

Glossary of Terms for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

<i>Annulment</i>	A determination by church authorities that a previous marriage was not sacramentally valid and, therefore, not an impediment to a sacramental marriage in the future.
<i>Candidate</i>	A person already baptized in another Christian community who is now preparing to be received into full communion with the Catholic Church.
<i>Catechesis</i>	Religious instruction in the fundamentals of Christianity in the Catholic tradition.
<i>Catechumen</i>	A person who is not baptized and is preparing for full initiation at the Easter Vigil through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.
<i>Catechumenate</i>	Second period within the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults involving intense preparation in word, worship, community life and apostolic works.
<i>Cycle A, B, C</i>	Refers to the three year cycle of liturgical readings used at Sunday Mass. Cycle A: Gospel of Matthew; Cycle B: Gospel of Mark; Cycle C: Gospel of Luke. All three cycles incorporate the Gospel of John. The R.C.I.A. makes particular use of the Cycle A readings during the Scrutinies of Lent.
<i>Easter Season</i>	A period of seven weeks beginning with Easter Sunday and ending with the feast of Pentecost.
<i>The Elect</i>	The name given to catechumens who enter the final phase of preparation for full initiation into the Catholic Church.
<i>Evangelization</i>	Inviting, welcoming, witnessing, sharing the faith and proclaiming the Gospel in inquirers and candidates during the precatechumenate.
<i>Inquirers</i>	Those who participate in the precatechumenate process. They are inquiring into Christianity in the Catholic tradition.
<i>Irregular Marital Situations</i>	Situations in which an inquirer or candidate is involved in a marital relationship not fully in accord with church law and/or teachings.
<i>Lent</i>	A six week period extending from Ash Wednesday to Holy Thursday. It is a period of preparation for the Easter Triduum.
<i>Liturgical Year</i>	The seasons and cycles of the Christian year including Christmas, Easter and Ordinary Time.
<i>Mystagogia</i>	A (recommended) one year period following initiation into the Catholic Church wherein new members meet to explore and deepen their understanding of the mysteries of the faith.
<i>National Statutes</i>	The statutes implementing the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in the United States under the authority of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.
<i>Neophyte</i>	A new Catholic who has received the sacraments of initiation.
<i>Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.)</i>	The official collection of rites of the Roman Catholic Church for initiation of adults (including children of catechetical age) and the reception of baptized candidates into the Church.
<i>Precatechumenate</i>	The first period of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults consisting of an introduction to the Christian way of life in the Catholic tradition.

<i>Purification and Enlightenment</i>	The third period of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults coinciding usually with Lent and within which catechumens and candidates are prepared for full initiation into the Church at the Easter Vigil.
<i>Rite of Welcome/ Rite of Acceptance</i>	For those already baptized, this is the bridge between the inquiry period and the period of pastoral formation within the catechumenate.
<i>Rite of Election</i>	Presided over by the Bishop, the rite inaugurates the period of Purification and Enlightenment for those who are not baptized.
<i>Call to Continuing Conversion</i>	A rite which inaugurates the period of Purification and Enlightenment for those already baptized.
<i>Scrutinies</i>	Three rites of exorcism for the elect, which occur during Lent.
<i>Small Faith Communities</i>	Members of a parish community who meet in small groups to pray, share faith, read scripture, and journey together toward deeper discipleship.
<i>Sacraments of Initiation</i>	Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist (usually received at the Easter Vigil by those not baptized).
<i>Triduum</i>	The "three days" of the celebration of Easter beginning at sundown on Holy Thursday and concluding on Easter Sunday. It includes the liturgies of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Ester Vigil (Saturday evening) and Easter Sunday.