



# National Gathering on Christian Initiation™

A Conference for Catechumenal Ministers and Pastoral Leaders

## Evaluating and Revitalizing the RCIA in Your Parish 2022



**July 13-14,  
2022  
Chicago, IL**



### REGISTRATION BOOKLET

“Why come to NGCI? This is no ordinary conference, this is a relational opportunity to expand our ministry within the creative embrace of the Holy Spirit. It is within this embrace, and in conversation with similarly committed ministers from all over the country, that the reality of ‘what is’ lays the foundation for a vision built on the grace of ‘what could actually be.’”

**—Monique Jacobs  
2022 NGCI Team Member**



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*Sometimes we get so stuck on what we always do, we forget to allow the Holy Spirit to be a part of the process! Initiation ministry, or any ministry, really, needs to breathe in order to continue growing. Revitalizing the initiation ministry can bring new energy to what already exists, and foster new ways of thinking, growing, and praying together.*

**—Rose Hernandez, 2022 NGCI Team Member**

## Mission

To promote the liturgical formation “of the faithful and also their active participation in the liturgy both internally and externally, taking into account their age and condition, their way of life, and their stage of religious development” so all the faithful may “become thoroughly imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy.”

—*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 19, 14

## Misión

Promover la formación litúrgica “y la participación activa de los fieles en la liturgia, interna y externa, conforme a su edad, condición, género de vida y grado de cultura religiosa”, de modo que todos ellos “se impregnen totalmente del espíritu y de la fuerza de la liturgia”.

—*Constitución sobre la Sagrada Liturgia*, 19, 14

## Contact Us



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# An Invitation from LTP

We at Liturgy Training Publications are excited to invite you to join us in Chicago for the fifth annual National Gathering on Christian Initiation™. At this event, we will take the time to consider many different aspects of our ministry. In a special way, we will examine how the principles of initiation ministry can serve as an opportunity for parish renewal and revitalization. Guided by Pope Francis' exhortation in *The Joy of the Gospel*, the NGCI team members will "invite everyone to be bold and creative [by] rethinking the goals, structures, style, and methods of evangelization in their respective communities" (#33). We will celebrate the good work you are doing in your community, and we will challenge you to consider ways in which things can be done differently.

This year's **National Gathering on Christian Initiation™** will serve as a strong foundation as parish ministers prepare for the newly translated *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults*. While the OCIA will not be promulgated for a few years, now is the time to look back and plan for the future. By entering into a process of evaluation and planning, participants will be able to lay the groundwork in their communities to fully implement the vision of the Church. We hope you can join us and encourage others to attend this fifth annual event as we gather catechumenal ministers and pastoral leaders from around the country.

Responding to positive feedback from previous gatherings, we will once again offer a free pre-gathering RCIA Coordinators forum, a Spanish-language breakout option, and an opportunity for diocesan leaders to gather together. Finally, please consider bringing a team from your parish or diocese and take advantage of the special group rate.

We hope to see you in July 2022 at Loyola University in Chicago!



# What Is the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™?

The National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ is an annual two-day conference for parish Christian initiation ministers and diocesan catechetical, liturgical, and evangelization leaders. Steeped in the vision of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ seeks to promote the vision of the Church as constantly evangelizing, catechizing, and initiating disciples. Throughout the conference, participants will explore the theoretical and practical aspects of initiation ministry, learn from interactive multimedia presentations, engage in prayerful reflection on the liturgies of the RCIA, and share their knowledge and experience with initiation ministers from around the country.



*At this year's NGCI, the Holy Spirit will be working through the participants and team members to breathe new life into our ministry. While the pandemic has stretched us in the way we approach this work, we are also tired from working so hard to adapt to the current situation. It will be exciting to work together as we turn the struggles of our ministry into opportunities for full parish renewal.*

—Michael Ruzicki, 2022 NGCI Team Member



The National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ will have two tracks. **Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers** will deepen and enrich their work as they gain practical skills, discuss common challenges, and share best practices. Within the Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers track, one may choose English or Spanish language breakout sessions. Pre-conference distance-learning sessions will be available for new ministers and those interested in exploring the basics of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. **Regional or Diocesan Trainers** will explore and discuss practical strategies for implementing effective training and formation in their local communities!

# Theme: Evaluating and Revitalizing the RCIA in Your Parish

The theme for the 2022 National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ is *Evaluating and Revitalizing the RCIA in your Parish*. A thorough assessment of our parish's catechumenal ministry is beneficial for the life and vibrancy of the faith community. The NGCI team members will use the RCIA ritual text and the 2020 *Directory for Catechesis* to guide participants through an honest evaluation process. While we will celebrate the good work that is being done in the parish community, we will also ask the hard questions and raise the bar as we strive to fully implement the Church's vision. Finally, participants will have the opportunity to develop a strategic plan that includes a more fruitful collaboration with clergy and full inclusion of the baptized faithful in the initiation process.



## Goals of the 2022 Gathering

- Offer participants new insights for evaluating their initiation ministry efforts.
- Equip participants to revitalize initiation ministry in their community.
- Prepare participants to share a renewed vision and strategic plan with leaders in their parish.

# Schedule

The schedule for the National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ has been intentionally designed to offer an engaging balance of presentations, prayer, fellowship, discussion, and skills training. At various times throughout the day, we will break into smaller groups—**Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers** and **Regional or Diocesan Trainers**—for an in-depth focus on the needs and challenges of our specific ministries. The optional opening reception on July 12 will offer the opportunity for networking and fellowship with initiation ministers from around the country.

## Pre-Gathering Forum & Reception July 12, 2022

2:30 PM – 6:30 PM • Registration

For those who would like to check-in early, an opportunity is provided in the lobby of the Hampton Inn.

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM • Optional RCIA Coordinators Forum

### **Catholic Social Teaching and the Catechumenate**

In this session, participants will explore how Catholic Social Teaching can shape the hearts, minds, and lives of catechumens. We will also consider how acts of apostolic witness are catechetical and connected to the liturgical community. **Free. Registration is limited.**

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM • Opening Reception

Join us for a special opening reception in the Palm Court rooftop atrium in the historic Mundelein Center, overlooking Lake Michigan, with desserts and an open bar. **Tickets are \$30.**

## Day One July 13, 2020

8:00 AM – 8:50 AM • Registration

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM • Welcome, Opening Prayer, and Introductions

9:30 AM – 9:45 AM • General Session

### **Revitalizing the RCIA Can Renew the Life of Your Parish**

When the catechumenal process serves as the model and inspiration for all of parish life, great things are possible! In this opening session, we listen to an inspiring first-hand account of parish renewal accredited to this approach to ministry.

9:45 AM – 10:15 AM • General Session

### **Permission to Dream: The Catechumenal Impact on Parish Life**

The vision of the RCIA has the potential to increase the vibrancy and vitality of a parish. What are the possibilities for your parish? What hopes do you have for your ministry? Before we start our evaluation and planning process, we will consider the influential power of the catechumenate in the life of the entire community.

10:30 AM – 12:15 PM • General Session

### **The Principles for Evaluation ARE Opportunities for Revitalization**

NGCI team members will present six principles for Christian initiation ministry that serve both as a tool for evaluation and a model for revitalization. Together, we will break open these principles, share practical ways they are realized in a parish, and reframe our obstacles and struggles as opportunities for growth, learning, and success.

12:15 PM – 1:30 PM • Lunch included in registration

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM • Breakout Session

### **Learning from Experience: Insights from Our Stories**

Our stories serve as a source of wisdom in the learning process. They shape our identities, preserve culture, and form us in communal living. Prior to the event, NGCI participants will be invited to write a short narrative describing their parish's Christian initiation ministry. At the gathering, each participant will have the opportunity to discuss their work in small groups, ask questions, and learn from the experience and wisdom of others.

3:30 PM – 4:00 PM • Coffee Break



4:00 PM – 5:15 PM • Breakout Session

**Parish Leaders and Initiation Ministers:** *Clergy and Laity as Co-laborers in Revitalization*

In order to revitalize a community, the relationship between clergy and laity must be rooted in prayer and exemplify trust and communication. Parish leaders must have a strong foundation in the vision of the RCIA and respect the talents and limitations of each other. We will consider a positive and hopeful approach to moving forward in mutual support of one another and the vision of the Church.

**Regional and Diocesan Trainers:** *The Diocesan Christian Initiation Commission*

Following a short presentation, diocesan leaders will have the opportunity to discuss the vision, purpose, and work of a diocesan Christian initiation commission.

5:30 PM – 6:00 PM • Ritual Celebration

To close the day, all participants gather in Loyola's breathtaking Madonna della Strada Chapel for an uplifting and inspiring Celebration of the Word of God.

6:00 PM • End of Day (dinner and evening on your own)

## Day Two July 14, 2022

8:00 AM – 8:30 AM • Morning Prayer and Announcements

8:30 AM – 8:45 AM • General Session

### **Moving from Intention to Action**

As we move into a process of strategic planning, participants will reflect on the inevitable need to change and adapt. A purposeful planning process requires us to consider the effective actions that need to take place for growth to occur. During this session, we begin to pivot from theory to practice.

8:45 AM – 10:00 AM • Strategic Action #1

### **Drafting the Blueprints for Catechumenal Renewal**

Building on the work from day one, NGCI team members will guide participants in creating a prioritized wish list that is focused on the six principles of initiation ministry and designed to enhance its influence on the different aspects of parish life.

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM • Coffee Break

10:30 AM – 11:45 AM • Strategic Action #2

### **Laying a Foundation for Parish Engagement**

Having discovered what they want in and for their communities, participants will turn to the RCIA's vision for the baptized members of the parish (see RCIA, 9). What are ways we can form Catholics to understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to the catechumenal process?

11:45 AM – 12:45 PM • Lunch included in registration

12:45 PM – 2:00 PM • Strategic Action #3

### **Constructing a Renewed Approach for Ministry**

Having learned from their previous experiences and explored the catechumenal vision, NGCI participants will create their plan for a new reality that inspires the community and attracts new believers.

2:00 PM – 2:30 PM • General Session

### **Returning with a Plan: Preparing for Fruitful Conversations**

In this final session, NGCI team members will offer participants practical ways to continue this conversation in their home parishes. Here we will discuss strategies for bringing the fruits of our gathering back so that positive changes can take place.

2:30 PM – 3:00 PM • Closing and Prayer

# The 2022 NGCI Team

Each year, a different team of presenters will work together with an LTP representative to plan the major presentations and breakout sessions of the event. Team members have been invited not only because of their understanding of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* and the Church's mission of evangelization, but also because of their vast parish and diocesan experience. As a true collaboration, the individual gifts and ministerial experience of each team member will shape the NGCI experience.



**Rose Hernandez** is the director for the Office of Formation and Evangelization in the Diocese of Fresno. She has over twenty years of ministry experience as a master catechist, pastoral associate, member of the Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission, and as a workshop presenter and retreat director in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. She served the North American Forum on the Catechumenate and is currently associated with TeamRCIA. Rose earned both her BA in psychology and ancient Greek and MA in pastoral ministry from Loyola Marymount University. Her ministerial passions are liturgy and initiation sacraments.

## Complete this sentence: When thinking about this ministry, it's important to dream big because . . .

*" . . . if we don't dream, we will remain in the same place forever. Dreaming big helps us to vision what could be; maybe not tomorrow or even next year but it gives us something to look forward to and keeps us from being stagnant."*

## Why are you excited about NGCI? What are you looking forward to?

*"I am excited to share and to listen to everyone who gathers at NGCI! We are all coming to learn together; none of us are "experts"; we are all ministers serving God's People. When we come together and share, we can learn so much from each other. I think, though, I am most excited about meeting people who share a love and enthusiasm for initiation ministry!"*



**Monique Jacobs** is the director of faith formation in the Diocese of Reno and accompanies seekers as a spiritual director. She has worked in a professional ministry setting for over forty years, serving as a religious sister and in leadership at local and diocesan levels. Monique completed her graduate degree in religious education from Fordham University, NYC. She contributes regularly to the Faith Forum series in the Reno Gazette Journal, has partnered with the Five Loaves for video catechesis and Our Sunday Visitor for family formation curriculum, and currently hosts a weekly Finding God video series, spotlighting the Spirit in daily life. Her joy in ministry is to serve as a mentor and companion to others to highlight their gifts and help build up the body of Christ.

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## How can Christian initiation ministry (or the vision of the Rite) revitalize a parish?

*"Walking together on this mysterious and joyful journey of faith offers us multiple opportunities to experience the many faces of the Divine. . . . Christian Initiation ministry is a vibrant partner for a deepening relationship with the God we already love, whose love shapes whom we are becoming."*

## Why are you excited about NGCI? What are you looking forward to?

*"Putting our hearts and dreams together in a vibrant bouquet which we then can offer back to our faith communities, takes my breath away. What will God reveal? What will be the new invitation that is laid before us? I can't wait!"*



**Victor Klimoski** is an organizational development consultant and facilitates writing retreats and workshops. He served as director of lifelong learning for Saint John's School of Theology for fifteen years and was academic dean for seventeen years at the University of St. Thomas's School of Divinity. He holds a PhD in adult learning and development from the University of Minnesota as well as an MA in theology from Saint John's, Collegeville. He has written extensively on theological teaching and learning, based on his consultation with nearly fifty seminaries across the country, and has published six books of poetry, with a seventh released in January 2022.

### Why is it important for a parish to enter a process of evaluation and planning?

*"At its core, evaluation is about learning from our efforts to achieve important outcomes. Done well, evaluation enables us to identify what works best, what engages people in the process, and what next steps are available. That sort of data makes planning specific, focused, and keyed to real needs and possibilities."*

### Why should people come to NGCI?

*"Work on this level of significance demands a great deal of those who commit to it. Gathering to share experience and wisdom is a profound way of being renewed for the journey ahead and ensuring that important insights do not get lost—or taken for granted! Each person coming contributes to what we know about the process, the various ways of sustaining it under differing circumstances, and intensifying its role as central to the renewal of the Church for mission in the world."*



**Michael Ruzicki** is the training and events manager at Liturgy Training Publications and the director of sacred music and liturgy for St. Mary of the Lake and Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Chicago. Previously, he served as a parish pastoral associate and diocesan coordinator of adult and sacramental formation in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Michael is a former team member of the North American Forum on the Catechumenate. He is the author of *Guide for Training Initiation Ministers: An Introduction to the RCIA* (LTP, 2018). Michael studied at the Catholic University of America and the Washington Theological Union.

### How can parish leaders use the vision of the RCIA to make a profound impact on a community?

*"Many of us have heard, in these or similar words, that 'the baptismal catechumenate should inspire all faith formation efforts in the parish.' Yes! But, can we honestly say that we have taken this seriously? Now is the time we let this model shape all of parish life."*

### Why should people come to NGCI?

*"For this year's Gathering, I am envisioning an Upper Room Pentecost moment. Together, a group of disciples will come together—mindful that a mission was placed before them, unsure of the path they must travel, but certain that there will be big challenges ahead of them. There, we will have tough conversations, support each other in our ministry, and pastorally and professionally challenge each other to see things in a different way. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we will be shaken—shaken and set on fire to go forth and make disciples of all nations."*

## Our Emcee



**Wendy Barton Silhavy** is the senior coordinator for liturgy and music in the Office for Divine Worship, Archdiocese of Chicago. She received her BM in Church music from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and her MA in liturgical music from St.

John's University, Collegeville. She brings twenty-five years of experience in parish, seminary, and diocesan liturgy to her work with the archdiocese. Her interests in liturgy include the relationship between liturgy and catechesis and the impact of liturgy on our everyday lives.

### Why is it important to evaluate your initiation ministry?

*"It's a natural temptation to rely on old information as the years go by. Taking time to evaluate allows us to reset our expectations and way of doing things. . . . If we stand still in our ministry, the world will change around us and we will not have the same impact, even with approaches that have been successful in the past."*

### Why are you excited about NGCI? What are you looking forward to?

*"I love the opportunity to gather with colleagues in a relaxed and supportive environment to learn, share, and be inspired. Most of the year is so busy, it's hard to find time to reflect on ministry. This gathering gives people time to reflect on personal experience and resonate with the experience of others."*

# Travel & Accommodations

## Health and Safety Protocols

All attendees of the 2022 National Gathering on Christian Initiation™ must be vaccinated against COVID-19 and will be asked to provide proof of vaccination. Other health and safety protocols, such as the wearing of masks and social distancing, will be announced in June 2022. These protocols will be based on the most current guidance from the CDC, the State of Illinois, the City of Chicago, and the Archdiocese of Chicago. Attendees failing to adhere to these protocols will not be permitted to participate in the event.

## Location

The 2022 **National Gathering on Christian Initiation™** will take place at the Loyola University Chicago Lake Shore Campus. Located in Rogers Park, along the shores of Lake Michigan, Loyola's Lake Shore Campus is located seven miles north of downtown Chicago and within steps of public transportation. The address for the campus is 1032 W. Sheridan Road, Chicago, IL 60660. The main sessions will take place on the second floor of the Damen Student Center in the Sr. Jean Dolores Schmidt, BVM Ballroom.

## Hotel Information

A limited number of hotel rooms are available at the Hampton Inn Chicago—North Loyola Station for a specially discounted rate of **\$149.00** per night. This rate is available for those who book before June 13, 2022, for the evenings of July 12–July 13.

### Hampton Inn Chicago - North Loyola Station

13 West Albion Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60626

Phone: (312) 265-5800 (front desk)

Check in: 3:00 PM

Check out: 12:00 PM

To reserve a room at the Hampton Inn Chicago—North Loyola Station, please call 800-426-7866 and mention NGCI 2022 or visit <https://group.hamptoninn.com/dhhw2c>.

## Campus Housing Information

There is lodging available on the campus of Loyola University. These rooms are available on the evenings of July 12 and 13 only. Please note that campus housing amenities are much more limited than typical hotel accommodations. For detailed information, email us at [NGCI@ltp.org](mailto:NGCI@ltp.org).

**Residence Hall (dormitory) Rooms** with two twin beds and a private restroom with shower are available. The rate for each room is **\$100** per night (plus 17.4% lodging tax) for single occupancy.

## Directions

### To / From O'Hare International Airport

Taxi Service	\$50–\$55
UberX	\$30–\$40
Lyft	\$30–\$40

#### Blue Line Train:

24-hour service; cost is \$2.50 one-way per person (from O'Hare a \$5.00 premium fare applies); travel time to Rogers Park is 1 hour 30 minutes; take Blue Line Forest Park train to the Washington stop; Walk to Red Line (through Block 37); take Red Line Howard train; exit Red Line train at **Loyola** station. The Hampton Inn is approximately a five-minute walk on Sheridan Road to Albion Avenue. Fare cards or daily passes can be purchased at the station. For more information visit: <http://www.transitchicago.com>.

### To / From Midway Airport

Taxi Service	\$50–\$60
UberX	\$34–\$40
Lyft	\$34–\$40

#### Orange Line Train:

Hours are 5:15 AM to 11:30 PM; cost is \$2.50 one-way per person; travel time to Rogers Park is 1 hour 26 minutes; take Orange Line Loop Train to Roosevelt; at Roosevelt take Red Line Howard train; exit train at **Loyola** station. The Hampton Inn is approximately a five-minute walk on Sheridan Road to Albion Avenue. Fare cards or daily passes can be purchased at the station. For more information visit: <http://www.transitchicago.com>

*All prices are approximate and subject to change without notice.*

Bus and railway options are also available. The Greyhound bus station, Megabus stop, Union Station, and Ogilvie Transportation Center are all located within 10 to 11 miles of the hotel and are easily reachable by taxi. For more details, information about parking, and driving directions, visit [www.NGCI.org/travel](http://www.NGCI.org/travel).



# National Gathering on Christian Initiation™

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and Pastoral Leaders

Evaluating and Revitalizing  
the RCIA in Your Parish  
2022

July 13–14,  
2022  
Chicago, IL

**Register by 4pm CT on May 18, 2022, to guarantee your spot!**

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Parish

Phone

E-mail Address

**\$250** Individual Registration, by 4pm CT on May 18, 2022.  
*Includes lunch for July 13th & 14th.*

**\$275** Late Registration, by June 7, 2022.

**\$25 savings** Group Registration, for four or more participants  
*Please contact Liturgy Training Publications directly.*

**\$30** July 12th Opening Reception. *Optional. Includes desserts and an open bar.*

**Free** Optional RCIA Coordinators Forum

Please Indicate:

Regional and  
Diocesan Trainers

Parish Leaders and  
Initiation Ministers  
(English)

Parish Leaders and  
Initiation Ministers  
(Spanish)

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**To register**, please complete and return this form with a check payable to:

Liturgy Training Publications

Attn: NGCI

3949 South Racine Avenue, Chicago, IL 60609

**To register online**, visit: [www.NGCI.org](http://www.NGCI.org). Contact us at [ngci@ltp.org](mailto:ngci@ltp.org) or 773-579-4900, ext. 3532 with any questions.