



My RCIA Experience: “ How to Become a Catholic in 30 Steps” by Jeff Patton

I was asked to say a few words about my RCIA experiences. I was raised and baptized as a Baptist. In college I worked for Presbyterian and Methodist Churches. It was while I was away at graduate school that I fell in love with a beautiful Catholic girl and have been attending Catholic services for the last 19 years. The Holy Spirit spoke to me on the very first service we attended here at Blessed Sacrament. I was so moved by the hospitality and sense of family that the Church shared with us on that first visit as strangers that I knew I had found a Church to call home. The name Blessed Sacrament truly describes this Church because you have been a blessing to us and it so nice to see a Church truly try to live by the Sacraments.

When I started the RCIA sessions I had no idea what to expect. I had taken the marriage classes previously and suspected it was going to be a similar checklist. I was expecting a book “How To Become Catholic in 30 Steps”. But I was pleasantly surprised. It is so much more than a checklist on becoming Catholic. It teaches us how to become better Christians and how the Sacraments can become part of our daily life. The topics and speakers vary from the Sacraments to social teachings of the Church and so many more. But the sessions teach us more than just the facts and the history. They are a time of sharing our faith stories and strengthening our fellowship. All of the participants come from such varied backgrounds that you can’t help but walk away learning something new about your own faith. But it is not all work, there is always time for a good laugh over coffee and food with this group.

The Church should be very proud of our RCIA team, and sponsors. They devote so much of their personal time and energy into making sure that our spiritual needs are met. The group is nurturing and supportive but allows each of us as individuals to discover that pathway we have to walk with God. They try to match a candidate with a sponsor who can relate to them not just on a spiritual level but also a personal one. That was true for my beloved sponsor Dave Haas, a fellow musician and professor.

My wife Monica and I would like to personally thank not just the RCIA team but everyone at Blessed Sacrament for all of the support, beautiful cards, prayers and hospitality that you have shown us and our family. I noticed a few weeks ago that we had stopped using the phrase “Are you ready to go to Mass?” and had started to ask each other “Are you ready to go to Church?”. We now see the importance of a community with God thanks to Father John and you the members of Blessed Sacrament.