Sample of Parish OCIA Schedule

The following is a sample parish OCIA schedule offered for consideration and adaptation. It is intended to provide a practical framework for organizing the various stages of the OCIA process throughout the year.

This sample schedule should not be understood as a complete or fixed program. The OCIA is a process of formation and conversion, not simply a weekly series of instructional sessions. Therefore, the schedule should remain flexible enough to respond to the needs, circumstances, and spiritual development of the catechumens and candidates.

The schedule below focuses primarily on the regular formation sessions. It does not include all of the other essential elements that should be incorporated into a parish's overall OCIA calendar, including:

- The various liturgical rites and scrutinies appropriate to catechumens and candidates.
- Sunday dismissals as part of the catechumenal formation.
- Retreat experiences that provide opportunities for prayer, reflection, and deeper conversion.
- Works of mercy and service, through which participants encounter Christ in serving others and begin to participate more fully in the Church's mission.
- Opportunities for participation in the actual life of the parish, including parish prayer, worship, fellowship, ministries, and charitable activities.
- Individual pastoral accompaniment and meetings with sponsors, clergy, and members of the OCIA team.
- Periods of mystagogy and continued formation following initiation.

These elements should not be viewed as optional additions to the weekly schedule. They are integral to a well-rounded OCIA process because Christian initiation involves the formation of the whole person—mind, heart, prayer, relationships, and participation in the life of the Church.

When developing the parish calendar, the OCIA team should therefore begin with the liturgical year and the Church's rites, and then build the catechetical sessions and other formative experiences around them. This helps ensure that the participants' formation is connected to the worship and prayer of the Church rather than functioning as a separate classroom program.

The sample schedule should also be adapted to the particular circumstances of the parish. A parish with a large number of catechumens and candidates may need a different structure from a smaller parish. Likewise, the needs of unbaptized catechumens may differ from those of baptized candidates who are already familiar with Christian faith and practice.

The goal is not to create the busiest possible calendar, but to create a balanced and intentional process in which instruction, prayer, liturgical participation, community life, personal accompaniment, and service work together to lead people toward a deeper relationship with Christ and incorporation into the life of the Church.

The schedule is therefore a framework, not the OCIA itself. The quality of the process depends on how intentionally these different dimensions of formation are integrated throughout the journey.

OCIA Process

Evangelization and Precatechumenate

- ❖ What are you looking for? (our desire for God)
  - o Ps 27:8; 42:2-3; 62:2, 6; John 1:35-39

- God searches for us
    - Calling of disciples, calling of Jonah, calling of Abraham
- How do I know God is real? (faith and science)
    - Ps 19:2-5; Rom 1:20
- Salvation history (aka, the story that is being told in the Bible)
- Why and how do I pray?
    - Matt 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4
- What is God's plan for the world? (creation and human dignity)
    - Gen 2:15-20; 3:1-7
- What went wrong? (The Fall/Sin)
    - Gen 3:1-7; Rom 5:12-15
- What is Israel's part in God's plan? (Abraham through prophets)
    - Gen 12:1-3; Exod 3:1-14; 2 Sam 7:8-17; Isa 40:1-11; Jer 31:31-34
- Who is Jesus?
    - Matt 4:23-5:16; Mark 1:14-15; 8:27-30; Luke 4:16-21; Phil 2:5-11
- What has Jesus done for us? (cross)
    - Mark 15:1-47; Luke 23:33-47; John 19:16-37
- What will Jesus do for us? (resurrection and second coming
    - Wis 3:1-9; Matt 28:1-10; 1 Cor 15:12-28, 51-58
- What is faith? (discipleship)
    - Rom 9:1-6; Heb 11:1-12:2
- Who is the Holy Spirit?
    - John 14:1-31; 16:12-15; 1 Cor 12:4-13

Catechumenate

Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens

- Why be Catholic? (Church)
    - Matt 16:13-20; John 21:15-19
- How do we worship God? (liturgy and sacraments)
- Why honor Mary and the saints?
    - Luke 1:26-56; 1 John 3:1-3; Rev 7:2-4, 9-14
- What happens in baptism and confirmation? (Baptism and Confirmation)
    - Mark 1:9-11; John 20:19-23; Acts 2:1-11; 8:26-39; 1 Cor 11:23-26
- Why go to Mass? (Eucharist)
    - Matt 26:26-30; Luke 24:13-35; John 6:1-71
- How does God forgive and heal me? (Penance and Anointing of the Sick)
    - Mark 2:1-12; John 7:53-8:11; James 5:13-16
- What is God calling me to do with my life? (Marriage, Holy Orders, Consecrated Life, Single Life)
    - Mark 1:16-20; Mark 10:1-9; Ephesians 5:21-33
- How does God expect me to live? (moral life)
    - Exod 20:1-17; Matt 22:34-40; Mark 10:17-22
- How can I change the world for the better? (social teaching)
    - Matt 25:31-46; James 2:14-20

Purification and Enlightenment (Lent)

Rite of Enrollment (Cathedral)

- **First Scrutiny**
    - What am I saved from and for?
- **Second Scrutiny**
    - Why is there so much suffering?
- **Third Scrutiny**

- What happens during Holy Week?

- **Chrism Mass (Cathedral)**
  - Prayer night

Sacraments of Initiation (Easter Vigil)

Mystagogy

The period of Mystagogy takes place in the parish community, not in the context of a classroom or "sessions". Gatherings are communal and strengthen the newly initiated to continue their Christian journey. Some example of "topics" to weave into gatherings are:

- What just happened to me? (reflection on the experience of the sacraments)
- Why and how shall I tell others about Jesus? (evangelization)
  - Matt 28:16-20; 1 Cor 15:1-9
- How can I bring my family closer to Jesus?
- How can I use my spiritual gifts?
  - Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:4-31

If your parish is interested in learning more about resources and practical steps on helping your ministers with this period, please contact the Office for Divine Worship.