

# Why am I becoming Catholic?

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |

Six people who will join the Church at the Easter Vigil answer the question, “Why am I becoming Catholic?”

✘ “When my wife, Delia became pregnant with our son, Aidan, we knew at the time that we wanted him to be raised with a good moral compass and in a Christian faith. One Saturday evening last fall, we attended Mass at St Vincent’s and I picked up a bulletin that had information about the RCIA program starting up. The next week we started going to the classes. Delia and I are definitely looking forward to taking Communion for the first time. It will be really neat to see my son baptized at the same time and to raise him with such a solid foundation. I hope he will be able to grow up understanding what he believes and knowing exactly what the Church teaches. His first birthday is exactly one week after the Easter vigil and we’ll have a lot to celebrate.”

— *George Loring, elect, St. Vincent de Paul, Rogers. His wife, Delia Loring, an elect, and 11-month-old son Aidan will also be baptized and received into the Church.*

✘ “Growing up in the Protestant faith, for some time I have been interested in converting to the Catholic faith, but only began following or pursuing it in the last two years. I really began to get interested when I learned of my second deployment to Iraq. I have been a member of the Arkansas Army National Guard for over 25 years and really have fallen away from the Lord since joining the military. When my unit deployed in January 2008, I became close friends with a fellow soldier who was born into the Catholic faith and has a brother that is a priest in Shreveport, La. I attended Mass with him on a few occasions and really became enthused about the Catholic faith and beliefs. When classes began in September 2009, my wife decided to join me in converting and we began the journey. The RCIA classes have taught so much. We look forward to Easter Sunday, when we can confirm our faith and celebrate the Eucharist and really become one with the God and the Church.”

— *Daniel Jackson, candidate, St. Joseph, Paris*

✘ “The answer is actually incredibly simple. I was exposed to the faith shared by the Catholic community through the greatest friend I have ever known in my life. When all in my life was dark and bleak, she shined brighter than the sun, and I couldn’t figure out what illuminated her life so brilliantly while I lived in despair. Years and miles had separated us, but Brandy Ortiz and her family took me in and she shared her secret — faith. While it might sound selfish and envious, I had to find a way to have that in my life. I went to Mass with her, and I had never felt so at peace or welcome anywhere else. I actually saw God’s hand and Christ’s love in action in her life and her family. I found my home here at Holy Souls, and I opened my heart to accept the gift that was always here waiting for me. How great is this gift of Christ’s love and peace, and how wonderful is the community with which to share it.”

— *Adam Culpepper, candidate, Our Lady of the Holy Souls, Little Rock*

✘ *Mark:* “A major reason that I am becoming Catholic is because I have come to believe that all the truths that the Church proclaims are, indeed, true — and not only the Church’s particular

'religious' claims about Jesus or Christianity. It has become altogether clear to me that the Church's teachings about the proper role of science and medicine, about the demands of social justice and politics, and about the importance of the family and procreation are correct — not just because they fit into a particular religious framework, but because they have shown themselves to be true on a practical and societal level."

*Sarah: "I am becoming Catholic because, after studying Scripture and history, I believe that the Catholic Church is the church that Jesus founded upon St. Peter. I have also come to appreciate that the Church, at its best, focuses on transmitting and practicing a complete faith, instead of attempting to develop a particular 'brand' based upon a few characteristics, such as the latest style of music, a popular pastor's style of preaching or a certain type of Bible study."  
— Mark and Sarah Duch, candidates, St. Edward, Texarkana*

✘ "The first time I went to Christ the King I was filled with awe. As we were saying the Nicene Creed I looked over to a little child, we looked into each other's eyes and what I saw in that child's eyes I also saw in the eyes of an older man standing two rows behind him. It was a look of love, love I had never seen before. I was home. We were about to celebrate, and even though I couldn't partake in the Eucharist yet, coming before our God with my brothers and sisters I knew I was truly blessed to be celebrating with everyone. For the past two years I have been going to a Catholic church and am happy to say I will be receiving the body and blood of Christ with all of you this Easter. I am truly blessed."  
— Jacklynn Hunt, elect, Christ the King, Fort Smith

✘ "I married a cradle Catholic. When we got married we went through some education for marriage through the Catholic Church. I never thought I was ready to become Catholic. After having kids, two, Olivia, 8, and William Wyatt, 4, and now that Olivia is going through steps to receive her first Communion, I really sort of felt like the kids are starting to look to me and ask questions about what does this mean when we go to Church, and what does that mean, what is he saying. I really think it was a couple of things. For the last several years, I have been going to Mass and listening, and I think I was finally ready to become Catholic. It is hard to be a father, a leader of the family if you are not part of what the others in the family are. This sort of completes the circle."  
— Dr. Will Hill, elect, St. Peter the Fisherman, Mountain Home

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