

## WHO WILL WALK WITH YOU ON THIS JOURNEY?

### Welcome ... the door is open.

The Catholic community is ready to welcome and accompany you on your journey towards Christ as a member of the Catholic Church.

It is the Holy Spirit who has led you this far and it is the Holy Spirit who will invite you to open your heart and your life to God.

The Catholic community will assist you on your journey. The Parish Priest and all the members of the Catholic community will be your companions and your guides.

As your journey progresses, you will also meet with your Bishop and the wider Catholic community.

The journey consists of periods of formation interspersed with the celebration of faith-filled and moving rituals.

It's an incredible journey that you are called to undertake under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It's a life-transforming journey ... a journey that begins with the first step of contacting the Parish Priest or the RCIA Coordinator as indicated in this brochure.

**The door is open ... the Catholic community is ready to welcome you!**



Dear Friends,

Every year the Lord abundantly blesses his Church with new members. The majority of these people are baptised into membership of the Church soon after they are born and will be "brought up Catholic" – that is, grow up in an environment where the Church is always a part of their lives.



But there are also other people who hear the call of God later in their lives and find themselves drawn towards the Church. The stories these people tell are in some ways the most interesting and when they come to the point of seeking admission as a full member of the Catholic Church, they undergo the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, which is also called the Catechumenate.

The RCIA is an integral part of the life of the Church and the normal way of preparing adults for the Sacraments of Initiation. It is a life giving and revitalising experience not only for the individual, but for the parish that welcomes them. For all concerned the RCIA is a wonderful journey to conversion. It is a powerful experience of the living Church.

If you are enquiring, or if you have decided that you would like to join the Catholic Church, then read this pamphlet carefully and talk to your Parish Priest or RCIA Coordinator about the RCIA. The one true God invites us to come and see the good things he has promised. The RCIA is the process through which the Church responds to this invitation.

+ *Denis J. Hart*

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE

[www.evangelisation.org](http://www.evangelisation.org)

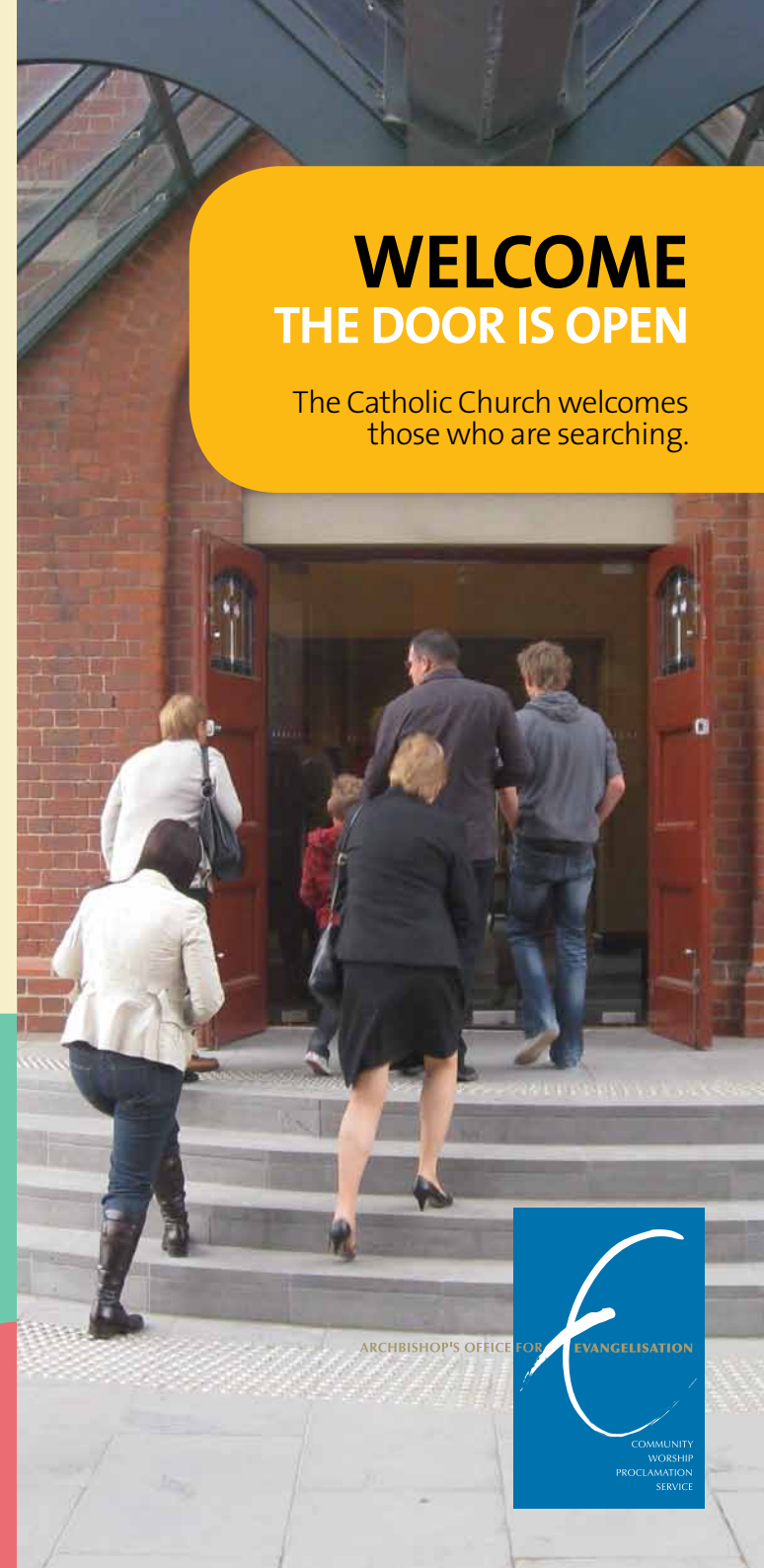
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ARCHBISHOP'S OFFICE FOR EVANGELISATION



# WELCOME THE DOOR IS OPEN

The Catholic Church welcomes those who are searching.



ARCHBISHOP'S OFFICE FOR EVANGELISATION



## HOW DOES A PERSON BECOME A CATHOLIC?

Stirred by the Spirit, adults seek meaning in their lives. The Catholic Church welcomes those who are searching through the catechumenate (RCIA) process. Based within a parish community the RCIA process is adapted to the spiritual needs and life journey of adults.

It is the process by which unbaptised adults and children over seven years of age are welcomed into the active community of believers in the Catholic Church.

The RCIA is also the accepted form of preparation for adults already baptised who seek full communion with the Catholic Church.

## WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP?

Most Catholic parishes have an RCIA Coordinator who will be very happy to welcome you and to respond to your enquiries.

### PLEASE CONTACT:

### The Journey

There are five stages to the journey. Each one concludes with a community ceremony (Rite) which acts as a starting point to the next stage. At each Rite the candidates affirm their intention to proceed to the next stage while the community commits to supporting them on their journey.



Missioning Ceremony

#### 5 Lifelong Formation

How to witness as a Catholic Christian.

Sacraments of Initiation

#### 4 Mystagogy: Deepening of Faith

Having received the Sacraments at the Easter Vigil the new Catholics reflect on the direction of their lives.

Rite of Election

#### 3 Preparation for Easter

A time to prepare for the Sacraments of Initiation.

#### 2 Catechumenate: Formation in Christian Life

A period of learning the teaching of Jesus through the Gospel and reflecting on how Catholics bear witness to their faith.

Rite of Acceptance

#### 1 Enquiry

Candidates make initial enquiries about the Catholic faith.