



Order of Christian Initiation for Adults

Adapted for Children and Teens

Parent Handbook



St. Pius X Catholic Church
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Religious Education Office: 609-693-0368



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Welcome to the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults adapted for Children and Teens! (OCIC)

We are so excited that you have answered the call from the Holy Spirit to call Saint Pius the Tenth home. You have chosen and committed yourself and your children to seek participation in, and prepare for the Sacraments of the Catholic Church. The parish community of the Church of Saint Pius the Tenth welcomes you.

Christian Initiation is a journey, not to a destination but to a person, the person of Jesus Christ. "Becoming Catholic" is a response to God's invitation by answering the call to follow Jesus as his disciple. This is a process of conversion, communion and discipleship.

We seek to share our faith and ultimately bring children and families closer to Christ through the Sacraments of the Catholic Church. For that to happen, we encourage each member of your family to simply come with an open heart and allow the Holy Spirit to work. All we do at OCIC is centered on Jesus Christ. We focus on building community and friendship, incorporating prayer, reading the Sunday scriptures, and preparing ourselves and our souls to receive the Sacraments of Initiation. We seek to build Disciples of Christ.

We recognize that faith formation begins at home with the parents as primary catechists. As parents, we ask that you pray for and with your child and family this year. We encourage you to talk with your children and to review the information that they bring home. Ask them what they are learning in their faith, but go beyond and ask how they are trying to live that faith out in school or home with their siblings. Journey with them and help them to see God working in their life and the life of the family. **Weekly Mass attendance is a vital part of this.** We hope to work hand in hand with you as your child completes his or her initiation into the Body of Christ. Remember, however, that this is just the beginning of a lifelong journey of faith.

Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your journey. We are always available to assist you and answer any questions you might have. Communication is a vital part of our relationship with you. Please feel free to reach us via telephone at the Religious Education Office: 609-693-0368. Again, welcome! We look forward to this time as we grow closer to Christ together.

Lovingly in Christ,

The OCIC Team

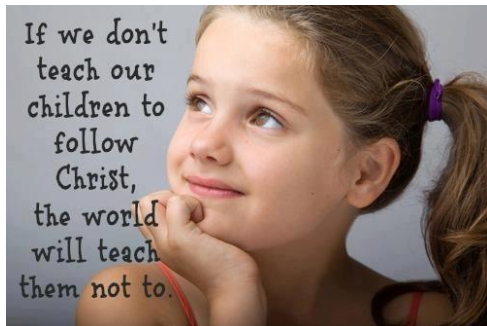
What is the Order of Christian Initiation of Children?

OCIC (Order of Christian Initiation of Children) is a *minimum* of a two-year process for children and youth of middle and high school age, whether baptized or unbaptized. Children preparing to receive the Sacraments they have missed since Baptism, or to join the Catholic Church through Baptism, will attend OCIC classes on a regular basis beginning in September and continuing through the Easter Season, with holiday breaks. Each family comes into the OCIC program with different needs. The children will be of various ages and have had different levels of previous instruction.

Taking into consideration the children's ages and levels of maturity, our goal is to provide a basic understanding of what it means to know and love God, and how to live out their lives within His guidelines. They will learn about what it means to become a Catholic Christian. The OCIC program enables children to enter into a relationship with God and share in the life of their identity as Children of God. The importance of weekly Mass, understanding the parts of the Mass, and how to use the Holy Bible will be covered early in the curriculum.

The OCIC team not only includes the teachers and the children but the parents, and/or guardians. Please be sure that your child attends class on a regular basis, reviews his or her class materials at home, learns prayers, becomes familiar with the Bible, and experiences a Catholic environment in the home.

Parent's Role



OCIC is supplemental to the faith formation that is taking place in the home. No one is more important than parents in passing on to their children the priceless gift of faith. Parents are the primary educators of faith as the family is the domestic church. This means that the parents' role is to witness, live and share the faith with their children. This is done directly and indirectly. All children learn from their parents indirectly when faith is made a priority in the home and their parenting/ family life reflects virtue and the love of Christ. Parents should also seek out direct ways to form their children in the faith. This includes: family prayer, participation in Sunday Mass, and intentional conversations about the faith and morality. Essentially, Jesus Christ should be a member of your family, not merely a mascot that comes out every so often.

- All OCIC students **must** attend the 10 am. mass with their families each Sunday beginning with the Rite of Welcome/Entrance which takes place the week after Thanksgiving. ALL individuals in the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults and Children, as well as their families and sponsors, will sit as a group in designated pews in the Church.
- Beginning with the Rite of Welcome/Entrance, all OCIA and OCIC candidates and catechumens will be dismissed from mass following the Gospel Homily to "Break Open the Word" and further explore the Sunday readings. (See below). Parents, sponsors and OCIA team members will remain in the Church until mass is over. Parents can then pick up their child in the OCIA meeting room located off the Narthex.

- We will provide all materials for each student. Parents should look for notes, newsletters and handouts from the teachers to further discuss the Catholic faith. Empower your children to teach YOU what they have learned. They will remember more this way.

Attendance

OCIC has weekly class sessions. Sessions take place Wednesday evenings from 6:30 – 8:00 pm in room #5 of the religious education building located behind the church. Please make sure that your child arrives on time since we start promptly at 6:30 pm. If a child misses a session, they not only miss the topics and discussion for that day, but also the community dynamic that resides in each group of participants. If a child misses a class, the parents are asked to share the lesson with their child. Lesson information can be obtained from the catechist.

No more than four classes can be missed. Missing more than four (4) classes may result in having to repeat the year.

- Students will only be released to a parent/guardian unless written authorization is provided by the parent/guardian.
- For safety reasons, children will not be released to the parking lot unattended. Please drive cautiously.
- All absences must be communicated with the catechist via phone or voicemail through the Religious Education Office (609) 693-0368 or you may call or text the teachers directly:
 - Mary La Bruna (Cell: 609-384-5605) email mlabruna13@hotmail.com
 - Eileen Ambrose (Cell: 609-709-1953) email Emagram52620@gmail.com

Weather Related Closings

If classes are cancelled due to bad weather, parents will be notified through:

- REMIND APP – Codes can be found in the Religious Ed Office
- Facebook: St. Pius X Religious Education
- Website: www.churchofstpius.org/faith-development/religious-education
- Main Digital Sign – Out in front of building on Lacey Road

If public schools are closed due to weather, religious education classes will also be cancelled, regardless of conditions later in the day. PLEASE do not drop off your child without confirming class is in session.

Parish Registration

Parish registration and religious education registration is required for all children to participate in classes. *Religious education registration is not registration in the parish.* It is important to be registered in the parish and to use your donation envelopes so that we have records of your activity in the parish. If you ever request a letter for Baptism, Marriage, Confirmation, a tax statement, being a godparent or sponsor, or if you would like to have your child enrolled in our Religious Education Program, or for many other reasons, we must check our records to confirm that you indeed attend here before we can make a statement to that effect. We also cannot sign affidavits stating that you are a member of the parish (even if you attend Mass here), if we have no records to that effect.

Baptismal Certificates - Certificates are due by the end of October.

A baptismal certificate is required for all baptized children enrolled in OCIA. The documents provide continuity of sacramental records and legal names. All certificates should be turned into the Religious Education Office and the OCIA Coordinator.

Sacraments of Initiation

Preparation for Sacraments should aim at leading the Christian toward more intimate union with Christ and a livelier familiarity with the Holy Spirit—his actions, his gifts, and his biddings—in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end catechesis for Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of the sacraments. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1309)

As a participant in OCIC your child will be preparing for two or all three Sacraments of Initiation. These sacraments include Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion. The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) will be celebrated during Lent for second year students who will be receiving the Sacraments of Confirmation and/or the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil.

Baptism - Becoming part of a family

When a person is baptized, (OCIC Candidate) he/she becomes united both to Jesus Christ and to His Church, the Christian family. This sacrament of Baptism is really the start of a new life in Christ. The ancient description of baptism as a time of being “born again” has been rediscovered in the Catholic vocabulary.

- The Sacrament of Baptism requires at least ONE (1) or TWO (2) Baptismal Sponsors* (see below).
- Those students who are unbaptized, OCIC Catechumens, will receive the Sacrament of Baptism during the *first year of the OCIC program at the Easter Vigil*.
- If a student is 8 - 9 years old, he/she may then be placed in the age-appropriate Faith Formation process with the other children for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

Reconciliation - also known as the Sacrament of Penance/Confession

The sacramental celebration in which, through God’s mercy and forgiveness, the sinner is reconciled with God and also with the Church, Christ’s Body, which is wounded by sin.

- This Sacrament is celebrated during the second year of the OCIC program during Lent before Easter.

Holy Communion – Eucharist

Holy Communion is the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the ritual, sacramental action of thanksgiving to God which constitutes the principal Christian liturgical celebration of and communion in the paschal mystery of Christ. This Sacrament is celebrated during the second year of the OCIC program during the Easter Vigil.

Confirmation

Confirmation is the second of the three sacraments of Christian initiation. Confirmation is the completion of Baptism and the sacrament by which the baptized faithful are anointed with chrism by the laying on of hands. The grace received is the fullness of the Holy Spirit and his gifts. We also describe this fullness as the completion, strengthening, or perfection of the Holy Spirit received in Baptism.

- The Sacrament of Confirmation requires only ONE (1) Confirmation Sponsor and a Saint's name. The role of a sponsor is to see that the confirmed person acts as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations connected with this Sacrament.
- This Sacrament is celebrated during the second year of the OCIC program during the Easter Vigil if the OCIC students' manifest readiness for this sacrament.

Saint's Name

Saints are our brothers and sisters in Christ. They intercede for us before God. We acknowledge the Communion of Saints as friends of Jesus that are already in heaven. They are also considered to be our "heavenly sponsors" that pray for us. Information will be provided to students to help them choose a Confirmation name.

Sponsor's (Godparent's) Role

Every child will need a Sponsor or God-parent depending upon if they have been baptized or not. The sponsor will be someone other than a parent, who will support the child in his or her Catholic Journey. The sponsor must be a baptized and confirmed Catholic, who is over the age of 16, and is in good standing with the Catholic Church. The sponsor will fill out a sponsor registration form and have it approved by the parish he/she belongs to. Sponsors can be described as a role model of the Catholic Church while we are here on Earth. Sponsors are fully initiated Catholics who have met the canon law (church law) requirements as stated below. They should be in a "state of grace" and able to receive Holy Communion at the Celebration Mass. One of the most important roles of a sponsor/godparent is to receive the Eucharist at mass with their sponsored child. **Sponsor Forms will be handed out during OCIC Orientation.**

Baptismal and Confirmation Sponsor Requirements:

- ✝ A Baptized Catholic, who has received the Sacrament of First Eucharist, Sacrament of Confirmation and, if married, celebrated the Sacrament of Marriage within the Church.
- ✝ Trusted adult; who is willing to stand with the child not only during the ceremony, but throughout life's journey. Should be willing to have faith-filled conversations with the child in order to provide guidance.
- ✝ A mentor who fully embraces and lives their faith fully by partaking of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.
- ✝ Must be at least 16 years old.
- ✝ May not be the parent of the one being confirmed.

Traditional Catholic Prayers

The Sign of the Cross

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

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.

Act of Contrition O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee. And I detest all my sins because of thy just punishment. But most of all, because I offend you, my God, who is all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

Hail Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us. And after this our exile, show unto us the blessed Fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

O clement,

O loving,

O sweet Virgin Mary.

-Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

-That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Guardian Angel Prayer

Angel of God, my Guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the LORD is with thee, blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus, Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Apostles' Creed (Profession of Faith)

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 the life everlasting. Amen.

Glory be to the Father

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.

Grace Before Meals

Bless us O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Morning Offering

O loving God, I give you this day All that I think and do and say, I give You my love with Jesus, your Son Today I will try to love everyone.

Fatima Prayer

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Your mercy. Amen.

