

## **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 past Sunday we celebrated the Rites of Acceptance and Welcoming. Our catechumen and our candidates have entered the second Period of the Catechumenate. The Catechumenate is an extended period during which the participants are given suitable pastoral formation and guidance, aimed at training them in the Christian life. It is during this time that the newly converted set out on a spiritual journey, eager to take part in celebrations of the Word of God and to receive blessings and other sacramentals.

We would like to warmly welcome and congratulate our new Catechumen, Susana Ugaz. Catechumens are now part of the household of Christ, since the Church nourishes them with the word of God and sustains them by means of liturgical celebrations. These catechumens learn to turn more readily to God in prayer, to bear witness to the faith, to keep their hopes set on Christ, to follow supernatural inspiration in their deeds and to practice love of neighbor. They should learn how to work actively with others to spread the Gospel and build up the Church by the witness of their lives and by professing their faith.

Our new candidates are Cindy Adkins, Kristen Albers, Todd Ayers, Jeanne Bell, Jay Benson, Troy Bracke, Bruce Cooke, Jennifer Delaney, Isaac Jeffries, Lisa McDonough, Al Metcalf, Shannon Miller, Lauren Morrell, Amanda Neihsel, Allison Picton, Shirley Plummer, Chris Ramos, Greg Wenker and Jeff Woodward. They too, are welcomed into the community and acknowledged to be part of it because they have already been marked with the seal of baptism. They will receive further catechetical formation to prepare for the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. The preparation of these adults also requires a considerable time, during which the faith infused in baptism must grow in them and take deep root through the pastoral formation they receive. These Candidates are preparing for reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church. These baptized but uncatechized Christians who are not Catholic are now called "*candidates for catechetical instruction leading to reception into the full communion of the Catholic Church.*"

A thoroughly comprehensive catechesis on the truths of Catholic doctrine and moral life is provided by the team during this period. While presenting Catholic teaching we try also to enlighten faith, direct the heart toward God, foster participation in the liturgy, inspire apostolic activity and nurture a life completely in accord with the Spirit of Christ.

The initiation of catechumens/candidates is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful. By joining the catechumens in reflecting on the value of the paschal mystery and by renewing their own conversion, the faithful provide an example that will help the catechumens to obey the Holy Spirit more generously.

While the Rites of Acceptance and Welcoming declare the inquirers' decision to enter the Church (or complete their initiation), the Rites of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion which conclude this Period of the Catechumenate herald the participants' readiness for this tremendous, life-changing event to occur in the very short term.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge our parishioners and others who have generously modeled stewardship of time and talent for us by becoming sponsors. They are: Kathy Finnegan, Diane Carrington, Lonnie Eversole, Tom and Kim Hahn, Ed and Mary Ann de St. Aubin, Gary Couch, Sal and Terri Forlini, Eric Kenny, Tanya Laycock, Claudia Reynolds, Kim Fleming, Chris Nachtraub, and Dwight Stephenson, Emily Ingram, Michelle Finn, Sarah Jeffries, Steve McDonough and Ray Hilvert. After the Rite of Acceptance, sponsors are among those who are to provide good example and support so that the catechumens "learn to turn more readily to God in prayer, to bear witness to the faith, in all things to keep their hopes set on Christ, to follow supernatural inspiration in their deeds, and to practice love of neighbor, even at the cost of self-renunciation.