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## Overview

Feature	Description
<b>Flexible, asynchronous approach centered on individual need and evidence of Holy Spirit working in their lives</b>	Seekers enter the process any time of the year. Some rites are held several times through the year as needed (Welcome/Acceptance, exorcisms, scrutinies, blessings). Kerygma retreat and prayer retreat are also held several time through the year. Participants attend when they are ready.
<b>Intake of seeker includes application, development of individual formation plan, assignment of sponsor.</b>	Shepherd or OCIA director handles initial intake and helps prepare a formation plan. The sponsor guides seeker into activities and events in parish life for formation within the community. The sponsor also guides and encourages the seeker in assigned catechetical studies. The shepherd supports the sponsor and seeker, providing oversight and accountability, resources, and assistance as necessary.
<b>Monthly sessions, typically second Sunday of each month (rites are also scheduled for those Sundays)</b>	Monthly sessions emphasize Word and prayer. Opportunities provided for asking questions and exploring topics of interest in greater depth. Sponsors and shepherds are not required to attend.
<b>Periodic sponsor/shepherd meetings</b>	Opportunities for additional training, checking in with one another about challenges faced, encouraging one another, etc. These meetings will not replace good, ongoing communication between shepherds and sponsors.
<b>Key retreats and sessions offered several times through the year (once each quarter works well for most, with reconciliation retreat once each period of purification and enlightenment)</b>	Kerygma retreat, prayer retreat, and reconciliation retreat; Liturgy and parts of the Mass; Theology of the Body; and an introduction and testimony session. Each individual participates based on when they begin their journey.
<b>Discernment of the candidate or catechumen's readiness determines whether or not they participate in the rites of sending, enrollment, election, and call to continuing conversion at the beginning of Lent or other times approved by the bishop and priest</b>	Typically, the sacramental culmination of the OCIA can remain associated with the Easter Vigil. All candidates and catechumens who are ready will enter final preparation at the beginning of Lent. If pastor and bishop are amenable, purification and enlightenment with attendant rites and sacraments could be conducted at other times of the year (such as Advent/Epiphany, end of ordinary time with sacrament on Christ the King, etc.). If catechumens or candidates are not prepared during a particular time, a reassessment of their formation plan is made by the shepherd in consultation with the sponsor, and their formation continues.
<b>No separate family OCIA or OCIC for children or youth—a flexible, individualized approach is followed under the OCIA director's leadership</b>	If the children are younger and have been baptized, they should be folded into the normal sacramental formation that all children in the parish undergo. If not baptized and young enough, the parents can undergo baptismal prep and the children can be baptized as they would normally (after the parents have been baptized/confirmed) in consultation with the pastor. If the children are older (3rd grade or older, typically—again, something to determine on a case by case basis), they can be catechized under their own individual formation plan with the help of a children's sacramental prep catechist or shepherd/sponsor team who is capable (and safety cleared). If on the older side, closer to middle school or older, they can be handled through the OCIA like their parents. A family with kids old enough for the regular OCIA process can be assigned a single sponsor under the guidance of a shepherd, and there may be overlap in some of what each person in the family will do as part of the individual plans. Giving a plan to each member of the family that is a little different is perfectly fine (and may be manageable by the one sponsor). For instance, integrating a family into the parish may include things for the whole family but may also include unique things for the children (getting them into youth or children's events or programs, for instance). Catechism aids more appropriate to a child or young teen (such as confirmation or first communion resources) may be provided instead of the USCCB adult catechism their parents may be studying. Anything the whole family can do together is important, but so are the things assigned to each individual that will foster their personal relationship with Christ. The thing to realize is that there should be no separate family OCIA—all should fall under the guidance of one OCIA director who can draw on any resource he or she needs within the church's full scope of faith formation efforts.

Materials provided

Item	Cost (estimated)	Purchase from	Distribution
United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (link to online version provided)	0	Online	Link given to each adult or teen participant
Symbolon (20 session video series)	0	Augustine Institute	Loaned out or used from <a href="http://formed.org">formed.org</a>
Reader's journal for the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults	\$10.00	Online	Each adult or teen participant
Participant's guide for Symbolon	0	Augustine Institute	Available online
Children or youth sacramental preparation materials	varies	Wherever parish purchases	Each child or youth participant
Catechism of the Catholic Church (link to online catechism provided)	0	Online	Link given to each participant
NAB or NRSV CE Bible	\$6.00	Online	Each participant
Cross (gifted at rite of welcome/acceptance)	varies	Online	Catechumens
Missal	varies	Online	Each participant
Icon of selected saint (gifted at baptism/first eucharist)	varies	Online	Each participant