

## **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.)**

**What we are doing now.** The catechetical process consists of four periods leading to receiving the sacraments of initiation and beyond into a final period called the neophyte year or mystagogy. This first period is called the precatechumenate and will extend until late November when candidates declare their intention to the Church. The first period consists of inquiry on the part of the “inquirer” or “candidates” and of evangelization and the precatechumenate on the part of the Church. During this time, the RCIA team gives a suitable explanation of salvific events and the Gospel and provides an opportunity to experience the company and spirit of Christians in our community. Inquirers are seeking the truth and the team transmits the words and deeds of revelation. There are no liturgical rites in this period because inquirers have not yet entered into a formal relationship with the Church through the Rite of Acceptance. All inquirers have been given a binder full of conversion stories, informational articles about our faith and examples of common Catholic prayers. Many of the questions asked early on are being answered and some are addressed specifically.

### **Catechism for All of Us...**

In our most recent catechetical session, Bibles were disseminated and we reviewed how to navigate through Sacred Scripture. Patty Norris spoke of Divine Revelation and we researched specific verses that were appropriate to the subject. We learned that Sacred Scripture has to be read in the context of Jesus Christ. Divine Revelation is synonymous with God’s Word. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (Jn 1:1-5)*

We are in desperate need of revelation from God in order to know who he is and what he wants. Revelation is God telling us about himself and his will for us through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. How does God speak to us? In the Old Testament, God the Father reveals himself to us. In the Book of Exodus, God speaks to Moses in the sight of the people at Sinai, and gives them the Ten Commandments. *Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. (Ex 33:11)* God has delivered his Revelation gradually in a series of covenants which were discussed in our last session. God wants to make himself known to us beyond what human reason can tell us, to reveal his plan, to make us partakers in his own life and enable us to know, love, and respond to him beyond what we could do on our own. He reveals himself in increments, little by little, just the same way that he created us. He created us to know him. There will never be a time in our life when we feel that we know it all. It is part of our humanity that we have the potential to learn more about who God is until our last day. *This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1Tim 2:4).*

*In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word and power. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has obtained is more excellent than theirs. (Hb 1:1-4)* In the New Testament, the Son of God was sent by the Father to complete the Divine Revelation. Important: Jesus Christ is the fullness of Divine Revelation. “In giving us his Son, his only and definitive Word, God spoke everything to us at once in this sole Word, and he has no more to say.” (St. John of the Cross) With the death of the last apostle, when John the Apostle died on the Isle of Patmos, Revelation was closed. The complete Revelation of the Father’s character and goodness is revealed only in the Son. *At that time Jesus declared, “I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was*

*thy gracious will. All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. (Mt 11:25-27)*

God speaks to us in human words, as Christ himself took on human flesh. He is truly the Way, the Truth and the Life and the only path to the Father. *"I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."* (Jn 16:12-13) The Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and Son to sustain and guide the Church in guarding and proclaiming God's Revelation. He enabled the apostles to remember and teach all that had been revealed. He inspired the writers of the New Testament. Through the successors of the apostles in union with the bishop of Rome, he protects the Deposit of Faith as taught in the living Tradition of the Church. **Sacred Scripture** is the Revelation of God put down in writing by human authors under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. **Sacred Tradition** is the living transmission of the entirety of Revelation by the successors of the apostles under the guidance and protection of the Holy Spirit. By grace, we are responsible for receiving, accepting, acting upon, and spreading the totality of Revelation. We can grasp the purpose and meaning of our lives by knowing and believing in Christ.

**Asked and Answered.** What is the relationship between Tradition and Sacred Scripture?  
Tradition and Sacred Scripture are bound closely together and communicate one with the other. Each of them makes present and fruitful in the Church the mystery of Christ. They flow out of the same divine well-spring and together make up one sacred deposit of faith from which the Church derives her certainty about revelation.

**Read it for yourself.** Catechism of the Catholic Church (hereafter: CCC) Paragraphs: 50-52, 53-64, 65-67, 68, 74-75, 76, 77-78, 101, 105-106.