

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults
The RCIA Process

--by Vickie Shepherd

Easter Vigil
Celebrating The Sacraments
The RCIA Process

I saw water flowing from the right side of the temple.

Alleluia!

It brought God's life and His salvation

And the people sang, in joyful praise.

Alleluia! Alleluia!

(RCIA Rite book #240)



“Called By Name”

A wonderful transformation has taken place in your life this past year; you have been guided by the Holy Spirit to know Jesus Christ in a more personal relationship than ever before. Looking back upon this process, you now see the footprints you have left upon the road you have traveled on this long journey. Your footprints are joined by other sets of footprints in various areas, some of which go off in different directions. God has called you by name and has given you a unique path to follow. How wonderful, that our paths have met here for a short time.

“The Service of Light”

The church is shrouded in darkness as we move from the somber services of Good Friday into the dawning light of the Risen Christ on this holiest of nights.

The new fire is lit and you follow the light bearer to the sanctuary of the church. As you approach the altar the new light is shared with those gathered to illuminate the church. “ This is the night”, the words which echo throughout the holy temple, adorned for the King for whom she now waits. Her beauty and splendor are ornamented for His triumphant return!

“The Story of God and His Children”

This is the night we share the chronicles of our ancestry. God has provided us with a rich history and abundant family tree. We sit and listen now to the story of our ancestors and their journeys, as they lived according to God’s law. It was a hard for our ancestors to stay on the path of righteousness as much as it is and will be for us.

Our story begins with creation and moved into the future thousands of years, where God entered history and became man. It was through His birth, life, death and resurrection that He shared His plan of salvation with us, His sacrifice of body and blood has covered and blotted out our sins forever! Jesus has overcome death-and became our life and our light in the darkness that surrounds us in our world.

“Come to the Water”

Jesus began his public ministry with His baptism, in much the same way you will be doing. On this night you will step into the waters of baptism, with others who spent time preparing for this moment with you. Just as Jesus showed you the way, now you shall “know” the way and follow Him. When time for baptism arrives, you will go to the baptismal font. (Some churches will have immersion for the baptism and others will pour water over your heads, according to local customs). While the priest is baptizing you he will say: “ I baptize you In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit Amen.” The next thing that will happen is the confirmation and the presentation of the baptismal garment. God asks you to bring it “unstained to the judgement seat of our Lord, Jesus Christ. May His flame never be extinguished from your heart.” (The people who were immersed will leave here to change into their dry clothes). The candidates will now come forward for Confirmation. If there was not an immersion type baptism in your church, you might be called up for Confirmation, with the newly baptized. You will make your profession of faith with the assembly, and renew your baptismal vows. When you do this you are reminded to renounce Satan and his empty promises and to renew your commitment to Christ. You will profess that you believe in God, our source of all mercy and salvation. Then, Father; will sprinkle the congregation with the waters of baptism.

“One Bread, One Body”

Having returned to your place among those assembled, you are reminded of the Paschal Mystery as we pray in preparation for the Eucharist. We have celebrated “new life” in Christ through baptism, now we are reminded that “Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ will come again”. We lift high our hands, hearts and voices in prayer as we thank God for this most holy sacrifice we are about to take part in - the paschal feast. For the first time you will come forward, born again through the water and the Spirit, as you join the ‘Body of Christ’ for the first time in the divine feast.



We have become ‘one body’ through the power of the Holy Spirit. We share ‘one bread’ that has become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ. He is present to us and within us. Our Communion time with our God.

“The Mass Never Ends...”

The Easter Vigil is nearing a close. We are all sent forth to love and serve the Lord. Therefore, we are asked to take what we have received here this night or day, and share it with those we meet. We will assemble once more at the next Mass to be fed and nurtured through God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit: so that we may, “Go forth to love and serve the Lord...”

“ Thus says the Lord:

*All you, who are thirsty, come to the water!
Heed Me and you shall eat well,
You shall delight in rich fare.
Come to Me heedfully, listen,
That you may have life.”*

(From the Book of the Prophet Isaiah 55)

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