

RCIA Class of 2016



Dana Garrett



Justin Hill



Chris Leid



Steve Orlosky



Sharon Nguyen



Aaron Andrade



Norman Robertson



Hydee Aguilar



Montel DeZayas y Silva



Annabeth Custodio



Jaime de Veyra



Steve Butsko



Crystal McGrew



Tatiana Fong



Siobhan Zwackhalen

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Candidate Bios

Dana Garrett

My name is Dana Garrett and I am in RCIA at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. I was born and raised in the Latter Day Saints faith but have not been active most of my adult life. My boyfriend and his family love the Catholic faith. After some time, I decided to investigate and learn more about Catholicism. Initially, I started attending Mass and after months of attending and learning a little about the Catholic faith, they announced that there would be a class to learn more. I took this opportunity to gain a deeper understanding. RCIA has been very enlightening and has helped in my journey in gaining a better understanding of the Catholic faith.

Justin Hill

My name is Justin Hill and I've been attending the RCIA program with the intention of learning about the Catholic faith and as well as receiving the Sacrament of Baptism.

A little back story about myself and how I was introduced into the faith as well as RCIA. I was born into a Catholic family. Both of my parents are very religious and devout followers. But unfortunately because of my parent's busy schedule, they couldn't plan a baptism nor give religious instruction for me. For a couple of years, my parents schedule got so busy they couldn't even attend Sunday's Mass. After my mom quit her job, she decided it was time to attend Mass regularly so we could receive the blessings of God. It was during one of the Masses last year that there was an announcement for signups for RCIA. Now since I was joining the Air Force my mom urged me to join the class because she really wanted me to be Baptist before I left. At first I didn't know what to expect, but I was curious to learn a bit about what it is to be a Catholic. At first I had a lot of questions, but after being in the program I have learned a lot about my faith and I'm so thankful to the RCIA team for delivering God's message onto me.

Chris Leid

My name is Chris Leid and God called my parents to be missionaries in Indonesia. Our parents really loved us and taught us by example that the Lord would reward us if we put our Faith in God. I was fortunate to go to school at Faith Academy in the Philippines.

In 1972, our family came back to the Bay Area and I joined the Marine Corps to serve my country. Camp Pendleton, CA wasn't even close to paradise so in 1976, when my Dad was Director of East Bay Missions, he introduced me to Ronny Svenhart, a Christian business man. That was the start of a career in baking which would eventually led to meeting my wife Dana at Safeway Bread Plant. We got married in 1980 and attended Holy Spirit due to the fact she was Catholic. Our family started attending OLMC when the Dome was built and tried to attend Mass while working Sat & Sun with mandatory O.T. After listening to Brett's testimony about how RCIA changed his life, I felt God was calling me to join. RCIA has taught us to live lives of FAITH, LOVE, & OBEDIENCE to God. Every day we pray that the Holy Spirit will help us to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Chris. Thank you RCIA!

Steve Orlosky

My name is Steve Orlosky, and I was baptized in 2012 in an Evangelical Church. I love being a child of God, and Jesus is my everything. After studying Holy Scripture, I felt lead to explore the Catholic Church, even though initially I was prejudiced toward her. I really believe Mother Mary tenderly helped me with my eventual conversion. I am convinced that this the one true Church of God, and I am blessed beyond measure to be here. Thank you for your love, teaching, and sacrifice, RCIA team!

Sharon Nguyen

My name is Sharon Nguyen, and I'm from Vietnam. I got baptized there in 2012 in the Baptist Church. I have now lived in the United States with my husband, Steve Orlosky, over 3 years now. I came to RCIA because my husband showed me about that. My husband told me it is the full truth and full love of God. RCIA has helped me understand better the meaning of the Eucharist, and crossing myself, and other things I didn't know before I came here. I'm looking forward to having Communion and becoming Catholic. Thank you all for taking the time to teach me!

Arron Andrade

My name is Aaron Andrade. My journey of following faith has been an amazing experience for me. How I initiated my journey of following faith was through my experience of having an angel influence my course of actions. What I mean by this is that there was a situation that involved a sleepy driver and me driving right next to this sleep driver. My angel was able to help me get away from this sleepy driver from colliding with me, and my angel was able to steer me away from going way off in to the shoulder. As a result of following faith, the teachings I have learned from following faith is very valuable to me, because they show a positive kind of meaning that is very amusing to learn about and to keep.

Charles Robertson

My name is Norman Charles Robertson. I was born on January 8, 1942 in Detroit Michigan and was baptized at Bethel A.M.E. Church. In 1993, I married my dear lovely wife Beth Garcia. Since then, I started attending Mass at the Catholic Church. Last September, I joined the R.C.I.A. with good people learning the faith to become a full pledge Catholic.

Hydee Aguilar

My name is Hydee Aguilar born and raised in Norfolk, Virginia. I am married with 3 kids. I moved here to Fairfield, CA in March 2006. I have been attending Our Lady of Mount Carmel since 2007 on and off. I have been more consistent attending church since summer 2015. Since I have been attending Mass, there would always be speakers encouraging us to sign up for RCIA. I never did get my confirmation and communion but was baptized and raised to be Catholic. That day when Ross (an RCIA member) spoke for us to join, I felt that something was speaking to me and guiding me to join so I did. Being part of RCIA has been a great experience for me so far and I know that it will continue to do so. I have met great people, learned much more about the Catholic faith and not to mention building a better relationship with God. I also feel a sense of joy, peace, and with a sense of purpose when I attend class. I hope to continue with the class until it's completed. I cannot wait for the upcoming experiences and great opportunities to come.

Montel James De Zayas y Silva

My name is Montel James De Zayas y Silva. I am from St. Croix Virgin Island, home of the seven flags. It is called Santa Cruz by my Spaniard ancestors and the Zayas' Family. Now I came to

America and now living in Fairfield, CA to study my Catholic Faith and get accepted to the Catholic Church.

Annabeth Custodio

I'm Annabeth Custodio, born and raised in the City of Fairfield. I'm hoping I can put my dreams in action and become a nurse. I have 6 siblings and love my father past death. Being exposed to this RCIA program and having an opportunity to drastically change my life for the Goodness of God is heartwarming and truly amazing. It goes to show that with God nothing is impossible. Strengthening my FAITH and being led in righteousness is what I'm yearning for. Hoping all my doings in life will please the highest of the high, the only truth.

Jaime de Veyra

My name is Jaime de Veyra. My journey through RCIA has been wonderful. Prior to enrollment, I had felt like there was a spiritual void in my life. After expressing how I felt to my fiancé, we decided to attend Mass together. Shortly after our engagement, I felt it was time to enroll in RCIA and see what the Catholic faith is all about. I still have a lot to learn on my journey, but I felt like everything fell into place, reminding me that God is always perfectly present!

Steve Butsko

My name is Steve Butsko. My parents were not involved in church when I was a child and never had me baptized. My grandmother was Catholic though and we would go to Mass together on Sundays when I visited during my early childhood. Later into my teenage years she didn't ask me to go with her to Mass anymore but have always considered myself "spiritual" growing up and into adult life although I was never involved in any particular religion or church. Recently before my father passed away from cancer, I was at his bedside praying for an end to his suffering and upon finishing my prayer I looked up and there was an angel in the room. This event has caused a shift in my whole perception of what is really important in life. I have new sense of need to live a purpose filled life that enriches my soul. So, feeling perplexed about the direction my life was going, I thought the best thing to do was pray/meditate on the path I should take to really live the life that God has intended for me. During my meditation I had a vision of Our Lady of Grace. Her message to me was very simple but profound. She took my hand and said, **"Go to church."** That same week I called Our Lady of Mount Carmel church and was enrolled in the RCIA program shortly after. God has called me to the church to begin a new journey that will enrich my life. Where this will take me next I'm excited to find out."

Crystal McGrew

My name is Crystal McGrew. I was born in Langley, Virginia where I was fortunate enough to receive the Sacrament of Baptism when I was five months old. I grew up on a military base and we were soon relocated to Japan where I spent the bulk of my childhood. I grew up in a Catholic

household. We went to Mass every Sunday and I attended CCD and received my Holy Communion when I was eight years old. I was eleven when my family relocated to California. It was the move that changed my life. I stopped attending Mass and lost touch with the Catholic Church. Later in my life, I would occasionally attend Mass but never made it a priority in my life. My mother since has become very involved with the Church and always encouraged me to come back. *"You need God in your life."* A good friend of mine asked me last year if I would like to attend RCIA. Her fiancé was attending and she thought it would be nice if we went through the process together. I graciously declined. He finished his class and received his Sacraments at the Easter Vigil last year. He said that the experience was beautiful and that he felt a huge weight lifted off his shoulders. This year my friend asked again if I would be attending RCIA. I thought about it a lot. I was feeling like something was missing in my life. I thought about what my mom had said. I decided it was time to make God the priority in my life.

Tatiana Fong

My name is Tatiana Fong I am 25 years old. I was born in San Francisco but raised in Fairfield. I was baptized at Our Lady of Mount Carmel when I was in elementary school. I feel that I have a pretty good life I have a loving family and I have accomplished graduating college from San Francisco State University. Although I have a good life I have always felt that something was missing in my life and was never quite sure what it was. Growing up my family was not very religious I got baptized and then we barely went to church after that. Through my life I have always felt God's presence but never was very in tune with my relationship with him. As I got older I felt like I wanted more and was missing something big in my life. My boyfriend attends church every Sunday at Our Lady, and he always seems very positive and seems to have a purpose in life. At the end of August 2015 I started to attend church on Sunday with my boyfriend even going a few times by myself. Once I started to attend church I felt very good about my decision to start going, I felt a whole light of positivity come through my life from just attending church on Sundays. After a while I wanted more and I was thinking that there had to be some kind of class I can attend to further my knowledge and to fully become a confirmed Catholic. Then one day while attending mass there was an announcement for RCIA, and I knew that I had to sign up and attend! Since joining RCIA I feel that my knowledge and relationship with God is growing every single day. I no longer have that feeling that something is missing in my life, I now have purpose.

Siobhan Zwackhalen

Bio not available