

The Initiation of Children: An Annotated Bibliography

Boucher, Therese M. Evangelizing Unchurched Children: A Pocketbook for Catechists. San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, Inc., 2000.

This resource, while not solely concerned with those children in the catechumenate, gives numerous resources and practical ideas to help catechists involved in children's initiation.

Brown, Kathy and Frank Sokol, eds. Issues in the Christian Initiation of Children: Catechesis and Liturgy. Font and Table Series. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1989.

Fourteen essays written by some of the well-known voices in RCIA cover a variety of aspects of the initiation of children – in particular, the intimate link of catechesis and liturgy.

Carola, Dorothy Kosinski. Learning About Liturgy: Catechesis for Children and Their Families. San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, Inc., 2001.

Because the 17 one-hour lessons in this book are created for families and mixed age groupings (nine-twelve year olds), it can work well for catechesis on the Mass during the catechumenate. This resource includes worksheets, lesson plans, and handouts for copying. One caveat, of course: Because the publication date precedes the more recent changes in the wording of liturgy, some adjustments/corrections would have to be made before copying the handouts in the book.

Cavalletti, Sofia. The Religious Potential of the Child Six to Twelve Years Old. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2007.

This is a wonderful introduction to the spiritual development of young children. This comes out of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a Montessori-based religion program, but can offer those involved in the Christian initiation of children a good understanding of the spiritual lives of six-twelve year old children.

Coffey, Kathy. Children and Christian Initiation: Leader Guide. Denver, CO: Living the Good News, 2002. [In cooperation with The North American Forum on the Catechumenate.]

Coffey begins Children and Christian Initiation with chapters on the spirituality of children and an overall vision of Christian Initiation. She discusses the four periods of the RCIA and offers practical insights and suggestions for implementation with sample lesson plans and family sessions. Coffey also includes suggestions for celebrating the Minor Rites with discussion of the ritual gestures found in the rites. [Amazon.com also includes other books in this series by Coffey: a Parent/Sponsor book; and journals for children & youth catechumens.]

Duggan, Robert D. and Maureen A. Kelly. The Christian Initiation of Children: Hope For the Future. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1991.

A comprehensive overview addressing the necessary paradigm shift in religious formation of children, addressing suitable pastoral formation and conversion. Each chapter includes discussion questions as tools for committees or groups responsible for implementation.

National Directory
General Directory
RCIA

Celebrating the Lectionary for Primary Grades 2012-2013: Supplemental Lectionary-Based Resource. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2012.

This LTP annual resource is also available for Intermediate Grade, Junior High, and High School Youth age groups. Celebrating the Lectionary for Primary Grades teaches children in grades 1-3 (approximately ages 6-8) reverence for and connection with the Gospel, using the full text of the Gospel reading. The reflections and activities in this resource will help children grow in familiarity with the stories of the Gospel, the themes of church teaching and tradition, and liturgical seasons and practices.

Figgess, Sandra, RSCJ. Christian Initiation of Older Children. Collegeville, MN: the Liturgical Press, 1990.

This is a resource meant for the young catechumen. It gives a simple overview of what Christian Initiation means – the three sacraments of initiation and the children's catechumenal process.

Guided Reflections for Children (Vol. I-Praying with Scripture; Vol. II – Praying My Faith). Chicago: Loyola Press, 2008.

Each booklet offers 10 ready-to-use guided reflections based on a specific Scripture passage (Vol. I) or on a variety of prayers and sacraments (Vol. II) to engage young people at a deeper level.

 **Huebsch, Bill, with Leisa Anslinger. Great Expectations: A Pastoral Guide for Partnering with Parents. New London, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2010.**

Though this book does not specifically concern itself with children's initiation, the model Huebsch presents and some of the resources he offers can be adapted to a family approach in RCIA for children. Huebsch's intent is to coach the parents to be the teachers of their own children, giving the parents the skills and confidence they need.

Huels, John M. The Catechumenate and the Law: a Pastoral and Canonical Commentary for the Church in the United States. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1994.

An authoritative resource for the inevitable situations and questions that require familiarity with canon law, including: the rights and obligations of catechumens and candidates; doubts about the validity of baptism or confirmation; the initiation of younger children at celebrations of adult initiation; delay of confirmation; record-keeping; marriage cases; ministers; and god-parents and sponsors.

Merritt, Sydney Ann. Guided Meditations for Child Catechumens. San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, Inc., 2001.

This book offers the catechist of child catechumens helpful hints on introducing and leading a guided meditation for children. Merritt includes forty-three guided meditations using Scripture stories from both Old and New Testaments. The meditations are organized according to the four periods of the catechumenate, with themes that highlight the various stages.

Merritt, Sydney Ann. Guided Meditations for Children: 40 Scripts and Activities Based on the Sunday Lectionary. San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, Inc., 1995.

This book is similar to the one above though it is not specifically for child catechumens. It contains helpful hints on introducing and leading a guided meditation for children, and forty guided meditations using Scripture stories from the Gospels. The stories are centered on different seasons of the liturgical year and include questions for discussion and activities related to the Gospel story.

Miller, Janet. Friends on the Way: A Catechumenate Resource for Children. (PDF download. Ordering and further info at www.teamrcia.com).

This is a comprehensive, flexible and intergenerational catechetical resource written specifically for child catechumens. Because it is sold as an e-resource, it is an economical alternative for your use year after year. Your purchase entitles you to make as many copies as you need for use within your own parish.

Pflaum Gospel Weeklies. Dayton, OH: Pflaum Publishing Group. (Info at www.pflaumweeklies.com).

This resource can be used in a variety of ways in the catechumenate adapted for children. The weekly leaflets focus on the Sunday's Scripture so they can be used in Breaking Open the Word, but their catechetical content can also be the foundation for your catechesis. The leaflets are targeted to different age groups and the Pflaum website contains numerous additional resources: for example, Spanish language materials and specific guidelines for adapting each week's lessons for children in the RCIA.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Study Edition. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1988.

Part II (Rites for Particular Circumstances), Chapter 1 (par. 252 – 330) is the section of the Study Edition that concerns itself with the Christian Initiation of children who have reached catechetical age. However, since this section is an adaptation of Part I, it is absolutely necessary to have a thorough understanding of Part I also.


Senseman, Rita Burns. A Child's Journey: The Christian Initiation of Children. Cincinnati, OH: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1998.

A Child's Journey is an eminently practical and comprehensive resource. Senseman presents the vision of the catechumenate particularly as it applies to children and also thoroughly covers the four periods. The appendix includes sample interviews for the initial meeting with the family and also sample discernment interviews for the Rites of Acceptance and Election.

Steffen, Donna, SC. Discerning Disciples: Listening for God's Voice in Christian Initiation, Second Edition. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2004.

This is a useful resource for understanding the art of discernment in the catechumenal process. Steffen's second edition includes a helpful chapter on discerning with children. The appendices include training processes for initiation ministers and give some concrete suggestions for discernment conversations. Though the latter are meant for those working with adults in the RCIA, the core elements are helpful for those involved in the initiation of children.

Stucke, Carolyn and Jane Pierron. Meeting the Challenge: Faith Formation with Baptized and Unbaptized Children in the Same Parish. (PDF download. Ordering and further info at www.teamrcia.com).

This is a basic e-booklet that would be helpful for those who wish to implement the RCIA adapted for children in their parish. The authors offer plain, common-sense solutions to some of the challenges parishes face (such as the possibility of including the catechumens in the parish's faith formation classes).

Tufano, Victoria, ed. Readings in the Christian Initiation of Children. Font & Table Series. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1994.

This is an excellent resource that covers many of the issues confronting the proper implementation of the RCIA adapted for Children. It includes essays written by many of more well-known names in RCIA, including Christiane Brusselmans, Robert D. Duggan, James Dunning and Rita Burns Senseman.