

WELCOME TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

*Jesus said:
'I have come that you may have life,
and have it abundantly'.*

JOHN 10:9

Jesus offers each of us the opportunity to come into **close relationship** with the God who loves us.

The Catholic Church offers you a place for finding, deepening and experiencing **'life to the full'** as you grow in your relationship with God.

We offer you a place in which your **God-given gifts and talents** can be expressed and developed as you contribute to Jesus' mission of love to the world.

We offer a welcoming, inclusive and **supportive community** to travel with along life's journey.



*Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life.
Whoever comes to me will never be hungry,
and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty'.*

JOHN 6:35

BECOMING CATHOLIC — A JOURNEY NOT AN EVENT

Developing a relationship takes time and we invite you to enter into a journey of formation and practice in living life as a Catholic Christian.

The journey of becoming a Catholic Christian is one made in faith in the company of other enquirers, teachers, sponsors and indeed the whole parish community together with their Parish Priest.

HOW DO I START?

Make contact with your local Catholic Priest or Christian Initiation Coordinator. They will be happy to talk with you about your journey so far, your hopes and desires and how you might continue the journey of becoming Catholic.

KEY MOMENTS ON THE JOURNEY

All journeys include a variety of steps and stages, often depending on the starting point.

At the conclusion of each stage your journey is affirmed by a community celebration and you have the opportunity to pause or affirm your intention to proceed to the next stage. At each celebration the community commits itself to supporting you.

The steps and stages of your journey to becoming a Catholic Christian will vary depending on whether you are Baptised or not Baptised.

For those who are **not** baptised the stages are:

1. Initial enquiry about the Catholic faith.
2. A period of learning about the teachings of the Catholic Church and practicing the life of a Catholic Christian.
3. A time of spiritual preparation for receiving the Sacraments of Initiation, usually undertaken in the Lenten season.
4. Reception of the Sacraments of Initiation
5. A period of reflection with the community on our shared experience of initiation, usually undertaken in the Easter season.

For those who **are** baptised in another Christian denomination the stages are similar but shorter:

1. Initial enquiry about the Catholic faith.
2. A period of learning about the teachings of the Catholic Church and practicing the life of a Catholic Christian.
3. Reception into the Catholic Church

Of course the final stage for both groups is the lifelong practice of living the Catholic life.

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED ABOUT

- The meaning of your life?
- What Catholics believe?
- Why and how to pray and what to say?

DO YOU EVER LONG FOR

- A deeper relationship with Jesus?
- Some answers to your own personal questions about the purpose of life?
- A people, a community, who can support you on your life's journey?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO

- Be more confident in answering your children's questions about God, the Church, Baptism, Reconciliation, good and evil, the Saints etc?
- Follow Jesus Christ in a community of fellow believers?
- Use your gifts and talents for the service of Jesus and his mission?

If so, then come along to your local Catholic Church. Here is a place where you are welcome to come, explore and seek answers to these questions in a friendly and safe environment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Your local Parish Priest *or* The Christian Initiation of Adults Coordinator in your local parish *or* The Catholic Church Diocesan Office on (02) 4222 2400.

GETTING IN TOUCH

Your local Catholic parish is the best place to begin this journey of belonging to the Catholic Church.

More information on the location and contact details of these parish churches can be found from our website, www.dow.org.au or contacting the Catholic Church Diocesan Office on **(02) 4222 2400**

COMPLEX CIRCUMSTANCES

If you are living in an "irregular relationship" (divorced and remarried – or divorced and living together – or unmarried and living together), or living with someone who is previously married and divorced, then you or your spouse/partner need to contact the Tribunal as soon as possible after first contact is made with the parish. The Wollongong Office of the Tribunal is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. You are welcome to contact the Tribunal on 4222 2409 or tribunal@dow.org.au

LOCAL PARISH CHURCH DETAILS



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
WOLLONGONG

www.dow.org.au

