



What if I'm married civilly, divorced, or divorced and remarried?

If you were married in a civil ceremony or if you are divorced and remarried, your circumstances must be addressed before beginning the OCIA process. If you are divorced but not remarried, you are free to begin the OCIA process. An annulment may be required if you later choose to marry in the Catholic Church. Entry into the OCIA process for the **sole** purpose of marriage in the Church is discouraged. Initiation into the faith is a life-long commitment and the decision should be made with much prayer.

What is OCIA?

The Catholic Church always welcomes new members into its community! The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults is the present-day process by which people enter into the faith. OCIA is a process in which interested men and women can explore Catholicism and make a decision to become a Catholic over a period of months.

Who can apply?

Anyone of high school age or older, who is unbaptized or a baptized Christian of another faith, may participate in the OCIA process.

What is the process?

The process runs in four stages:

1. Precatechumenate or Inquiry Period

The process begins with several weeks of inquiry and instruction, during which interested individuals can learn the core beliefs of the Catholic church, sacraments and rituals, and basic church history. This is a time when inquirers ask a lot of questions of the OCIA team members and class speakers.

2. The Catechumenate

Next is an extended period of weekly classes and other activities designed to involve participants in the church community. This period allows participants the opportunity to examine their commitment to the process through regular attendance at classes and involvement in other parish activities.

3. The Period of Enlightenment and Purification

For those committed, the next step is an intense period of prayer and reflection (normally during Lent) leading to the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation customarily at Easter or when the participant and sponsor agree that the participant is ready to proceed.

4. Mystagogy

Those who have received the sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil will spend time together in reflection and prayer for six weeks until Pentecost.

What documents are required for becoming Catholic?

Baptized Christians of another faith will need a copy of their baptismal record. Copies of marriage certificates and decrees of annulment in the Church may be required if appropriate.

What about attendance?

Regular participation is strongly encouraged at all meetings, days of prayer and community service events. Attendance is viewed as a commitment to the process. Please feel free to discuss any attendance conflicts with one of the OCIA team members.

Does anyone help me?

A sponsor will help you throughout the initiation process. You may choose a sponsor or we will be glad to provide someone for you. They must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church.

When does the process start?

You can begin anytime.

How can I learn more?

Contact the Religious Formation office. Email dre@stvpp.org or call Monday - Thursday, 9am to 3:30pm at 734-285-9840 ext. 102