

The Adult Initiation process is a wonderful gift from God. How often do we get to take time and reflect on who we are, what we are made for, who is God, and what life is all about? If you're like me, not very often.

For most of us, the busyness of life gets in the way of discovering who we truly are and what we are truly called to be. It is challenging to ask ourselves who God calls us to be when figuring out how to afford our rent or braces for our teenagers.

Adult initiation gives us nine months at one and a half hours a week to discover things about ourselves, our God, and our community we don't often have time to think about. We are allowed to discover more about ourselves and our relationship with God. Some may view this time offered for the enrichment of ourselves as selfish. I disagree. When we discover who we are and our purpose in this world, we can become the gift to others we are intended to be. We can serve others with the gifts God has given us.

The adult initiation process is broken into four parts (1) Inquiry, (2) Catechumenate, (3) Purification and Enlightenment, and (4) Mystagogy. These four parts allow the participants to dive deep into self-reflection to better understand their formation as human people.

The inquiry period at Saint Patrick Catholic Community is about eight weeks long. During the inquiry, we offer a deeper look into topics such as "What is the Mass," "The Liturgical Calendar," and "Who is Jesus." Inquiry is a time when the adult initiation team introduces those inquiring about our faith to the Gospel values our Catholic identity is built upon.

The catechumenate is begun with a RITE celebrating the beginning of a journey moving towards joining the body of Christ with the sacrament of baptism and joining the Church with the other two sacraments of initiation, Confirmation, and First Eucharist. The Inquirer is now considered a catechumen, someone discerning joining the Church. The Saint Patrick Catholic Community prays with you for your discernment into joining the mystical Body of Christ.

The period of purification and enlightenment is when individuals take a deeper look into their lives, letting go of things holding them back from building a holy relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. The Catechumens are encouraged to let go of sin and change their lives to mimic and imitate the life and way of our Lord Jesus Christ. This period is immediately before the individual receives the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist) at the Easter Vigil. Saint Patrick Catholic Community begins this period in the first week of Lent.

Finally, the period of mystagogy starts immediately after the Easter Vigil. This period reminds our Catholic brothers and Sisters who were officially made members of the Catholic faith and now members of the Body of Christ that our faith journey is a lifelong process. The sacraments of initiation are just the beginning of our Catholic life. We must always work on our prayer life and relationship with the Lord.

If you're interested in becoming a full member of the Catholic Church, please contact Dr. Lenny at lkelly@stpatcc.org.