

THE RITES OF ACCEPTANCE AND WELCOMING

The adults seeking to learn more about the Catholic faith through the **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)** began their journey with a period of inquiry. This is a personal time of seeking and questioning about God, Jesus, faith and the Scriptures, as well as the Church.

The Rites of Acceptance and Welcoming are celebrated at the end of the inquiry period at the first public gathering for those seeking initiation.

- The *Rite of Acceptance* is celebrated for inquirers who wish to receive all three Sacraments of Initiation — Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. After celebrating this Rite, they become *Catechumens*.
- The *Rite of Welcoming* is celebrated for inquirers who have been baptized in a Christian faith tradition previously and wish to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. After celebrating this Rite, they become *Candidates*.

The Rites are a sign that these inquirers are ready to journey deeper into the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ, making His life, death and resurrection the pattern of their lives along the way. It is also their first public declaration of these intentions. After being presented to the community, they each are marked with the cross, the sign of all the faithful.

The Rites are celebrated within the community of believers so the community can welcome the inquirers to the second step of their faith journey as the community promises to be with the new RCIA participants on this journey of faith. By observing our prayer, words, deeds and actions in the parish and in the broader community, they learn what it means to live as a Catholic Christian today.