

OCIA Ministry

What exactly is OCIA ministry, and how can I get involved?

We all know that ministry is the act of serving God and others with love, humility, and compassion, based on the biblical example of Jesus serving rather than being served. It consists of meeting physical, emotional, and spiritual needs through preaching, outreach, and pastoral care. Ministry is often categorized as ordained ministry (clergy) or lay ministry (all believers).

Why is ministry an important part of the Church's mission?

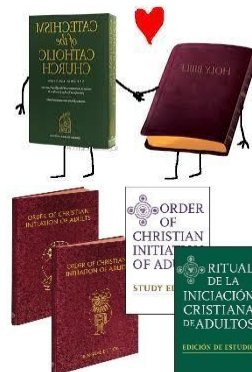
Ministry is vital to the mission of the Church because it turns faith into action, directly fulfilling the Great Commission through service, outreach, and discipleship. It strengthens believers, addresses physical and spiritual needs, fosters unity within the Body of Christ, and serves as a tangible expression of God's love for the community.

How can I get involved in OCIA ministry?

The best way to get involved in OCIA ministry is to talk to your pastor and follow his advice. Many begin by participating as a catechist's assistant. Study the Scriptures and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and familiarize yourself with the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*.

OCIA resources at St. Rita of Cascia Parish

At St. Rita of Cascia Parish in Aurora, we use the Scriptures and the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. So far, we have been very pleased with the results. We also provide a booklet so participants can follow the Mass (*Guide to the Mass / Welcome to Our Church*) and learn the basic prayers. In addition, we use YouTube videos from Catholic Central to support certain topics.



Your pastor will help you decide which resources fit the Parish Mission Statement.

Top Recommended RCIA Programs out there are:

- **Symbolon: The Catholic Faith Explained (Formed.org):** Frequently recommended as one of the best comprehensive video-based programs. Produced by the Augustine Institute, it features top Catholic teachers and is designed to lead participants through the faith, making it excellent for both in-person and small-group study.
- **Credo (TAN Books):** A newer, highly structured 36-topic video program created in collaboration with the Dominican Friars and the Thomistic Institute. It is designed specifically for OCIA, offering a deep, orthodox, and systematic look at Catholic teaching.
- **Journey of Faith (Liguori Publications):** Widely used and praised for being very catechistfriendly. It is structured around the RCIA process and excels at making complex theological concepts easy to grasp for inquirers.
- **My Catholic Life! Series (24-week study):** A free online program that provides a complete, faithful, and easy-to-read summary of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. It is very accessible for individual study or as a primary text.
- **Dynamic Catholic (The RCIA Experience):** Focused on engaging adults through video and discussion to foster lifelong discipleship, often used in parishes looking to modernize their approach.

Top Online/Self-Study Options

For individuals looking for self-paced study or a supplement to their parish program:

- **CatechismClass.com:** Offers an online adult faith formation program covering scriptures, sacraments, and morality.
- **Fr. Mike Schmitz's Catechism in a Year (Podcast/YouTube):** Excellent for supplemental learning, though not a complete, structured RCIA program in itself.
- **[Catholic Online School](#):** Provides free video-based RCIA courses that can be used for self-paced study, though they are intended to supplement, not replace, in-person parish training.

Key Considerations for Choosing

- **Parish Approach:** The best program is often the one that the local parish uses and supports with trained catechists.
- **Orthodoxy:** Ensure the material adheres to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
- **Structure:** Look for a program that aligns with the liturgical seasons (Inquiry, Catechumenate, Purification/Enlightenment, Mystagogy).
- **Interactive Components:** Programs like *Symbolon* or *Credo* that include discussion questions are generally superior to lecture-only formats.

Note: The official [USCCB website](#) is recommended as a starting point for finding resources on the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults.

Your pastor will help with choosing what best fit the Parish Mission Statement.