

Diocesan RCIA Network

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2012

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ◆ The RCIA is one Rite
- ◆ Period of Catechumenate Actively working with others to spread the Gospel and Build up the Church RCIA # 75.1
- ◆ Election and Enrolment of Names: Beginning of the period of final and more intense preparation for Sacraments of initiation # 105
- ◆ Scrutinies: Celebrated only with elect

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Diocesan RCIA Team

L-R: Michelle Griffin, Marg Hallinan, Anne Sheehan, Jocelyne Benoit, Claire Stitt



The Diocesan Pastoral Plan, Strand Four - Liturgy and Prayer, Goal Three encourages communities to foster spirituality in everyday life. One way to implement this goal was to focus on the implementation of the Diocesan Policy on the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. With this goal in mind, Bishop Brian appointed a new Diocesan RCIA Team in June 2011. The team comprises Margaret Hallinan Diocesan Co-ordinator for RCIA, Anne Sheehan, Claire Stitt, Jocelyne Benoit and Michelle Griffin.

The vision for this team is to:

- Support RCIA teams throughout the diocese
- Be well informed
- Spend time together as a Diocesan Team to ensure quality output
- Be a proactive resource group searching out resources that are appropriate and up to date, for use throughout the diocese.
- Prepare the diocesan liturgies of the RCIA

Launch of the RCIA Newsletter

One of the outcomes from the Diocesan Conference in August 2011 was to produce an RCIA newsletter for the diocese. The purpose of this newsletter is to encourage more effective networking and to realise that there is life or people alive to the potential of RCIA. Another reason for such an initiative was the need to encourage greater ownership of RCIA at parish, deanery and diocesan level. The Diocesan RCIA Newsletter will be produced quarterly. **Volume one includes:** Introduction to the Diocesan RCIA Team, Recapping the Diocesan RCIA conference 2011, where to after the Conference, Rite of Election, Scrutinies, Diocesan RCIA Policy Statement and information about the Diocesan Resource "Drawn into the Mystery of God's Love".

As this is the first Newsletter, the Diocesan RCIA Team is interested in receiving feedback regarding this initiative and about ideas that you may be interested in being included in future editions. If you have information of e.g. articles, good practice that maybe of interest to other RCIA Teams within the diocese - please forward to Marg Hallinan dpp@rok.catholic.net.au for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Diocesan Conference



On the weekend of 6 -7 August, 2011, twenty-one members of RCIA teams from across the diocese came together in the Duhig Centre Bishop's House Rockhampton to break open the diocesan resource "*Drawn into the Mystery of God's Love.*" The weekend was facilitated by Sr Ursula O'Rourke sgs,

with sessions led by Anne Sheehan and Margaret Hallinan. Bishop Brian Heenan prayed God's blessing upon the participants, confirming in them that they would be God's instruments to bring the light of faith to those who are looking for Jesus and the Good News He unfolds.

The aim of the weekend was that participants would come to a clearer understanding of the intentions of the Rite, receive support for the good work they are already doing, and be offered helpful suggestions for setting up RCIA teams, preparing the rites, and using available resources.

After an explanation of the background to the resource, participants were taken through the Policy Statement and the Outline of the Rite; an interesting role play on ways to handle Inquiry and the place of various ministries in the parish; Implementation of the Rite; what an Inquiry Session looks like; Models for Initiation Catechesis; Celebrating the Rites – acceptance into the Order of Catechumens, and rites for particular circumstances; an introduction to the Adelaide Experience for children in the RCIA; and Music to accompany the Rite. The Conference finished with an informative session by Father John Grace, regarding pastoral issues, and answering questions raised by participants.

Attendance at Mass at the Cathedral before dinner on Saturday evening, and the chance to meet others and discuss ideas over meals, completed a weekend which hopefully enabled all to leave with uplifted spirits, a sense of the support which is available to all, and an understanding of their roles in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

**"Drawn into
the Mystery
of God's
Love"**



What is Next?

What will be happening as a result of 2011 Conference?

- ◆ Introduction of RCIA Diocesan Newsletter
- ◆ Conference to be held in August 2012 (on training formation of Catechists)
- ◆ Sharing of good practice at Conference
- ◆ Information regarding Mystagogy #306
- ◆ Ideas on prayer and liturgy
- ◆ Retreat experiences

Rite of Election



**2011 Rite of Election
St Joseph's Cathedral**

Election or Enrolment of Names

Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

The second step in Christian initiation is the liturgical rite called election and enrolment of names. This rite closes the period of formation and begins the period of final preparation for the sacraments of initiation.

It is at this step that the Church judges the readiness of the catechumens and decides on their advancement towards the sacraments of initiation. This

decision is made on the basis of the testimony of godparents and catechists and the

reaffirmation of the intention of the catechumens. It is thus that the Church makes its "election", the acceptance founded on the election by God. The step is also called the enrolment of names as the candidates names are inscribed in the book that lists those who have been chosen for initiation.

Admission to election belongs to the bishop, and the presiding celebrant for the rite of election is the bishop himself (or a priest or deacon who acts as the bishop's delegate). From the day of their election and admission, the catechumens are called "the elect". After the election, the entire community should surround the elect with prayer, so that the entire Church will accompany and lead them to encounter Christ.

The rite is celebrated within Mass, after the homily, and should be celebrated within the Mass of the First Sunday of Lent. This allows the final period of preparation of the elect to coincide with the Lenten season and the sacraments of initiation to be celebrated during the Easter solemnities.

(summary of Sections 105 – 115 of Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults)

**"Your ways,
O Lord,
are love and
truth to those
who keep
your
covenant."**

Time and Place



Time: 6.00pm (Mass)
Date: Saturday 25th February 2012
Venue: St Joseph's Cathedral
William Street Rockhampton

(Gladstone, Rockhampton and Capricorn Coast are invited to attend the above ceremony. Other regions, because of distances to be travelled—Mackay, Emerald, Clermont and other faith communities within this region, Bundaberg, Biloela and the Western Deanery will hold their own ceremonies at dates and venues to be advised.)

Scrutinies

The Scrutinies—making them as meaningful as possible

The scrutinies are rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose, therefore the assembly and the elect should sense God's presence in the celebration. The intent of the scrutinies is to be above all, prayerful, culminating with the exorcism where the elect are freed from sin and gain a new strength to open their hearts to receive the Lord's gifts. The scrutinies are celebrated in order to deliver the elect from the power of sin and Satan, to protect them against temptation and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. They should complete the conversion of the elect and deepen their resolve to hold fast to Christ and to carry out their decision to love God above all.

The scrutinies are supposed to heal weak and sinful hearts and strengthen all that is good in the elect (unbaptised).

- ◆ Be true to the words and use the exact text. Imagine being brand new to the faith and hearing these words for the first time, what is needed most from these prayers?
- ◆ In order to communicate the power of this rite, instil that the laying on of hands be done solemnly and prayerfully by the presider. The solemnity of the occasion can be further added to by having the director of the catechumenate and the godparents also lay hands on each of the elect.
- ◆ If the laying on of hands is done in deep silence, the power of the exorcism is heightened; let the silence seep into the depth of the souls of the elect.
- ◆ Strive to do the ritual as given to us in the RCIA; the three exorcism prayers, as stated, are clear and powerful.

The presentation of the Creed is meant to be celebrated at a weekday Mass during the third week of Lent and the Lord's Prayer at a weekday Mass during the fifth week of Lent. If it is necessary to have the presentations on a Sunday, consider doing them in winter in Ordinary Time, just before Lent.

An effective celebration of the scrutinies during Lent will transform your parish.



Diocesan Co-ordinator: Marg Hallinan

Phone: 07 4931 3643

Mobile: 0407 130 878

Email: dpp@rok.catholic.net.au

Diocesan RCIA Policy Statement

The Rite of Christian Initiation (R.C.I.A.) is the norm by which unbaptised persons are initiated and welcomed into the Catholic Church.

Drawn into the Mystery of God's Love

In October 2008 a Writing Group was formed, a sub-committee of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, to look at the possibility of producing a resource that would be beneficial to all RCIA Teams across the diocese. The Writing Group members were Pauline Leahy, Margaret Hallinan, Margaret Perkins, Anne Sheehan, Jan McSweeney, and Sr Ursula O'Rourke. The group met often to write the content of the resource and along the way discovered and learnt much about the RC.IA process and the gift that it is to those who minister to the unbaptised.

Finally in August 2010 the resource, *Drawn into the Mystery of God's Love*, was launched. The resource is produced on CD in a web-page format. The title, "*Drawn into the Mystery of God's Love*" comes from the Rite, paragraph 37, and was chosen to signify the purpose of all who form, or desire to form, a relationship with Jesus.

The resource seeks to explain the Rite concisely and to give recommendations on how best to implement the stages of the process. It places the Rite in the context of our diverse diocese without losing the intention of the Rite. It begins with the diocesan RCIA policy statement and continues to look at the structure and implementation of the Rite, models for catechetical sessions, preparing and celebrating the Rite, music suggestions to support the liturgical rites, discernment, evaluation and pastoral issues that surround the Rite. Also included in the resource are recommendations for implementing Part 2 of the Rite, Rites for Particular Circumstances, in which we find guidelines for the initiation of children of catechetical age and reception of baptized Christians into full communion with the Church.

The Writing Group hopes that parish RCIA Teams will find "*Drawn into the Mystery of God's Love*" beneficial to their ministry of evangelization. We recommend you pick it up, insert the disc into a computer and take time to read the section relevant to your planning. It is a valuable tool for the training and formation of RCIA Teams. Copies are available from Margaret Hallinan at the Diocesan Office for the Implementation of the Pastoral Plan.

