

# RCIA Class of 2018-2019



## Jesse Carter

My name is **Jesse Carter**. I was born and raised in a small town in Ohio. Growing up my family wasn't very religious. I met my wife in my junior year of high school and joined the Marines right after graduating. We have three beautiful little girls. We moved to Travis AFB in 2016 after my wife joined the Air Force. One day my oldest daughter came to me and told me she wanted to go to church and learn about God, after looking up a bunch of churches I came across Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, I decided to send Pearlra an email and we set up a time for our whole family to sit down and talk with her about the Catholic Church. We instantly fell in love with the Church. While talking with Pearlra she mentioned the R.C.I.A program and I signed up for it. During the program, I have met great people whom I have built a spiritual bond with, learned much more about the Catholic faith and not to mention building a better relationship with God. I also feel a sense of joy, peace, and I am filled with a sense of purpose when I attend class. Thank you to Ms. Pearlra for introducing my family to the Catholic faith.



## Federico (Ricky) G. Tolentino, Jr

My name is **Federico (Ricky) G. Tolentino, Jr.** I've lived in the U.S. longer than the years I had lived in my country, the Philippines.

In the past, I had some religious experiences, though I was not serious about it. I am glad that in this latter part of my life, I found myself going to church at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel almost every Sunday, and I feel the blessings every time. I pray that these blessings I am experiencing now will be permanent.

Before, my thought/connection with our Almighty God was "on & off." But now I want to maintain my trust in Him for His guidance and blessings.

In line with the above, I decided to join the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults).

Since I joined the RCIA class, my neighbors and some friends became curious and wanted to know how I got involved. I sense a feeling of interest on them. I hope I can bring them to RCIA in the future. I thank God for all these blessing and thank also to our volunteer teachers who guided us all throughout our learning.



## Biblia Galang Frederiksen

My name is **Biblia Galang Frederiksen**. I grew up in a "non-denominational Christian Society" but I was baptized in a Catholic Church when I was an infant. For some reason, my siblings and I lived separately from our parents.

When I came to the U.S., life was better for me but I felt something was missing in my life. I longed for some Christian life activities. Two years after my late husband passed away, I started to live with my daughter and son-in-law in Fairfield. I felt good about it. I felt at peace going to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church every Sunday, and I enjoyed going to CFC events like Household meetings, assemblies, teachings, CLP (Christian Life Program), and other religious activities. Everything really came together when I decided to join the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). I learned so much from this program.

Let me share with you two of the biggest lessons I gained in this program:

*1 Cor. 12: 4, 5(4) There are different kinds of Spiritual gifts but the same Spirit.*

*(5) There are different forms of services but the same Lord.*



## Masoumeh Kennedy

My name is **Masoumeh Kennedy**. I was born in a Muslim Family. I believed in Jesus and at age 29 when I was in Armenia, my family got angry when they heard that I had changed my religion from Islam to Christianity. After 2 years when I returned to Iran, my youngest sister and my mother started believing in Jesus. My sister and I were baptized in Turkey when we went to a Christian Conference. I came to the US in December 2010 and married in January 2013. The First time I heard about RCIA classes and the Catholic faith was from my sister and her husband. They encouraged me to find a Catholic Church.

One night I had a dream about MARY, the Holy Mother. She was wearing a beautiful blue dress and hug me with kindness. When I described Mary to my husband and that she had encouraged me to join the Catholic Church. Finally, God leads me and my husband to Our Lady of Mt Carmel Church. RCIA classes opened my eyes and my heart. The Catholic faith teaches you about the living God, that God is real.

Moreover, since joining RCIA and coming into the Catholic faith, I know that Catholic faith is the only true faith to believe in and who worship God with thanksgiving, love and grace in their hearts.



## James Kennedy

My name is **James Kennedy**. I joined an Antioch Baptist church in Shreveport, Louisiana where Rev. Walter Mason was the Pastor. I gave my life to Christ at an early age coming from a family of Christians. My mom had always taken me and my sibling to church every Sunday. She was an usher in the church, dad was on the Deacon Board while my sibling and I sang in the Choir. Later I moved to Vallejo, CA and joined Union Baptist where Rev. Jim Mc Coy is the Pastor. I was a choir member in the men's chorus. Later, I moved to F airfield, CA and became a member of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church. This was where the Holy Spirit led me to join RCIA and I became more involved in learning more about Jesus and the Bible.

I joined RCIA because it teaches the word of the Living God, it helps me to continue my spiritual Journey and gave me the courage to go out into the community of non-believers to let them know that God is real and still sitting on His throne. RCIA gave me a broader view to help me understand that nothing is impossible if you trust/put your faith in God! Moreover, I came to RCIA knowing RCIA doesn't discriminate. They don't care what your religious belief is, they welcome all.

*In Revelation 22:17 is an open invitation: "Come! Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."* In these and other verses, the clear implication is that, even though we are sinners, God desires us to come to Him as we are so that He can cleanse us. I believe this is the stand that RCIA shares.



## RJ (Richard) Ornellas

Hello! My name is **RJ (Richard) Ornellas**. I am 38 years old and was born and raised in Fairfield. As a young boy I can remember my mom believing in God but I was not raised in the church and I was never baptized. I also remember going to what we called "the golf ball" church as a child with my friend and his mom. After going to church with my friend and his mom, I started believing in God. In 2014, I met Lauren, the woman of my dreams. We fell in love quickly and she started teaching me about the Catholic faith. At first, I wasn't very open to it, but after some time my interest started to grow. I started RCIA in 2018 and have learned so much about the Catholic faith. In the beginning I thought the Catholic Church was strict and I didn't understand a lot of what happened in the Mass and why certain things were done. Since RCIA, I now have a better understanding of the Catholic faith and a closer relationship with God. I am excited to receive my Sacraments of Baptism, first Holy Communion and my Confirmation at the Easter Vigil 2019. I have a clear understanding of faith, hope and love and can't wait to see what the Good Lord has in store for my life, my ETERNAL life!



## **Dan Stark**

My name is **Dan Stark**. I grew up in a Baptist household, when I met my future wife for the first time, I could see the joy of the Lord in her. She was a devout Catholic and I soon began attending Mass with her and came to love the beautiful serenity of the service. She also introduced me to the wonderful Filipino tradition of *Simbang Gabi*, which is a 9- day Christmas Novena that helps to prepare oneself for the celebration of the birth of Christ. Over the past 6 years, I felt strongly to become a member and practitioner of the Catholic faith, which lead me to join RCIA. I had lots of questions for the RCIA team and Father David, and all were readily answered, with supporting scriptural references. I am super excited about my journey into Catholicism and look forward to all that is to come!