

**DIOCESE OF ALTOONA-JOHNSTOWN  
LAY ECCLESIAL MINISTRY AND ADULT ENRICHMENT**

***Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)*  
Catechumenate Team Ministry**

**Course Description:** The course is modeled after the four-part phases and periods of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. The RCIA was promulgated on 27 January 1966, and mandated for use in 1988 by the Catholic Conference of Bishops after it was translated and published in the English language. RCIA is the official Catholic Church process for preparation of adult candidates for the celebration of the Sacraments: of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.

Each of the parts consists of four sessions for each RCIA phase and period. The sessions are 2 ½ hours long and **are not** scheduled during Advent, Christmas or Lent. The informative, progressive course content is presented in an adult environment and is a combination of experiential and traditional learning styles.

**Who Should Attend?**

- Adults who have completed the first 2 years of Lay Ecclesial Ministry coursework and need a Third Year Track course, and by the permission of their pastor or administrator, have become new directors and coordinators of a parish Christian Initiation process. (Every parish should have at least 2 people prepared to assist the pastor/administrator to continue in the RCIA process.)
- Clergy who did not have a concentrated preparation to lead RCIA in a parish,
- Directors (by permission of their pastor/administrator) and Team members who have been active in Christian Initiation process, for a minimum of two years who want a refresher for themselves and team members.
- Men and women who have expressed a desire to become active in Christian Initiation Ministry after serving in parish for at least two years in a Catechetical Ministry, and have completed Basic Catechist Formation
- Men who are in preliminary discernment to explore diaconate formation

**Attendance requirements: Adults must attend all course sessions and two annual workshops that are named by the Office of Christian Initiation.** Make-up work will be discussed as needed.

1. Understanding the Annulment Process

2. Attendance at one of the following two listed:

A. Bi-annual Catholic Life Conference Day or Bi-annual Catholic Life Conference Day of Prayer

B. Annual fall or spring workshop normally on Part II: Rites of Particular Circumstances of the RCIA.

Workshops are open to all clergy, men and women also in need of C.E.U. credit hours.

**Course Requirements:** In addition to the attendance requirement, participants will complete the syllabus content, keep a reflective journal, complete a personal one-page reflection after each Part, lead at least two Lectionary based scripture study for development of methods for parish RCIA processes; complete the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Lay Ecclesial Ministry Program evaluation forms, and develop and present a practicum.

**The 2016-2017 Catechumenate Team Ministry Course will be held at the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown Administrative Office, Hollidaysburg, PA. The fee is \$75.00 per person which covers all materials for the 20 week course.** Registration forms posted on the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown website under Parish Life Office: Lay Ecclesial Ministry/Adult Enrichment. Forms must be completed and returned with the \$75.00 fee by September 1, 2016. Mail to: Lay Ecclesial Ministry/Adult Enrichment Office: St. Patrick School, 925 Park Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15902, Attn: Marybeth Heinze. Contact for information: [mheinze@dioceseaj.org](mailto:mheinze@dioceseaj.org), 814-361-2000; Jeanne Thompson, 814-317-2672, Christian Initiation Coordinator, 925 South Logan Blvd., Hollidaysburg, 16648. [jthompson@dioceseaj.org](mailto:jthompson@dioceseaj.org).

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**2016-2017 Calendar Year**

**CATECHUMENATE TEAM MINISTRY: FOUR PERIOD PHASE CONTENT**

**Sessions are 2.5 hrs. 6:30 PM – 9:00PM and in 4 week groupings (Parts I, II, III and IV)**

Sessions are **not** scheduled during the Church seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Lent. All sessions are on Thursday evenings. A personal written reflection is required after Session Four of each Part, an evaluation for the Lay Ecclesial Formation Office

**Christian Initiation Certification:** Four Parts: 4 weekly sessions, 2 workshops, 1 practicum: Total: 75 hours

**2016 Part I. Pre-Catechumenate (also called Period of Evangelization): September 22, 29, October 6, 13**

**Topics:** Conversion: Church Documents on Evangelization; History of the Catechumenate; overview the total *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*; plan and lead prayer service; faith sharing/prayer with the Sunday scriptures; catechesis and adult faith development stages; discernment processes; parish team formation; roles and development of team members; and parish catechesis; sorting “Who’s Coming Into the Church.”

**2016 Part II. Catechumenate: October 20, 27, November 3, 10**

**Topics** – What is Church? Jesus as Church; Liturgical calendar; Faith development though the nature of, and study of the Church’s liturgies; celebration of the Eucharist and the Holy Word of God the Lectionary and Liturgical Catechesis; tools for integration of Gospel with doctrine and prayer. Dismissal Catechesis: all must lead a model of a Breaking Open the Word and Catechetical Session that would be a part of a parish weekly RCIA process.

**2017 Part III. Purification and Enlightenment: January 19, 26, February 2, 9**

**Topics:** Catechesis and formation of RCIA ritual action; proper use of symbol; importance of inclusion of song, reflection of scripture; modeling of the minor rituals within the *Rite of Christian initiation of Adult*; study of discussion and reflection of the rites and presentations; catechesis on the liturgies of Holy Week- Passion Sunday, Chrism Mass, and the Holy Triduum with particular focus on the Easter Vigil.

**2017 Part IV. Mystagogy: April 20, 27, May 4, 11** (must be held during Easter Season)

**Topics:** Definitions of Neophyte and Mystagogy; prayer reflection on Holy Week to Easter Sunday; catechesis for Easter Season; study of Resurrection narratives; on going formation – doctrinal topics, prayer tools, Sacrament of Reconciliation/Penance. Practicum projects are due.

**Wrap-up:** All must participate in a Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown generated written reflection, evaluation, and a personal closing interview with the Coordinator of Christian Initiation.

**WORKSHOP SAVE THE DATES:**

**Required for certification** but open to all people in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown and beyond.

- 1. Jubilee of Mercy: Catholic Life Day of Prayer: Saturday, October 22, at Mt. Aloysius College, 9AM – 3:00 PM, “Enfleshing Mercy in Our Lives” Keynote: Sister Janet Ruffing, R.S. M.**

**Required for certification,** Parish RCIA Directors, Coordinators and Team members; (may be waived for the already ordained), and open to all Parish RCIA Directors, Coordinators and Team members.

- 2. Understanding the Annulment Process: Saturday, November 5, at Saint Michael School Cafeteria, Loretto, 8:30 AM - 1:30 PM, Facilitator: Very Rev. John Byrnes, JV, JCL**

**STRONGLY ENCOURAGED: 2016 (not a requirement!)**

- 3. Team RCIA, “Making Disciples” Friday 6 PM August 12 to Saturday 4 PM - August 13** at the Ramada Hotel and Conference Center, 1450 South Atherton Street, State College.

Complete Information is available on the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown website ([www.dioceseaj.org](http://www.dioceseaj.org)) On Homepage click on **Donate/Register** for all specifics if the institute icon for TeamRCIA is not visible. Registration forms can be downloaded or by request sent in the mail.