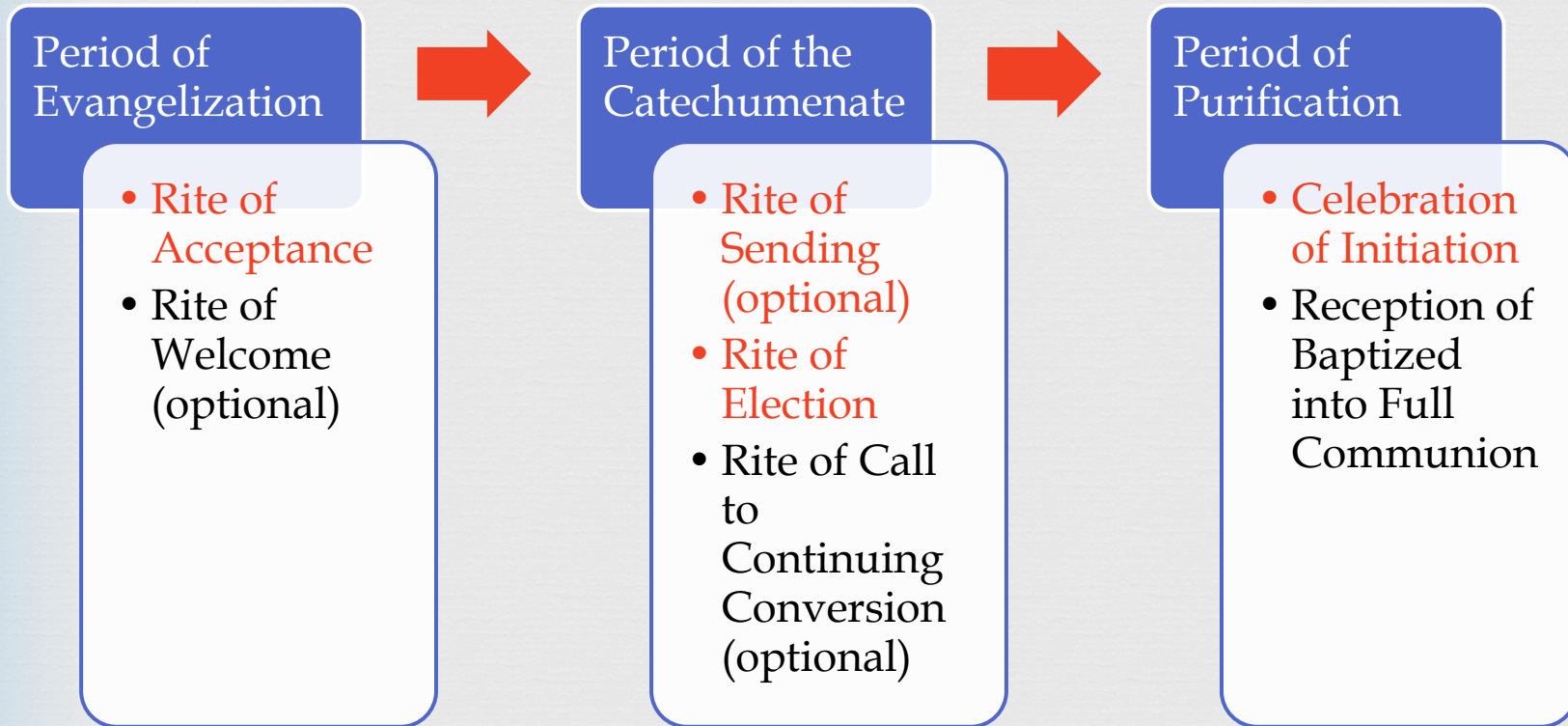


Rite of Acceptance/
Rite of Welcome



Periods and Steps in the RCIA



Mystagogy

First Step



- ❧ Note about the term “Candidates” in the RCIA
- ❧ Importance of the ritual:
 - ❧ “The rite that is called the rite of acceptance into the order of catechumens is of the utmost importance. Assembling publicly for the first time, the candidates who have completed the period of the precatechumenate declare their intention to the Church and the Church, in turn, carrying out its apostolic mission, accepts them as persons who intend to become its members. God showers his grace on the candidates, since the celebration manifests their desire publicly and marks their reception and first consecration by the Church” (RCIA §41).

Three Forms of the First Step



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- ❧ Rite of Acceptance
 - ❧ *Who?* Unbaptized only (“inquirers” who will become “catechumens”)
 - ❧ Ritual found in RCIA § 48
 - ❧ Rite of Welcome (*optional*)
 - ❧ *Who?* Baptized, but uncatechized (“candidates for reception into full communion”)
 - ❧ Ritual found in RCIA § 416
 - ❧ Combined Rite of Acceptance and Rite of Welcome
 - ❧ *Who?* Both unbaptized and baptized but uncatechized
 - ❧ Ritual found in RCIA § 507

Rite of Acceptance



- ❧ Prerequisites (RCIA § 42)
 - ❧ First faith
 - ❧ Initial Conversion
 - ❧ Intention to change their lives
 - ❧ Desire to enter into a relationship with God in Christ
- ❧ Proper Timing (RCIA § 18)
 - ❧ Any time the inquirer(s) are ready
 - ❧ Can take place multiple times a year based on need

Preparation with RCIA Team



- ❧ All current guidelines in place for the liturgy are to be maintained (facial coverings, physical distancing, 50% capacity, etc.)
- ❧ Determine a date
 - ❧ Look at the readings of the day (look for something appropriate to the rite, such as following Christ, hearing God's word, etc.), or;
 - ❧ Pick a day where you can substitute with the recommended readings from the RCIA (§ 62 recommends Genesis 12:1-4a and John 1:35-42)
 - ❧ May not change readings on Sundays of Advent/Lent/Easter, Solemnities, days within the Octave of Easter, All Souls' Day, Ash Wednesday, and Holy Week (GIRM § 372)

Preparation with RCIA Team



- œ Rehearse with team members, sponsors/godparents and the celebrant (priest or deacon) so everything flows smoothly
 - œ Decide where each part will take place (outside/inside the church?)
 - œ Determine where everyone will stand to ensure physical distancing
 - œ If using a microphone, place on a stand so no one has to touch it
 - œ The person speaking may briefly remove their mask to speak, and then resume it immediately
 - œ The signing with the cross should be done without physical touch

Preparation with RCIA Team



∞ A Note about Dismissal

- ∞ “After the dismissal formulary, the group of catechumens goes out but does not disperse. With the help of some of the faithful, the catechumens remain together to share their joy and spiritual experiences” ... “If for serious reason they cannot leave...” (RCIA §67).
- ∞ *Only* Catechumens are dismissed if the Liturgy of the Eucharist follows. The dignity of baptismal character should be respected as baptized Candidates stay to celebrate the Paschal Mystery which they have already been initiated into (though still not in full communion with the Catholic Church).
- ∞ Decide who will accompany the dismissed Catechumens and how to facilitate a reflection and sharing on what they just experienced.

Preparation for Inquirers / Candidates



- ❧ Explain the meaning of the rite, what will be asked of them, and what will happen, but avoid rehearsing every step of the ritual
- ❧ Encourage them to think about their personal responses to (RCIA § 50, 418, 509):
 - ❧ “What do you ask of God’s Church?”
 - ❧ “What does _____ (ex: faith) offer you?”

Questions?

