

What the RCIA Says: The Importance of Interviews and Discernment

Period of Inquiry

- Assessment of sacramental status
- Identify irregular marriage cases
- Cooperation with God's grace

Before the Rite of Acceptance (RCIA nos. 42-43)

- evidence of first faith, initial conversion
- intention to change their lives
- to enter into a deeper relationship with Christ
- evidence of a first stirrings of repentance
- start to practice calling on God in Prayer
- a sense of the Church
- some experience of the company and spirit of Christians
- sufficient and necessary time to evaluate and, if necessary, purify the candidates motives and dispositions
- careful that no baptized person seeks to be baptized a second time

Before the Rite of Election (RCIA 107, 120, 121, 122)

- Parish community and the Rite of Sending
- expected to have undergone a conversion in mind and in action
- to have developed a sufficient acquaintance with Christian teaching
- developed a spirit of faith and charity
- have the intention to receive the sacraments of the Church (they will express this resolve publicly in the Rite of Election)
- act of admission belongs to the bishop who acts only after testimony of sponsors, godparents, and community
- before the election, priests, deacons, catechists, godparents and the entire community...(121)
- After the election, surround them with prayer, so that the entire Church will accompany and lead them to encounter Christ

Scrutinies (RCIA 141)

- are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective or sinful in the hearts of the elect;
- to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good.

Initiation (RCIA 211)

- the faith of those to be baptized is not simply the faith of the church, but the personal faith of each of them...
- the renunciation of sin and profession of faith are an apt prelude to baptism
- by professing their faith before the celebrant and the entire community, the elect express the intention, developed to maturity during the preceding periods of initiation, to enter into a covenant with Christ

Candidates (RCIA 477- 478, NS 30)

- anything that equates candidates for reception and those who are catechumens is to be absolutely avoided (see also NS 31)
- doctrinal and spiritual preparation depends on the extent to which the baptized person has led a Christian life within a community of faith and has been appropriately catechized
- discernment should be made regarding the length of catechetical formation required for each individual
- if careful investigation raises prudent doubt about baptism, confer conditionally –explain why beforehand, use non-solemn rite