

## **A Brief History of R.C.I.A.**

The R.C.I.A. has its roots in ancient Roman times when Christians were a persecuted minority. Since their pagan neighbors lived by very different beliefs and morals, a lengthy period of Christian formation was necessary for the newcomer. This also protected Christian believers, who were officially outlaws, from the merely curious and from possible informers.

After Christianity was legalized by Constantine in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century, those being baptized were more often children of Christian believers, and such a lengthy practice fell into disuse.

Today, the Church has revived the R.C.I.A. to introduce the Catholic way of life to those who are interested, and to give them the opportunity to live the experience of the Church, not just to learn about it. Study of the Catholic teaching is just one part of the process. People are also invited to participate in community worship, service and fellowship, to discuss Scripture, and to develop an individual prayer life.