



St. Ann Catholic Church
5300 N. 10th St.
Arlington, VA 22205

July 9, 2020

Dear St. Ann Parishioners and Friends,

Greetings of Peace!

You may have been asked lately by your remote coworkers, friends, or family members if our little church is still “open” during the pandemic. Yes! We never closed. The service, formation, and devotion to our Lord continues. It's true, however, that how we celebrate has had to change to keep our faithful well and safe. And yet, we have recently welcomed newly baptized and confirmed men and women into our St. Ann Catholic family, sadly not at the beautiful Easter Vigil Mass. But our church has been graced by their desire, dedication, and commitment to our Catholic faith; the Church is made stronger because of them.

I want to assure you of our ongoing commitment to faith formation for those of all ages, including those adults in our community who are not Catholic but are interested in exploring the Catholic faith and possibly becoming Catholic. For adults who have never been baptized or who were baptized in a non-Catholic Christian church the normal path to becoming Catholic is participation in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). RCIA has typically consisted of regular in-person meetings to discuss assigned readings. These sessions prepare participants for their initiation into the Catholic Church, if that is their desire. This initiation normally takes place at the Easter Vigil, which will be April 3, 2021.

Our traditional format will not be possible this year, at least not at the beginning. Therefore, the RCIA team has developed a plan for the 2020-21 cycle that allows for the teaching of fundamental Catholic doctrine, traditions and practices in a safe and flexible learning environment. The new format consists of: (1) Independent Study, using the *U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults* as the basic text, supplemented by web-based resources; and, (2) Virtual meetings, including regular RCIA group meetings and periodic “check-ins” with the sponsor and an RCIA team member. Our goal is to help candidates learn about Catholic teaching while growing in their relationship with God.

We will be providing additional information in the weeks ahead, but in the meantime if you think you might be interested in participating either as an “inquirer” or a “sponsor” in our RCIA program when it gets underway in the Fall I'd encourage you to contact Deacon Bill Donovan at deacondonovan@stann.org or our Director of Faith Formation, Amy Strickland, at stannreled@gmail.com.

Blessings,

Fr. Mel