



Catechetical Institute: Suggestions for RCIA during the COVID pandemic:

Four key things to focus on to ensure your RCIA process attends well to those God sends to you:

- Meet *outside as often as you can* and as long as the weather permits. Go heavy on the *food* and make it fun. Done carefully, potlucks during COVID can work, and are a great help to fellowship. Food is God's love made edible! Share time *outside* of the RCIA sessions – invite people over to your homes for a meal outside. *Befriend* them with greater intentionality.
- Focus on the *quality of one-on-one meetings* to touch base on how each RCIA participant is doing – this is normal to do prior to each of the major liturgical rites of the process, but such interactions can occur more frequently in this context (see the PDF handouts for discussion questions based on discerning readiness for the RCIA rites).
- Focus on giving each RCIA participant a *well-trained, attentive sponsor or godparent*, as early in the process as possible. Focus this year on improving your attention to the formation of those willing to serve in this critical person-to-person ministry.
- *Pray* with RCIA participants in a more deliberate manner and in *a more personal way* than perhaps you are accustomed to. Obtain for them *intercessors*, by name, from among the stronger prayer warriors in your parish community.

Three excellent resources to move forward, not backward, this autumn:

- Use the Catechetical Institute's workshops (www.FranciscanAtHome.com) to understand the pastoral aspect of RCIA better and approach the process more creatively. Some suggested workshops titles are:
 - *The Challenge of Charity: Life in the Family of God*
 - *Pastoral Components of the Christian Initiation Process: From Initial Motivation to Firm Conviction to a Catholic Worldview*
 - *Being Guided & Guiding Souls*
 - *Adult Catechetical Methodologies & Learning Styles*
 - *Developing a Team: Creating an Environment for Conversion*
- Purchase the *RCIA Godparent and Sponsor Handbook* from the Association for Catechumenal Ministry (ACM) and use it to substantially improve the quality of that area of RCIA pastoral care.
- Have your RCIA team and catechists read together the small book *The Good Listener* by Fr. James Sullivan. Used copies from Amazon are very inexpensive, and the book will give you a much stronger sense of how to pastorally impact others just by the quality of your one-to-one interactions with those in the RCIA process. You might also consider taking the Catechetical Institute workshop titled: *Building the Mentoring Relationship: Empathic Listening*.

In Christ,

William Keimig, D.Min.
Assistant Director
Catechetical Institute
Franciscan University of Steubenville
www.FranciscanAtHome.com