

Talk to someone

“How can I, unless some man shew me?”

In short. Faith is a personal act, but not an isolated one: the believer receives faith from others and hands it on.¹ From the time of the apostles, becoming a Christian has been a journey in several stages, covered rapidly or slowly.²

Key points

- No one can believe alone, just as no one can live alone.¹
- Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.³
- Becoming a Christian is a journey in stages, rapid or slow.²
- The catechumenate brings conversion and faith to maturity, in union with an ecclesial community.⁴

Try this, this week

1. **Read Acts 8:26–39.** Notice that Philip starts from the passage the official is already reading.
2. **Find a parish near you.** Use the parish finder and note the office hours.
3. **Send one short message.** “I have some questions about the Catholic faith. Could we talk?”
4. **Bring a friend if you like.** A Catholic friend can come with you, or simply listen.

“And Philip running thither, heard him reading the prophet Isaias. And he said: Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest? Who said: And how can I, unless some man shew me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.”

Acts 8:30–31, Douay–Rheims

Watch out: what this does not mean

- Programme names and timetables differ from parish to parish; what does not change is that the catechumenate is a formation in the whole Christian life.⁴
- Initiation of adults reaches its culmination in a single celebration of the three sacraments of initiation.⁷

Common questions

Do I have to be baptized already to talk to a priest?

No: the Church welcomes those preparing for Baptism, and the catechumenate exists for adults on that path.⁵ The Church says of catechumens: “With love and solicitude mother Church already embraces them as her own.”⁶

How long does becoming Catholic take?

The Catechism says the journey of Christian initiation can be covered rapidly or slowly, but certain essential elements will always be present.² For adults it culminates in a single celebration of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.⁷

Remember: You only need to ask the first question.

Sources

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| 1. CCC 166 | 5. CCC 1247 |
| 2. CCC 1229 | 6. CCC 1249 |
| 3. Romans 10:17 (Douay–Rheims) | 7. CCC 1233 |
| 4. CCC 1248 | |

Quotation above: Acts 8:30–31, Douay–Rheims. Catechism: official text on vatican.va.

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