

Rite of Initiation of a Christian Adult [RCIA]

Have you ever thought of becoming a Catholic?

Some may ask... "why be Catholic?" Good question... To be truly Catholic means to enter into the Catholic wisdom tradition. It means appreciating all of creation and looking at the world from a universal perspective. It means adopting a holistic outlook that encourages personal growth and social transformation. It means building community and learning from history. It means not being afraid to ask questions about faith, about the Church, or about the world in which we live.

Yet all this heritage is pointless unless it also points us to Christ, and to living the gospel. The reason for accepting the Catholic tradition is to learn better from our rich past how to live our faith more deeply today.

Each year at Easter we have the joy and privilege of receiving adults into the Christian community through baptism. The Rite is specifically geared to them, though it is also an occasion to welcome those already baptised in one of our sister churches, who find themselves called by grace to embrace full communion with the Catholic Church and to be embraced by it.

Most of us were baptised as babies – and there is a beautiful rightness about that. Just as we received our natural life from our parents as a sheer gift of love which we did nothing to earn, so the community of Jesus' disciples embraces us with love, not because we have earned it, or because of our personal faith, but as a gift of grace from the heart of God.

Some of you were baptised as adults and you remember your journey and the experience of coming home and knowing you belong. Whatever our personal experience, let us imagine that we have spent our life with no knowledge of Jesus, in a family that has never celebrated the experience of being part of a Christian community. We have been picking up our values from the world around us, and in our search for meaning we keep coming up against a brick wall. We are unable to find our centre and we find ourselves stumbling from crisis to crisis without knowing where we are going. There is no way of judging the value of things and no way of finding forgiveness or of bringing about a reconciliation from the many hurts that life brings. At least, we find that we cannot do these things in a way that satisfies our soul. Then, by whatever means, we come to know of Jesus and so of a God of love. We experience an attraction to be part of a community of faith that offers forgiveness and communion with God as well as a set of values that has stood the test of time, generation after generation. We ask to be part of this community and we are welcomed by baptism. Some of you know this joy. We all know people who would love to experience it if they only knew about it.

Jesus gave his disciples the mission to go to the ends of the earth and invite people to belong in a community that has discovered God's love through Jesus. Our community at St John's prays that God may use us again as his instruments in providing just such a welcome to those whose hearts are being attracted to Jesus, and to those who wish to bring their life and experience in one of our sister churches into the Catholic community, to share with us the Catholic dream, the dream of Jesus that there will indeed be one fold and one shepherd and a world that embraces Jesus in such a way as to embrace 'all the nations of the world'.

If you require further information, please call us... 6254 3236.