



FALLING IN LOVE WITH JESUS

Vision 2020 is about calling parishes, and our diocese, back to our core mission: forming missionary disciples, persons in love with Jesus Christ. Persons who want to follow him. The Church gives us a roadmap for doing so; there is no need to reinvent the wheel. This roadmap is called the RCIA, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Our Church teaches that “[t]he model for all catechesis is the baptismal catechumenate... catechumenal formation should inspire the other forms of catechesis in both their objectives and in their dynamism.” (GDC, 59). In other words, the RCIA process should be the inspiration for all our formation efforts, whether we are preparing adults for baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist... or teens for confirmation... or couples for marriage... or simply living our life as an evangelizing parish.

RCIA 75: Recovering an Ancient Paradigm

The heart of this roadmap is found in [RCIA paragraph 75](#). There we read: “The catechumenate is an extended period during which the candidates are given suitable pastoral formation and guidance, aimed at training them in the Christian life.” In other words, the RCIA – and all of parish life – is an apprenticeship. We fall in love with Christ, and learn to follow him, with our whole being: hearts and hands as well as heads.

An Apprenticeship in the Faith

What are the components of this apprenticeship? RCIA 75 lists four ways that catechumens, and all of us, are to be formed in the faith:

1. By “**suitable catechesis**... planned to be gradual and complete in its coverage, accommodated to the liturgical year, and solidly supported by celebrations of the word.”
2. By becoming “familiar with the Christian way of life... helped by the example and support of sponsors, godparents, and the entire **Christian community**...”
3. By “**suitable liturgical rites**...”
4. By learning “how to **work** actively with others to spread the Gospel and build up the Church by the **witness** of their lives...”

Catechesis, community life, liturgy and prayer, service and witness. These are how disciples are made. This is how discipleship is deepened. The parish is the curriculum.¹

So, as we continue our Vision 2020 journey, we have a lens through which we can look at our parishes and our diocese. How are we doing these things well? What successes do we need to celebrate? Where might we need to put more time, effort, and attention? How might we become more attractive communities?

¹See: Diana Macalintal, *Your Parish is the Curriculum: RCIA in the Midst of the Community* (Liturgical Press, 2018).