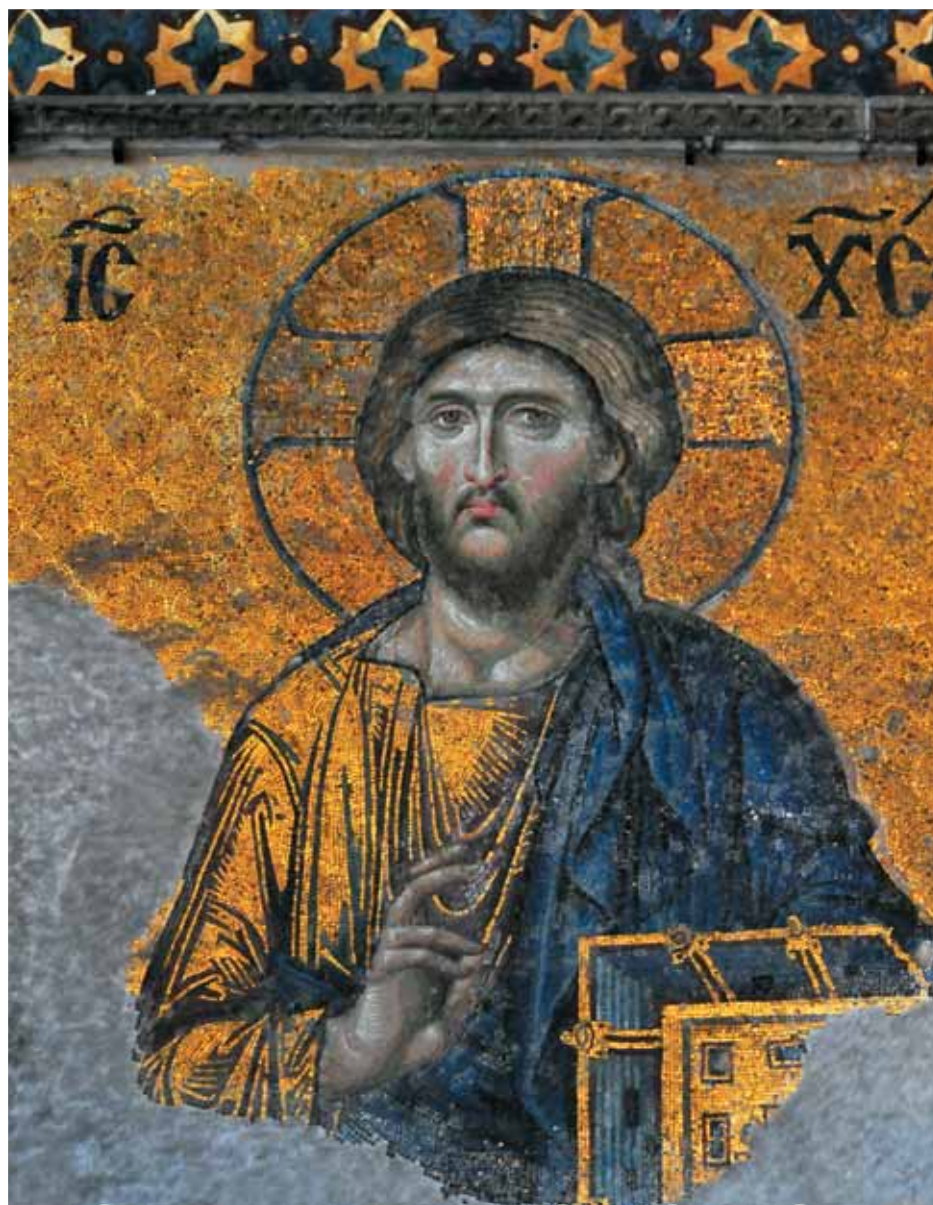


RCIA Companion Manual for **CALL and RESPONSE**



CALL and RESPONSE

An Introduction to the Catholic Faith

Catholic Enquiry Centre

www.catholicenquiry.com



Letter of recommendation

from Bishop Walker

Dear Priests, Deacons and members of Diocesan or Parish RCIA teams,

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) is the process by which the Catholic Church welcomes people into the faith. It is a journey whereby people discover the richness of Catholic faith and their place in it.

RCIA typically involves a variety of catechesis: lectionary-based, liturgical, instructional and mystagogical. It means using Sunday readings supplemented with some instructional material identifying connections with liturgy, processed through reflection.

As noted in the Rite itself an important part of RCIA is suitable catechesis which is “planned to be gradual and complete in its coverage, accommodated to the liturgical year, and solidly supported by celebrations of the word.” (par. 75.1) The purpose of the catechesis is to lead the catechumens to an appropriate knowledge of the dogmas and precepts of the Catholic faith and to invite them into a profound sense of the mystery of salvation.

Call and Response: An Introduction to the Catholic Faith is a resource designed to introduce adults to the fundamentals of Catholic teaching. This *RCIA Companion Manual for Call and Response* is intended to show how it might be fruitfully used as a resource in the RCIA.

The task of journeying with people through the RCIA who are interested in being baptised or entering into full communion with the Catholic Church is a very important one. It is a privileged role that you are undertaking. On behalf of the Bishops of Australia, I thank you for your contribution to the mission of spreading the gospel.

Bishop David Walker

Bishops Delegate RCIA,

Bishops Commission for Mission and Faith Formation



Introduction

This manual is designed to be used in conjunction with the book *Call and Response: An Introduction to the Catholic Faith* as an aid for those responsible for facilitating catechetical formation for catechumens and candidates during the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). For the sake of simplicity, throughout this booklet the term ‘catechumens’ is to be understood as referring to both catechumens and candidates.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is a liturgical rite that is designed to prepare catechumens in the Christian life through pastoral formation and guidance in the context of a Christian community.

RCIA works to achieve this end in four equally important ways.

The local parish community assists the catechumens on their journey by means of suitable liturgical rites. These rites work to incrementally form and inform catechumens and strengthen their relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church.

Through the support and example of clergy, sponsors, other members of the RCIA team and the whole parish community catechumens grow in the practice of prayer.

Catechesis is provided by priests, deacons, catechists and others of the community. The catechetical process is structured in a way that it is planned, gradual, comprehensive in its coverage, accommodated to the liturgical year and solidly supported by celebrations of the word. The catechesis is designed to lead the catechumens to an acquaintance with Church teaching while maintaining a sense of the mystery of salvation. (See RCIA par. 81- 84)

Consistent with the Church’s apostolic mission catechumens are invited and encouraged to learn how to work with others in spreading the Gospel and building up the Church by the witness of their lives and by professing their faith.



Lectionary based Catechesis and *Call and Response*

Scripture is the foundation of catechetical teaching and catechesis grounded in Scripture presents the persons and events involved in God's plan of revelation and salvation. It is envisaged that the text of *Call and Response: An Introduction to Catholic Faith* would form part of catechesis for RCIA and build on and extend the critically informed reflection on Sunday lectionary readings that forms the central process in lectionary based catechesis.

The RCIA and Catechesis

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults has three Liturgical Rites and four distinct periods of catechetical formation.

The Liturgical rites are the Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens, Election or Enrolment of Names and the Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation. The four distinct periods in the Rite are the Period of Evangelisation and Pre-catechumenate, the Period of the Catechumenate, the Period of Purification and Enlightenment and the Period of Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy.

The book, *Call and Response An Introduction to the Catholic Faith*, has four distinct sections; *Hearing God's Call; Understanding the Catholic Faith; Receiving the Sacraments* and *Responding to God's Call: Faith in Action*. It is available from the Catholic Enquiry Centre.

The four sections of *Call and Response* co-relate to the four periods of the RCIA as follows

RCIA Period	<i>Call and Response</i> section
Evangelisation and Pre-Catechumenate	<i>Hearing God's Call</i> <i>'Welcome' to Chapter 5</i>
Catechumenate	<i>Understanding the Catholic Faith</i> <i>'Introduction' and Chapters 6 to 17</i> <i>Receiving the Sacraments</i> <i>Chapters 24 to 26</i>
Purification and Enlightenment	<i>Receiving the Sacraments</i> <i>Chapters 18, 19, 20 & 23</i>
Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy	<i>Understanding the Catholic Faith</i> <i>Chapters 21 & 22</i> <i>Responding to God's Call: Faith in Action</i> <i>Chapters 27 to 31</i>

The Period of Evangelisation and Pre-catechumenate

During the pre-catechumenate period, priests and deacons, catechists and other laypersons through celebrations of the Word introduce inquirers to the story of Jesus and the community of his followers. During this period it is the inquirer's own questions that shape the basis of formation.

Chapters of *Call and Response* that may be useful in working with enquiries during this period are in the first section of the book: ***Hearing God's Call***.

Stories in the chapter 'Welcome'

1. God's Search for Us – Our Search for God
2. Call and Response: Men and Women in the Old Testament
3. Call and Response: Men and Women in the New Testament
4. God's Call: Saints and Heroes
5. Call, Journey and Life

The Period of the Catechumenate

The catechumenate is an extended period during which the catechumens are given suitable pastoral formation and guidance.

Chapters of *Call and Response* that may be useful in working with enquiries during this period are in the second and third section of the book: *Understanding the Catholic Faith* and *Receiving the Sacraments*

Understanding the Catholic Faith

6. The Bible
7. The Bible and the Catholic Church
8. Bibles with Different Contents
9. Church: Called to be the People of God
10. Called to be the People of God Who Serve
11. I Believe in God and in Jesus Christ
12. I Believe in the Holy Spirit
13. In the Name of the Father ...
14. And of the Son ...
15. And of the Holy Spirit
16. Love is Stronger than Death
17. The Communion of Saints

Receiving the Sacraments

- 'Introduction'
24. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick
 25. The Sacrament of Marriage
 26. The Sacrament of Holy Orders

The Period of Purification and Enlightenment

This is a period of more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction. Its aim is to purify the minds and hearts of the catechumens as they search their own consciences and do penance.

Chapters of *Call and Response* that may be useful in working with enquiries during this period are in the third section of the book: *Receiving the Sacraments*

18. The Sacrament of Baptism
19. The Sacrament of Confirmation
20. The Sacrament of the Eucharist
23. The Sacrament of Reconciliation



The Period of Mystagogy

The process of initiation continues during the Eastertide Period of Mystagogia. The word comes from ancient Greek and signifies a deepening understanding of the mysteries of our faith. During the Easter season, the neophytes (newly initiated) gather each week to deepen their grasp of the mystery into which they have just been incorporated. Mystagogy is also about mission as the new Catholics now go forth as members of the Church to continue the mission of Jesus Christ.

Chapters of *Call and Response* that may be useful in working with enquiries during this period are in the second section of the book *Understanding the Catholic Faith* and the fourth section *Responding to God's Call: Faith in Action*

Understanding the Catholic Faith

- 21. The Mass: Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist
- 22. The Order of the Mass

Responding to God's Call: Faith in Action

Introduction

- 27. Life Choices: Responding to the Gift of Baptism
- 28. Prayer and Action
- 29. Word and Prayer
- 30. Living Our Vocation
- 31. Justice, Solidarity and the Reign of God
- 32. God Active in the World
- 33. The Human Community
- 34. The Common Good and the World Community
- 35. My Journey in Faith

About Catholic Enquiry Centre

The Catholic Enquiry Centre provides information on the Catholic faith to enquirers who are not members of the Catholic Church. Under the auspices of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, the Catholic Enquiry Centre has been fulfilling this evangelising mission since 1959.

The Centre aims to (1) offer clear information about the Catholic Faith for those who are searching for faith and for people of other religious backgrounds, (2) assist Catholics seeking a return to faith practice, and (3) promote inter-religious understanding.

Copies of *Call and Response: An Introduction to the Catholic Faith* are available for purchase from the

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