

RCIA

Activity & Conversation Companion

*For unbaptised adults preparing for Baptism,
Confirmation and the Eucharist*

THIS IS NOT ANOTHER CATECHISM

Use alongside Becoming Catholic RCIA A Catechumenate Companion. Its twenty-four conversations supply the teaching. This guide helps an inquirer, catechumen, sponsor or mentor explore that teaching through practical activity and honest conversation.

THE METHOD

Start with the person

Do something concrete

Open the Companion

Talk honestly

Check the central truth

Pray and act

ONE SACRAMENTAL INITIATION

An unbaptised adult ordinarily receives Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist together. Baptism forgives every previous sin; sacramental Confession begins after Baptism.

St Mary's • St John Bosco • St Edward's Parish

Inquirer • Catechumen • Sponsor • Mentor edition

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How to use this guide

THE PRINCIPLE

RCIA is a gradual apprenticeship in Christian life, lived with the parish through faith, conversion, worship, charity and the Church's rites. Finishing activities does not establish readiness.

For each conversation

1. Begin with the opening question. Listen to the person's actual experience and allow uncertainty to be expressed.
2. Try the short activity together. Speak, draw or write as helpful; no craft work or prepared talk is required.
3. Open the numbered conversation in the Catechumenate Companion. Read the indicated teaching slowly.
4. Talk together, then clarify the main points. The concise answers support understanding; they are not a script to be recited.
5. Pray the printed prayer and choose one realistic action. Return to it next time without making it an attendance test.
6. Adapt, repeat or divide conversations. Follow the person's growth and the periods of RCIA rather than treating this as a twenty-four-week course.

ESTABLISH THE CORRECT PATHWAY

Tell the priest about any possible previous Baptism and any marriage history early. A validly baptised adult requires a different pathway. Use Appendix A of the Companion for the first pastoral check.

Private sins, family difficulties and canonical questions are not for group disclosure. Arrange a confidential pastoral conversation when needed.

A small activity kit

The Companion, this guide, paper and a pen are enough for most conversations. Cards can be handwritten during the meeting.

Ordinary objects

A crucifix and a cup of water help explain signs. No object is needed if it would distract from the conversation.

A church visit

When convenient, look at the font, ambo, altar, tabernacle and images of saints. Arrange access and leave liturgical vessels and holy oils to the priest.

Real situations

The guide supplies short cases about choices, faith, work, family and parish life. Use them without requiring personal disclosures.

Prayer texts

The Apostles' Creed and basic prayers are printed at the end. The guide includes a short prayer for every conversation.

Sunday worship

Bring one question from Mass. Where catechumens are dismissed after the Liturgy of the Word, reflect on the readings with the parish's arrangements.

PRACTISE WITH REVERENCE

Rehearse responses and movements, not sacramental actions. Do not simulate Baptism, absolution, anointing or consecration. Catechumens participate in Sunday worship without receiving Holy Communion.

The Desire for God

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Help the inquirer identify the real questions and desires drawing them towards God.

QUICK PREP

Paper and a pen, optional. No prior religious knowledge is assumed.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What has brought you here now? What do you hope faith might help you understand?”

DO SOMETHING

Questions worth staying with

1. Write four headings: MEANING, TRUTH, GOODNESS, HOPE. Invite the person to choose the one that matters most today.
2. Ask for a question under that heading. It might concern purpose, suffering, conscience or death. Do not rush to solve it.
3. Name a good thing they have pursued. Ask why even good things may leave us wanting more.
4. Read the Companion’s account of God taking the initiative. Choose one question to carry into the next conversation.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 1, especially the relationship between human longing, reason and God’s grace.

The Desire for God

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What would it mean to seek truth even if the answer changed your life?”
- “Is there an experience that has made belief in God seem possible or difficult?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Is faith opposed to reason? No. Both come from God and assist one another.

Can created goods fully satisfy us? They are real gifts, but we are made for communion with God.

What is a first step? Seek honestly, pray simply, hear the Gospel and meet the Church.

PRAY TOGETHER

God, receive my desire for truth. Lead me out of confusion and give me courage to follow the light you give. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Pray each day: “God, show me the truth and give me courage to follow it.”

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Allow an inquirer to begin with questions rather than a confident profession. Listen for sincere seeking. The aim is a real conversation about God, not an account polished to please the parish.

Jesus Christ and the Good News

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Place the person of Jesus and his saving work at the centre of enquiry.

QUICK PREP

A crucifix, optional; the Companion.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Who do you understand Jesus to be? What has formed that understanding?”

DO SOMETHING

What would change if this is true

1. Write TEACHER, SON OF GOD, SAVIOUR, RISEN LORD. Ask which descriptions the person already accepts and which raise questions.
2. Use Conversation 2 to explain that the eternal Son truly became man and gave himself for our salvation.
3. Ask what would change if the Resurrection were a real event rather than the survival of Jesus’ ideas.
4. Choose one consequence for life: trust, prayer, repentance, hope or obedience. Ask why it follows from who Jesus is.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 2. Keep Jesus’ identity, Cross, bodily Resurrection and invitation to discipleship together.

Jesus Christ and the Good News

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What makes the Gospel good news rather than only a demand?”
- “What would trusting Jesus ask of you?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Who is Jesus? The eternal Son of God made man.

Did he truly rise? Yes. His Resurrection is real and bodily.

What does he ask? Faith, conversion, love and lifelong discipleship.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, reveal yourself to me. Give me faith to know you, love you and follow you. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Reread Conversation 2 and bring one honest question about Jesus to your next meeting.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Keep Christ at the centre even when questions concern Church customs or difficult teachings. Do not treat Jesus as merely an admirable moral example. Invite trust while leaving room for genuine enquiry.

Faith Conversion and Discipleship

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Connect belief in Christ with a free response and a developing change of life.

QUICK PREP

Paper marked BELIEVE, TRUST, FOLLOW.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Can a person agree that something is true without living by it?”

DO SOMETHING

From agreement to discipleship

1. Use this case: someone believes honesty matters but continues a dishonest practice because it is profitable. What is still missing?
2. Under BELIEVE, name receiving what God reveals. Under TRUST, name entrusting oneself to him. Under FOLLOW, name a change of action.
3. Read how grace comes first and enables the response. Conversion is not self-improvement achieved without God.
4. Privately identify one possible next step. The person may share the step without sharing sensitive details.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 3, especially grace, freedom and the real beginnings of conversion.

Faith Conversion and Discipleship

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why is perfection not required before beginning the catechumenate?”
- “What distinguishes a sincere beginning from merely saying the expected words?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is faith? A grace-enabled response of belief and trust in God.

What is conversion? Turning from sin towards God in a changed life.

Must faith be free? Yes. No one may be forced to embrace it.

PRAY TOGETHER

Father, give me sincere conversion. Show me what I must leave behind and what I must begin, and keep me close to your Son. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Choose one practical act of conversion and ask God’s help to carry it out.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Ask about willingness to grow without demanding a public account of private sins. Support concrete change. Refer complex moral, relational or pastoral matters to the priest in a confidential setting.

Why the Church Why Baptism

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Explain visible Church belonging, sacramental new birth and the meaning of Acceptance.

QUICK PREP

Three cards: ENQUIRY, ACCEPTANCE, BAPTISM.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Why might following Christ involve belonging to his Church rather than remaining on one’s own?”

DO SOMETHING

Belonging and beginning

1. Place ENQUIRY first: questions, first faith, prayer and contact with the community.
2. Add ACCEPTANCE: the Church receives the intention to follow Christ and enrolls the person among catechumens. This is not Baptism.
3. Add BAPTISM: new birth in Christ, forgiveness and incorporation into the Church. Read the Companion’s explanation.
4. Ask what support a person needs between Acceptance and Baptism. Include worship, teaching, conversion, charity and a sponsor.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 4 and Appendix B on Acceptance. The priest discerns when the first step is appropriate.

Why the Church Why Baptism

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What attracts you to visible Church belonging, and what feels difficult?”
- “What do you need to understand before asking for Acceptance?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Did Christ intend a Church? Yes. He entrusted his people to apostolic teaching and care.

Is Acceptance Baptism? No. It begins the formal catechumenate.

Does Acceptance fix the Baptism date? No. Growth and readiness determine progress.

PRAY TOGETHER

Jesus, you gather your people into one flock. Give me humility, perseverance and joy as I discern the next step. Amen.

THIS WEEK

With the priest or mentor, name one hope and one hesitation about entering the catechumenate.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Check initial faith and conversion before arranging Acceptance. Never imply that joining the catechumenate automatically promises initiation at the next Easter Vigil. Recognise the real belonging of catechumens while explaining that Baptism is still to come.

Scripture Tradition and the Magisterium

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Show how the apostolic faith is received, handed on and faithfully interpreted.

QUICK PREP

Three cards: SCRIPTURE, TRADITION, MAGISTERIUM.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “When Christians disagree about a biblical passage, how might truth and unity be preserved?”

DO SOMETHING

Who receives and explains the message

1. Use this case: two readers take the same passage to support opposite beliefs. Sincerity alone does not resolve the disagreement.
2. Place SCRIPTURE: the inspired written word of God. Add TRADITION: the living transmission of the apostolic faith.
3. Add MAGISTERIUM: the Pope and bishops in communion with him faithfully guard and interpret the deposit of faith.
4. Ask whether these are competing authorities. Read the Companion’s explanation that the teaching office serves God’s word.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 5. Distinguish Apostolic Tradition from ordinary customs and private opinions.

Scripture Tradition and the Magisterium

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why does a received faith need faithful interpretation?”
- “What question about Catholic authority would you most like explained?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Is Scripture inspired? Yes. God works through its human authors.

What is Apostolic Tradition? The living transmission of the apostolic faith.

Is the Magisterium above God’s word? No. It serves, guards and interprets it.

PRAY TOGETHER

Holy Spirit, make me attentive to God’s word. Give me humility to receive the faith and courage to ask honest questions. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Bring one actual question about Scripture, Tradition or Church authority to the next conversation.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Do not reduce Tradition to customs or suggest the Church invents new revelation. Explain the reasons for Catholic authority patiently. The Companion supplies the doctrinal answer; the activity simply makes the question concrete.

One God Father Son and Holy Spirit

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Give a clear, orthodox understanding of the Trinity and Trinitarian prayer.

QUICK PREP

Three name cards: FATHER, SON, HOLY SPIRIT.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Make the Sign of the Cross. Ask: “What does this brief prayer profess about God?”

DO SOMETHING

One divine nature and three Persons

1. Place the three cards beside one another. Ask whether each Person is truly God.
2. Write ONE GOD above them. Read that each Person wholly possesses the one divine nature.
3. Ask whether the Persons are simply three roles or names for one Person. Clarify that they are really distinct.
4. Pray the Glory Be slowly. Notice that Christian prayer leads to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 6. Use its precise language rather than an analogy that changes the doctrine.

One God Father Son and Holy Spirit

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Which confusion is easier to fall into: three gods or one Person under three names?”
- “How does the Sign of the Cross prepare you for the faith of Baptism?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

How many Gods are there? One.

How many divine Persons? Three: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Is each Person fully God? Yes. Each is wholly and eternally God.

PRAY TOGETHER

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Make the Sign of the Cross slowly each morning and evening.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

The cards identify the Persons; they do not model God’s being. Avoid illustrations implying three parts of God, three gods or successive disguises. Mystery calls for humility while allowing clear statements about what the Church believes.

Creation Human Dignity and the Fall

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Hold together the goodness of creation, human dignity and the need for redemption.

QUICK PREP

Three headings on paper: GIFT, WOUND, HOPE.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Where do you see both human goodness and something deeply wrong in human life?”

DO SOMETHING

Goodness that needs healing

1. Under GIFT, name reason, freedom, love and the dignity of every person made in God’s image.
2. Under WOUND, consider this case: someone knows an action is harmful but repeatedly chooses it. What does it reveal about fallen human life?
3. Read the distinction between original sin and personal sin. A newborn has not personally chosen an offence.
4. Under HOPE, name God’s promise of salvation fulfilled in Jesus, the new Adam. Ask why wounded nature is still worth respecting.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 7. Creation is good; human nature is wounded, not destroyed.

Creation Human Dignity and the Fall

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why does dignity remain even when a person is weak, dependent or sinful?”
- “Why do we need God’s salvation as well as human effort?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Who created all things? God, freely and from nothing.

Why has every person dignity? Every person is made in God’s image.

Is original sin a baby’s personal act? No. It is an inherited fallen condition.

PRAY TOGETHER

Creator and Father, teach me gratitude, respect for every person and honesty about my need for salvation in Christ. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Show deliberate respect or practical kindness to someone who is easily overlooked.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Explain original sin without personal blame or the claim that human nature is wholly evil. Keep discussion of creation focused on the theological truths of dependence on God, goodness and dignity; take further scientific or philosophical questions seriously.

The Word Became Flesh

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Clarify the Incarnation and why Jesus is true God and true man.

QUICK PREP

Paper marked PERSON and NATURES.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What would be missing if Jesus were only a wise teacher, or only appeared to be human?”

DO SOMETHING

Who Jesus is

1. Write “One divine Person” under PERSON: the eternal Son.
2. Write “Divine and human” under NATURES. Jesus is fully God and fully human, with a real human body, mind and will.
3. Consider two mistaken statements: “Jesus is half God and half man”; “Jesus began as a man and later became God”. Use Conversation 8 to correct both.
4. Ask why Mary is called Mother of God. She bore the divine Son according to his humanity; she is not the source of his divinity.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 8. Connect precise teaching about Christ with his saving work.

The Word Became Flesh

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why does salvation involve the Son truly sharing our humanity?”
- “How does honouring Mary protect the truth about her Son?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

How many Persons are in Christ? One divine Person, the Son.

How many natures? Two, fully divine and fully human.

Did the Son cease to be God? No. He truly assumed our humanity.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, draw me close to you. Help me receive the salvation you bring and honour your Mother. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Explain the Incarnation in one sentence, then reread Conversation 8 to check it.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Let theological terms clarify rather than dominate the conversation. The person should be able to say who Jesus is in ordinary words. Avoid explanations that divide him into two persons or deny his true humanity.

The Paschal Mystery

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Connect Christ's Cross, bodily Resurrection and Ascension with Christian hope.

QUICK PREP

A crucifix, optional; three cards: CROSS, RESURRECTION, ASCENSION.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "Which part of Jesus' saving work is hardest for you to understand or receive?"

DO SOMETHING

One saving mystery

1. Place CROSS first. Name his free self-offering for our sins, reconciling us to the Father.
2. Add RESURRECTION. Ask why hope would change if Jesus had remained dead. He truly rose in a glorified body.
3. Add ASCENSION. Explain that the risen Lord reigns, intercedes and sends the Holy Spirit; he has not abandoned us.
4. Ask how Baptism will join the person to Christ's death and Resurrection. Let the Companion make the connection explicit.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 9 and the central teaching of Conversation 14 on dying and rising with Christ.

The Paschal Mystery

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why is the Cross more than an example of courage?”
- “What kind of hope does bodily resurrection give?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Why did Christ die? He freely offered himself for our sins.

Did he rise bodily? Yes. The crucified Jesus truly rose.

What is the Ascension? His entry in his humanity into heavenly glory.

PRAY TOGETHER

Jesus crucified and risen, have mercy on me. Unite my life to your Cross, free me from sin and lead me to eternal life. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Spend a few quiet minutes before a crucifix and ask Jesus to deepen your hope.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Do not reduce salvation to admiration of Jesus’ example or the Resurrection to a metaphor. Allow grief and suffering to be named without requiring a personal testimony. Christian hope takes both death and Christ’s victory seriously.

The Holy Spirit Grace and Justification

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Explain grace as God’s free gift of forgiveness and genuine interior renewal.

QUICK PREP

Three cards: GIFT, RESPONSE, FRUIT.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “When you hear grace, do you imagine pardon only, or God also changing a person?”

DO SOMETHING

God acts and we respond

1. Place GIFT first. Explain that the Holy Spirit awakens faith and that initial grace cannot be earned.
2. Add RESPONSE. Use this case: a person receives help to end dishonesty and freely accepts it. The help enables rather than removes responsibility.
3. Add FRUIT: truthfulness, patience, charity and good works made possible by grace.
4. Read the Companion’s account of justification as forgiveness and interior renewal. Ask why this is neither self-salvation nor doing nothing.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 10. Distinguish sanctifying grace from the actual help God gives in particular moments.

The Holy Spirit Grace and Justification

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What does it mean to cooperate with a gift?”
- “How could you recognise grace at work without pretending to measure holiness?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Who is the Holy Spirit? The third divine Person, true God.

What is sanctifying grace? A stable participation in God’s life.

Can we earn the first grace of conversion? No. God acts first and enables our response.

PRAY TOGETHER

Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life, prepare my heart for Baptism. Give me faith, hope and charity and help me cooperate with your grace. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Each evening thank God for one help received and ask his grace for one next step.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Keep the order clear: God’s gift precedes the response. Good works are fruits of grace, not a price paid to purchase initial justification. Do not speak as though grace merely covers sin while leaving the person unchanged.

The Church Christ Founded

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Explore the Church's spiritual and visible life, apostolic authority and holiness.

QUICK PREP

Four cards: ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, APOSTOLIC.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "Which is harder to understand: the Church as Christ's Body or the Church's visible authority?"

DO SOMETHING

The four marks in real life

1. Read the four marks in Conversation 11. Give a brief meaning for each: unity, Christ's holiness, universality and apostolic foundation.
2. Use this case: a Catholic leader behaves badly. Ask whether acknowledging the sin means denying Christ's gifts to the Church.
3. Name the roles of bishops as successors of the Apostles and the Pope as successor of Peter.
4. Ask how truth, repentance, justice and reform can belong together within love for the Church.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 11. The Church is spiritual and visible, and her members need continuing conversion.

The Church Christ Founded

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “How can we avoid both excusing sin and forgetting Christ’s promises?”
- “What question about papal or episcopal authority needs more explanation?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What are the four marks? One, holy, catholic and apostolic.

Who are bishops? Successors of the Apostles in communion with the Pope.

Why is the Church holy? Because of Christ and his gifts, despite her members’ sins.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus, heal what is sinful and strengthen what is weak in your Church. Teach me to love her truthfully and faithfully. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Ask for the names of the Pope, diocesan bishop and parish priest, and pray for them.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Do not minimise wrongdoing or suggest every papal opinion is infallible. If a person’s experience involves harm, listen carefully and follow the appropriate safeguarding process. Questions about authority deserve patient explanation.

Mary the Saints and the Last Things

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Clarify worship, intercession and Christian hope beyond death.

QUICK PREP

Paper for two headings: ADORATION, INTERCESSION.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Which teaching raises your strongest question: Mary, saints, purgatory, judgement or prayer for the dead?”

DO SOMETHING

Communion that death does not destroy

1. Under ADORATION write “God alone”. Under INTERCESSION write “asking someone to pray”. Ask how this distinction helps explain Catholic devotion.
2. Read the Companion on Mary’s grace and her relationship to Christ. Honour given to her leads to her Son.
3. Consider asking a fellow Christian for prayer. The communion of saints includes those alive with Christ in heaven.
4. Read the definitions of heaven, hell and purgatory. Explain that purgatory purifies those already in God’s grace; it is not another chance to reject or accept God after death.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 12. If several questions arise, divide this into more than one meeting.

Mary the Saints and the Last Things

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “How does asking a saint for prayer differ from worshipping that saint?”
- “What does hope in resurrection add to an idea of merely surviving in memory?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Do Catholics worship saints? No. Adoration belongs to God alone.

What is purgatory? The final purification of those who die in God’s grace.

What is our final hope? Resurrection of the body and eternal life with God.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord, give eternal rest to the faithful departed. Mary, Mother of God, pray for us that we may persevere in Christ. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Pray for a person who has died, entrusting them to God’s mercy.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Bereavement may make this conversation sensitive. Do not pronounce on the eternal fate of a particular person. Distinguish intercession from adoration and describe the Church’s hope without denying judgement or the need for conversion.

Liturgy and the Seven Sacraments

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Help the catechumen recognise Christ acting through sacramental signs.

QUICK PREP

Seven handwritten cards using the names in the steps.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What changes when worship is understood as Christ acting in his Church?”

DO SOMETHING

Sacraments for a whole life

1. Write Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony on cards.
2. Sort them using Conversation 13: initiation; healing; service of communion.
3. Choose Baptism as an example. Distinguish the outward sign from the grace Christ truly gives through it.
4. Ask why sacraments are more than reminders but do not work as magic. They are Christ’s effective signs, received with the proper disposition.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 13. Do not try to teach every sacrament fully here; Conversations 14–17 deepen the teaching.

Liturgy and the Seven Sacraments

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What is different about receiving a sacrament and simply expressing a feeling?”
- “What helps us participate in liturgy with faith and attention?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is a sacrament? An effective sign of grace instituted by Christ.

How many are there? Seven.

Which initiate Christian life? Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord Jesus, teach me to recognise your action in the liturgy. Prepare me to receive your Sacraments with faith and reverence. Amen.

THIS WEEK

At Sunday worship, notice one gesture or prayer and ask what it means.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

The activity sorts the names, not people into predetermined life paths. Every sacrament serves Christ’s saving work. Keep catechumens’ participation in worship clear: they do not yet receive Holy Communion or other sacraments before Baptism.

Baptism Dying and Rising with Christ

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Explain the full gift of Baptism and the repentance that prepares an unbaptised adult.

QUICK PREP

A cup of water and paper, optional.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What do you expect God to do in Baptism, beyond recording your own decision?”

DO SOMETHING

God’s saving gift

1. Look at water and name its ordinary meanings: cleansing, life and refreshment. Do not pour it over anyone.
2. Read the effects of Baptism: forgiveness of all sin and its punishment, new birth in grace, adoption, union with Christ and incorporation into the Church.
3. Write “Permanent character”. Explain why a valid Baptism can never be repeated.
4. Ask what preparation means: faith, sorrow for sin, conversion and free intention. State explicitly that sacramental Confession does not precede Baptism.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 14. Baptism joins us to Christ’s death and Resurrection and truly gives new life.

Baptism Dying and Rising with Christ

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why is Baptism more than a promise or membership ceremony?”
- “What difference does the forgiveness of every previous sin make to your hope?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What sins does Baptism forgive? Original sin and every personal sin before Baptism.

Can it be repeated? No. It gives a permanent sacramental character.

Do catechumens confess sacramentally first? No. They repent and prepare for Baptism.

PRAY TOGETHER

Father, prepare me to die and rise with Christ. Give me true repentance, strong faith and joy in the new life you promise. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Write or say one sentence about what God gives in Baptism, and pray for readiness to receive it.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Baptism forgives all previous sin; do not import the First Confession pathway for baptised children or candidates. Honest repentance and appropriate reparation still matter. Refer uncertainty about any prior Baptism to the priest.

Confirmation and the Gift of the Holy Spirit

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Connect Confirmation with baptismal grace and the strength to witness to Christ.

QUICK PREP

Paper listing the seven gifts printed in the steps; no oil is required.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Where would living faithfully as a Christian require courage from you?”

DO SOMETHING

Gifts for a real mission

1. List wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. Read the central teaching of Conversation 15.
2. Use this case: a colleague invites someone to join in dishonest or cruel behaviour. Ask which gifts could help them respond well.
3. Explain hands laid and anointing with sacred chrism. Confirmation gives a permanent seal and a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
4. Connect new birth, strengthening and Eucharistic communion: an adult is ordinarily confirmed immediately after Baptism in the same celebration.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 15. Confirmation strengthens Baptism; it does not make Baptism real for the first time.

Confirmation and the Gift of the Holy Spirit

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why is this sacrament more than a personal declaration of maturity?”
- “What form of witness is being asked of you now?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What does Confirmation strengthen? Baptismal grace.

What is given? A special outpouring of the Holy Spirit for witness.

Can Confirmation be repeated? No. It gives a permanent character.

PRAY TOGETHER

Come, Holy Spirit. Give me wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. Make me faithful to Christ. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Choose one gift and ask the Holy Spirit for it in a particular situation.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Do not describe Confirmation as a reward for completed lessons or an optional later graduation. Explain its place in adult initiation. The priest directs the actual rite and any exceptional arrangement; do not rehearse anointing.

The Eucharist and the Holy Mass

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Hold together the Real Presence, Christ's sacrifice and Eucharistic communion.

QUICK PREP

A crucifix and three headings: PRESENCE, SACRIFICE, COMMUNION.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "What do Catholics believe is happening during the Eucharistic Prayer?"

DO SOMETHING

What Christ gives at Mass

1. Under PRESENCE, read that bread and wine become Christ's Body and Blood while their appearances remain: transubstantiation.
2. Under SACRIFICE, explain that Calvary's one sacrifice is made sacramentally present; Christ does not suffer and die again.
3. Under COMMUNION, discuss union with Christ and his Church through receiving Jesus, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.
4. Ask why a catechumen participates in worship but waits until initiation before receiving Communion.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 16. Take more than one meeting if the Real Presence or sacrifice needs fuller explanation.

The Eucharist and the Holy Mass

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why do Catholics adore the Blessed Sacrament?”
- “How can you offer yourself with Christ while preparing to receive him?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Who is truly present? Jesus Christ, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.

Does he die again at Mass? No. His one sacrifice is made present.

May an unbaptised person receive Communion? No. Baptism comes first.

PRAY TOGETHER

Jesus, Bread of Life, increase my faith. Help me worship you now and prepare to receive you sacramentally in your Church. Amen.

THIS WEEK

After Sunday worship, spend a few quiet minutes before the tabernacle and express your desire for Christ.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Listen for understanding beyond “special bread” or a symbolic meal. Avoid makeshift consecrations and misleading physical analogies. Where catechumens are dismissed for Scripture reflection, support that liturgical practice and explain its meaning.

The Sacraments of Healing and Vocation

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Explore sacramental forgiveness, care for the sick and vocations of service.

QUICK PREP

The Companion and the four cases below; no objects needed.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “How might Christ’s care shape the difficult and decisive moments of a Catholic life?”

DO SOMETHING

Which sacrament and why

1. Consider a baptised Catholic repentant after serious sin: Penance gives sacramental forgiveness and reconciliation.
2. Consider someone seriously ill or weakened by old age: Anointing brings Christ’s strength and care; it is not reserved to the last moments of life.
3. Consider a man called to ordained ministry: Holy Orders includes bishops, priests and deacons.
4. Consider a man and woman entering a lifelong covenant open to children: Matrimony serves their good and family life, and is sacramental between the baptised.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 17. Baptism opens the door to this continuing sacramental life.

The Sacraments of Healing and Vocation

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Which of these Sacraments changes your picture of everyday Catholic life?”
- “Why should marriage history be discussed with the priest early?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is Penance for? Sins committed after Baptism.

Is Anointing only for the dying? No. It is for serious sickness or weakness through age.

What is Matrimony? The lifelong covenant of one man and one woman, sacramental between the baptised.

PRAY TOGETHER

Christ our physician and shepherd, heal what is wounded and guide my vocation.
Teach me to receive your gifts in holiness and service. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Ask how to arrange Confession after Baptism and how to contact a priest for someone seriously ill.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Never direct a catechumen to sacramental Confession before Baptism. Discuss personal marriage circumstances confidentially with the priest; this activity cannot establish freedom to marry or resolve a prior bond. Keep the cases explanatory rather than diagnostic.

Freedom Conscience Virtue and Sin

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Form a truthful conscience and connect freedom with choosing the good.

QUICK PREP

Paper with three headings: TEMPTATION, CHOICE, HABIT.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Is being free simply doing whatever I feel like doing?”

DO SOMETHING

Learning to choose the good

1. Use this case: someone is tempted to spread a harmful rumour but chooses to remain silent. Distinguish temptation from consent.
2. Change the case: the person knowingly invents a damaging lie. Ask what makes the choice morally different.
3. Read the three conditions for mortal sin: grave matter, full knowledge and deliberate consent, present together.
4. Under HABIT, name virtues that help stable good choices: prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. Discuss conscience formed by truth rather than preference.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 18. Accidents, intrusive thoughts and insufficiently free acts must not be equated with deliberate sin.

Freedom Conscience Virtue and Sin

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “How can conscience be both personally binding and in need of formation?”
- “Which good habit would make a right choice easier?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is conscience? Reason’s judgement about a concrete act’s moral quality.

What makes sin mortal? Grave matter, full knowledge and deliberate consent together.

Is temptation itself sin? No.

PRAY TOGETHER

Lord, give me a truthful conscience and steady love of the good. Free me from sin and help me grow in virtue. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Choose one virtue and one small action through which to practise it.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Use fictional situations, without judging whether a particular person has committed mortal sin. Avoid both trivialising grave matter and causing scrupulosity. Private examination and sensitive questions can be taken to the priest without group disclosure.

Love in Concrete Life

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Connect the Church's moral teaching with dignity, truth and costly love.

QUICK PREP

Paper listing LIFE, RELATIONSHIPS, WORK, SPEECH, POSSESSIONS.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "Which area of Catholic moral teaching most needs patient explanation for you?"

DO SOMETHING

What love requires

1. Choose a case: an employer exploits a vulnerable worker; a family dismisses an elderly relative as a burden; a friend treats sexual intimacy as having no lasting obligations.
2. Ask what dignity or good is at stake and why love requires more than strong feelings.
3. Read all of Conversation 19, including life, chastity, marriage, truth, justice and the common good. Do not omit a difficult teaching.
4. Let the person identify one teaching needing further discussion and one possible work of mercy. Personal details may remain private.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 19. Divide the discussion across several meetings when needed, while preserving the whole teaching.

Love in Concrete Life

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What reasons does the Church give for this teaching?”
- “How can clarity about right and wrong be joined to practical mercy?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Why defend every human life? Every person bears God’s image and has inviolable dignity.

What is chastity? The integration of sexuality according to one’s state of life and God’s design.

Does morality include social justice? Yes. Love requires justice, mercy and concern for the common good.

PRAY TOGETHER

God of truth and mercy, order my desires, relationships, speech and possessions towards love. Give me courage where conversion is costly. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Choose one work of mercy that responds to a real person’s need.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Do not substitute a vague discussion of kindness for the source’s moral teaching. Invite sincere questions about the reasons. Complex relationships or moral struggles need patient, confidential pastoral care; never force sensitive disclosure in a group.

Prayer and the Ordinary Catholic Life

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Build a realistic pattern of prayer, Sunday worship, charity and parish belonging.

QUICK PREP

A weekly calendar or blank paper.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What pattern of prayer and worship could last after your first enthusiasm fades?”

DO SOMETHING

A rule that can be lived

1. Write DAILY, SUNDAY, WEEKLY and PARISH. Add one manageable practice under each.
2. For DAILY, choose prayer from the printed texts at the end. For SUNDAY, plan Mass and necessary transport or work arrangements.
3. For WEEKLY, choose a work of mercy. Under PARISH, name a person or setting that will help continued belonging.
4. Read Conversation 20 about the Church’s worship and discipline. Mark Confession and worthy sacramental Communion as practices beginning after Baptism.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 20 and Appendix F. Devotions support the liturgy and do not replace Sunday Mass.

Prayer and the Ordinary Catholic Life

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What usually gets in the way of prayer, and what small change would help?”
- “Who will help you remain part of parish life?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is the weekly centre? Sunday Mass.

What is the model of prayer? The Our Father taught by Jesus.

Are lay Catholics called to mission? Yes, according to vocation and gifts.

PRAY TOGETHER

Father, teach me to pray. Make worship, Scripture, charity and service ordinary parts of my life. Give me perseverance. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Keep the simple rule you have chosen for the next seven days.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Adapt to work, disability, caring duties and language needs. Teach the actual discipline rather than inventing personal burdens. Before Baptism the person attends worship without receiving Communion and learns repentance without sacramental Confession.

Election Scrutinies and the Battle for the Heart

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Explain Election and the Lenten rites as discernment, purification and healing.

QUICK PREP

Three cards: ELECTION, SCRUTINIES, INITIATION.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “What do you hope Christ will strengthen or heal as Baptism draws nearer?”

DO SOMETHING

What the Lenten rites are doing

1. Place ELECTION first. Explain the Church’s call of catechumens ready for the final preparation, following testimony and discernment.
2. Add SCRUTINIES. Read that these are prayers of intercession and exorcism for the elect, not tests or public Confession.
3. Use a fictional concern such as fear of changing an unjust habit. Ask what healing and strengthening would mean. No personal sin need be named.
4. Add INITIATION. Plan prayer, appropriate fasting and charity with the parish, keeping Lent’s spiritual purpose central.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 21 and Appendix B. Confirm current diocesan arrangements with the priest.

Election Scrutinies and the Battle for the Heart

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “Why does readiness include Christian life as well as knowledge?”
- “What is different about prayer for healing and public interrogation?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is Election? The Church’s call to the final preparation for initiation.

What are those called now named? The elect.

Are Scrutinies public Confession? No. They are rites of purification and strengthening.

PRAY TOGETHER

Jesus, light of the world, search my heart with mercy. Free me from what enslaves and strengthen what is good. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Choose one faithful Lenten practice with your mentor and keep it quietly.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Use this conversation at the appropriate point in the journey, not merely after twenty meetings. The priest arranges the rites. Do not stage a mock Scrutiny or invite disclosure of private sins; sacramental Confession remains after Baptism.

Creed Lord's Prayer and Final Preparation

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Help the elect profess the faith sincerely and receive the Church's prayer.

QUICK PREP

The Apostles' Creed and Our Father printed at the end of this guide.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "If asked why you want Baptism, what would you say in your own words?"

DO SOMETHING

Receiving faith and prayer

1. Read the Creed slowly. Pause after the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit and the Church. Ask the person to explain one truth from each part.
2. Read the Our Father. Choose one petition and discuss how it shapes a Christian life.
3. Practise making responses calmly while asking whether the words are sincerely meant. Questions can still be brought to the priest.
4. Explain that final repentance is a peaceful review before God, with appropriate reparation, not sacramental Confession before Baptism.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 22. The priest uses the approved rite for the actual presentations, baptismal profession and responses.

Creed Lord's Prayer and Final Preparation

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What does receiving the faith from the Church mean for you?”
- “What still needs clarification before you profess that faith?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What does the Creed summarise? The apostolic faith into which we are baptised.

Must every answer be perfectly memorised? No. Sincere faith and sufficient understanding matter.

Do the elect confess sacramentally before Baptism? No. Baptism forgives all previous sin.

PRAY TOGETHER

Father, increase my faith. Prepare me to profess your truth freely and pray as your child. Heal what needs healing and lead me into new life. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Pray the Creed and Our Father slowly each day, bringing any real difficulty to the priest.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

The printed Apostles' Creed is for learning and prayer; the approved rite supplies the profession used at initiation. Avoid cramming or pressure. Any act of repair or reconciliation should be wise, safe and proportionate.

The Easter Vigil and the Sacraments of Initiation

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Prepare the elect to participate peacefully in Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

QUICK PREP

Five cards: LIGHT, WORD, BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION, EUCHARIST.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: “Which part of the Vigil are you most longing for, and which makes you nervous?”

DO SOMETHING

Walk through the celebration

1. Arrange the cards using Conversation 23. Explain the movement through light and salvation history to sacramental initiation.
2. Review the renunciation of sin and profession of faith. Rehearse only the spoken responses and practical movements directed by the priest.
3. Explain water, white garment, candle and sacred chrism. Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist ordinarily belong in the same celebration.
4. Practise “Amen” before Communion and plan a short thanksgiving. Review the one-hour Eucharistic fast, except water and medicine, with the priest.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 23 and Appendix B. The approved rite and the priest’s directions govern every actual liturgical action.

The Easter Vigil and the Sacraments of Initiation

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “What gift does each sacrament bring?”
- “What practical concern can we settle so you can pray with greater peace?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

Which sacraments are received? Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

What does the white garment signify? The new dignity of being clothed in Christ.

What does Amen before Communion express? Faith that this is the Body of Christ.

PRAY TOGETHER

Risen Lord Jesus, complete what you have begun in me. Make me your own, feed me with your Body and Blood and keep me faithful. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Confirm practical arrangements with the parish and spend time in quiet prayer.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Rehearse without pretending to administer sacraments. Resolve mobility, language, health or other practical needs beforehand. Do not require sacramental Confession before Baptism. Receive the newly baptised into parish life beyond the celebration.

Mystagogy Living as a Newly Baptised Catholic

Page 1 • Opening & activity

AIM

Deepen the experience of the sacraments through continuing Catholic life.

QUICK PREP

The person's simple rule of life and a calendar.

BEGIN WITH THE PERSON

Ask: "What has receiving the sacraments begun to change in your prayer and everyday life?"

DO SOMETHING

Living from what you have received

1. Recall Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion. Ask what each gift means now, allowing a quiet or ordinary experience rather than demanding strong feelings.
2. Review the rule of life: Sunday Mass, daily prayer, charity and parish belonging. Adjust what has proved unrealistic.
3. Discuss how to prepare for Confession after Baptism: examination, contrition, honest confession, absolution and penance. Arrange personal guidance if needed.
4. Name one relationship, one act of service and one continuing opportunity to learn. Put the next meeting in the diary.

NOW OPEN THE COMPANION

Read Conversation 24 and Appendix F. Mystagogy is lived experience and reflection, especially in the Easter season and continuing afterwards.

Mystagogy Living as a Newly Baptised Catholic

Page 2 • Conversation, prayer & action

TALK TOGETHER

- “How is Communion becoming the centre of your week?”
- “Where do you need help to persevere or begin again?”

CHECK THE CENTRAL TRUTH

What is mystagogy? Deepening sacramental life through experience and reflection after initiation.

Does formation end? No. It continues throughout life.

What forgives serious sin after Baptism? The Sacrament of Penance.

PRAY TOGETHER

Father, thank you for the grace of Baptism. Nourish me in the Eucharist, keep me humble in repentance and make me generous in mission. Amen.

THIS WEEK

Keep your next meeting with the sponsor or mentor and choose one continuing parish commitment.

FOR THE MENTOR OR SPONSOR

Do not disappear after the Vigil. Help the neophyte learn peaceful, regular Confession after Baptism and worthy Communion. Anyone conscious of mortal sin should receive sacramental absolution before Communion. Growth is sustained by real parish relationships.

The RCIA journey at a glance

The conversations serve these periods; the rites mark genuine growth. Use the Companion's journey map and Appendix B with the priest.

Enquirer

Evangelisation and precatechumenate. Hear the Gospel, ask questions and begin faith, prayer and conversion. Conversations 1–4.

Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens

The first major step follows discernment of the beginnings of faith and an intention to follow Christ.

Catechumen

A substantial period of formation, worship, conversion, charity and community. Conversations 5–20. It may take as long as real growth requires.

Election and the elect

The second major step, normally at the beginning of Lent, leads into purification and enlightenment. Conversations 21–22 support the Lenten rites and final preparation.

Sacraments of initiation

The third major step is ordinarily at the Easter Vigil: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist together. Conversation 23.

Neophyte and mystagogy

Especially in the Easter season, deepen the gifts received through sacramental life, reflection, charity and mission. Conversation 24.

THE RITES ARE NOT A TIMETABLE

No promise of initiation follows from completing these pages. Confirm the current diocesan arrangements for Election and adult initiation through the parish priest.

Readiness for Acceptance

Use these prompts alongside Appendix E of the Companion. Discernment is personal and pastoral; it is not a public examination.

FIRST FAITH

The person has heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ and shows initial faith or a sincere desire for faith.

FREE INTENTION

The person freely wishes to follow Christ and continue preparation, without pressure from family or circumstances.

BEGINNING CONVERSION

There is willingness to turn towards God and begin changing life in response to him.

PRAYER AND COMMUNITY

The person has begun prayer and contact with the parish's worship and people.

UNDERSTANDING THE STEP

Acceptance begins the formal catechumenate. It is not Baptism and does not guarantee a fixed date for initiation.

An early pastoral conversation

Before plans are fixed, clarify any possible prior Baptism, marriage history and needs affecting participation. Use Appendix A. The priest determines the correct route and arrangements.

Readiness for Election

The catechumen, godparent, mentor and priest consider the person's developing Christian life. The bishop's current directions and approved rite govern Election.

INTENTION

A developed desire to receive Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

UNDERSTANDING

Sufficient knowledge of Christian teaching according to capacity, with sincere acceptance rather than memorised phrases.

FAITH AND CHARITY

Growth in prayer, Sunday worship, service and parish belonging.

CONVERSION

A real willingness to turn from grave sin and live the Gospel, supported by concrete steps.

PASTORAL MATTERS

Major canonical and pastoral questions have been addressed sufficiently for initiation to proceed.

HONEST TESTIMONY

Those accompanying the person can speak truthfully of readiness and any remaining concerns.

If more time is needed, continue accompaniment. Do not rush because Lent is approaching or turn uncertainty into humiliation.

Readiness for initiation

SINCERE PROFESSION

The elect freely profess the Catholic faith and understand its central truths according to capacity.

SACRAMENTAL UNDERSTANDING

Baptism gives new birth and forgiveness; Confirmation strengthens and seals; Eucharist gives Christ himself.

LENTEN PREPARATION

The person has entered prayer, repentance and the rites of purification and enlightenment as arranged by the Church.

REPENTANCE

There is sorrow for sin and intention to live a Christian life. Sacramental Confession does not precede Baptism.

PRACTICAL PARTICIPATION

The person understands the Vigil's outline, responses and movements, with any needed adaptations.

CONTINUING LIFE

A sponsor, mentor and parish relationships will support the neophyte afterwards.

Perfect memory, confidence in public speaking and strong religious feelings are not the standards. The priest discerns readiness within the Church's law, rites and diocesan direction.

The Apostles' Creed

Use this Creed for learning and prayer. At initiation the celebrant uses the profession and responses prescribed in the approved rite.

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God
the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

Pray with understanding

Pause over a truth that needs attention. Ask what it tells you about God and the life into which you are preparing to be baptised. “He descended into hell” refers here to Christ’s descent to the realm of the dead.

Prayers for ordinary life

The Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

An Act of Contrition

O my God, because you are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you, and by the help of your grace I will not sin again. Amen.

A morning offering

Father, I offer you this day through Jesus Christ. Guide my work, words and choices; help me love you and serve my neighbour. Amen.

A simple evening prayer

Thank you, Father, for your gifts today. Forgive my failures, show me how to begin again and keep me in your peace. Amen.

Before Baptism, pray with repentance and trust. The Act of Contrition is a prayer you can use; it does not imply sacramental Confession before Baptism.

Final word for the mentor and sponsor

Let the person bring a real question. Use the activity to make the teaching concrete, then let the Companion supply the Catholic answer. Give time for understanding to become faith, prayer and a changed life.

ACCOMPANY THE PERSON

A sponsor or mentor introduces parish life, prays, listens, encourages and gives honest testimony when needed. The relationship continues after initiation.

KEEP THE WHOLE JOURNEY

Teaching belongs with Sunday worship, the Church's rites, conversion, charity and community. Twenty-four conversations are a guide to formation, not a replacement for the catechumenate.

LIVE FROM CHRIST'S GIFTS

The goal is a disciple who freely believes, turns from sin and lives through Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. Arrange continuing support, learning and service.

When the conversation needs help

Questions about possible Baptism, marriage history, doctrinal difficulties, health, disability or safeguarding belong with the appropriate parish support and the priest. Respect privacy and follow current parish procedures.

cathparishmje.co.uk

St Mary's | St John Bosco | St Edward's Parish

References for the priest and mentor

This guide follows the twenty-four conversations of Becoming Catholic RCIA A Catechumenate Companion. Use that book for the full teaching and the following appendices.

Appendices A and G

Correct pathway, prior Baptism, marriage and particular circumstances.

Appendices B and C

The major rites and the roles of sponsor and godparent.

Appendices D and E

Concise doctrinal answers and readiness before Acceptance, Election and initiation.

Appendices F and H

Ordinary Christian life, sources and parish authority.

Primary Church sources

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults approved for England and Wales, especially the introductory guidance on the periods, major steps, formation and mystagogy.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, especially 1213–1284 on Baptism, 1285–1321 on Confirmation, 1322–1419 on the Eucharist and 1422–1498 on Penance.

Code of Canon Law, especially canons 206, 788–789 and 849–878, including canon 866 on Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist in adult initiation.

Liturgy Office of England and Wales, RCIA An Overview:
liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/RCIA/overview.pdf.

The approved liturgical books, universal law, current diocesan direction and the parish priest's pastoral judgement govern the actual celebration. This activity guide does not supply a substitute rite.