

THE RCIA: THEN AND NOW PART 4

In last week's column, I discussed the many ways each of us can participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA). This week I will discuss why we should participate. First and foremost, we should participate in the RCIA because Christ has called us to do so. The RCIA is the ordinary way that adults not yet joined to Christ in and through the Church are united to him through the sacraments of initiation. This is the mission of the Church, it is the mission of our parish, and it is the mission of each and every one of us as disciples of Christ.

Second, we should participate in the RCIA because of the grace that we receive from doing so. Certainly those who are joined to Christ through the process receive the saving grace of faith and the sacraments, but the grace of the process overflows too to the entire parish and Church. New members on fire with God's Spirit bring new life to our parish and a new source of gifts with which to serve the parish's mission. As St. Paul says, the Church is the Body of Christ, and each part is uniquely vital to the body. By adding new members, we add new, unique parts to the body, extending our reach in our efforts to witness to the Gospel in ever new ways.

Third, we should participate in the RCIA because it is a joy to experience the life of Christ grow in the heart of another person and to know even more that we had some part in that. We have the opportunity to be vessels of salvation for others, sharing with them the fullness of life. All we have to do is invite them to join Christ in his Church through the RCIA. May we all do our part to renew the RCIA here at St. Boniface, and may Christ, who calls us to this mission, bless us with new life and joy.