**What is the RCIA?** The **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** (**RCIA**) is the process through which interested adults are gradually introduced to the [Roman Catholic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Church) [faith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faith) and way of life.

**What is Kid Cat?** The Catholic Church welcomes children into the Faith through the same process it uses to welcome adults, the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).  At Prince of Peace, we call it Kid Cat.

Kid Cat is a process for children about the age of 8 and up. While it is primarily intended for unbaptized children who have had no religious formation, it is also appropriate for those who were baptized, but who have had little or no religious education.

**Guidelines for Choosing Godparents:**

Sponsors/Godparents embody the responsibility shared by the entire Catholic Community to nurture the faith and to share in the religious development of children. In carefully choosing sponsors/godparents who are good examples of Catholic living, parents share the primary duty to nurture the child’s faith.

Being a sponsor/godparent is not just an honor to be given to a good friend or relative. To be a sponsor/godparent means having a real appreciation of the Catholic Church’s faith, a practice of the same and a sense of responsibility toward the one to be baptized. As a Godparent, your responsibility is to foster the faith of your godchild and to reflect to your godchild the meaning of Catholic discipleship.

***Requirements for Godparents for your child, as stated in Canon Law 872-874:***

(All of the following is required of a proxy if one of the Catholic sponsors/godparents is unable to attend the Sacrament of Baptism.)

* Only ONE Godparent is required.
* If TWO are chosen, they should be one of each gender: one male and one female. The two do not have to be a married couple.

Godparent(s) must:

* 16 years of age or older
* Be baptized, received the Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation
* Be a practicing Catholic (a life of prayer, following the teachings of the Catholic Church, attend Mass on a regular basis, receiving the Sacraments regularly, etc.)
* If married, be married in the Catholic Church (This means that those married outside the Church or those living together without marriage are not eligible.)
* Be a person(s) who will have some part in the child’s faith development
* Not be the father or mother of the child to be baptized
* If the Godparent is not a member of Prince of Peace, he/she must have the “Certificate of Eligibility” form filled out (one per person).
* A baptized non-Catholic may not be a godparent but may serve as a witness along with a Catholic godparent.
* A non-baptized person may not serve as a Godparent or a witness.

**What are Sponsors?** Candidates (those who have already been baptized) must have in mind someone who would be willing to “sponsor” them. The sponsors are usually practicing Catholics. The duties of a sponsor are to go with them through the various rites, and provide individual instruction about matters of faith.

The sponsor must meet all of the following:

1. At least 16 years old.

2. A practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church (able to receive sacraments).

3.   Received all 3 sacraments of initiation.

4.   Not a parent of the participant.

  (A parent may additionally serve as proxy sponsor)

***Kid Cat Process Outline:***

***Rite of Acceptance*** (for the unbaptized -referred to as *Catechumens*)

This is the first rite that takes place at the beginning of the general Sunday [Mass](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_%28liturgy%29) in front of the parish community.

From this point until their baptisms, [catechumens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catechumen) are dismissed after the liturgy of the word when they attend mass.

***Rite of Welcoming the Candidates*** (for those who are baptized)

The Inquirers who have already been validly baptized in another [non-Catholic ecclesial community](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_denomination), or baptized Catholic but not confirmed are welcomed to this next stage via the **Rite of Welcoming the Candidates**. They enter this Rite known as Candidates, and they are known by this title from now on.

**Period of the Catechumenate**

A [Catechumen](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catechumen) *(from Latin catechumenus, Greek κατηχουμενος , instructed)* is one receiving instruction in the principles of the Christian religion with a view to baptism. It is for this reason that those who are already validly baptized in another Christian Faith are not known as Catechumens, but rather Candidates.

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.

The Catechumens learning to:

* Turn more readily to God in prayer
* To bear witness to the Faith
* In all things to keep their hopes set on Christ
* To follow supernatural inspiration in their deeds
* To practice the love of neighbor

The period of the Catechumenate is a time for:

* Continuing to build community within the group
* Getting more involved in parish activities, getting to know the parish community
* Learning about the basic teachings and beliefs of the Catholic Church
* Exploring important and foundational Scripture passages
* More importantly, it is a time for:
* Continuing to examine God's presence in our lives, past and present
* Developing prayer life, entering into the communal worship of the parish
* Fostering conversion
* Developing or improving our relationship with God

Various Rites pertain to this period of instruction:

***Rite of Sending:*** The catechumens are asked to stand before the congregation at Prince of Peace and let the congregation know that they are prepared and ready to take the next step of their journey. After agreeing they are asked to sign the book of the elect, people that elected to be catholic.

***Rite of Election:*** (Conducted at The Cathedral Sanctuario de Guadalupe in downtown Dallas) This is a very significant and important step in the process. It is usually celebrated on the first Sunday of lent at the local [diocesan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese) [cathedral](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral), led by the local [bishop](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop). All of the Catechumens and Candidates, their [Godparents](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Godparents) (for Catechumens) and Sponsors (for Catechumens and Candidates) gather together on this day. It often involves hundreds of people coming together for this occasion. The Church formally ratifies the Catechumens' readiness for the [Sacraments](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacraments) of Initiation, and the Candidates' readiness to be received into full Communion with the Catholic Church. In turn the Catechumens - from now on known as the Elect - publicly acknowledge their desire to receive the Sacraments of Initiation, and the Candidates' their desire to be received into full Communion with the Catholic Church.

**Period of Purification and Enlightenment (P&E)**

This is a period of increased introspection and coming closer to God. The aim of this period is to eliminate what is weak and sinful, and affirm what is holy. During this period the Elect undertake a number of Rites, including the Scrutinies.

To best define scrutinizes, scrutinies are mainly for the "elect. But the faithful are encouraged to join in the scrutinies to also benefit from them. We are all in need of conversion throughout our lives, so we join with the "elect" in scrutinizing our lives and pray for the grace to overcome the power of sin that infects our hearts.

The scrutinies, which are solemnly celebrated on Sundays and are reinforced by an exorcism, are rites of self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose. The scrutinies are meant to uncover, then heal all that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect; to bring out, then strengthen all that is upright, strong, and good. For 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. These rites, therefore, 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.

In order to inspire in the elect a desire for purification and redemption by Christ, three scrutinies are celebrated. By this means, first of all, the elect are instructed gradually about the mystery of sin, from which the whole world and every person longs to be delivered and thus saved from its present and future consequences. Second, their spirit is filled with Christ the Redeemer, who is the living water (gospel of the Samaritan woman in the first scrutiny), the light of the world (gospel of the man born blind in the second scrutiny), the resurrection and the life (gospel of Lazarus in the third scrutiny). From the first to the final scrutiny the elect should progress in their perception of sin and their desire for salvation."

**Rite of Christian Initiation: The Easter Vigil**

At the [Easter Vigil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Easter_Vigil) the celebration of the [sacraments](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacraments) of initiation takes place. The Sacraments of [Baptism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptism), [Confirmation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confirmation), and [Holy Communion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucharist); if one is a candidate, [confession](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacrament_of_reconciliation) will already have been made prior to the vigil. The Elect celebrate all of these while the Candidates (having already been baptized) only celebrate Confirmation and the Eucharist. The Elect are now called Neophytes, and they are considered to be full members of the Christian faithful.