am Mass: First Sunday of Advent/Rite of Welcoming (Sponsor required.) Please be seated 15 minutes before starting time.

February 26, 2011

- First Sunday of Lent 10 am Mass: Rite of Sending(IC) & 3:00PM Rite of Election at CMOQ (Sponsor Required).

April 5, 2011

- Mandatory Mass of the Lord's Supper 7:30 pm

April 6, 2011

- Good Friday: Mandatory Service of the Lord's Passion and Death 3:00 pm

April 7, 2011

- Holy Saturday: Mandatory Easter Vigil Practice Time TBA (C/C & Sponsor.)
- Easter Vigil: 8:00 pm The Great Vigil of Easter—Mandatory (C/C & Sponsor.)

May 21, 2011

- R.C.I.A. Closing Mass and Celebration