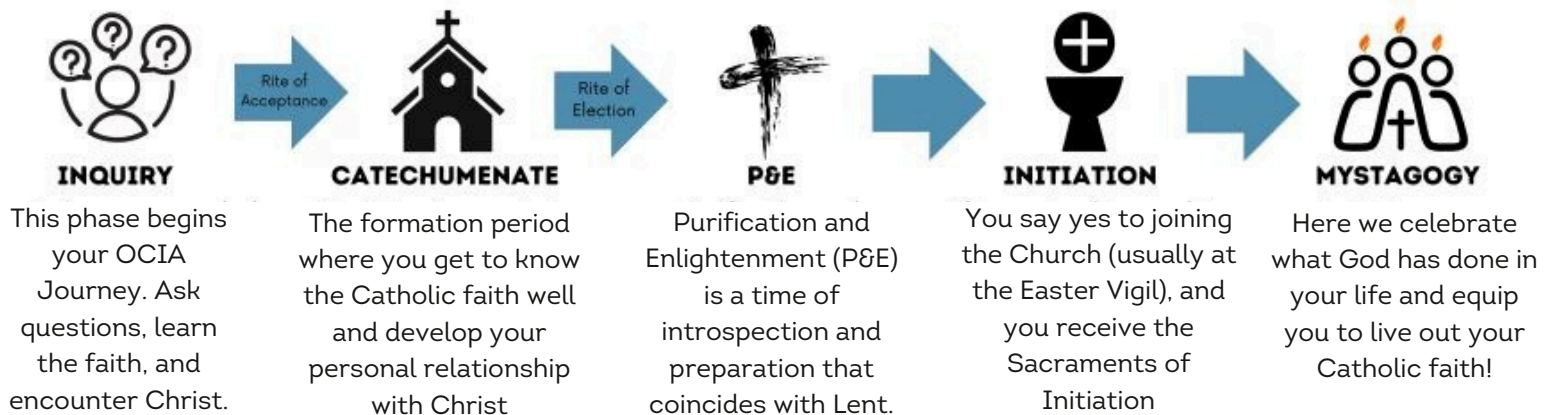




Everything You Need to Know!

STAGES OF OCIA PROCESS - AN OVERVIEW



Key Terms:

The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA): the process through which an individual becomes fully initiated in the Catholic Church. When Children or teens are entering they go through OCIA-Adapted for Children and Teens

Rite: a blessing ritual that is performed by a bishop, priest, or deacon

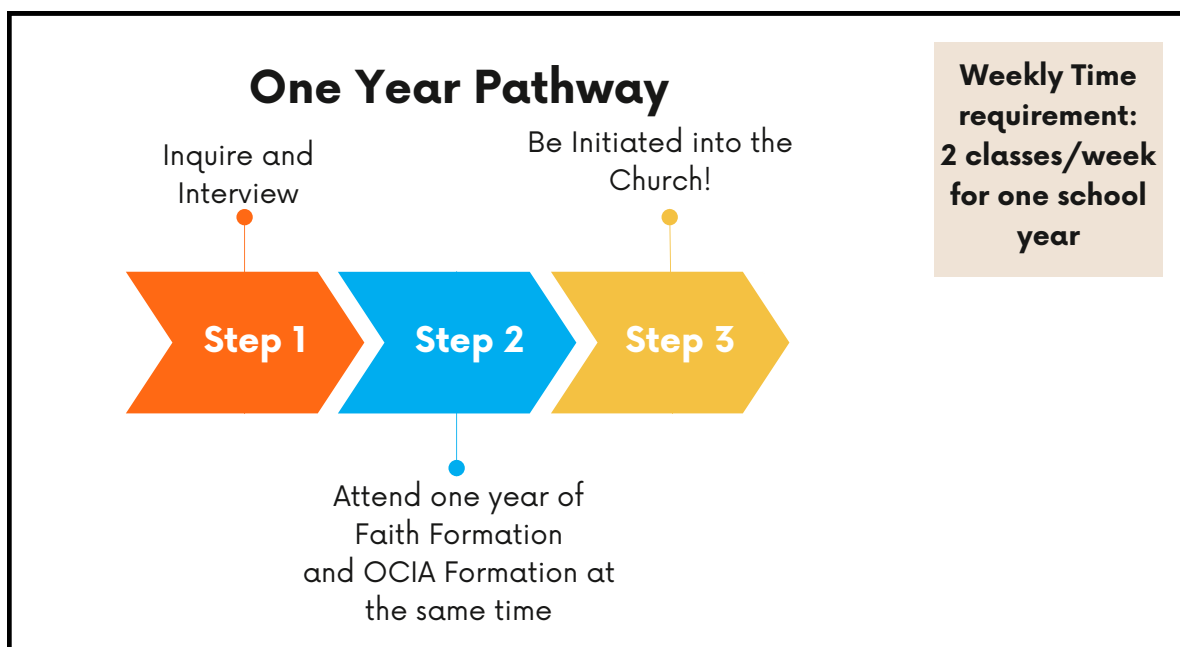
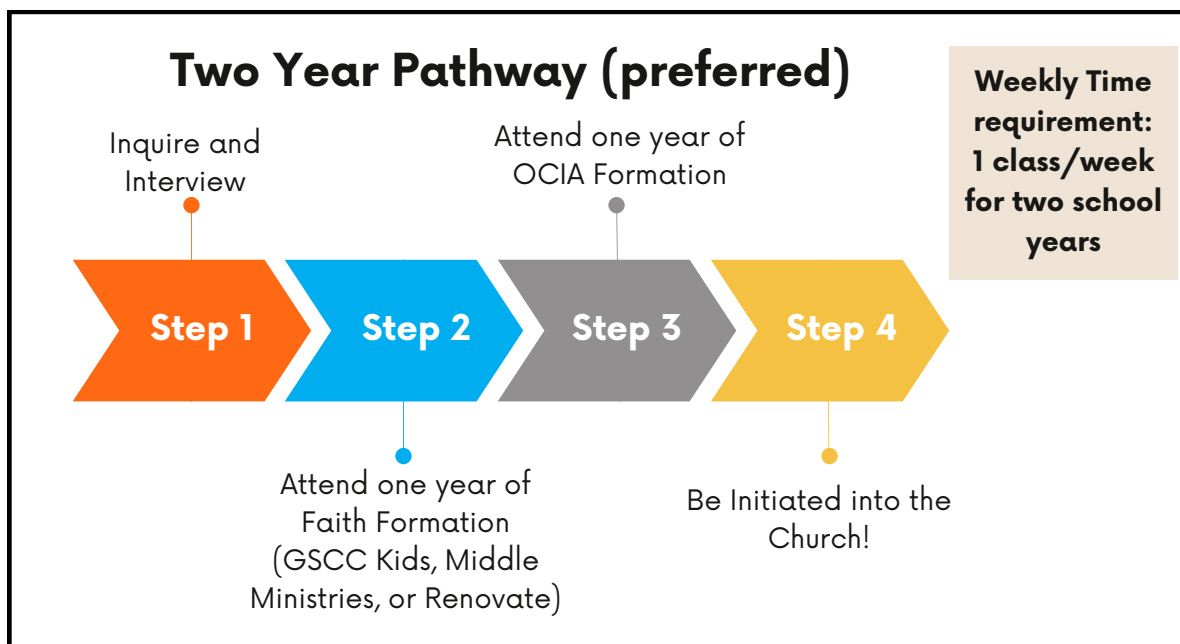
Catechumen: someone who is unbaptized and seeking union with the Church

Candidate: someone who is baptized and seeking full initiation within the Church through the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation

Sacraments of Initiation: The three sacraments that fully initiate a person in the Catholic Church are Baptism, Holy Communion, and Confirmation

The OCIA - Adapted Formation Process

The process of OCIA is designed to integrate the students into the community of the Church, provide them with opportunities to encounter Christ and conversion, and be formed in the truth and teachings of the Catholic Faith. This process takes time. For this reason, the OCIA Process usually takes two years from start to finish. Good Shepherd encourages each family to take the two year pathway, so as to ensure proper formation of their student. However, we recognize that there may be cases in which a one year pathway would suit the family better, and so we offer both. The pathway your family takes will be discerned with the Coordinator of OCIA - Adapted.



FAQ

Why does my child need to go through this process? There are a few different reasons your child may need OCIA:

- Your family is converting to the Catholic faith and your child needs formation and initiation in the Church
- They were not baptized before they reached the Age of Reason (7 years old)
- They did not receive First Communion before the age of 11

Ultimately, this process is a way to ensure that the person receiving the Sacraments is properly formed and knowledgeable in the Faith and is able to live out the Christian life they are committing to.

When will my child receive their sacraments? All students in the OCIA Process receive the three Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil Mass of the year that they are being formed

Is my child too young to receive Confirmation? No. There is no age limit on when one may receive Confirmation. The only stipulation the Church holds is that the person must first be baptized. Although it is customary to defer Confirmation until teenage years, it is not necessary. It is recommended that the person be at the age of reason or older.

Can their sibling be baptized on the same day? Unfortunately, no. The Easter Vigil Mass is the designated time for OCIA participants to receive their sacraments, and only OCIA participants.

What is the difference between a Godparent and a sponsor?

- Godparent(s) are necessary for Baptism. A Godparent is the person/people who publicly affirm their commitment to help the parents, in their Christian duty, to raise the child in accordance with true religion. Godparents are usually chosen by the parents.
- A sponsor is necessary for Confirmation. They “take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament” (canon 892). Sponsors are usually chosen by the student.
- A Godparent may also be a Confirmation sponsor if that is what the student wishes.

Do the Godparent(s)/Sponsor need to be Catholic? Yes. All Godparents and sponsors need to be fully-initiated practicing Catholics who can provide proof of reception of all their Sacraments with the Church (i.e. sacramental certificates). Both roles require the person to take on a position of “spiritual parent” in the students life, and therefore should be placed upon people who are already striving to live a life of virtue.