

And You Shall Be My Witnesses

Acts 1:8

**ACTS II:
CONVERSION, PROCLAMATION,
COMMUNITY**

**LEADER'S
EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE
RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS**



Coordinator's Training Handbook

**Community of the New Covenant
Private Association of the Christian Faithful**

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**ACTS II:
CONVERSION, PROCLAMATION,
COMMUNITY**

**LEADER'S
EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE
RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS**

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To all those who have contributed to our growth in the faith, Our families, friends, theology professors, students, and from All whom we have learned in so many different ways, this "work of love" is most gratefully dedicated.

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Foreword

This particular Evangelizer's Handbook is one of an Evangelistic Series for ACTS II: Conversion, Proclamation, Community, a parish-based evangelization process of conversion and training in evangelization.

The ACTS II Process is a comprehensive training that has as its purpose the long-term goal of facilitating the formation of an evangelizing community of the parish. The means to accomplishing this is the Parish Small Group System: the networking of small groups whose primary purpose is evangelistic outreach. The Parish Small Group System is a way of life, a process of conversion, proclamation, community.

ACTS II: Conversion, Proclamation, Community is a total package of parish training in evangelization. It is divided into two parts:

- Part 1: Leadership Training, given by a CETC team, for the laity, those who will take leadership roles within their parish for this evangelization effort.

- Part 2: Evangelization Training of the Parishioners given by those trained in Part 1.

ACTS II is a process. It unfolds according to a specific dynamic which accomplishes far more than the materials alone can do. Throughout the unfolding of this process of life-giving events, the Holy Spirit is able to do what He alone can do: bring about the ever-deepening conversion of the parishioner.

Within the ACTS II Process, the parishioner, the trainee in evangelization, is equipped with the tools and skills to reach out and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ to the unchurched and the alienated/inactive Catholic, and bring them into the Church through the Parish Small Group System.

If you wish more information about this process, please visit our website: www.sncweb.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Schedule R.C.I.A. Weekend

Session One: Introduction	1
Session Two: History of the Church's Initiation Process	13
Session Three: A Definite Vision of Faith and of Church	22
Session Four: Evangelization and the Precatechumenate	29
Session Five: The Catechumenate	45
Session Six: Period of Purification and Enlightenment	55
Session Seven: The Sacraments of Initiation and the Period of Post-baptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy	63
Session Eight: Implementing the R.C.I.A.	70
Session Nine: Pastoral Observations	76

Appendix

Prayer Services	82
Chart: Structure of R.C.I.A.	86
Chart: Overview of R.C.I.A.	87
Individual Activity 1-6	88
Evaluation of R.C.I.A. Training	94
Bibliography	

LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SCHEDULE

R.C.I.A. WEEKEND

SATURDAY

9:00 A.M.	Session One	110 Minutes
10:50 A.M.	Session Two	25 Minutes
11:15 A.M.	Session Three	140 Minutes
1:35 P.M.	Session Four	150 Minutes
4:05 P.M.	Dismissal	

SUNDAY

9:00 A.M.	Session Five	230 Minutes
12:50 P.M.	Session Six	65 Minutes
1:55 P.M.	Session Seven	90 Minutes
3:25 P.M.	Session Eight	10 Minutes
3:35 P.M.	Session Nine	35 Minutes
4:10 P.M.	Dismissal	

LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVE

To come to an understanding of the R.C.I.A., the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

1. Order copies of the following books:
 - a) Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Study Edition; and the
 - b) STUDY TEXT 10, Christian Initiation of Adults, A Commentaryfrom: Office of Publishing Services, USCC, 1312 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington D.C. 20005 for each trainee.
2. Have trainees pick up books and do assignment given in number 3 below, one month before the R.C.I.A. training weekend.
3. All trainees are to read the following in preparation for the R.C.I.A. week-end:
 - a) the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Study Edition, pp. 1-79; and
 - b) Chapters I, II, III, IV and V of STUDY TEXT 10, pp. 1-65.
4. Trainer to read the following in preparation for each of the sessions given for the R.C.I.A. weekend training:
 - a) For Saturday's Sessions:
 - the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Study Edition, pp. 1-76; and
 - Chapters I, II, III and IV of STUDY TEXT 10, pp. 1-54.
 - b) For Sunday's Sessions:
 - the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Study Edition, pp. 77-152; and

-Chapters V and VI of STUDY TEXT 10, pp. 55-102.

5. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
6. Study instructional content on page 2.
7. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
8. Prepare copies of charts: Structure of R.C.I.A., Overview of R.C.I.A., and Prayer Services One and Two.
9. Meet with small group leaders to review session format.
10. Pray with training team 20 minutes before session.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 115 Minutes.

OPENING PRAYER

15 MINS.

1. GIVE out copies of Prayer Service One and ask group to stand.
 2. SIGNAL for music and prayer leaders to begin.
 3. REQUEST Blessing Prayer.
 4. THANK group and ask them to be seated.
-

BEGIN SESSION ONE

1. GIVE out copies of the two charts to each trainee.
2. ASK group to be prepared to take very good notes.
3. STATE session objective:

Our purpose in this session is to acquire an understanding of the R.C.I.A., the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, the Church's official way of initiating people into the Church.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

35 MINS.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught:

I. Chart: Structure of R.C.I.A.

II. Chart: Overview of R.C.I.A.

2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

I. Chart: Structure of R.C.I.A.

A. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a process of initiation which has a twofold goal:

1. Personal commitment to Jesus Christ, which leads a person to live a life based on the Gospel; and

2. Incorporation into the Church.

B. This process, the R.C.I.A., is intended to form those desiring to enter the Church in all aspects of Church life: Scripture, doctrine, liturgy, morality, and ministry, while slowly integrating them into full membership in the Church.

-The main concern of this process is to create within new members **a strong Christian identity** and **a deep solidarity with the community** -- in other words, to form new members for a life of faith within the Catholic Church.

C. Let's look now at the chart: Structure of the R.C.I.A.

Looking at this chart, we see then that the R.C.I.A. is structured into **Periods** and **Steps**. As you can see, it is a process of initiation that is structured into:

1. Four different time **periods**, each having a specific goal; and

2. Three **steps** or **gateways**, liturgical rites, celebrating a person's entrance into each period.

D. The four different periods within the R.C.I.A.:

1. The **first period** is the period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate; and --

-**the step** through which a person enters into the period of the catechumenate is **the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens**.

2. **The second period** is the period of the catechumenate; and

-**the step** through which a person enters into the period of purification and enlightenment is **the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names**.

3. **The third period** is the period of purification and enlightenment.

-**The step** through which a person enters into the Church is called **the Rite of the Sacraments of Initiation**.

-After receiving these sacraments, the person enters **the fourth period**, the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.

E. As we have seen, there are four different time periods within the R.C.I.A., each having a specific goal, and three steps, liturgical rites, which celebrate a persons' entrance into each period.

-It is important to take note of the terms that are used within the R.C.I.A. The **three steps** are not to be confused with the **four periods** within the R.C.I.A.

F. The steps are "gateways" or "doorways" which mark a transition point between periods within the R.C.I.A.

-**Each step** is a celebration of a liturgical rite, celebrating what has taken place in the **previous period**, and to commission and

strengthen the candidate for what is to take place in the **next period**.

1. **The first step** within the R.C.I.A., **the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens**, is the passage into the period of the catechumenate.

-It takes place when initial conversion to Christ has occurred within the inquirer, and the person is now wishing to become a member of the Church.

2. **The second step** within the R.C.I.A., **the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names**, is the passage of the catechumen into the period of purification and enlightenment during which the elect undergoes an intense preparation for the reception of the sacraments of initiation.

-This happens when the faith of the candidate has reached some degree of maturity and the period of catechumenal formation is coming to a close.

-At this time, the catechumen requests admission to the Easter Sacraments.

3. **The third step** within the R.C.I.A., **the Rite of the Sacraments of Initiation** -- that of baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist -- marks the final liturgical celebration of the R.C.I.A.

-Through this rite, the candidates become **full members** of the Church, and these new members, now called the neophytes, enter the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.

G. We will look now at the four periods within the R.C.I.A

1. **The first period** is the period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate.

- a) The goal of the evangelization period is the evangelization of the inquirer --

-to bring the inquirer to have his/her heart opened by the Holy Spirit to believe, to accept, and to be freely converted to the Lord Jesus Christ.

- b) The means used for evangelizing the inquirer can be the moments of evangelization that you have been trained in:

- i) Introduction;
- ii) Establishing relationship;
- iii) Personal testimony;
- iv) Good News proclamation;
- v) Invitation;
- vi) Commitment;
- vii) Pastoral follow-up; and
- viii) Incorporation into the Church.

- c) When the newly evangelized person desires to come into the community, the Church, (s)he celebrates the first step which is the celebration of the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens and enters the second period of the the R.C.I.A.

2. The second period is the period of the catechumenate.

- a) The goal of the catechumenate is the pastoral formation of the catechumen through:

- i) the Word of God;
- ii) training by the suitable discipline of prayer; and

- iii) a changed lifestyle which manifests the catechumen's conversion of mind and morals.
 - b) As the catechumen matures in conversion and faith, (s)he arrives at the second step, the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names, which is celebrated with the community of the faithful.
- 3. The new elect is now in **the third period**, the period of purification and enlightenment. This period is a time of penance.
 - a) The goal of the purification and enlightenment period is to provide a profound spiritual preparation for receiving the sacraments of initiation.
 - b) The time of penance, usually the Lenten season, comes to a close when the elect arrives at the third step, which is the celebration, by the Church, of the sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation and Eucharist, at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday.
- 4. With the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, the newly baptized is now in **the fourth period**, the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.
 - a) The goal of the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy is for the newly baptized to grow in living a life in the Holy Spirit, come to a fuller understanding of the paschal mystery, and

-become truly wise, by savoring the mystery of the love of Jesus Christ, given in the Church through the sacraments and the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

II. Chart: Overview of R.C.I.A.

This chart presents in a clear way, the role of the Church, the task of the candidate, and the time frame or the length of each of the four periods of the R.C.I.A.

- A. **The first period** of the R.C.I.A. is the period of evangelization and precatechumenate.

1. The role of the Church in this period is:
 - a) to welcome the inquirer, the seeker,
 - b) to proclaim the Gospel,
 - c) to make the decision of accepting the inquirer for membership in the community, the Church.

2. All the moments of evangelization are operative in this period.
 - a) It is the time of establishing relationship, of building trust between the inquirer and the community, the Church.
 - b) It is the time of personal testimony, the evangelizer sharing his/her story of faith.
 - c) It is the time to come to understand the meaning of life through the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

3. The task of the candidate, the one seeking Jesus, is:
 - a) to come to initial faith and conversion through the working of the Holy Spirit; and,
 - b) to come to the decision to seek membership in the community, the Church.

4. The **length of time** for the period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate is **unlimited**.

5. When a candidate, inquirer, makes the decision to seek membership in the Church, and to enter into the R.C.I.A., the Church celebrates the **first step** with him/her, the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens.

-This is the first public welcome of the person into the household of the Church.

B. The candidate is now in **the second period**, the period of the catechumenate, and is known as a catechumen.

1. The role of the Church is:

a) to provide complete catechesis, that is, teaching or instruction, through nourishing the catechumen on the Word of God;

-after the celebration of the Liturgy of the Word on Sunday, the catechumens are dismissed and invited to reflect, study, and pray over the Scriptures of that Sunday;

b) to give affirmation and support; and,

c) to make the decision of when to admit the catechumen to the sacraments of initiation.

2. The catechumen is prepared for the second step by means of catechesis, fellowship, prayer, and introduction to the apostolic life, the giving of service in the community.

3. The task of the candidate, the catechumen is:

a) to grow in maturity of faith and conversion;

b) to grow in a deeper commitment to Jesus Christ that is manifested in his/her style of life;

c) to begin to be at home in the community, the Church, that is, to be gradually integrated into the community; and

d) to come to the decision to receive baptism.

4. The **length of time** for the catechumenate is flexible. It may be up to three years.
 5. The catechumen, upon making the decision for baptism, and being accepted for baptism, enters **the second step**, the celebration of the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names.
- C. The elect is now in **the third period**, the period of purification and enlightenment.
1. The role of the Church is:
 - a) to hold the Lenten observance as a parish;
 - b) to celebrate the rites for the elect: the scrutinies, and the presentations; and,
 - c) to carry out the preparation of the elect to receive the sacraments of initiation.
 2. The task of the candidate, the elect, is to make an intense spiritual preparation for receiving the sacraments of initiation.
 3. The **length of time** for the period of purification and enlightenment is **the Lenten season**, i.e., from Ash Wednesday to Holy Thursday.
 4. At the conclusion of the period of purification and enlightenment, the elect reaches **the third and last step** of the R.C.I.A., the celebration of the sacraments of Initiation: baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.
- D. The newly baptized is now in **the last period** of the R.C.I.A., the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.
1. The role of the Church is:

-to give a rich postbaptismal catechesis, especially through

the Sunday Eucharistic celebrations.

2. The task of the newly baptized is:

- a) to grow in deepening his/her understanding of the mysteries of the Lord's love, the sacraments, by experiencing them; and,
- b) to become active in the community of the faithful, his/her parish.

3. The **length of the period** of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy is **the Easter season**, that is, **from Easter to the celebration of Pentecost**.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

30 MINS.

STATE the following:

1. Please study and make your own the periods and steps of the R.C.I.A. as presented in the two charts.

-You have 15 minutes for this.

2. The goal of the R.C.I.A. is twofold: personal commitment to Jesus Christ through ongoing conversion which leads a person to live a life based on the Gospel; and secondly, incorporation into the Church.

Please write your reflections on your own personal experience of ongoing conversion to Jesus Christ which has led you to live a life based on the Gospel and to greater solidarity with the Church.

-You have 15 minutes for this individual activity.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

20 MINS.

STATE the following:

1. Please move into your small groups.
2. The small group leader is to begin and end with prayer. Each person is to share briefly what each has written for the first reflection and when everyone has shared, you are to move on to reflection two, etc.
3. You have 20 minutes to share your personal experience of ongoing conversion to Jesus Christ that has led you to live a life based on the Gospel and to greater solidarity with the Church.

COMMUNITY BREAK

15 MINS.

LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION TWO

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH'S INITIATION PROCESS

OBJECTIVE

To come to an understanding of the history behind the R.C.I.A.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

1. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
2. Review chapter 1 of STUDY TEXT 10.
3. Study instructional content on page 13.
4. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
5. Pray with training team 20 minutes before session.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 35 Minutes.

BEGIN SESSION TWO

1. ASK trainees to take very good notes.
2. STATE session objective:

The purpose of this session is to gain an understanding of the history behind the R.C.I.A.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

30 MINS.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught as a summary to Chapter I of Study Text 10:
 - I. The roots of the catechumenate in the New Testament and the Didache.
 - II. The development of the catechumenate in the early Church Fathers.
 - III. The dissolution of the catechumenate throughout the Middle Ages.
 - IV. The revival of the catechumenate through three successive reform efforts.

2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

What I would like to do now is review four main points that give a succinct history of the catechumenate in the Church.

I. The roots of the catechumenate in the New Testament and the Didache.

- A. While there is no complete account in the New Testament of the method used by the early Church to bring about the formation of new Christians, there are --

-indications in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles of the practice and the experience of the first Christians.

1. The Apostolic Discourses in the Book of Acts are inspired preaching that brought about conversion and faith in those who heard.
 - a) By reflecting on these passages, we are able to gain insight into the understanding that the early Church had of what was required of those coming to faith in Jesus Christ.
 - b) You will remember that we reflected on these Apostolic Discourses in one of the first sessions of our Evangelizer's Handbook, Be An Evangelizer? Me? They are:

- i) Acts 2:14-39;
- ii) Acts 3:12-26;
- iii) Acts 10:34-43;
- iv) Acts 13:16-41;
- v) Acts 17:22-31.

2. The conversion of Cornelius and his household, told in Acts 10:1-48, is important. It gives some idea of what was expected of those desiring baptism.

3. Paul's Epistles give evidence that baptism required moral change in those coming to faith in Jesus: "put on Christ," "put off the old nature."

4. Scripture scholars have identified various hymns and fragments of hymns in the letters that were probably sung as part of a liturgy of baptism. Some of these passages are:

- a) Rom. 6:3-11;
- b) Gal. 3:27-28; and
- c) 1 Pt. 2:10.

5. The Book of Hebrews expresses the understanding of baptism as bringing illumination or enlightenment to the baptized (Heb. 6:3f; 10:32).

B. The Didache is a primitive manual on Church order or practice that was first written in Syria during the second century. It gives definite instructions for baptism.

II. The development of the catechumenate in the early Church Fathers.

A. An important point that we learn from the Church Fathers is that the ritual of initiation into the Church became much more structured.

1. Justin, a lay philosopher and teacher, wrote his Apology for the faith for non-Christian readers.

-In describing the ritual of baptism, he makes it clear that both the local Church and the candidate for baptism were responsible and participated in the rite.

2. From Tertullian's On Baptism, and the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus, we are able to get a glimpse into a developed catechumenate. What we learn is the following.

a) Criteria for admission for baptism:

i) initial evangelization;

ii) candidates were examined more in regard to the impact the faith was having on their lives and their lifestyle than on their intellectual understanding of the faith;

iii) crafts and professions contrary to Gospel values had to be given up (such as: artists who made idols, gladiators, or those who taught them how to fight, prostitutes, etc.); and

iv) sponsors had to give witness to this conversion.

b) Once enrolled in the catechumenate, the candidates became "hearers" of the Word.

c) Their instruction lasted approximately three years and included:

i) principles of Christian life from the Scriptures; and

ii) presence at the Liturgy of the Word with the faithful.

d) As the catechumenate drew to a close, the candidates were again examined on their way of life. Testimony was

again given by others regarding this and then their names were enrolled. Those entering this stage were referred to as the 'elect.'

e) On the Thursday before Easter:

i) they were instructed to bathe;

ii) a fast on Friday and Saturday;

iii) a whole night in vigil Friday;

iv) then, prebaptismal rites of renunciation of Satan and anointing with the oil of exorcism;

v) water baptism: triple immersion following a triple profession of faith in the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit;

vi) a second anointing followed, after which the candidate was clothed and led into the midst of the assembly;

vii) then, the bishop laid hands on each candidate and anointed the candidate with the oil of thanksgiving with a prayer of invocation of the Holy Spirit;

viii) the candidate then joined the community for the Eucharist for the first time.

3. The bishops of the third century insisted on true faith and conversion as requirements for admission to the catechumenate.

-St. John Chrysostom states quite emphatically in a baptismal instruction the requirements for baptism.

"I have said it before, I say it now, and I shall say it again and again: unless a man has corrected the defects of his character and has developed a facility for virtue, let him not be baptized."

4. From these writings, we also learn that during Lent, the catechumens underwent "scrutinies."

a) The understanding of a scrutiny was a catechesis, an instruction, not so much on the intellectual level but an active formation through prayer, laying on of hands, exorcism, fasting, and tasting salt.

b) These were public actions participated in by the entire community.

B. After the Edict of Milan in 313, when Christianity became legal and the state religion, mass conversions were the order of the day, with people's motives being social or political.

-Because a person became a Christian when he or she entered the catechumenate, many stayed as catechumens, some for their whole life. This began the deterioration of the catechumenate.

1. The Church responded by holding the catechumenate during Lent, making it an intense, serious time of formation for the catechumens, in an effort to bring about conversion in those who became catechumens without wanting to change their lifestyle.

-The catechumenate ended with the catechumens being admitted to the sacraments in Holy Week.

2. The Church recognized that the Lenten preparation time was too short, so the practice began of continuing the formation of the newly baptized by means of a mystagogical catechesis during the Easter season.

3. Even with these efforts, from the 5th century on, the catechumenate stagnated into formalism.

III. The dissolution of the catechumenate throughout the Middle Ages.

A. Factors that contributed to the collapse of the catechumenate were:

1. Wrong motives for entering the catechumenate;
2. The chaos and destruction brought about by the barbarian invasions of the early Middle Ages;
3. The increase of infant baptisms.

B. Some of the popes and teachers in the Church tried to counter the deterioration of the catechumenate.

1. Among these popes were Pope Siricus (385), Pope Leo the Great (447), and Pope Gregory II who strongly urged reform.

-One point that was insisted on was that baptisms only be celebrated on Easter and Pentecost in order to give more preparation time.

2. Among the teachers in the Church was St. Boniface, the evangelist of Germany, who instructed his catechumens for two months or longer.

C. One of the effects of this collapse of the catechumenate was the separation of the baptismal rite into three distinct rites.

1. Confirmation became separated through the practice of reserving the postbaptismal anointing to the bishop, and through the theologians considering the rite as the conferring of the Holy Spirit.

-Over the centuries, these rites developed into two distinct sacraments: baptism and confirmation.

2. Over time, first Eucharist gradually became separated from the sacraments of baptism and confirmation.

IV. The revival of the catechumenate through three successive reform efforts.

A. During the sixteenth century:

1. In Latin America, the Franciscans had mass baptisms, which the Dominican and Augustinian missionaries tried to temper later by baptising only four times a year.

-Finally, an Episcopal conference insisted on a catechumenate of forty days, a reform never generally practiced.

2. In Asia and Africa, St. Ignatius of Loyola countered St. Francis Xavier's mass baptisms by establishing catechumenal houses for converts to come together for three months before baptism.

B. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, efforts were made to re-establish the catechumenate. Some of these were the following:

1. Cardinal Julius Anthony Sanctorius wrote the Restored Roman Ritual Based on the Practice of the Ancient Church in 1602.
2. Though Cardinal Sanctorius' work was not promulgated, Thomas of Jesus, a Carmelite, used it to write his work, On the Manner of Procuring Salvation for all Pagans, in 1613.
3. In 1622, when the Society for the Propagation of the Faith was founded, it distributed Thomas of Jesus' book to Asian missionaries who again put initiation into the Church into a process without, however, having liturgical rites to mark the stages.
4. From the 18th century on, Capuchin and Holy Ghost missionaries worked to restore a time of baptismal preparation, but it was the founder of the White Fathers, Cardinal Lavignerie, who rebuilt the catechumenate on the two key elements of:

- a) having baptismal preparation take place in stages, marking different levels in catechesis and conversion; and

b) having a definite time period for the preparation.

-His efforts brought the European Church to recognize the need to restore the catechumenate.

C. Finally, in the twentieth century, the restoration of the catechumenate was accomplished through the decrees of Vatican II.

1. On April 16, 1962, when the Sacred Congregation of Rites issued a decree restoring the rite of baptism in stages, the door for renewal was opened.
2. The Commission on the Liturgy distributed a provisional ritual to the Churches throughout the world in 1966 for experimentation.

-From this came the new Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, promulgated on January 6, 1972, which has guided the development of the catechumenate throughout the Church.

STAND UP BREAK

5 MINS.

LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION THREE

THE BASIS OF THE R.C.I.A.

OBJECTIVE

To come to a deeper understanding of the vision of faith and of Church that underlies the R.C.I.A.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

1. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
2. Review chapter 2 of STUDY TEXT 10; Introduction of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Study Edition, pp. 2-4.
3. Study instructional content on page 22.
4. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
5. Be prepared to respond to the Study Guide reflections questions from the Study Text 10 for this session on page 30 should trainees have any questions about these.
6. Meet with small group leaders to learn about the progress of the trainees.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 140 Minutes.

BEGIN SESSION THREE

1. ASK participants to take very good notes.
2. STATE session objective:

The purpose of this session is to come to a deeper understanding of the vision of faith and of Church that underlies the R.C.I.A.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught as a summary to Chapter II of Study Text 10:

- I. The R.C.I.A. is based on a definite vision of faith and the Church.
- II. A review: a succinct overview of the R.C.I.A. through the division of the process by steps and periods.

2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

I. The R.C.I.A. is based on a definite vision of faith and of Church.

A. The goal of the R.C.I.A. is not simply to prepare candidates to receive the sacraments of initiation, but to prepare them for a life of faith within the community, the Church. The twofold goal is:

- 1. Personal commitment to Jesus Christ, witnessed to by living a Gospel way of life; and,
- 2. Integration into the community of the faithful.

B. The **participation of the faithful in the whole process of the catechumenate cannot be stressed enough.** Through this participation, the community renews its own faith and deepens its own conversion.

- 1. The mystery of faith into which the faithful initiate new members is the paschal mystery, the death/resurrection of Jesus.
 - a) It is in the light of the paschal mystery that Christians are able to answer the great questions of human life: Who is God? What is the meaning of suffering, of life, and of death?

- b) The faithful who work with the R.C.I.A. have the great responsibility of both understanding and entering more deeply themselves into the paschal mystery, as --

-revealed in the Scriptures, celebrated in the worship of the Church, and expressed in the lived vocation of Christians to be light to the world.

2. It is important to grasp that the **R.C.I.A. is not a program** which people attend or take, but it is a **gradual process** through which a person experiences conversion on all levels of her or his being: affective, intellectual, moral, and religious.

-It is not possible to program faith, only to recognize the steps and the periods of time for the conversion process to take place.

II. **A review: a succinct overview of the R.C.I.A. through the division of the process by steps and periods.**

A. There are three steps or rites in the process of initiation

The Rite identifies three steps in the process. Each step celebrates the conversion that has been reached, and provides strength for the period of time that is ahead.

1. The **first step** is reached when initial conversion to the person of Jesus Christ has been made, and the person is ready to celebrate the **Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens**.
2. The **second step** is reached when the faith of the catechumen has so matured, that she or he is ready to request admission to the Easter sacraments.

-This requires that the Church test the readiness of the catechumen, who, when accepted, is ready to celebrate the next step -- the **Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names** -- becoming one of the elect for baptism at the Easter Vigil.

3. The **third step** is reached at the end of the intense Lenten time of preparation. The elect celebrates the next step by receiving

the Sacraments of Initiation: baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.

B. **The Rite** also specifies **the periods** of time preceding and following the steps.

1. The **First Period, the Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate**, provides time for the person to come to initial conversion and so the time span for this period is unlimited.

2. The **Second Period, the Period of the Catechumenate**, has a flexible time frame so that catechesis on the faith and ritual celebrations can provide opportunities for the candidate to internalize the faith. So the time frame is determined by the needs and readiness of the candidate.

3. The **Third Period, the Period of Purification and Enlightenment**, always takes place during Lent, and is that intense time for the elect to prepare for the sacraments of initiation by --

-reflection on the Sacred Scriptures, prayer, penance, and the celebration of the Lenten rites.

4. The **Fourth and Last Period, the Period of Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy**, is the Easter season, from Easter to Pentecost, and is a --

-time for the newly baptized to deepen their experience of the sacramental and communal life of the Church.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

40 MINS.

STATE the following:

Write out your response to the following reflections and be prepared to share this in your small groups as well as in the large group.

1. The process of initiation is a process of faith deepening. The central mystery of faith is the paschal mystery, the active entering into the death/resurrection of Jesus Christ.

-Reflect over your faith life and write down the steps and the periods of your faith journey of death/resurrection that has brought you to a greater fullness of faith.

2. A very important aspect of the R.C.I.A. is the participation of the whole community of the parish in the process. The faithful are to be brought to a renewal of their own personal conversion to Jesus Christ.

-Give this goal of the R.C.I.A. serious reflection. Write your own experience of coming to deeper conversion through witnessing conversion in someone else.

3. You have 20 minutes for each reflection.

PREPARATION FOR LUNCH	10 MINS.
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COMMUNITY LUNCH	80 MINS.
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1. ASK one of the trainees to pray a blessing over the lunch.
2. GIVE time for all to get their lunch and to be seated.
3. STATE the following:

During this lunch, we want to give each of you the opportunity to share about these two questions:

-What has your experience been in doing marketplace evangelizing and what has your experience been so far in carrying out the parish evangelization outreach?

4. THANK each person after (s)he shares and give a statement of encouragement after all have shared.
6. ASK all to help clean up after lunch so that everyone will be ready for the next session.

LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION FOUR

EVANGELIZATION AND PRECATECHUMENATE

OBJECTIVE

To come to an understanding of the first period of the R.C.I.A., the Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

1. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
2. Review Chapter III of STUDY TEXT 10.
3. Study instructional content on page 27.
4. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
5. Be prepared to respond to the Study Guide reflections questions from the Study Text 10 for this session on page 39 should trainees have any questions about these.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 170 Minutes

SMALL GROUP SHARING

40 MINS.

STATE the following:

1. Please move into your small groups.
2. The small group leader is to begin and end with prayer. Each person is to share briefly what each has written for the first reflection and when everyone has shared, you are to move on to reflection two, etc.

3. You have 20 minutes to share on each reflection.

LARGE GROUP SHARING

10 MINS.

STATE the following:

1. Who would like to share on the first reflection?

The process of initiation is a process of faith deepening. The central mystery of faith is the paschal mystery, the active entering into the death/resurrection of Jesus Christ.

-Reflect over your faith life and write down the steps and the periods of your faith journey of death/resurrection that has brought you to a greater fullness of faith.

2. Who would like to share on the second reflection?

A very important aspect of the R.C.I.A. is the participation of the whole community of the parish in the process. The faithful are to be brought to a renewal of their own personal conversion to Jesus Christ.

-Give this aspect of the R.C.I.A. serious reflection. Write your own experience of coming to deeper conversion through witnessing conversion in someone else.

BEGIN SESSION FOUR

1. ASK group to be prepared to take notes.
2. STATE session objective:

To come to an understanding of the first period of the R.C.I.A., the Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

50 MINS.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught as a summary to Chapter III of Study Text 10:
 - I. The importance of the First Period of the R.C.I.A., Evangelization and Precatechumenate.
 - II. The need for initial conversion to Jesus Christ, the result of the proclamation of the Good News.
 - III. Time and opportunities for the inquirer, the seeker, and the parish family to become personally acquainted are of utmost importance.
 - IV. The primary goal of the precatechumenate is the ongoing evangelization of the seeker.
 - V. It is necessary to discern if the candidate is ready to become a catechumen.
 - VI. Who are candidates for the R.C.I.A.?
 - VII. The ACTS II Process: an evangelization process of conversion and training in evangelization.
2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

I. The importance of the First Period of the R.C.I.A., Evangelization and Precatechumenate.

- A. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults actually begins with the catechumenate, the second period.
 1. However, if a candidate, the seeker, is going to benefit fully from the entire process of the catechumenate, that is, begin to realize the cost of following the Lord Jesus Christ and --

-have a willingness to enter as much as possible into the paschal mystery of our Lord Jesus Christ, that person must first be initially evangelized and initial conversion the outcome --

-a willingness to begin to put on the mind and heart of Jesus and to take on a new lifestyle centered in Jesus Christ.

2. The period of evangelization and the precatechumenate is so important because true faith and conversion are required for admission to the catechumenate, the second period of the R.C.I.A.

B. In the third century, the bishops insisted on the necessity of faith and, therefore, emphasized how important serious evangelization was to a candidate's being admitted to baptism.

1. Athanasius has this to say:

-"The Savior commanded not only to baptize, he said first 'to teach' and then 'to baptize' so that teaching may give birth to the proper faith and that, with the faith we may be initiated by the sacrament . . . Indeed, the body cannot receive the sacrament of baptism if the soul, before all else, has not welcomed the truth of the faith" (Dujaries, A History of the Catechumennate, p. 86)

2. The faith that these bishops are speaking about is not simply an intellectual faith, but rather a personal faith in Jesus Christ, a personal relationship with Jesus Christ that results from personal conversion to Him.

II. The need for initial conversion to Jesus Christ, the result of the proclamation of the Good News.

A. The preaching of the third century bishops insisted on initial conversion of those desiring to become catechumens, a conversion resulting from the proclamation of the Good News.

1. Each one of us has been trained in how to make a clear, succinct, yet easy to understand presentation of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Gospel.

-How important it is then for us to go through the moments of evangelization with those to whom we reach out.

2. As we reach out in marketplace evangelization and in the parish evangelization outreach, it is urgent that we move from the first

and second moments of evangelization: introduction and establishing relationship to --

- the Good News Proclamation,

- personal Testimony,

- invitation and commitment to Jesus Christ, and

- invite those we initially evangelize to the Parish Small Group System for ongoing evangelization.

-Leading a person to Jesus Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the message. We are the messengers. And the Holy Spirit is the only one who --

- can bring about conversion to Jesus Christ as the Good News is proclaimed.

3. Do not spend the entire visit in establishing relationship. Move along as delicately as possible to the Good News Proclamation.

- a) What a crying need exists in the hearts of people today for the Lord, even though they may not know it.

- b) It is up to each one of us, as trained evangelizers, to bring those to whom we are reaching out, to the realization of their need for Christ, of --

- their need for a personal relationship with Him, the outcome of which is conversion -- initial conversion -- a turning around 180 degrees to Him.

- c) It is only the proclamation of the Good News that will bring this about. As the Good News is proclaimed, the Holy Spirit is able to touch hearts --

- convict hearts, and, therefore, bring persons to acknowledge Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

B. Initial conversion is what the Holy Spirit brings about with the proclamation of the Good News.

1. Note well that I said initial conversion, because conversion is a lifetime process. Each of us has studied this. The process of conversion is given in the Evangelizer's Handbook, 1B.

-Does anyone remember what the process of conversion involves?

Trainer: Allow for some time for people to respond to this question.

2. Conversion is a process and it involves the inquirer's, the seeker's:
 - a) acknowledgement of personal sin followed by repentance and a firm resolution not to sin again;
 - b) belief in Jesus Christ and acceptance of Him as Lord and Savior;
 - c) receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit (that is, laying on of hands gently on the person's head by the evangelizer and praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon this person).
3. Then that person begins the long process of submitting every area of his/her life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
4. The bishops of the third century insisted that conversion be manifested by:
 - a) A life conformed to the faith. If conversion has taken place, then a change in that person's life should be evident.
 - b) Conversion brings about a radical moral change in a per-

son's life because of belief in Jesus Christ, a change that is evident in a life that is morally in accord with the values of the Gospel.

5. That is why, if your recall, in the early Church, the state of life and the manner of living of the candidates for the catechumenate was examined.

a) Their lives were examined on how well their faith in Jesus Christ was having an impact on their lives.

-In other words, was their faith, their belief in Jesus Christ bringing about righteous living, that is, a lifestyle lived in accord with the moral values of the Gospel?

b) If, during the examination of the candidates, it was seen that their lifestyles or professions were contrary to the Gospel, they were to turn from these pursuits or be rejected for the catechumenate and, therefore, baptism.

c) Some examples of lifestyles that had to be turned away from before they could be accepted for baptism were:

i) artists whose job it was to make idols;

ii) gladiators because their goal was to kill their opponent;

iii) those who taught gladiators how to fight; and

iv) prostitutes, etc.

d) The sponsors of candidates for the catechumenate had to verify, that is, give testimony to the fact that such lifestyles had been given up.

6. St. John Chrysostom states quite emphatically, in the following baptismal instruction, the need for conversion, for radical change in a person's lifestyle before being baptized, when he says:

-I have said it before, I say it now, and I shall say it again

and again: unless a man, (a woman), has corrected the defects of his (her) character and has developed a facility for virtue, let him (her) not be baptized." (Dujaries, A History of the Catechumenate, p. 86)

III. Time and opportunities for the inquirer, the seeker, and the parish family to become personally acquainted are of utmost importance.

A. It is important for the evangelizer to learn some necessary facts about the inquirer's background in order for the parish community to care for him or her pastorally during the R.C.I.A. process.

B. The seeker needs to be brought to an honest look at any area of his or her life that requires moral change.

-It is very important that marital situations requiring consultation with the diocesan marriage tribunal be recognized and attended to.

IV. The primary goal of the Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate is the evangelization of the seeker.

A. During this time of bringing the inquirer, the seeker, to that initial conversion -- that personal acceptance and commitment to Jesus Christ --

-the evangelizer relates his/her story to the inquirer by sharing his or her personal testimony that expresses how his or her own process of conversion is rooted in the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ --

-how (s)he has been brought to an abundant life through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

B. It is finally, a clear, humble and powerful Gospel proclamation by the evangelizer that moves the heart of the seeker to conversion and commitment to Jesus Christ.

C. The evangelizer is to bring the initially evangelized candidate into the community, the Parish Small Group System, as well as into the

larger community of the parish for Sunday Eucharist --

-explaining clearly to him or her that together, Christians are the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.

1. It is most important that candidates realize that it is **in the Church** that the life of the Spirit and the mission of evangelization continues.
2. During this period, the inquirer, the seeker, must also be led to purify his or her motives, actively turning away from sin to live the Gospel way of life.

V. It is necessary to discern if the candidate is ready to become a catechumen.

A. An inquirer, seeker, is ready to enter the catechumenate when (s)he gives evidence by lifestyle of having initial faith and conversion.

1. Essentially, the candidate desires discipleship, desires to follow Jesus Christ.
2. This desire leads the candidate to the paschal mystery, the death/resurrection of Jesus. Because this mystery is entered into through baptism --

-evidence of desire to follow Jesus Christ is also seen in the candidate's desire for baptism.

B. In order to assure a free decision on the part of the inquirer, it is wise to allow a space of time before celebrating the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens.

-The inquirer, seeker, should continue meeting in the Parish Small Group System until such time that (s)he desires to become a member of the Church (if unchurched) or be re-membered (if alienated or fallen away).

C. During this time of ongoing evangelization within the Parish Small

Group System, the inquirer, seeker, is to --

- be helped in how to pray,

- be encouraged to pray the Sacred Scriptures and the traditional Catholic prayers, and

- brought into the experience of communal prayer.

-The trained evangelizer should continue to take a personal interest in the person (s)he has initially evangelized and do one-on-one follow-up --

- helping the person with the four essential means to centering one's life on Jesus Christ: prayer, study, community, and service.

D. I think the importance of the first period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate has been well made.

1. Your role, as trained evangelizers, is vital to the world that is in such great need of Jesus Christ, its Lord and Savior.

- a) The Church exists to evangelize. You and I are Church. Therefore, each of us exists to evangelize. God creates in order to call. God creates for vocation, for mission.

- b) Each one of us has been commissioned, mandated for the work of evangelization (Read: Mt. 28:18ff).

2. All of the moments of evangelization that we have studied and have made our own are extremely important.

E. To whom are these moments of evangelization to be brought?

1. To everyone, but especially to the unchurched and the alienated, those who have fallen away from the Church (E.N. 50-53).

2. It is not for us to pick and choose to whom we shall go.

- a) All of us have been mandated and all of us are being guided. And it is to the authority of the Vicar of Christ that we give our obedience.

- b) Pope Paul VI directs us to whom we are to go in his Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelization in the Modern World (Evangelii Nuntiandi).

VI. Who are candidates for the R.C.I.A.?

A. While the R.C.I.A. was meant strictly for the unchurched (the unbaptized), those ordinarily considered for the R.C.I.A. fall into three groups:

1. the unchurched (the unbaptized);

2. those from other Christian denominations desiring to become Catholic;

3. Catholics who have been baptized but are in need of the sacrament of confirmation or Eucharist or both.

B. Then there are the fallen away/alienated who may or may not have a good understanding of the Catholic faith (an interview would determine that), but who have received all of the sacraments of initiation.

-These persons are to be re-membered into the Church.

C. Those who are –

-the unchurched (the unbaptized);

-from other Christian denominations desiring to become Catholic;

-Catholics, who have been baptized, but who are in need of the sacrament of confirmation or Eucharist or both,

are all potential candidates for the R.C.I.A. and would experience the following in our evangelization outreach:

1. be visited by the evangelization teams for the specific purpose of bringing about initial evangelization within them;
2. after being initially evangelized, be invited into the weekly small group home gatherings (the Parish Small Group System) for ongoing evangelization;
3. continue in the weekly Small Group Home Gatherings until such time they decide to enter the catechumenate.

D. Those who are fallen away/alienated would:

1. be visited by the evangelization teams for the specific purpose of bringing about initial evangelization within them;
2. after being initially evangelized, be invited into the weekly Small Group Home Gatherings (the Parish Small Group System) for ongoing evangelization;
3. be re-membered into the Church through the ACTS II Process (a process of conversion and training in evangelization);
4. attend the catechesis given during the precatechumenate, if it is determined that this is what this person needs.

-The interview done by the R.C.I.A. director (or delegated person) would determine whether this person has or does not have adequate understanding of the Catholic faith.

VII. The ACTS II Process: an evangelization process of conversion and training in evangelization.

A. The ACTS II Process has been designed to take care of:

1. The Period of Evangelization and Precatechumenate period of

the R.C.I.A.

2. The Period of Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy of the R.C.I.A.

B. How does the ACTS II Process take care of the period of evangelization and precatechumenate?

1. By facilitating conversion of the active Catholic and training him/her in the skills of "how to" evangelize. These trained active Catholics then reach out to:
 - a) the unchurched (the unbaptized); and
 - b) the fallen away/alienated.
2. They initially evangelize them and then invite them to attend the weekly Small Group Home Gatherings (the Parish Small Group System) where they experience ongoing evangelization.
3. When the unchurched person is ready, (s)he attends the inquiry sessions, and then, when ready enters the period of the catechumenate through the **Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens**.
4. When the fallen away/alienated person is ready, (s)he is **re-membered** into the Church through the ACTS II Process (a process of conversion, growth and training in evangelization).

C. How does the ACTS II Process take care of the period of post-baptismal catechesis or mystagogy?

1. After having received the sacraments of initiation, those initiated into the Church, are known as neophytes.

-They are very enthusiastic and filled with zeal and are in need of a faith-community where they can receive ongoing support and continue to grow.

2. The neophytes return to the weekly Small Group Home Gatherings (the Parish Small Group System) until the ACTS II Evangelization Training component begins again..

-At that time, the neophytes receive training in the "how to" of evangelization so that they can give freely to others what they have received freely.

3. Through the ACTS II Process, the neophytes continue to grow and are equipped to reach out to the unchurched and the fallen away/alienated, to bring them into the Church, the parish, through the **R.C.I.A.**, or through a **re-membering process**.

D. And the ACTS II Process begins again!

COMMUNITY BREAK

20 MINS.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

40 MINS.

STATE the following:

Please write out your responses to the following reflection questions and be prepared to share them in your small group.

1. From your training and your experience as an evangelizer, what do you understand to be the goal of the period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate?
2. From your experience in evangelizing, what do you see as the biggest blocks to a person responding with an eager "YES" to committing/recommitting his or her life to Jesus Christ? Why?
3. Consider each of the moments of evangelization. Is one more important than another in evangelizing someone? If so, why? Which moments do you use well? Why?
4. From your experience, what are the signs in the lifestyle of the one being evangelized that show (s)he has reached the point of becoming a catechumen? Explain.

You have 40 minutes to do this individual activity. That means you have 10 minutes per question. So watch your time.

ASSIGNMENT

STATE the following:

Your assignment for this evening is to read the following:

- Chapters V and VI of STUDY TEXT 10, pp. 55-77; and the
 - Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Study Edition, pp. 77-152.
-

CLOSING PRAYER

10 MINS.

1. REMIND everyone to bring a brown bag lunch for tomorrow.
2. ASK group to turn to Prayer Service One and stand.
3. SIGNAL for music and prayer leaders to begin.
4. DISMISS once prayer time is finished.

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LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION FIVE

THE CATECHUMENATE

OBJECTIVE

To come to an understanding of the second period of the R.C.I.A., the Period of the Catechuminate.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

1. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
2. Read chapter IV of STUDY TEXT 10.
3. Study instructional content on page 44.
4. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
5. Be prepared to respond to the Study Guide reflections questions from the Study Text 10 for this session on pages 53-54 should trainees have any questions about these.
6. Meet with small group leaders to learn the progress of the trainees.
7. Pray with training team 20 minutes before session.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 170 Minutes

OPENING PRAYER

15 MINS.

1. GIVE out copies of Prayer Service Two and ask group to stand.
2. SIGNAL for music and prayer leaders to begin.
3. REQUEST Blessing Prayer.

4. THANK group and ask them to be seated.

SMALL GROUP SHARING

50 MINS.

STATE the following:

1. Please move into your small groups.
2. The small group leader is to begin and end with prayer. Each person is to share briefly what each has written for the first reflection and when everyone has shared, you are to move on to reflection two, etc.
3. You have 45 minutes for this, approximately 12 minutes for each question. So please watch your time. Do not stay longer than 12 minutes on a question.

-If all have not shared on a particular question and the 12 minutes are up, begin the next question with those persons who were not able to share on the previous question because time ran out.

LARGE GROUP SHARING

15 MINS.

STATE the following:

1. Who would like to share on the first reflection?

From your training and your experience as an evangelizer, what do you understand to be the goal of the period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate?

2. Who would like to share on the second reflection?

From your experience in evangelizing, what do you see as the biggest block to a person responding with an eager "YES" to committing/recommitting his/her life to Jesus Christ? Why?

3. Who would like to share on the third reflection question?

Consider each of the moments of evangelization. Is one more important than another in evangelizing someone? If so, why? Which moments do you use well? Why?

4. Who would like to share on the fourth reflection question?

From your experience, what are the signs in the lifestyle of the one being evangelized that show (s)he has reached the point of becoming a catechumen? Explain.

BEGIN SESSION FIVE

STATE session objective:

Our purpose in this session is to come to a clearer understanding of the period of the catechumenate of the R.C.I.A.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

25 MINS.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught as a summary to Chapter IV of STUDY TEXT 10:

- I. The celebration of the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of the Catechumens.
- II. The role of the Church during the period of the catechumenate.
- III. The role of the catechumens during the period of the catechumenate.
- IV. The choice of godparents by the catechumen.

2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

- I. The celebration of the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of the Catechumens.**

We will review now the four main points that were covered in chapter IV of STUDY TEXT 10, which gives a basic explanation of the first step, the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of the Catechumens, and then go into the period of the catechumenate.

A. The caution is given not to assume that all inquirers are ready to enter the period of the catechumenate at the same time.

-For this reason, an interview is to be had the candidates to determine:

-their desire;

-their motivation and readiness;

-their doubts and difficulties.

B. The candidates, inquirers, have three options:

-to request entrance into the catechumenate;

-to continue as inquirers; or,

-to withdraw from the precatechumenate.

C. What are some of the signs of readiness that show that the inquirer, the seeker, is ready to enter the period of the catechumenate?

a) Some signs of readiness that should be present in the candidate, the inquirer, besides the necessary motivation, are the following.

b) There should be some evidence:

i) of the first faith and a grasp of the basics of Christian teaching;

ii) that initial conversion has taken place -- a personal relationship with Jesus Christ has been established -- and a willingness to bring one's life in accord with the Gospel values;

iii) of the first stirrings of repentance;

iv) that prayer is being integrated into the candidate's life: personal prayer, knowledge of traditional prayers, and praying with others.

D. Sponsors are to accompany the candidate, the inquirer, seeking to enter the period of the catechumenate.

- "Sponsors are persons who have known and assisted the candidates and stand as witnesses to the candidates' moral character, faith, and intention" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 10).

E. It is for this Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens that the candidates gather publicly for the first time before the community, the local Church.

1. The Rite has three parts:

a) The reception of the candidates at the entrance to the Church.

i) The candidates are presented at the entrance to the Church where a dialogue with the celebrant takes place.

-According to pastoral need, a rite of exorcism and renunciation of non-Christian worship may be done (RCIA Study Edition, nos. 69-72)

ii) What follows is the signing of the forehead and the senses: the ears, the eyes, the lips, the heart, the shoulders, the hands, and the feet (RCIA Study Edition, n. 56).

-This signing of the forehead and the senses with the sign of the Cross symbolizes the candidates being claimed for Jesus Christ.

b) The Celebration of the Word is the second part of this Rite.

i) The celebration of the Liturgy of the Word is a very important part of this Rite, because it is upon the Word that the candidates will feed and be formed throughout the period of the catechumenate.

ii) To symbolize this, each candidate is given a copy of the Gospels or the Cross, or both (RCIA Study Edition, n. 64).

c) The third and final part of the Rite is the dismissal of the new catechumens before the liturgy of the Eucharist begins.

-This is a significant moment because through the dismissal, the catechumens are sent and invited to go now and be fed and formed by the Word of God, through reflection, study, and prayer over it.

F. As members of the Order of Catechumens, the names of the catechumens are recorded in the register of catechumens, along with the names of the sponsors.

G. As catechumens, they are now members of the Catholic Church (although unbaptized members), and have certain rights and privileges within the Church (RCIA Study Edition, n. 47):

1. The right to marry within the Church; even if the person that a catechumen is going to marry is not a Catholic, a Catholic marriage can be celebrated;
2. The right to receive a Christian burial;
3. Is expected to acknowledge the faith during times of persecution;
4. Is expected to become involved in some type of Church ministry, such as visiting the sick.

H. The length of time for the catechumenate will vary according to the catechumen and the local Church (RCIA Study Edition, n. 76).

-It is to be a sufficient period of time for conversion and faith to deepen and grow.

II. The role of the Church during the period of the catechumenate.

A. The catechumenate is to be an extensive period of pastoral formation (RCIA Study Edition, n. 75) which has as its goal the ever-deepening conversion of the catechumen to the Gospel way of life.

1. The local Church is to nourish the catechumens with the Word of God and help them with appropriate celebrations of the Word of God.
2. Along with this catechesis -- this formation by the Word of God -- the catechumens are to have concrete experiences of community, prayer and service in --

-order to learn how to work actively with the faithful of the parish for the spread of the Gospel and the building up of the kingdom of God.

B. The Church celebrates special liturgical rites for the formation of the catechumens. These are as follows.

1. First, the celebrations of the Word, relating the catechesis to the Church year, are essential for the catechumens:
 - a) the Sunday Liturgy of the Word with prayer, reflection, and study following the dismissal; and
 - b) the Liturgy of the Word that closes the catechesis sessions and relates the catechesis to the Sacred Scriptures, that is, allows --

-for the catechumens to make their own what has taken place during this session.

- c) in addition, such celebrations provide opportunity for the catechumens to experience and reflect upon the symbols and seasons of the liturgy.
2. Secondly, the minor exorcisms, powerful prayers bringing healing and the strength of God on the catechumens and which can be used more than once, are celebrated with the Liturgy of the Word either on Sunday or after the sessions of catechesis.
 3. Thirdly, in the same way, the blessings prayed over the catechumens are given as conclusions to the liturgy of the Word.
 4. Fourthly, the special Lenten rites may be anticipated during the catechumenate as a matter of pastoral care when mature faith and commitment are evidenced in the catechumens. Such rites are:
 - a) the presentations of the Creed and the Our Father;
 - b) the ephphetha rite, the rite of opening the ears and mouth; and
 - c) the anointing with the oil of catechumens for the strengthening of the catechumens.

III. The role of the catechumens during the period of the catechumenate.

- A. The first task of the catechumen is to put on the mind of Christ through the deepening of faith and conversion.
- B. It is a process of conversion at all levels of the catechumen's life that brings him or her into the experience of the paschal mystery, putting off the old and putting on the new.
- C. The entire process of conversion during the catechumenate must result in a new way of life for the catechumen, the daily living out of the faith.

IV. The choice of godparents by the catechumens.

A final word about a task that the catechumen must accomplish during the catechumenate.

-Since the godparents' role is so important, the catechumen must be helped to choose this important person who will serve as a faith witness and spiritual guide after the Rite of Election.

COMMUNITY BREAK	10 MINS.
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INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY	20 MINS.
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STATE the following:

You are to write out your responses to the following reflection questions and be prepared to share them in your small group.

1. What is the relationship of evangelization to the period of the catechumenate? Explain.
2. The Word of God is the primary source of spiritual nourishment for the catechumens.

-From your personal experience of the Scriptures, write out how you would explain the importance of the Scriptures to someone you are encouraging to become a catechumen.

SMALL GROUP SHARING	25 MINS.
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STATE the following:

1. Please move into your small groups.

2. The small group leader is to begin and end with prayer. Each person is to share briefly what each has written for the first reflection and when everyone has shared, you are to move on to reflection two, etc.
3. You have 25 minutes for this activity. Please watch your time.

PRAYER PARTNER ACTIVITY

10 MINS.

1. ASK prayer partners to get together.
2. TELL prayer partners that they have five minutes each to pray together.
3. CALL group back at the end of ten minutes.

PREPARATION FOR LUNCH

10 MINS.

COMMUNITY LUNCH

60 MINS.

1. ASK one of the trainees to pray a blessing over the lunch.
2. GIVE time for all to get their lunch and to be seated.
3. STATE the following:

During this lunch, we want to give each of you the opportunity to share about this question:

-What are the benefits that you have received from this weekend so far? Please explain.

I will give you some time to think about this before we begin to share on this question.

4. THANK each person after (s)he shares and give a statement of encouragement after all have shared.
6. ASK all to help clean up after lunch so that everyone will be ready for the next session.

LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION SIX

PERIOD OF PURIFICATION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

OBJECTIVES

To come to an understanding of the third period of the R.C.I.A., the Period of Purification and Enlightenment.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINER INSTRUCTOR

1. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
2. Review chapter V of STUDY TEXT 10.
3. Study instructional content on page 52.
4. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
5. Be prepared to respond to the Study Guide reflections questions from the Study Text 10 for this session on page 65 should trainees have any questions about these.
6. Meet with small group leaders to learn the progress of the trainees.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 80 Minutes

BEGIN SESSION SIX

STATE session objective:

Our goal in this session is to come to an understanding of the third period of the R.C.I.A., the Period of Purification and Enlightenment.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

25 MINS.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught as a summary to Chapter V of STUDY TEXT 10:
 - I. The celebration of the Rite of Election.
 - II. The Period of Purification and Enlightenment completes the spiritual and catechetical preparation of the elect for the sacraments of initiation.
2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

I. The celebration of the Rite of Election.

What I am going to do now is review for you the two main points that were covered in chapter V of STUDY TEXT 10, which gives a basic explanation of the second step, the --

-Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names, and then we will look at the third period of the R.C.I.A., the Period of Purification and Enlightenment.

-"The second step in Christian initiation is the liturgical rite called both election and the enrollment of names, which closes the period of the catechumenate proper.

-"The celebration of the rite of election, which usually coincides with the opening of Lent, also marks the beginning of the period of final, more intense preparation for the sacraments of initiation, during which the elect will be encouraged to follow Christ with greater generosity" (RCIA Study Edition. n. 118).

A. The election for the sacraments of Initiation is a critical decision on the part of the catechumen and the Church, that is, the R.C.I.A. team, the pastor, sponsors, godparents, and others delegated by the community (RCIA Study Edition, n. 119).

1. This step, the Rite of Election is called election because "the acceptance made by the Church is founded on the election by God, in whose name the Church acts" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 119).

2. This Rite is also called the Enrollment of Names because "as a pledge of fidelity the candidates inscribe their names in the book that lists those who have been chosen for initiation" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 119).
 3. The catechumen's readiness is manifested by signs of:
 - a) conversion of mind and conduct;
 - b) a sense of Christian faith and charity;
 - c) a sufficient understanding of the Church's teaching, as well as a spirit of faith and charity;
 - d) the express request for the sacraments of initiation (RCIA Study Edition, n. 120).
 4. This step is so critical that the names are given to the bishop for the final decision.
 5. The caution is given not to assume that all catechumens are ready for election at the same time.
- B. The Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names usually is held on the First Sunday of Lent, either in the local parish or at the cathedral with the bishop presiding or a priest or a deacon who acts as the bishop's delegate (RCIA Study Edition, n. 121).
- It is a new moment of coming into community for the catechumens, since the faithful and the catechumens make the Lenten journey of prayer and penance together.
- C. Prior to the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names, godparents are chosen by the catechumens and consent given by the priest or delegated person.
1. Sometimes the sponsor becomes the godparent because of the relationship that has developed during the process of initiation. However, another person may be chosen.

-In either case, with the Rite of Election, the godparent's role officially begins.

2. This relationship of godparent and candidate is to continue beyond the reception of the sacraments of initiation. In the words of the Rite itself --

-"It is the responsibility of godparents:

-to show the candidates how to practice the Gospel in personal and social life,

-to sustain the candidates in moments of hesitancy and anxiety,

-to bear witness, and

-to guide the candidates' progress in the baptismal life" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 11).

3. The godparents exercise their role publicly for the first time at the Rite of Election or Enrollment of Names, when they are called by name to --

-come forward with the catechumen for election, and give testimony to the community on behalf of the catechumen (RCIA Study Edition, nos. 123, 11).

- D. After the catechumens are presented and questioned as to their intention, and their godparents give testimony, the celebrant, ordinarily the bishop, announces the decision of the Church for the catechumens to be enrolled among the elect.

-The godparents may also write their names along with the catechumens in the book of the elect (RCIA Study Edition, n. 132).

- E. Before the new elect are dismissed to reflect on the Word of God, the whole community joins in prayer over them.

II. The Period of Purification and Enlightenment completes the spiritual and catechetical preparation of the elect for the sacraments of initiation.

Both the community and the elect enter the Lenten season in a spirit of penance and recollection in preparation for the celebration of the paschal mystery, Easter.

In the words of the Rite itself,

- "This is a period of more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction, and is intended to purify the minds and hearts of the elect as they search their own consciences and do penance.

- "This period is intended as well to enlighten the minds and hearts of the elect with a deeper knowledge of Christ the Savior.

- "The celebration of certain rites, particularly the scrutinies and the presentations, brings about this process of purification and enlightenment, and extends it over the course of the entire Lenten season" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 139).

A. The Sunday readings of cycle A are used to help the elect and the community enter more deeply into the call to conversion and adherence to Jesus Christ.

1. On the third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of Lent, John's Gospel leads the elect and the assembled faithful through a progression of baptismal symbols:

a) With the Gospel of the Samaritan woman, the assembly is presented with Christ, who is the living water.

b) With the Gospel of the man born blind, the assembly is presented with Christ who is the light of the world.

- c) With the Gospel of Lazarus, the assembly is presented with Christ who is the resurrection and the life.
2. These Scriptures are intended to help the elect grow in their sense of sin and their desire for the Lord, for salvation.
- B. Three scrutinies are celebrated for the elect after the homily on the third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of Lent.
1. The purpose of the scrutinies is "to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation, and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life."

-"These rites, therefore, should complete the conversion of the elect and deepened their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 141).
 2. The scrutinies provide healing prayer for what is still weak and sinful in the elect, liberating them from whatever keeps them from fully accepting the Christian life.
 3. From the first scrutiny on the third Sunday of Lent to the third scrutiny on the fifth Sunday of Lent, "the elect should progress in their perception of sin and their desire for salvation" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 143).
 4. The rite of the scrutinies consists of: intercessions for the elect, a prayer of exorcism, and the dismissal for reflection on the Lenten Word.
- C. The presentations take place at this time as well, unless anticipated during the period of the catechumenate.
1. The presentation of the Creed to the elect takes place the week following the first scrutiny.

-The elect are expected to memorize the Creed which they will recite publicly prior to being baptized (RCIA Study Edition, n. 148).

2. The presentation of the Lord's Prayer to the elect takes place the week following the third scrutiny.

D. When it is possible to bring the elect together during the day of Holy Saturday, some of the preparation rites can be celebrated (rites which help prepare the elect for celebrating the sacraments of initiation), such as:

-the presentation of the Lord's Prayer and the choosing of a baptismal name, to mention a couple.

-The elect are also encouraged to refrain from labor and to keep this holy day in prayer and fasting.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

30 MINS.

STATE the following:

Write out your responses to the following reflection questions and be prepared to share them in your small group.

1. What is the relationship of evangelization to the period of purification and enlightenment? Explain.
2. The means provided by the Church for the deepening of the conversion of the elect are the Sunday Liturgy of the Word, the scrutinies, the presentations, and the preparatory rites.

-Put in writing how you would explain these means to someone that you are hoping to lead into the R.C.I.A.

You have 30 minutes for this activity.

STATE the following:

1. Who would like to share on the first reflection?

What is the relationship of evangelization to the period of purification and enlightenment? Explain.

Trainer: The suggested response to the above follows:

-The period of purification and enlightenment is to continue the evangelization of the elect. The purpose of evangelization is the interior transformation of the person making him or her new.

2. Who would like to share on the second reflection?

The means provided by the Church for the deepening of the conversion of the elect are the Sunday Liturgy of the Word, the scrutinies, the presentations, and the preparatory rites.

-Put in writing how you would explain these means to someone that you are hoping to lead into the R.C.I.A.

Trainer: The suggested response to the above follows:

-It is the Word of God that converts hearts that brings people to repentance and to the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

-The scrutinies help remove the blocks and obstacles to the acceptance of Jesus through the healing prayer of intercession and the laying on of hands.

-The presentation of the Creed and the Our Father

strengthen the elect in his or her acceptance of Jesus by giving the truths of the faith and the power of prayer.

-The preparatory rites are strengthening and healing for the deepening and purifying of the elect for adherence to Jesus Christ. The rites are: the recitation of the Creed, the opening of the ears, and the anointing with the oil of catechumens.

COMMUNITY BREAK

10 MINS.

LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION SEVEN

THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION AND THE PERIOD OF POSTBAPTISMAL CATECHESIS OR MYSTAGOGY

OBJECTIVES

To come to an understanding of the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation as the third step in the R.C.I.A. and also to come to an understanding of the fourth period of the R.C.I.A., the Period of Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mys-tagogy.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

1. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
2. Review chapter VI of STUDY TEXT 10.
3. Study instructional content on page 62.
4. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
5. Be prepared to respond to the reflection questions by having your reflection questions done based on your personal experience, training in ACTS II, and from your knowledge of chapter III of the STUDY TEXT 10.
6. Review session format.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 90 Minutes

BEGIN SESSION SEVEN

STATE session objective:

In this session we want to come to an understanding of the celebration of the sacraments of initiation as the third step in the R.C.I.A.; and also come to an understanding of the fourth period of the R.C.I.A., the period of post-baptismal catechesis or mystagogy.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught as a summary to Chapter VI of STUDY TEXT 10:

- I. The celebration of the sacraments of initiation.
- II. The period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.

2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

I. The celebration of the sacraments of initiation.

What I am going to do now is review for you the two main points that were covered in Chapter VI of Study Text 10, which give a basic explanation of the third step --

-the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, and then discuss the fourth period of the R.C.I.A, the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.

A. "The third step in the Christian initiation of adults is the celebration of baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.

-"Through this final step, the elect, receiving pardon for their sins, are admitted into the people of God. They are graced with adoption as children of God and --

-"are led by the Holy Spirit into the promised fullness of time begun in Christ and, as they share in the Eucharistic sacrifice and meal, even to a foretaste of the kingdom of God" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 206).

B. Of utmost importance is the richness of the symbolism for the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, the symbols of fire, water, and word, each expressing the passage from death to life in a unique way.

1. After the new fire is blessed and the paschal candle lit from it, the Good News of Jesus' victory is proclaimed in the singing of the Easter proclamation.
2. The whole of salvation history is then recalled from the Sacred Scriptures, bringing the elect and the faithful to celebrate their identity as the covenanted people of God.

C. The celebration of the sacrament of baptism.

1. Before celebrating the sacrament of baptism, all the saints are called upon to intercede in the Litany of Saints and the water is blessed with great ceremony.
2. The elect, before they are baptized, renounce Satan and publicly make the profession of the faith, claiming it as their own personal belief.
3. The Rite stresses that baptism in water needs to be a clear symbolism of dying in the waters of death and rising to new life in Jesus Christ. The immersion in water can be of the head only or of the whole body.
4. Following baptism, the explanatory rites, which try to make more clear what has happened in the baptism, are celebrated. These explanatory rites are the:
 - a) anointing with chrism, a sign of the royal priesthood of the baptized and their enrollment in the fellowship of the people of God;
 - b) giving of a white garment signifying the new dignity received by the baptized; and
 - c) giving of a candle, lit from the paschal candle, symbolizing the call of the baptized to live as children of the light.

D. The celebration of the sacrament of confirmation.

1. The Rite strongly stresses that the ancient practice of confirming adults right after baptism be followed, in order to express more clearly the unity of the paschal mystery --

-the mission, the death and resurrection of the Son, Jesus, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the gift of the Father.

2. To assist this symbolism, the celebrant who baptized the elect also confirms them.

E. The celebration of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

1. The newly baptized and confirmed now are able to participate in the covenant meal, the thanksgiving meal of sacrifice, the Holy Eucharist.
2. Now they are one with the faithful in sharing the table of the Word and the table of the body of Jesus Christ. When in communion they receive the body that was given for us and the blood that was shed, the --

-neophytes are strengthened in the gifts they have already received and are given a foretaste of the eternal banquet.

II. The period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.

- #### A. The Easter season is the usual time for the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.

-It is the time of deepening awareness for the neophytes, a time to experience, celebrate, and reflect on the sacramental mysteries they have received, the mysteries of the faith.

1. The Rite presents the means for this period as: meditation on the Gospel, doing the service of charity, and sharing in the Eucharist, all carried out with the community.
2. An important aspect of the new faith of the neophytes is their

mission now to evangelize, to witness to their experience of being brought to life in and through Jesus Christ.

3. The neophytes are introduced into a fuller and more effective understanding of the mysteries through the Gospel message they have learned and the sacraments they have experienced.

-They have truly been renewed in mind, tasted the sweetness of God's Word, received the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and come to know the goodness of the Lord.

- B. Of special importance is the neophytes' presence in special places at the celebration of the Sunday Masses during the period of post-baptismal catechesis or mystagogy, the Easter season.

-These are called the Masses of the neophytes with Cycle A readings recommended.

- C. Other gatherings of the neophytes are necessary in order for them to:

1. 'remember,' to reflect on the 'steps,' the 'gateways' they have passed through in their coming to conversion; from this experience which belongs to Christians and increases as it is lived --

-they come to a new perception of the faith, the Church, and the world.

2. reflect on the Sunday Scriptures; and

3. prepare for their mission of evangelization and their service in the parish.

- D. A celebration at Pentecost is recommended to close the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy and to celebrate the new life of the neophytes.

- E. The neophytes return to the weekly small group home gatherings (the Parish Small Group System) until the ACTS II Evangelization

Training begins again in the Fall.

1. At that time, they are able to receive training in the "how to" of evangelization so that they can give to others freely what they have received freely.
2. Equipped with the tools for evangelization, they are able to reach out to the unchurched and the fallen away/alienated to evangelize them and bring them into the Church through the R.C.I.A. or through a re-membering process.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

20 MINS.

STATE the following:

Please write out your responses to the following questions:

The Emmaus story, Luke 24:13-35, describes the journey of coming to faith. After reading the passage, describe the phases of the disciples' coming to believe in the Risen Jesus. Relate these phases to your own journey of coming to faith as you would witness this to someone you are evangelizing.

SMALL GROUP SHARING

20 MINS.

STATE the following:

1. Please move into your small groups.
2. The small group leader is to begin and end with prayer. Each person is to share briefly what each has written for the reflection question.
3. You have 20 minutes for this activity.

LARGE GROUP SHARING

10 MINS.

STATE the following:

Who would like to share on the reflection question:

The Emmaus story, Luke 24:13-35, describes the journey of coming to faith. After reading the passage, describe the phases of the disciples' coming to believe in the Risen Jesus. Relate these phases to your own journey of coming to faith as you would witness this to someone you are evangelizing.

PRAYER PARTNER ACTIVITY

10 MINS.

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1. ASK prayer partners to get together.
 2. TELL prayer partners that they have five minutes each to pray together.
 3. CALL group back at the end of ten minutes.

COMMUNITY BREAK

10 MINS.

LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION EIGHT

IMPLEMENTING THE R.C.I.A.

OBJECTIVES

To come to an understanding of the ministries involved in the R.C.I.A.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

1. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
2. Review Chapter VII of STUDY TEXT 10.
3. Study instructional content on page 61.
4. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
5. Review session format.
6. Meet with small group leaders to learn the progress of the trainees.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 15 Minutes

BEGIN SESSION EIGHT

STATE session objective:

Our purpose in this session is to get an understanding of the ministries that are involved in the R.C.I.A.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

15 MINS.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught as a summary to Chapter VII of STUDY TEXT 10:

- I. There are special ministries for this process of initiation.
 - II. The bishop has overall responsibility for the R.C.I.A.
 - III. Certain times in the R.C.I.A. are mandated.
 - IV. The conferences of bishops have the responsibility for adaptations of the Rite itself.
2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

What I am going to do now is review for you the four main points that were covered in chapter VII of STUDY TEXT 10 which basically considers the persons responsible for the implementation of the R.C.I.A.

I. There are special ministries for this process of initiation.

- A. Perhaps the most important aspect of the participation of the faith community is that the gradual process of initiation of catechumens takes place within the community of the faithful.

-The community supports the catechumens through their prayer and their example. The initiation of adults is the responsibility of all the baptized.

-The entire community must help the candidates and the catechumens throughout the process of initiation.

1. "During the **period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate** the faithful should remember that for the Church and its members, the supreme purpose of the apostolate is that Christ's message is made known to the world by word and deed and that his grace is communicated.

-The faithful should welcome the candidates into their homes, into their personal conversation, and into community gatherings.

2. "During the **period of the catechumenate**, the faithful should seek to be present at the rites belonging to the catechumenate, having active participation in the responses, prayers,

singing, and acclamations.

- "On the day of election, because it is a day of growth for the community, the faithful, when called upon, should be sure to give honest and carefully considered testimony about the catechumens.

3. "During **the period of purification and enlightenment**, the faithful should participate in the rites of the scrutinies and the presentations, and give the elect the example of their own renewal in the spirit of --

-penance, faith, and charity, being especially fervent in the renewal of their own baptismal promises at the Easter Vigil.

4. "During **the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy**, the faithful should take part in the Masses for the neophytes (the Sunday Masses of the Easter season), welcoming the --

-newly baptized with open arms, making them feel at home in the community of the baptized" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 9).

- B. The community is required to be present and to take an active part in the rites celebrating the three steps:

1. Rite of acceptance into the order of catechumens;
2. Rite of election or enrollment of names; and the
3. Sacraments of initiation.

- C. Of special note is the Lenten observance of the faithful that serves as a support and witness to the elect, as they seek to be purified and enlightened in preparation for the Easter Vigil.

- D. The ministry of the sponsors is very important. Each candidate for the catechumenate must have a sponsor to accompany him/her through the catechumenate to take pastoral concern, to be a

strong faith witness, and to be a source of encouragement.

- "Sponsors are persons who have known and assisted the candidates and stand as witnesses to the candidates' moral character, faith, and intention" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 10).

E. The godparents' role begins at the rite of election or enrollment of names with their giving witness on behalf of the candidates.

1. They accompany the elect through the Lenten preparation, the celebration of the sacraments of initiation during the Easter Vigil, and throughout the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogy.
2. "Godparents are persons chosen by the candidates on the basis of good example, good qualities, and friendship, delegated by the local Christian community, and approved by the priest" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 11).

-The pastoral responsibility of the godparents cannot be over-emphasized because they:

-show the elect, by life and word, how to practice the Gospel in personal and social life, sustaining them in moments of hesitancy and anxiety;

-give Christian witness; and

-support their growth in the baptismal life through the daily living out of the paschal mystery.

F. The catechists' role as teacher is of extreme importance. They must be well prepared with a solid foundation in Scripture, Church teaching, liturgy, and spirituality rooted in the paschal mystery.

- "Their instruction must be filled with the spirit of the Gospel, adapted to the liturgical signs and the cycle of the Church's year, suited to the needs of the catechumens, and as far as possible enriched by local traditions" (RCIA Study Edition, n. 16).

- G. The role of deacons is dependent on the decision of the bishop. They, however, should be ready and prepared to assist in the ministry to catechumens (RCIA Study Edition, n. 15).

- H. The basic responsibility of the priest, along with the celebration of the sacraments of initiation, is to provide for the pastoral and personal care of the catechumens, being especially alert to care for the hesitant and discouraged.

-The priests are also responsible for the correct celebration and the adaptation of the rites (RCIA Study Edition, n. 13).

II. The bishop has overall responsibility for the R.C.I.A.

- A. The responsibilities of the bishop in regard to the catechumenate are clearly stated in the Rite.
 - 1. He sets up or delegates the establishment, regulation and promotion of the program of pastoral formation for catechumens, and admits the candidates to their election and to the sacraments.

 - 2. What is stressed is that the bishop is overseer and head of the local Church, responsible for its life and growth (RCIA Study Edition, n. 12).

- B. It is important that the candidates experience the role of the bishop in order to begin to understand the relationship of the local Church to the universal Church.

III. Certain times in the R.C.I.A. are mandated.

- A. Only with the permission of the bishop can the following times within the R.C.I.A. process be changed:
 - 1. The rite of election or enrollment of names taking place on the First Sunday of Lent; and
 - 2. The sacraments of initiation being celebrated at the Easter Vigil.

- B. What is especially stressed in this section of the Rite is that pastor-

ing of the candidates requires that great care be taken to keep to the fixed points in the R.C.I.A. process in the liturgical calendar.

IV. The conferences of bishops have the responsibility for the adaptation of the Rite itself.

A. The bishops' pastoral responsibility is to adapt the Rite to the needs of their local Churches.

B. While remaining faithful to the Rite, they may add introductory material, musical settings to texts, etc.

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LEADER'S EVANGELIZATION TRAINING GUIDE

SESSION NINE

PASTORAL OBSERVATIONS

OBJECTIVES

To conclude the R.C.I.A. training by summarizing the Pastoral Observations from STUDY TEXT 10.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS--TRAINING INSTRUCTOR

1. Plan for and implement personal prayer time.
2. Review Chapter VIII of STUDY TEXT 10.
3. Study instructional content on page 74.
4. At the end of presentation, ASK if there are any questions about presented material, and ANSWER questions by quoting from presented material.
5. Review session format.

TRAINING INSTRUCTOR PATH

TOTAL TIME: 40 Minutes

BEGIN SESSION NINE

STATE session objective:

I want to conclude the R.C.I.A. training by summarizing the Pastoral Observations from STUDY TEXT 10.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT

10 MINS.

1. LOOK OVER key points to be taught as a summary to Chapter VIII of STUDY TEXT 10:

- I. The theological and pastoral unity of the rites of Christian initiation.
 - II. A consideration of who the catechumens are in the American Catholic Church.
 - III. The context that is necessary in the Church for the R.C.I.A. to be effective.
 - IV. Implications of the R.C.I.A. in areas of sacramental and pastoral practice.
 - V. The restoration of the catechetical-liturgical relationship.
 - VI. The R.C.I.A. affirms the truth that ministry is the responsibility of all baptized Christians.
2. TEACH expanded outline of above key points.

I. The theological and pastoral unity of the rites of Christian initiation.

- A. It is important to note that the key theological aspects of all the rites are in unity.
 1. Meeting God in all the sacraments is to encounter the Trinity: entrance into death and resurrection in, with, and through Jesus Christ, the Son, and becoming a son/daughter of the Father by the Spirit of adoption.
 2. Also, the sacraments of initiation are presented as the final step of Christian initiation.
- B. There is a common goal to the rites: to bring about an informed, active, mature faith that is a developing reality in the candidate.
- C. Of great importance is the understanding of Christian initiation as an ecclesial act (an act of the Church), that is, involving the whole community of the faithful.
- D. An important contrast is seen between the process of initiation for adults and for children.

1. The process for adults moves along the path of conversion, through catechesis (instruction), to sacramental initiation.
 2. For infants, the process is from the sacrament of baptism, through catechesis, to foster conversion.
- E. It is important to note that the Church has made the decision to maintain the ancient tradition of infant baptism along with adult baptism.

-Adult baptism clearly shows the faith response to the call of God, while the baptism of the infant shows God's initiative and the faith of the community.

II. A consideration of who the catechumens are in the American Catholic Church.

- A. According to the Rite, a catechumen is an unbaptized person who asks for sacramental initiation into the Church.

-In the American Catholic Church, however, the inquirers fall into a number of categories:

1. Validly baptized Catholics without experience of the Church;
 2. Validly baptized Catholics without first Eucharist or confirmation;
 3. Those baptized, perhaps confirmed, in another Christian Church.
- B. Pastoral care to provide for each of these groups is essential in the process of initiation.
1. All candidates should participate in the celebration of the rites of initiation, but, a clear distinction must be made between the unbaptized and those already baptized.

2. Care must be taken, above all, not to have the R.C.I.A. deteriorate into a renewal process, or an update program.

III. The context that is necessary in the Church for the R.C.I.A. to take place.

- A. The necessary context is a renewed Church, that is, parishes that are evangelized and are evangelizing communities.
- B. STUDY TEXT 10 quotes Pope Paul VI who states that, "the Church is not only evangelizer, but it begins by being evangelized itself" (E.N., n. 15).

-Evangelization is a major challenge.

IV. Implications of the R.C.I.A. in areas of sacramental and pastoral practice.

- A. The present approach of receiving the sacrament first and then striving to come to faith must be reversed.

-The movement must be from the experience of faith to the reception of the sacrament, not the reverse. This requires that evangelization precede any sacramental preparation.

- B. With the R.C.I.A. as the model for sacramental preparation, the steps are:
 1. Initial period (evangelization and pre-catechumenate);
 2. Catechesis (catechumenate);
 3. Retreat (purification and enlightenment); and
 4. Reception of the sacrament (which must be followed by mystagogy).

V. The restoration of the catechetical-liturgical relationships.

- A. Integrating the R.C.I.A. into Church life will require that work be done to restore the necessary close relation between catechesis and liturgy, with the liturgy bringing to life and experience the truth and the beauty of the catechesis.
- B. One practical aspect of this would be for offices of religious education, liturgy and worship to work much more closely together.

VI. The R.C.I.A. affirms the truth that ministry is the responsibility of all baptized Christians.

- A. With Vatican II, the R.C.I.A. requires that all baptized Christians carry out their role in the apostolate of the Church, namely, evangelization.

-The leaders must be eager to call forth the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the faithful.

- B. Diocesan offices ought to be involved in offering resources for training the laity for their ministry.

ASSIGNMENT

STATE the following:

Your assignment is to complete your reading of STUDY TEXT 10, chapters VII and VIII, pp. 79-102.

EVALUATION OF THE R.C.I.A. TRAINING

5 MINS.

STATE the following:

You have 5 minutes now to complete the evaluation form that I am handing out. Thank you.

LARGE GROUP SHARING

15 MINS.

STATE the following:

1. Please take some time now to think about the following question:

What effect has this R.C.I.A. training had on you and what fruit is it going to produce in your life as an evangelizer?

-You have a few minutes now to write your response.

2. Who would like to share what you have written?

CLOSING PRAYER

10 MINS.

1. ASK group to turn to Prayer Service Two and stand.
3. SIGNAL for music and prayer leaders to begin.
3. DISMISS once prayer time is finished.

* * * * *

APPENDIX

R.C.I.A. WEEKEND

PRAYER SERVICE ONE

OPENING PRAYER

PROCESSION: Leader 1 and Proclaimer of the Good News bring in a candle and the Bible.

ALL: Sing during procession, Song of Good News, #69.

LEADER 1: This candle is a sign of Christ in our midst and Jesus says to us now: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses." We are now reminded of Jesus, the FIRST and GREATEST Evangelizer, being here with us. He wishes to speak to us about our call to evangelize.

LEADER 2: A reading from Matthew 28:18-20 (followed by quiet reflection).

LEADER 1: Let us respond in prayer to Jesus' saving word.

Lord Jesus, you tell us to go out from where we are.

ALL: May we respond with an eager "Yes" to your call.

LEADER 1: Lord Jesus, you tell us to go and to make disciples.

ALL: May we ourselves be faithful disciples, able to witness true discipleship to those we evangelize.

LEADER 1: Lord Jesus, you tell us to go and make disciples of all nations.

ALL: May we be willing to step out and risk in order to make Disciples of all nations.

LEADER 1: Let us pray.

ALL: Father, keep your servants here joyful in hope and faithful in their evangelizing efforts. We pray this in the name of your Son Jesus by the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

ALL: Sing, Glorify Thy Name, #209.

CLOSING PRAYER

LEADER 1: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, we praise and thank you for your presence here with us. We now offer you our evangelizing concerns.

LEADER 2: May we daily invite people into the light of Jesus by our words and actions...

ALL: Spirit of Jesus, send us forth.

LEADER 2: May we grow in an ever-increasing love for those we evangelize...

ALL: Spirit of Jesus, send us forth.

LEADER 2: May we grow daily in the zeal of our love for Jesus...

ALL: Spirit of Jesus, send us forth.

LEADER 2: Together let us praise the Lord in song.

ALL: Sing, How Great Is Our God, #32.

R.C.I.A. WEEKEND

PRAYER SERVICE TWO

OPENING PRAYER

PROCESSION: Leader 1 and Proclaimer of the Good News bring in a candle and the Bible.

ALL: Sing during procession, Come and Worship, #308.

LEADER 1: This candle is a sign of Christ in our midst and Jesus says to us now: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses." We are now reminded of Jesus, the FIRST and GREATEST Evangelizer, being here with us. He wishes to speak to us about the humility required of us as His witnesses.

LEADER 2: A reading from 1 Peter 5:5b-11 (followed by quiet reflection).

LEADER 1: Let us respond in prayer to Jesus' saving word.

Lord Jesus, you call us to clothe ourselves with humility towards one another.

ALL: Give us your Spirit that we may proclaim your name with humble boldness.

LEADER 1: Lord Jesus, you call us to cast all our anxieties on you because you care for us.

ALL: Give us your Spirit to increase our faith and trust in you.

LEADER 1: Lord Jesus, you call us to be firm in our faith.

ALL: Give us your Spirit of holy fortitude and faithfulness in the midst of suffering.

LEADER 1: Let us pray.

Father, you oppose the proud but give grace to the humble. Increase our trust and faith in you, so that in casting all our anxieties on you, we may experience your care for us. You have called us to your eternal glory in Christ. Now, in the power of your Holy Spirit, restore, establish and strengthen us. Amen.

ALL: Sing, He Is Lord, #29.

CLOSING PRAYER

LEADER 1: Let us pray.

Lord Jesus, we praise and thank you for your presence here with us. We now offer you our evangelizing concerns.

EADER 2: May we clothe ourselves with humility towards those we evangelize...

ALL: Spirit of Jesus, send us forth.

LEADER 2: May we be firm in our commitment to give time and energy in reaching out to your people...

ALL: Spirit of Jesus, send us forth.

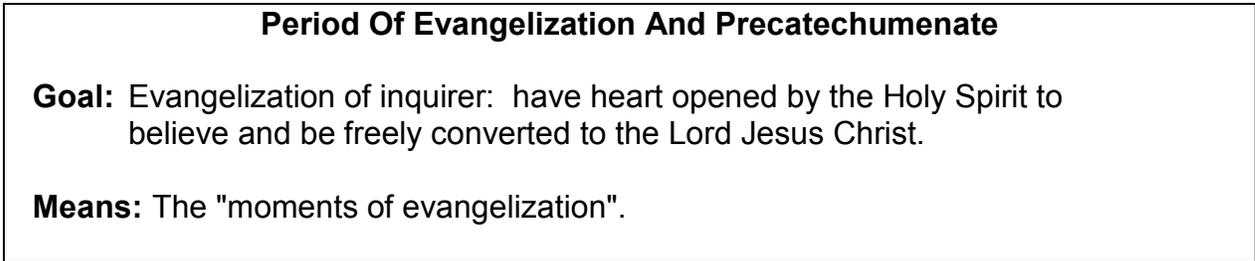
LEADER 2: Together let us praise the Lord in song.

ALL: Sing, The Light of Christ, #52.

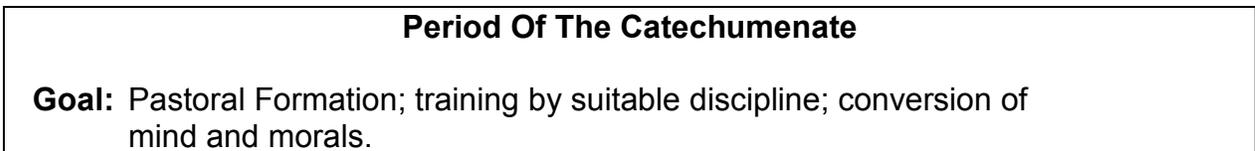
STRUCTURE OF THE R.C.I.A.

Structure: Four PERIODS of time, each having a specific goal.

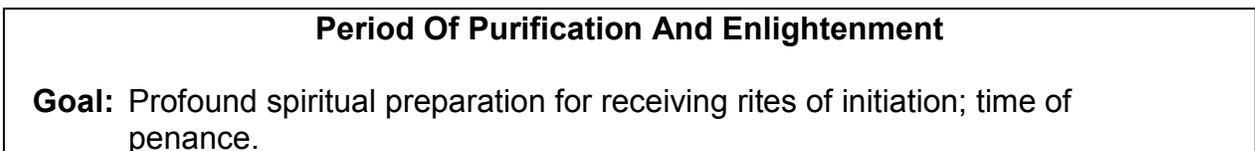
Three STEPS, or gateways, liturgical rites which celebrate a person's entrance into each period.



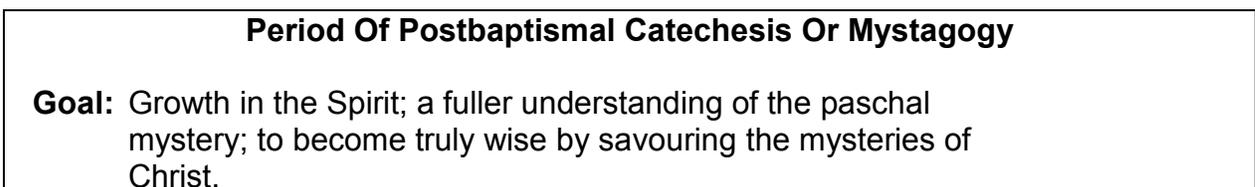
Step 1: The Rite Of Acceptance Into The Order Of Catechumens



Step 2: Rite Of Election Or Enrollment Of Names



Step 3: Sacraments Of Initiation -- Easter Vigil



OVERVIEW OF R.C.I.A.

Period	Role of the Church	Task of Candidate	Length
Evangelization & Precatechumenate	Welcome; Initial proclamation of the Gospel; decision to admit to membership -time to build trust; share personal stories & questions of meaning.	Initial faith and conversion; decision to seek membership in the Church	Not specified; unlimited.

Step 1: Rite Of Acceptance Into The Order Of Catechumens

(First Welcome Into The Household Of The Church)

Period	Role of the Church	Task of Candidate	Length
Catechumenate	Complete catechesis; affirmation & support; decision to admit to the Sacraments of Initiation -Catechesis -Fellowship -Prayer -Introduction to apostolic life	Maturing of faith and conversion; deepening commitment to Christ demonstrated in lifestyle; gradual integration into the Church; decision to receive baptism.	Flexible, up to three years

Step 2: Rite Of Election Or Enrollment Of Names

(Admission To Those Elected For Initiation)

Period	Role of the Church	Task of Candidate	Length
Purification and Enlightenment	-Parish Lenten Observance; -scrutinies, -presentations; -preparation of candidates for Sacraments of Initiation.	Intense spiritual preparation for Sacraments of Initiation.	Lenten season (Ash Wednesday to Holy Thursday).

Step 3: Sacraments Of Initiation -- Easter Vigil

(Full Initiation Into The Church)

Period	Role of the Church	Task of Candidate	Length
Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy	-Postbaptismal catechesis; especially through the Sunday Eucharistic celebrations.	Deepening Christian experience; full integration into the community of the faithful.	Easter season (Easter to Pentecost).

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY 1

1. Please study and make your own the periods and steps of the R.C.I.A. as presented in the two charts.
2. Write out your response to the following reflection and be prepared to share this in your small groups as well as in the large group.

The goal of the R.C.I.A. is twofold: personal commitment to Jesus Christ through ongoing conversion which leads a person to live a life based on the Gospel, and secondly, incorporation into the Church.

Please write your reflections on your own personal experience of ongoing conversion to Jesus Christ which has led you to live a life based on the Gospel, and secondly, to greater solidarity with the Church.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY 2

Write out your response to the following reflections and be prepared to share this in your small groups as well as in the large group.

1. The process of initiation is a process of deepening one's faith. The central mystery of faith is the paschal mystery, the active entering into the death/resurrection of Jesus Christ. It forms the pattern of Christian life and spirituality.

Recall those experiences in your life where you recognized this Christian pattern -- the death/resurrection of Jesus Christ at work in your own life -- dying to self, letting go in order to reach out to growth and new life in Jesus Christ.

Reflect over your faith life and write down the unfolding of your own faith journey of death/resurrection that has brought you to a greater fullness of life and faith.

2. A very important aspect of the R.C.I.A. is the participation of the whole community of the parish in the process. The faithful are to be brought to a renewal of their own personal conversion to Jesus Christ.

Give this aspect of the R.C.I.A. serious reflection. Write your own experience of coming to a renewal of your own personal conversion to Jesus Christ.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY 3

Please write out your responses to the following reflection questions and be prepared to share them in your small group as well as in the large group.

1. What do you understand to be the goal of the period of evangelization and precatechumenate?
2. From your experience in carrying out the supervised outreach, what do you see as the biggest blocks to a person responding with an eager "YES" to committing or recommitting his or her life to Jesus Christ? Why?
3. Consider each of the moments of evangelization.
 - a) Is one more important than another in evangelizing someone? If so, why?
 - b) Which moments do you use well? Why? Which moments do you use poorly? Why?
4. What are the signs in the lifestyle of the one being evangelized who wants to join the Church that show he or she has reached the step of becoming a catechumen? Explain.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY 4

You are to write out your responses to the following reflection questions and be prepared to share them in your small group.

1. What is the relationship of evangelization to the period of the catechumenate period? Explain.
2. The Word of God is the primary source of spiritual nourishment for the catechumens.

From your personal experience of the Scriptures, write out how you would explain the importance of the Scriptures to someone you are encouraging to become a catechumen.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY 5

Write out your responses to the following reflection questions and be prepared to share them in the large group.

1. What is the relationship of evangelization to the period of purification and enlightenment? Explain.
2. The means provided by the Church for the deepening of the conversion of the elect are the Sunday Liturgy of the Word, the scrutinies, the presentations, and the preparatory rites.

Put in writing how you would explain these means to someone who doesn't understand what these are all about.

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY 6

1. Please write out your responses to the following reflection:

The Emmaus story, Luke 24:13-35, describes the journey of coming to faith.

After reading the passage, describe the phases of the disciples' coming to believe in the Risen Jesus.

Relate these phases to your own journey of coming to faith as you would witness this to someone you are evangelizing.

2. You are to write out both parts to this reflection and come prepared to share them in your small groups as well as in the large group.

EVALUATION OF R.C.I.A. TRAINING

1. What part of each of the sessions did you find most helpful? Why?
2. What part of each of the sessions did you find least helpful? Why?
3. As you reflect over the training, has what you have learned helped to equip you for your role as an evangelizer? In what way?
4. How has this training affected you as a parishioner?
5. What in your life is going to change as a result of this training?

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